The MainGate

Free and Fair
Ahmad Badran (BBA expected ‘19) is following in his brother’s footsteps in attending AUB. “Ashraf [his brother] graduated in 2014 with a degree in engineering,” he says. Badran is working towards a degree in business administration at his brother’s encouragement. “I was going to study engineering, but he recommended business.” Why? “Because he knows I want to stay in Lebanon and there are more opportunities here for someone with a business degree.” He hails from a working class family in Der El Zehanni, in the heart of southern Lebanon. His father, now retired, spent his career at the General Directorate of General Security. On arriving at AUB, he applied for financial aid and was awarded a BLOM Bank Scholarship. “I’m extremely grateful,” he says. Inspired by the passion of lecturer Rania Uwaydah Mardini (BBA ‘96, MBA ‘99), Badran has made accounting his focus. When not working through cash flow statements under Jafet Library’s fluorescent lights, he is watching Prison Break and Designated Survivor, listening to Cuban-American singer Camila Cabello, or perusing the shops on Rue Verdun. “So far it’s been a really pleasant experience.”
Contents

Inspiration

Student life, the liberal arts, AUB personalities past and present

A look at AUB’s student elections

Discoveries

Research, the arts, and current events

AUB reinstates tenure, affirming its research bona fides

Wellness

AUBMC 2020, health, and medicine

Dr. Fadi Sawaya discusses the future of cardiac intervention procedures

Impact

Regional impact, advocacy, and policy initiatives

The story behind the empty skyscrapers towering over campus

AUB Everywhere

Alumni profile, class notes, WAAU, and chapter news

Emily Nasrallah (BA ’58), celebrated writer, explores the theme of migration in her novels, while remaining true to her roots

In Memoriam
Dear fellow alumni and friends of AUB,

Our deep roots in the Arab world and our strong ties to the homeland of our American founders make AUB a dual-identity institution that sits at the heart of today’s global challenges. I would argue that our strengths lie in exactly that nexus, in which millennia of cultural development blend with the freshness and vigor of a young population, rooted in old civilizations, yet honed on modern ideas. From my perspective, we can identify AUB’s specific challenges under several broad headings—affordability, graduate employment, elevating research, and geopolitical instability.

AUB tuition and fees, while substantially lower than those of competitor American institutions by more than a third, are out of reach of many Lebanese and Arab families, and represent a significant barrier to my core belief that the advantages bestowed by a top-class university education must not be available only to those already endowed with wealth, access, and privilege. On the contrary, universities must engage in rectifying economic imbalances, empowering the disempowered and the underrepresented, and acting as an engine for lasting positive change in society. After years of steep tuition rises we are now becoming considerably more economically inclusive, not less. We are on track to double the number of scholarships, but we want to—and must—do more. Philanthropy is a keystone for affordability and donors give more generously to dynamic, visionary, and ambitious causes. To judge by current record levels of philanthropic giving, our support base has never been so galvanized in support of AUB’s vital mission. To go to the next level, the university needs to be recognized globally as one of the great societal difference makers and mainstays of tolerance, openness, and diversity in the world today.

The job market our graduates enter remains challenging. We believe the AUB graduate of the future should be versed in the vital and marketable skills of the liberal arts, alongside a professional qualification for some. We want each and every graduate to be empowered and equipped with an entrepreneurial mindset and skill set to create her or his own original role. Meanwhile, we have done everything possible to invest more in research with internal funding growing from $2.5 million a year to about $5 million a year over the last three years. We are rethinking our approach to graduate education and graduate assistantships and providing considerably more opportunities and funding for individuals committed to seriously defining their futures in the spheres of research, teaching, and administration. In addition, we have restored academic tenure after a hiatus of more than 30 years and are seeking reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, a massive effort involving more than 145 faculty, staff, and students. Our biggest challenge remains, as it has been for many years, geopolitical instability. Even in the midst of regional transition and uncertainty, I am convinced that we must tilt towards the future with a sense of determination and self-belief. We cannot be cowed into despair or inaction. We must instead embrace the role that AUB has played so often in the past and help to shape the future of our region. That after all is at the core of our identity, and why we at AUB do what we do, and what we must keep doing.
Dear MainGate readers,

Welcome to this latest edition of your favorite magazine shining a spotlight on the abundant life of AUB and its global community. This time we have tried to focus on the most important constituency that any university has—its students—with stories that we hope will invoke your own campus experiences, and perhaps the comforting feeling that little has changed in the rocky outcrop between Bliss Street and the Mediterranean. But you might equally be struck that things are very much in transition in an academic community that has its sights firmly set on the future.

Our cover image and main feature celebrates the unique phenomenon of the AUB student elections, which took place in the fall in typical energetic fashion. Do read our close-up account of the realities of the polls which, if you think about it for a moment, must be an apogee of democratic expression in a region with a dearth of free and fair elections at almost any level. It is my sincere hope that the participants in these hotly contested ballots will carry the experience throughout their lives, reminding them of the truth that this region’s people deserve more say in who governs them. Don’t miss our illuminating profile of world renowned author Emily Nasrallah whom MainGate was lucky to interview in her Beirut home, nor the unforgettable and life-affirming account of a newly-enrolled scholarship student who has reached AUB after a series of ordeals of forced migration and homelessness.

Since taking the honor of editing MainGate, I have felt we missed hearing from our readership, except the very welcome reminiscences and updates we receive for our AUB EVERYWHERE alumni section. So please do contact us. We will publish the most interesting messages and consider all requests for different kinds of coverage. Get writing and thanks in advance!

Martin Asser, Executive Editor
The International Advisory Council Annual Meeting and Dinner

New York City

The International Advisory Council (IAC) held its annual meeting at AUB’s New York Office Debs Center on November 17. This was followed by a dinner and panel discussion at the Morgan Library and Museum. Established in 1992 to support the president and trustees, the IAC brings expertise and a worldwide perspective to areas of key concern to the University.

President Khuri led a fascinating discussion during the meeting with a diverse group of international leaders on the risks and opportunities of higher education during a period of extremism and conflict in the Middle East. Participants wrestled with a number of topics during a wide-ranging discussion that touched on strategic partnerships, centers of academic excellence, student life, mentoring, financial aid, research, tenure, public service, and innovation. IAC members were especially concerned about the urgent need for enhanced job opportunities for Arab youth and for education for refugees. One theme that came up repeatedly was the importance of the core values of a liberal arts education in helping to build and sustain dynamic regional civic institutions.

