

## **Alfred University finance professor to speak at conference in Tunisia**

5/24/04

ALFRED, NY -- Dr. Abderrahman Robana, professor of finance and business administration at Alfred University, will give a presentation at a conference on information systems this summer in Tunis, Tunisia. Robana, a native of Tunisia, will speak about Alfred University's Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF). The presentation will be given during a conference July 25-27, sponsored by London's Brunel University. SMIF was initiated at Alfred University in 1995 with \$100,000 of start-up money authorized by the AU Board of Trustees. Students, under the direction of a faculty advisor, are charged with investing the funds and building a stock portfolio. SMIF, which meets weekly throughout the year, is open to all students, regardless of major. By the spring of 2000, the fund had grown to \$320,000. The fund, like the stock market, declined in the early part of the decade but has rebounded and is now valued at \$188,000, still almost double the initial investment. Robana said information systems are a critical part of the success of AU's SMIF program, and he plans to discuss that aspect of SMIF at the conference in Tunisia. "The use of databases by the students is essential to managing a portfolio," he said. Robana has been closely involved with SMIF since its inception, serving as primary faculty advisor from 1995-2000. He said SMIF has provided students with valuable experience in making financial investments. "It prepares the students for the real world" of financial investment, he said, noting that some former SMIF members have gone on to pursue careers as investment professionals. Each year, SMIF members attend the Financial Management Association Student Leaders Conference in Chicago, where they've had the opportunity to hear presentations given by some of the country's leading investment executives. Robana accompanied four Alfred University students to the 2004 FMA conference, held in Chicago in March. Students gave a presentation on the Alfred's student-managed investment fund. "They were the sole presenters (of student-managed funds)," Robana said. "There were professional investment managers and more than 250 students from colleges and universities from across the country. It was quite an honor."