

## THE BUSINESS OF LEARNING

Michelle Marrone  
(From *Rivier Today*, Spring 2017)

Innocentus Alhamis, Ph.D.,  
Assistant Professor of Business, Program Director for Business Administration

*“Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.”*  
— Albert Einstein

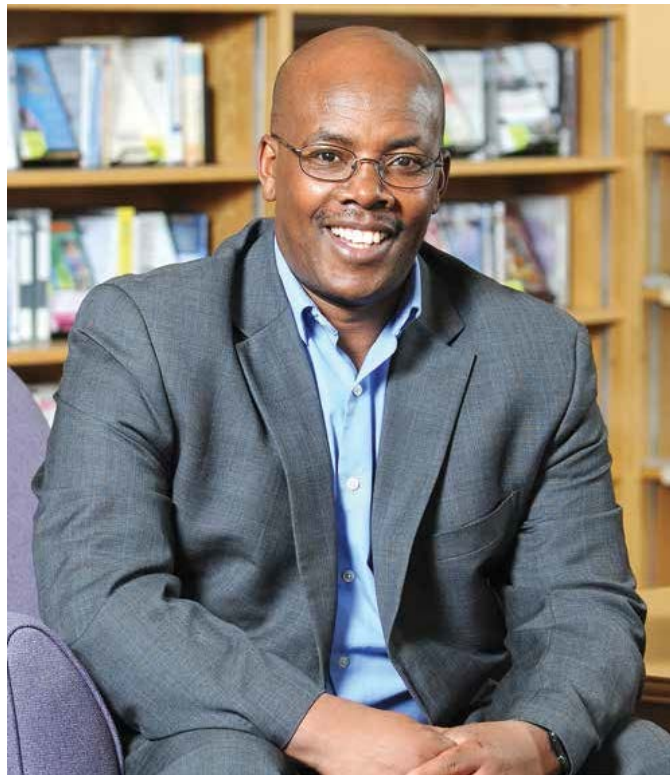


Photo by Jodie Andruskevich

**“Amazing lecturer ... inspirational ... and respected”** are just a few of the words students use to describe **Dr. Innocentus Alhamis**.

Dr. Alhamis joined Rivier’s Division of Business in 2014 taking on the roles of assistant professor and program director. Prior to joining the University, Dr. Alhamis studied and taught in Tanzania and Japan.

“I started teaching immediately after fulfilling my bachelor’s degree for the then newly established long distance university known as The Open University of Tanzania,” says Dr. Alhamis. “After two years of work, I was offered a prestigious scholarship to pursue a master’s degree at International University of Japan where I also became a tutorial assistant for a number of business courses.”

After completing his M.A. in Economics and International Finance, he resumed teaching economics and business courses with The Open University of Tanzania, offering distance learning through traditional “snail” mail, phone, and limited class meetings at established centers. “Electronic communications like email

and other online services were very limited in Tanzania at that time,” Dr. Alhamis shares. “The Open University offers educational opportunities in situations where traditional education has difficulty operating.”

In addition to teaching, Dr. Alhamis established the Economics Department at The Open University and initiated a Master’s of Community Economic Development program before immigrating to the U.S. to pursue his Ph.D. in Developmental Finance. He has been teaching in New Hampshire and online for the past 15 years.

Dr. Alhamis is a proponent of active learning; he engages students in the learning process via group discussions, case studies, guided inquiries, and other projects that develop analytical and critical thinking skills. He applies a three-pronged approach to teaching: knowledge, activity, and reflection. As well as understanding coursework, students are encouraged to question, evaluate, and, ultimately, to apply what they learn to their daily lives to create new knowledge. He believes teaching higher-order thinking skills, like analytical and critical thinking, is the most valuable learning he can offer as an educator.

“I try to make my classes fascinating and up-to-date by encouraging students to apply the principles they learn to real-world situations, especially the most current issues,” says Dr. Alhamis. “For example, my undergraduate and graduate students are analyzing the economic policies of the current administration. A number of students have expressed excitement regarding their ability to argue issues on their merits with colleagues rather than on political inclinations.”

Dr. Alhamis is a lifelong learner, constantly bringing new ideas to the classroom. “I learn every day something new about the world and my students,” he says. “I always listen to my students’ points of view and experiences. I listen to the daily news and regularly read peer-reviewed journals, books, blogs, op-eds, policy reports, etc. This variety keeps my thinking process fresh.”

Expanding on his teaching career, Dr. Alhamis is also a social entrepreneur. He is a founding member, co-owner, and coordinator of The eSoma, Inc., a massive online teaching platform for all levels of education—from elementary school to graduate classes. The platform is an educational delivery alternative or supplement for developing countries, starting with Tanzania, where skilled instructors, books, and other educational resources are severely lacking.

For those students with internet access, The eSoma platform provides online learning opportunities by delivering entire courses via video lectures, audio files, PowerPoint presentations, documents, discussions, and web content. These resources are provided free of charge to instructors to create their courses, which are most often offered at no cost. In those countries where online learning is restricted due to a lack of technology and digital services, The eSoma provides educational resources on DVDs, audio cassettes, and in print. These materials are distributed to instructors and students in need.

Dr. Alhamis’ experience and professional focus align with Rivier’s emphasis on exploring the global perspective in education. “Our programs deliver a high-quality, hands-on education to prepare our students for leadership roles and are tailored to impart in them a holistic global perspective,” says Dr. Alhamis. “Also, our programs encourage students to connect their personal life, professional life, and social responsibilities.” He points to Rivier’s Catholic tradition, mission of transforming hearts and minds to serve the world, and “the finest team of credentialed faculty” as distinguishing factors for the University and the education it provides.

Employing a business approach to learning, Dr. Alhamis strives for innovation and continuous improvement in his teaching. His students become change agents; they apply newly acquired knowledge to affect change in the workplace and in their lives. Appreciating the tangible difference education makes in people’s lives, he shares, “I get incredible joy in seeing the fruits of my efforts every day as I use my knowledge and creativity to help students gain new insights, to become more interested in subjects, to learn about the world and themselves, and to help them shape their dreams.” ■

### **Bio: Dr. Innocentus Alhamis**

Ph.D., Developmental Finance, Southern New Hampshire University  
M.A., Economics and International Finance, International University of Japan  
B.A., Economics, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

### **Assistant Professor of Business**

- Program Director, Business Administration
- Business Majors Advisor
- Business Students Association Advisor

### **Specialties**

- Economics
- Strategic Management
- Poverty Reduction Strategies

### **Classes Taught**

- Principles of Macroeconomics
- Principles of Microeconomics
- International Economics and Finance
- Managerial Economics
- Global Finance for Managers
- Risk Management and Decision Making

### **Languages Spoken**

- English
- Japanese
- Swahili

### **Academic Philosophy**

Learning should be student centered, and both students and instructors need to be equal partners in the learning process.

### **Recent and Upcoming Publications**

Dr. Alhamis has contributed a chapter to the forthcoming book *Effective Management Strategies for Organizational Success*. Currently, he is developing a paper for publication on open educational resources titled “Pursuit for OERs: Will they transform academic practices?” and compendium textbooks for two online courses: *Risk Management and Decision Making* and *Applied Statistics and Data*.