The meeting was followed by a dinner and panel discussion led by IAC Chairman Ambassador Frank G. Wisner. The panelists included US Ambassadors Ryan Crocker and Susan L. Ziadeh, and the former Jordanian foreign minister and deputy PM Marwan Muasher. They drew on their wealth of experience having served for decades in high-level positions in the region to offer interesting insights on several challenging issues including the Iran/Saudi Arabia axis and their regional proxy wars, the US-Iran nuclear arms deal, authoritarian and patronage regimes in post-oil economies, US interventions in the region, the Islamic State, and the refugee crisis. Muasher discussed the absence of effective, responsive governance in the Middle East and concluded that we are living in the gap between the end of one era and the beginning of another. Ziadeh assessed changes in US foreign policy under President Trump. In his remarks, Crocker commented that he thought that the region would remain volatile for some time to come. He spoke also of AUB’s century-and-a-half record as a rock of stability, a beacon of hope in a sea of chaos, and an institution whose brightest days lie ahead.

The panel discussion triggered a lively question and answer period.
Inspiration

Student life, the liberal arts, AUB personalities past and present

Women's Symposium 6
Improving the lives and careers of female faculty at AUB

Face to Face 8
Samia Azar on focus, flexibility, hard work, and giving back

Student Elections 10
AUB's impassioned voters

Published & Produced 12
Art, Theater, Music, Comics
Written Word: books by AUB faculty and alumni

Shukri's story 14
Triumphing over adversity

A brave new world for journalists 16
AUB’s Media Studies Program trains students to navigate the world of new media

Sports and Scholarship 18
What can sports teach students? Why are scholar-athletes so scholarly?

BBC World Questions 20
BBC comes to AUB

Fight School 22
Ramzi Yahia trains in the art of combat, while keeping his grades high
AUB has long been at the forefront of empowering women in the region, admitting its first female students to the School of Nursing in 1905, accepting women to the Pharmacy and Dentistry Schools in 1921, graduating the first female student, Sara Levy, in 1925, the first Muslim woman, Ihsan Shakir, in 1929, and the first woman medical doctor, Edma Abu Chedid, in 1933. Fully coeducational in 1924, decades before most colleges and universities in the United States and Europe, AUB has appreciated the importance of female empowerment, not only as a matter of social justice, but in creating more robust working environments, an essential component of national and regional development. While this history is remarkable, it is not the reason that women’s rights are so close to the heart of AUB’s current president. Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri often pays tribute to the influence of his mother, Dr. Soumaya Makdisi-Khuri, a well-regarded mathematics professor (now retired), and his wife, Dr. Lamya Tannous-Khuri, who holds a PhD in nutrition from Columbia University. Early in his administration, the president announced that although the University had been a pioneer in the area of gender equity in the region, it still had far to go, and that he intended to do something about that. Making good on that promise, he appointed a Task Force on the Lives and Careers of Women Faculty at AUB in December 2015.

Over the course of nine months, the task force, which was made up of men and women, senior and junior faculty and staff, collected information and data from various university departments, and conducted meetings, surveys, and focus groups. In December 2016, they submitted a 236-page report that included findings and recommendations that were both meticulous and exhaustive. This might be expected from a committee of impressive academics headed by co-chairs Howayda Al-Harithy, a professor of architecture in MSFEA, and Emeritus Professor of Public Health Huda Zurayk, a pioneer in public health scholarship in the region who served as dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences from 1998 to 2008, and was AUB’s first female academic dean. Still, the work of the task force is surprising in its scope and potential impact as anyone who attended the president’s symposium, Women at AUB: Strategic Institutional Initiatives, on September 5, 2017 can attest. [See it on AUB YouTube]

In her introduction to the symposium, Al-Harithy stated, “Today we no longer ask how far women can go and what they can achieve, but we ask the more pertinent question of how to remove all barriers in offering them equal opportunity.” In 2003, President John Waterbury launched initiatives that had some success in increasing the number of women in the student body and faculty, and in senior administration. “But representation and leadership are not enough,” Al-Harithy continued, “an infrastructure of opportunity, empowerment, and accountability needs to be put in place.” The panelists
discussed the many challenges and opportunities related to empowering women at all levels from senior administration to students. Gender Equity and Title IX coordinator Trudi Hodges illustrated the benefits of leveling the playing field and spoke of research that shows that “gender diversity improves performance on teams, organizations, and across the board—particularly gender diversity in leadership.”

The task force collected and assessed quantitative and qualitative data under two major themes: women’s professional status and career trajectories and work/family/personal life balance. Currently, women represent 28 percent of the professorial faculty at AUB. While 47.7 percent of female faculty hold professorial titles, significantly more (73.6 percent) of male faculty hold professorial titles. In the academic year 2015-16, 32 percent of assistant professors, 32 percent of associate professors, and 21 percent of full professors were female. Promotion success rates for women are similar to men.

The number of years in rank, however, is longer, especially at the assistant professor level: 6.1 years for women faculty compared to 5.5 years for men. Women represent 19 percent of academic leadership and 20 percent of administrative leadership. Forty percent of female faculty reported that they “strongly agree” that women have an equal opportunity to express their views in important committee meetings compared to 68 percent of men. Work/family life balance does not show a wide gap between women and men. Sixty-eight percent of female faculty reported often missing family responsibilities due to work obligations, as compared to 64 percent of male faculty.

At the conclusion of the presidential symposium, President Khuri spoke of the unique challenges of work/life balance in academia and in Lebanon. He announced several initiatives that are a direct result of the work of the task force, including the establishment of a permanent commission on the status of women at AUB, an annual award to recognize individuals who mentor women faculty and others at AUB, and a “top flight” mentorship panel. In reaffirming the mission of the Task Force on the Lives and Careers of Women Faculty at AUB, Khuri stated, “Our goal is straightforward: to ensure a safe and non-discriminatory environment at AUB. Our approach is to nurture a culture of mutual respect and tolerance, to anchor our policies and practices in ethics, to focus on education and prevention, and to prioritize student needs.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women Faculty at a Glance*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* (statistics for AY 2015–16, except where noted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="47.7%25" alt="Female Faculty" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="40%25" alt="Female Faculty" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>![Female Faculty](6.1 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="5%25" alt="Female Faculty" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Representation**

- 47.7% of female faculty hold professorial rank
- 73.6% of male faculty hold professorial rank

**Senior administrative leadership positions held by women**

- 5% (AY 2000–01)
- 20% (AY 2015–16)

**Promotion**

- Women spend more years in rank than men before receiving a promotion, especially at the assistant professor level

- 6.1 years in rank before promotion for female faculty
- 5.5 years in rank before promotion for male faculty

**Work Environment**

- “Strongly agree” that they have an equal opportunity to express their views in important committee meetings

- 40% of female faculty
- 68% of male faculty
When Samia Ibrahim Azar came to AUB as a young mathematics graduate in 1977, she was immediately impressed by the support and job training she received as a junior programmer in AUB’s Computer Center. She also appreciated what AUB offered her and so many others during the Civil War years: the feeling of being in the calm eye of a storm. Living close to campus, she didn’t have to endure a long or dangerous commute. And whereas other departments were dealing with attrition and trying to maintain the status quo, IT was taking off, piloted by talented and dedicated staff determined to move AUB forward. While navigating new technologies, Samia felt the reassuring presence of senior managers who were always there to guide, support, and mentor her, and who inspired her to do the same for others just starting out in their careers.

Focus, flexibility, hard work, and giving back are the four pillars of Samia’s working life. Add to that personal attributes of being an exceptionally good and patient listener, and having an insatiable curiosity about how things work—and how to make them work better—and you have someone deserving of a President’s Service Excellence Award. Thrilled to have received this honor, Samia modestly deflects compliments by insisting that she has simply done what anyone would do—stepped in when needed.

In her 40 years at AUB, Samia has “stepped in” to support many business functions. She also helped set up processes for Finance, Procurement, and HR, and even did a short stint in strategic planning for the Faculty of Medicine. Having worked in a number of different roles, Samia has gained a global awareness of how the University operates. Currently a business analysis manager in the IT Enterprise Functional Systems Unit, she concentrates mostly on the daunting student Banner application for registration and admissions, and on the overarching effort to “reach for the skies” in coordination with the IT vision to invest in Cloud strategies.

Like other AUB staff stalwarts, Samia says that “AUB is in my blood. Family members have gone here for generations, but it’s not something that I take for granted. I know what a privileged life I’ve led, and I feel a tremendous debt to this unique institution.” She believes deeply in the role AUB has played and will continue to play in Lebanon and the region, fostering tolerance, diversity, open dialogue, intellectual freedom, and progress through process—or in plain language, people working well together. Samia’s love for her work springs from knowing that what she does contributes to the greater good. “It’s not how you’re ranked or remunerated. It’s how well you do your job—how much you love it. If you love what you do, then material rewards follow. The big payoff is just doing something well.” Take it from an authority on the subject.
By the Books

Course: Building and Destruction of Mountains

**SYLLABUS**

This course deals with geomorphology, the science of the landforms of the Earth's surface and the processes that create them. It covers the interplay between the two sets of forces that create landforms: internal, geologically driven, plate tectonics; and external, climatically driven, weathering and erosion. It involves a range of scales, from continents and mountain systems to hill ranges and river basins to rivers, beaches, and glaciers. This is a natural sciences course geared toward a general audience.

**CLASS TIME**

This is a seminar-based class where students have ample opportunity to discuss, interact, and assess concepts. They are shown real-life examples of landforms and their associated processes to enliven the discussion. Students also take a field trip to explore various Lebanese landforms that illustrate concepts discussed in class.

**INSTRUCTOR’S BIO**

Dr. Tony Nemer is a newly appointed assistant professor at the Department of Geology. He holds a PhD in active tectonics from Université Louis Pasteur in Strasbourg, France, and a master’s of science in structural geology from AUB. He conducted post-doctoral research at the University of Missouri, Columbia, where he researched neo-tectonics. In 2007, he joined ExxonMobil in Houston, Texas as a structural and exploration geologist. He combines both industrial and academic experience, and has published in top international journals.

---

By the Numbers

With the move to reinstate tenure, AUB is taking stock of itself as a research institution. We thought it would be worthwhile to look at where faculty publish, the disciplines which publish the most papers, and with whom they’re collaborating. Below are the results for 2012-17:

**Most popular journals for faculty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th># of publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plos One</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Reports</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Clinical Epidemiology</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancet</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Health in the Arab World</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top Collaborating Institutions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th># of publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American University of Beirut*</td>
<td>4,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard University</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese University</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese American University</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMaster University</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Faculty collaborate most frequently with other AUB faculty.

- The source of the data is the Web of Science.

**Most active areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th># of publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Environmental Occupational Health</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Reports</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oncology</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine General Internal</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Electrical Electronic</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac Cardiovascular Systems</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
When I arrive on campus early Monday morning, I expect to see all the signs of a contentious, impending election: campaign posters, pamphleteers, speechmakers, hawkers of political trinkets, cheering throngs. But there is none of that in front of West Hall, only stands of wood and metal arranged in one long row against the stone wall, underneath which sweeps a hollow-cheeked custodian, and above which walks a sullen cat.

Fearing I’m missing some flurry of activity, I scramble up the stairs into West Hall to speak with Student Services and find, on entering, an Outlook newspaper flopped against the door, open to a full-page article, “AUB election coalitions revealed.” I read the authors’ description of shifting political alliances among clubs with deliberately ambiguous names, Freedom Club, Youth Club, Social Club; only Secular Club openly declares its basic character, its raison d’être, in its name. Below, the major coalitions—Campus Choice (CC), Leaders of Tomorrow (LT), Students for Change (SC), and Red Oak (RO)—made up of various student clubs make statements about their visions of student values. And below those statements are links to social media. I pull out my phone.

While the physical campaign I expected to find in front of West Hall has yet to begin, the digital one is already well underway. Coalitions, clubs, and a handful of independent candidates are posting furiously on the Facebook group, AUB COURSES/TEACHERS GURU, which counts more than 18,000 members. One student, in a clever, low-key plug, posts a photo of some lost keys on top of a campaign poster for independent candidate Georgio Toumieh (BS expected ’18) that reads: “The elections just went from Zero Tou-Mieh (or 0-100 in Arabic) real quick,” a bilingual play on words which references a popular hip-hop song.

By Tuesday, CC, LT, and SC have filled the wooden and metal stands with candidate photos and flyers. RO has chosen to boycott the elections, not for the first time. LT members wear red vests, SC wears yellow, and CC wears white. I see an earnest-looking man, a purity of spirit in his face, sitting on the edge of West Hall’s platform, Ali Zeineddine (BE expected ’19). He enters firmly into his political speech as I plop myself next to him with a recorder: “I’m not financed by anyone and our party’s decisions are made democratically. They aren’t dictated by some outside force. We don’t tell people who to vote for. We’re concerned with the students and how to represent them secularly and democratically.”
After speaking with Ali, I begin approaching students at random. As standard practice, I ask each person where he or she is from and find this to be a sensitive question. “Why do you want to know where I’m from? I’m from Lebanon. Where in Lebanon? From the South. Where in the South? From a city called...”

I make a point to ask every student this question, painting for myself the full panoply of origins that is AUB, a university that truly lives up to its claim to be a home to students from every corner of Lebanon, and many corners of the world.

Hassan Taan (BE expected ’19), a deep-voiced young man from Zrarieh, tells me: “I want to increase the budgets for final-year student projects and to expand the engineering career center.” Beyond a sea of yellow and red vests, I see Georgio Toumieh in a white shirt, looking poised and polite: “I’m running for the SRC [Student Representative Committee] for FAS seniors, the only independent candidate running. To run for the USFC [the university-wide University Student Faculty Committee] as an independent is really hard. I only need 100 votes for SRC, but 200 or 300 for USFC.”

In a nod to national politics, he speaks of how members from different coalitions sabotage each other’s projects, resulting in gridlock, which he, as an independent, hopes to transcend.

The students are getting rowdy in front of the platform where I first met Ali, shouting, throwing each other on one another’s shoulders, forming three separate colored seas. A goateed young man steps to the edge of the yellow sea and shouts a sectarian slogan with great gusto, before a supporter of a rival coalition candidate walks over and calms him down with a hug in a lovely show of brotherly spirit.

On Wednesday, the students set up for the annual Outlook debate. Each coalition has a table. The moderator from Outlook stands behind a lectern posing questions in English, which candidates answer in a mix of English and Arabic. It’s hard to discern clear policy differences. As with many elections, there are a handful of issues that must be championed regardless. Tuition must be lowered; work-study programs improved; transparency increased; student spaces enlarged. Palestine, LGBTQ+, feminism, and inclusiveness bona fides are showcased to different degrees.

More than anything, the debates show how engaged and knowledgeable students are regarding university issues and administrative mechanisms. “We need to improve communication with the Board of Trustees,” an SC candidate says.

Thursday is calm, as official campaigning is suspended. In the meantime, I make contact with two PhD candidates in Lebanon to study the elections and we agree to meet at a cafe. Daniel Tavana, of Princeton, sits across from me; Christiana Parreira, of Stanford, to my left. “Our project looks at student participation in the elections,” says Tavana, “who’s voting, who’s not, who they’re voting for.” He talks of how students arrive at the university, having matriculated from a secondary school “that, more often than not, has a particular religious affiliation.” He continues: “at AUB, they’re around all different types of people.” Parreira cuts in, “we want to see the effect participation in these elections has on students, whether they become more or less sectarian.” She remarks on the robustness of AUB’s election process compared to American universities where few pay attention and candidates run on “comically minor” issues. Tavana, who ran and won election to student government at the University of Pennsylvania, concurs: “Interest in elections is much higher here, and the platforms, it’s amazing how developed they are.”

The day of the election, Friday, I see a cameraman from a private news network outside the Main Gate. “Why are you here?” I ask. He grins. “What happens inside happens outside,” referring to the notion that AUB’s elections serve as a bellwether for national ones. Security is tight, the guard checks my ID, then sends me inside the office to have it checked again. Everyone is scrambling towards West Hall. I meet George Yazbeck (BE expected ‘20), half-Nigerian, half-Lebanese. After briefly bonding over our mixed-race origins, he tells me he won’t vote. Why? “I grew up in Dubai and Nigeria, so I’m not really invested in the politics here.”

Election observers in blue vests watch over the crowds. The voting IT infrastructure is in place. Students form lines to enter West Hall, swipe their IDs on machines that tell them which faculty council they’re eligible to vote for, and vote on preset laptops. A Ugandan graduate student, Esther Kamugo (MA expected ’18), tells me she voted for CC, “because they support graduate assistantship payments.”

The sun sets as the students form a tri-colored sea in front of West Hall. The energy reaches its peak, the atmosphere is electric. At stake is control over AUB student representative committees at the university and faculty levels, and a say in the University’s administrative affairs. Suddenly, a large projection screen drops and begins to show the results as they’re counted. Dean of Student Affairs Talal Nizameddin announces winners from the building’s steps, as the chants become more rhythmic and political. From amidst the yellow sea appears a flag for a political party, but it is quickly snatched away by security officers. The final results show an even split among the three coalitions, at which point the students chant the Lebanese national anthem in unison.

A thick crowd exits via Main Gate, after which political party flags can be produced without contravening university policy. Cheering students make their way up Bliss Street before dispersing to celebrate at various cafés and restaurants around the city.

The final voter turnout stands at 62.3 percent, with roughly 5,200 students voting. “I’m very happy,” Zeineddine says. “CC got more seats than last year.” I turn to the dean of student affairs for a final statement on the outcome: “Politics is tough, but you come out a stronger person. It’s an educational experience.”
Published & Produced

Art

SURSOCK MUSEUM
EXHIBITION

Partitions et Couleurs: Hommage à Amine El Bacha
September 15, 2017 – March 12, 2018

The first exhibition in a cycle of tributes to artists represented in the collections of the Sursock Museum, this tribute brings together a series of oil paintings, watercolors, and painted wooden objects created between the 1960s and the first decade of the 21st century.

AUB ART GALLERIES AND COLLECTIONS

“One Hundred Years Closer to Communism: Art and Revolution in the Middle East”
November 23, 2017 – February 9, 2018

On the centennial anniversary of the October Revolution, this exhibit explored the relationship between art and communist politics in the Middle East by bringing together artifacts, archival materials, posters, prints, photos, film, theater, and communist symbolism from different periods.

Theater

AUB THEATER INITIATIVE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “LATIN AMERICA, AL-ANDALUS AND THE ARAB WORLD”

Scheduled to open in mid-April 2018, Venue TBD

A Lebanese dialect production of Federico Garcia Lorca’s Blood Wedding
Robert Myers, producer
Sahar Assaf, director and translator

Comics

THE MU’TAZ AND RADA SAWWAF ARABIC COMICS INITIATIVE AT AUB: A SERIES OF EVENTS ON ARABIC COMICS

March 2018

• March 5: Award Announcement
  A press conference to announce the winners of the Mahmoud Kahil Award in Comics, Cartoons and Illustrations to promote comics, editorial cartoons, and illustrations in the Arab world.
• March 6: Symposium
  Bathish Auditorium, West Hall, Activism in Arabic Comics
• March 8: Gala Dinner
  The annual Mahmoud Kahil Award dinner ceremony
• March–May: Exhibition
  “Moroccan Comics”

Music

CONCERT: ASSEMBLY HALL
TRIBUTE TO NASRI CHAMSEDDINE

February 21, 2018

A concert by the Arabic Ensemble of the AUB Zaki Nassif Program
1. **In the House of Understanding: Histories in Memory of Kamal S. Salibi**

   *Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn, Tarif Khalidi, Suleiman A. Mourad (eds.) (AUB Press, 2017)*

   Dr. Kamal S. Salibi is renowned for his monumental contributions to the history of Lebanon. Yet, his scholarly legacy extends well beyond Lebanon to topics that span the Middle East from biblical to contemporary times. This collection of essays, written in Salibi’s honor and memory, similarly covers a range of subjects that touch upon his own interests—aspects of ancient, medieval, and modern Arabic/Islamic and Middle Eastern history, literature, and art.

2. **Strategic Thinking in a Hospital Setting**

   *Strategic Thinking in a Hospital Setting by Abdul-Latif Hamdan; (Springer, 2017)*

   Translating the realities of healthcare reform and healthcare costs into competitive hospital practice is the goal of this accessible, jargon-free guide. Taking its cue from Michael Porter’s highly-regarded business strategies, it offers a sound framework for hospitals looking to develop efficient, patient-centered service delivery. The book organizes business and clinical priorities where they intersect so that physicians throughout healthcare systems can understand their role in building and sustaining innovation, and leverage their strengths and system resources toward meeting patient needs. In addition, chapters review eight core strategic tools, describe possibilities for their implementation, and provide in-depth findings on Porter’s methods as used in a diverse group of hospitals across Lebanon.

3. **Arabic as One Language: Integrating Dialect in the Arabic Language Curriculum**

   *Arabic as One Language: Integrating Dialect in the Arabic Language Curriculum; Mahmoud Al-Batal (ed.) (Georgetown University Press, 2017)*

   For decades, students learning the Arabic language have begun their studies with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and then transitioned to spoken Arabic. While the MSA-first approach neither reflects the sociolinguistic reality of the language nor gives students the communication skills required to function in Arabic, the field continues to debate the widespread adoption of this approach. Al-Batal gathers key scholars who have implemented dialect integration into the Arabic language curriculum and presents their studies of curricular models, student outcomes, and attitudes of students and teachers using the integration method. This is an essential resource for all Arabic language teachers and those working in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language (TAFL).

4. **Astounding Memories in Developing Countries**

   *Astounding Memories in Developing Countries; Waddah Chehadeh (CreateSpace, 2017)*

   From a seaport in Yemen to an airport in the jungles of Equatorial Guinea, from a dam in Mali to a highway in Mongolia, a large-scale developer narrates 12 astounding accounts of the socio-economic effects of infrastructure development. After millions of miles travelled and the observation of hundreds of projects impacting tens of millions of lives, he arrives at the conclusion that billions of dollars in infrastructure can only bring about sustainable change when coupled with investment in human capital. To advance civilization, he believes that ingenuity must be paired with education.

5. **Shake, Rattle and Roll: Lebanon 1971-1984**

   *Shake, Rattle and Roll: Lebanon 1971-1984; (Amazon Australia Services, 2013)*

   This is a coming of age story of a young Australian-born Druze boy who moves with his family to Lebanon at the onset of the Civil War. This deeply personal account offers cultural insights forged on the crucible of brutal conflict. The author was an FAFS Class of 1983 graduate.
I have been on the move for most of my life, so that even now I have never had a firm idea of what “home” is. I don't know what it is like to have childhood friends. I've always wondered what it meant to have a country to go back to or a passport to take me there. I've never taken lessons in my mother tongue or learned the history of my people. I've never had a sense of belonging and I've always wondered what it would be like to understand the rules of the game in your culture, your society, or your community. It is a strange feeling being a resident stranger your whole life.

The civil war in Somalia forced many families to flee in the 1990s, so my experience as a young girl was not unusual. At the age of eight, I was taken away with my nine-month-old sister by our mother and spent six months on a perilous journey that took us to four countries in two continents to reach a safe haven in Sweden.

I was exhausted but excited to think that we had the opportunity now to find a safe shelter, a peaceful life, and a good education. Soon I started imagining what my future career might be: a doctor, or lawyer, or a TV presenter. After tasting the experience of crossing Europe with my mother and sister, I knew one thing—that I must have a good job, so I could take care of myself and my own children so they would not have to go through what my sister and I did.

I was taken back to Somalia when I was 12. The only explanation I was given was that it was not good for me as a young Somali and Muslim girl to grow up in Sweden. Unfortunately this is a common practice among the Somali diaspora community. I couldn’t understand what was happening to me at the time, but I knew all too well that I was back to Square One and had to start all over again.

The dream of building my own successful career still burned in my breast, even though in the reality of the next few years it took a lot to keep the flame alive. The dangers of Mogadishu and its bleak career prospects drove me to neighboring capitals. I gave birth to a lovely son but I became separated from him through circumstances I don’t want to go into here. Although I still can’t see him today, he gives me reason to strive for a better life, for him, which he so deserves.
But still I hadn’t tasted the worst. Desperate to revive my fortunes, I took the dangerous journey across the Gulf of Aden to Yemen and I was lucky to survive the ruthless people traffickers on the way. I worked for two-and-a-half years in Yemen as a housemaid, a hotel cleaner, a waitress, a cashier, and a receptionist. All I wanted was to go to school, but I couldn’t because I was an undocumented immigrant with little money. Yemen saw the peak of my vulnerability and the most serious violations that I have faced: long hours without breaks or days off, beatings, being deprived of food and wages. All the while harassment in the workplace and in the street. I had to escape and the only option I had was to take another risky journey, by foot, over the mountains to Saudi Arabia.

As an undocumented immigrant, my only option was to become a domestic servant. The lady who employed me, I only knew her first name, was a cultivated person with an important job in Jeddah and no husband. She was a graduate of the American University of Beirut and I saw that real freedom for women in our societies begins with education. She was surprised by the request from her Somali housemaid, but she allowed me to read the Arabic books in her library and gave me the newspaper to read every day after she had finished it. I spent all my free time reading.

Eventually, after five years in Saudi Arabia, I saved enough to return to Africa and complete my secondary education in Somalia and undergraduate degree (with distinction!) in Uganda. I paid my way by doing part-time jobs and my mother sent me some funds from Sweden although she could ill afford it.

“Being a MasterCard Foundation scholar is being a role model. I am ready to take up that challenge. I envision myself as a leader who will bring positive change on the ground”

Despite all the hardship and difficulties that I faced in my early life, I remained positive about my future. I pushed myself beyond my limits and that gave me the confidence to realize my inner abilities. The way I see it, every experience has made me more determined to develop people’s capacity to help themselves and to work with others as a community. I give my energy to programs and organizations to support women and especially Somali women and girls. Just a few years ago I was among the thousands of voiceless women working in the MENA region as domestic workers. Education was my only hope and getting the MasterCard Foundation Scholarship was what pulled me to come back to the region. It was a dream come true.

Now that my AUB journey has started with a world-class education and learning the practical skills to transform my community back home in Somalia, I am planning to use my education, my training, and my skills to benefit the situation that girls and women face back home. Being a MasterCard Foundation scholar is being a role model. I am ready to take up that challenge. I envision myself as a leader who will bring positive change on the ground. I know it will take a lot of time to change all that, but I will be satisfied to do my part, however small.

Now that Somalia is emerging from a long civil war there is a lot of work to do in terms of security as well as food security. As I have been writing this article a terrible tragedy has happened in Mogadishu. The bombing left more than 300 people dead, and hundreds are missing or injured. The vast majority of Somalis either know someone who was killed or injured by the atrocity or know someone who is connected at a personal level, be they a friend, a colleague, a close family member, or a more distant relative. Most of the victims were young people, the future leaders, doctors, teachers, and stars of the next generation.

With my friends in the African Club, which we have revived at AUB this term, we held a vigil under the hashtag #IAmSomalia and Arab and European students, faculty, and staff stood alongside us. It was a strong and emotional reminder not to let lack of stability back home stop us from being the best we can be here at AUB so we can shine and keep the hope of Somalia alive.
Fast-growing Media Studies Program Aims for Quality Communicators and Self-confident Citizens

Journalism and communications offerings have grown at AUB in recent years almost as briskly as the offerings on Arab television, which begs the question: how should AUB, anchored in American and Arab values, teach journalism and communications in light of such rapid change? The answer, Media Studies Director May Farah explains, is to teach students to “grasp critically how facts and propaganda alike shape their world so that they can behave competently as media consumers and producers.”

Last year, the Media Studies Program held a conference titled “Rethinking media through the Middle East.” Researchers, practitioners, students, and activists from across the world analyzed how media operates in the Middle East, what it tells us about the lives of citizens in the region, and how such analyses from within the region differ from those from abroad.

This broad scope may be one reason for the program’s robust growth. The MA program has remained steady at 25 students annually, while the new BA program attracted 175 majors in its first three years. Meanwhile, hundreds of working professionals from the Middle East and North Africa come to AUB each year for four-week diploma and certificate programs in journalism and communications.

Mariam Shour, a senior media studies major who also minors in creative writing, says she “chose to study Media and Communications because the many different courses cover topics that are relevant and timely to today’s world. During my four years at AUB, I’ve learned over time to see things with a different perspective, from the television shows I watch to the politics going on behind the scenes. The constant change in the media world trickles down to our studies, always keeping the material exciting.”

The AUB veteran and institutional memory in this arena is Dr. Nabil Dajani (BA ’57, MA ’60), who has taught communications at AUB since the early 1970s. He helped establish the first journalism program at AUB and has participated actively in recurring discussions on how AUB should balance pure academic research on media in society and teaching practical journalism skills.

“‘The aim is to generate our own brand of Arab Hemingways — battalions of ruthless and dogged investigative journalists and first-class documentary filmmakers who can compete with their peers worldwide.’”

Nora Boustany, an award-winning Washington Post foreign correspondent and columnist for 30 years, is one of half a dozen journalism instructors in the Media Studies Program. She says that her main mission “is to train students on how to become effective communicators, by relying on facts and keen probing and observation to get their stories across professionally and credibly. We also teach our tech-savvy students how to apply their own critical thinking and scrutiny to sift through the information that is out there. The aim is to generate our own brand of Arab Hemingways — battalions of ruthless and dogged investigative journalists and first-class documentary filmmakers who can compete with their peers worldwide.”

She and other seasoned professionals teach practical courses like war and trauma journalism, video and photography, visual storytelling, Palestinian film and media, advertising writing and strategies, public relations techniques, opinion and public policy writing, broadcast reporting, and digital data journalism. New courses reflect pioneering research by faculty on issues like gendered media representations and political activism and campaigns.

The most recent new course, Narrative News Reporting and the Legacy of Anthony Shadid, draws on analysis of the personal papers of the late award-winning Arab-American Washington Post and New York Times foreign correspondent who died in 2012. His papers at the AUB Libraries’ Archives and Special Collections Department are being studied in a joint project between media studies and archives professionals.
Practical experiences open to students include summer- and term-long internships, a specialized media lab course, producing videos on AUB-generated research for dissemination by the university Office of Communications, and weekly brown bag lunch lectures by successful professionals who share their experiences with students in open discussions.

Even in very specialized courses, such as the photography and visual storytelling course taught by award-winning photojournalist and documentary filmmaker George Azar, students simultaneously learn about their world, their vocation—and themselves.

“Students today live with cameras in their cellphones and use photography daily, both to express themselves and to capture events all around them. One of the most critical things we teach them is more about human relationships than technical photojournalism—it is how to connect with people, and gain their trust. This makes them better visual storytellers, but also more rounded human beings.”

This reflects what Farah calls AUB’s intent to give students the technical and personal tools they need to succeed in work and life “because we have no idea what the media scene will look like five or ten years from now.”

Whatever that may be, the AUB Media Studies Program is likely to be keeping up with the new technologies and media uses in political society, while also training aspiring communicators in the immutable ABCs of journalism—getting the facts right, and presenting them to the world in a compelling way.

-RK
The rows of students lined up along the Green Field’s edge, waiting to test their mettle as rugby players, seemed longer this year, than last. The same went for soccer tryouts. “Every year we have more and more students trying out for sports teams,” says Athletic Director Ghaleb Halimi. “Three years ago we had between 350 and 400 athletes. This year we easily have 600.”

New leagues have been formed to accommodate the growing number of students. “We used to struggle to find players,” says varsity rugby captain Alfred Bowles (BE ’17), “now we have varsity, junior varsity, and a women’s rugby team.” The diversity of sports offerings has grown as well, Halimi says: “This year, we added ultimate frisbee, archery, and men’s and women’s badminton. Last year, we added handball and women’s rugby. Next year, we’ll add cheerleading.”

And those additions come with the full support of the administration, which has increased the athletics budget by roughly 12 percent. Those funds have gone to coaches’ and referees’ salaries, as AUB supports a greater number and diversity of sports, and toward athletic scholarships. The budget for students traveling abroad to compete also increased by 10 percent.

There is much evidence, both scientific and anecdotal, demonstrating the positive effects of physical activity, in general, and organized sports, in particular, on academic performance, which gives any university, including AUB, good cause to support student participation in athletic events. As water polo player and swimmer

“Being an athlete teaches one to be organized, skilled in time-management, to give our best ... and take responsibility.”
George Khalil (BE ’17) put it on receiving AUB’s Men’s Athlete of the Year award, “Being an athlete teaches one to be organized, skilled in time-management, to give our best in what we do, to be able to take decisions, pre-calculate consequences and impact, and take responsibility.”

Varsity football captain Wael Daou (BE expected ’18), who has played for professional club Shebab Al Arabi and trained with the Lebanese national team, expresses a similar sentiment: “I have to be more organized because my day is so full.” And Deya Schray (BA expected ’19), a 5’8” half-German, half-Lebanese small forward for AUB’s varsity basketball team says that her fear of ever becoming academically ineligible to play keeps her studying hard.

For Halimi, sports is more a means to shape one’s character than one’s habits. “It teaches leadership, democracy, and respect, for your teammates, your captain, and more importantly, your opponent. Even when they meet after matches and socialize, that shapes their personalities.”

Then there’s the science. The New York Times has reported on multiple studies that show how physical activity supports learning and brain health. One study published in PLOS One showed that well-exercised adults retain new vocabulary in foreign languages quicker than their sedentary peers. Another, published in the Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, showed the powerful neurogenerative effects of exercise in mice, meaning that exercise makes new brain cells.

And, lastly, there are the intangibles, the memories of glory on the field or the court that can be drawn from long after one’s college years. “We were playing a tournament final against LAU, remembers Daou. “There were five minutes left in the match when I headed the ball into the goal off a corner kick. We won the league. It was my greatest moment.”
It was a humid Tuesday afternoon when BBC host Jonny Dymond, series producer Charlie Taylor, and other team members descended on AUB for an installment of the radio program World Questions. The program sees the renowned British news service partner with the British Council in hosting a dialogue between local citizens and a panel of politicians around contentious national and regional issues in a select country, this time and for the first time, Lebanon.

World Questions chose Lebanon as a challenging stop in the Middle East, as a regional exception that tolerates the kind of frank political discussion the program encourages. The panelists—Deputy Prime Minister and Lebanese Forces MP Ghassan Hasbani, Beirut Madinati founder and AUB Neighborhood Initiative director Mona Hallak, Free Patriotic Movement MP Nicolas Sehnaoui, political analyst Kamel Wazne, and Health Minister Wael Abu Faour of the Progressive Socialist Party—spoke candidly of the nature and consequences of Lebanon’s confessional system of government, the role of paramilitary forces such as Hezbollah’s, and the country’s environmental degradation.

Audience members—BBC World Service controller Mary Hockaday sitting quietly among them—commented, questioned, and frequently clapped and cheered, but never so loudly as when a young woman, professing to be traumatized at hearing the word Israel repeated by Dymond and the panelists said, “Mr. Anchor, sorry, but Lebanon is bordered by Syria, the Mediterranean, and occupied Palestine.”

Cautious rhetoric left the audience unimpressed, as when Hasbani hedged around Dymond’s question about whether a sect-based political system undermines the state. “The concept of sectarianism could act against a strong state,” he said, “but it could also help produce a unique model where a strong state can exist.” Hasbani and Sehnaoui, who said sectarianism must be addressed regionally before it could be done nationally, were the only panelists who did not give the confessional system short shrift.

Wazne said sects stymie governments by providing each other with a convenient means of avoiding parliamentary debate, which, he said, is to accuse the other party of sectarianism. And Abu Faour said, “There is a very deep contradiction between being part of a sect and part of a state... every sect has its own party, political affiliation, its own view about what’s going on from here to China.”

Talk of transcending sectarianism led to talk of transcending the Civil War’s legacy when an audience member asked how Lebanon could progress if the Civil War isn’t taught in public schools. A Yemeni woman, her voice thick with emotion stood and said, “it’s time to move past [the Civil War],” and write the history, while several others sounded their approval, and one shouted, “you’re all representing parties that were involved in the Civil War.”

Hasbani said, “historians should not write the history of the war as most historians are biased,” and Sehnaoui said that the time for a tribunal and the writing of history was in the war’s immediate aftermath, though it isn’t too late.

Hallak spoke of her project Beit Beirut, a famous villa turned museum at the crossroads of what was once the city’s dividing line, which, she said, might serve as a vehicle for bringing personal stories from the war to the fore of public consciousness and encourage open dialogue.

Hasbani downplayed the existence of any relationship that implied Hezbollah had legitimacy as a security force and insisted the Lebanese Army was responsible for ousting the Islamic State from Lebanon. “[The Lebanese Army] represents all Lebanese. It is the only force authorized by the government today to act as far as the terrorist groups within the Lebanese borders are concerned.”

Wazne made a point of mentioning his Southern origins and said Hezbollah fights on behalf of all Lebanese. Scattered cheers. Then a young man shouted “Hezbollah brought Daesh to Lebanon.” Abu Faour said a “Lebanese formula” was necessary to solve the country’s defense problem. One
audience member said, “Hezbollah, when they decided to fight in Syria, they didn’t ask our opinion. More than half of the Lebanese didn’t agree and they were totally against what Hezbollah did.” Scattered cheers.

Should Lebanon, like Kenya, ban plastic bags? That question brought the discussion back to the theme of government dysfunction. “People are ahead of the government,” said Hallak. “We do recycle at home.” More talk of divided government, lack of trust, and parliamentary paralysis followed. A young audience member asked the final, seemingly counterintuitive, question: how can the West benefit from Lebanon? Wazne said they already had through “our minds, our education.” Sehnaoui echoed that sentiment: “the mix of genes we have is full of creativity.” Wael said sardonically, “Why should the West benefit from Lebanon?” The crowd gave an approving chuckle. Hassan said, “talent.” And Hallak had the final word on the matter: “resilience.” Then the microphones shut off, the Issam Fares Lecture Hall emptied, and the audience and panelists stepped outside into a balmy evening.

Should Lebanon, like Kenya, ban plastic bags?
Every day Ramzi Yahia (BE ’20) walks out through Main Gate to Atos Jiu-Jitsu in the basement of the Sabah Building on Badr Dimechkiye Street. He warms up with acrobatic jump roping, stretching, then drills combat techniques—choke holds, arm bars, double leg takedowns—and ends the two-hour session with sparring or by wrapping his legs around a heavy bag for some vertical sit-ups, before returning to Jafet Library to study.

He’s coming off a gold medal at the Open Mediterranean in MMA (mixed martial arts) and silver at Abu Dhabi Grand Slam Championship and is preparing to travel to Portugal and the United States, visas permitting, for training and competition, with an eye towards entering the UFC, the world’s premier mixed martial arts league.

His is a classic tale, of finding in martial arts a means to defend himself against bullies and improve his physique. “People would tease me for being fat,” he says. “I avoided swimming classes.” And so he typed “kickboxing” into Google and picked the closest gym, which was Muay Thai-focused Champions Club, near his home in Abu Dhabi.

“I got kicked, punched, and really hurt badly that first day, but I liked it.” The rush of pain and power, and the angst of adolescence, kept Ramzi coming back, first weekly, then several times a week; Champions Club became a refuge from the Emirati sun, malls, souped-up cars, and school. “I wasn’t that good at studying and [the gym] felt like the only place I belonged.”

After a year of training came his first official fight. He didn’t sleep the night before. “I was nervous, excited. [Fighting] was the only thing I was good at. I didn’t want to do badly.” Yahia’s father and brother watched from the stands. He remembers the ring smelling of Thai oil, the fluorescent lights bouncing through globules of sweat dripping into his eyes, and the adrenaline, never so high as in those moments just before the first bell. He remembers channeling the surrounding din until it became white noise, a hum that focused his mind.

A kick thudded against his midsection, shins snapped against thigh meat. Suddenly, Yahia saw a window to his opponent’s nose through which he pushed his right fist, hobbling the teenaged boy in front of him. The referee raised his hand.

It was a clean victory, that first fight, and one that encouraged Yahia enough to keep him training and fighting through high school. “I trained when I should’ve been studying,” he says. “I even snuck out to fight once because I didn’t think my parents would let me compete.” His mom called and called, “then I picked up the phone and told her I won, and she started crying.”

Though his mother doesn’t like to see him fight, she recognizes the positive impact it’s had on her son. “I made more friends,” says Yahia. “I’m more respectful, unaffected, chill. I tell it like it is.”

No longer an academic idler, Yahia earned a 93 grade point average his first term. And for his athletic accomplishments and scholarly achievement, he was celebrated by President Khuri and Dean Talal Nizameddin with the New Record Award for winning first place in the adult division of a world championship. He has become known around campus as “the MMA guy,” although, he says, “I don’t like to advertise all that.”
Discoveries
Research, the arts, and current events

Tenure returns
AUB restores a fundamental protection for its professors and encourages research along the way

Under Discussion
Monitoring glucose without needles

AUB Spaces
Dr. Hermann Genz unearths human history—very carefully

Holcim Awards
AUB alumni recycle rubble in conflict zones

Pursuits
A food crisis looms in the Middle East

Quiz
The arbiters of higher ed rankings know the score

Sports and Politics
Are the players on the field pawns in a geopolitical game?
After a 32-year hiatus, tenure is returning to AUB. One hundred and seven out of 189 full professors have applied to be part of the inaugural cohort. Normally, a university’s tenured faculty confer tenure on their peers but AUB has no tenured faculty yet. So, for this first round, a committee of top-tier faculty from universities in the US are taking stock of applicants’ research, teaching, and service, in the humanitarian, civic sense.

The basic arguments for and against tenure haven’t changed over the decades. Tenure’s champions talk of academic freedom, while its detractors say it breeds complacency. More recently, the pro-tenure crowd has pointed to the general impoverishment of graduate students, lecturers, and post-doctoral students in the United States, who work on short-term contracts, often lack job security, health insurance and 401(k) benefits, yet do much of academia’s heavy lifting in terms of teaching, as one more argument for tenure.

President Khuri, who has made it a priority, said, during the discussion prior to the vote to reinstate tenure in November 2015, that “tenure and its privileges confer the ultimate academic protection and inspire high-risk, high-impact research and scholarship.” Thus the primary motivation behind reinstatement is to transform AUB into a research powerhouse that could serve as a model for other universities in the region.

It is the job security that tenure brings, which is critical to building a cadre of scholars that can achieve real research gains, that is the reason all top academic institutions in the United States continue to offer tenure. Tenure first came to AUB in 1921 when the Board of Trustees, meeting at 45 Wall Street in New York City, voted to give all adjunct, associate, and full
professors indefinite appointments, regardless of ethnic origin. “Hereafter no distinction shall be made between Anglo-Saxon and non-Anglo-Saxon teachers and administrators in regard to ranks or categories of promotion,” the board report said.

That initial commitment was reaffirmed in later decades in a series of memos emphasizing the role of tenure in protecting academic freedom. One memo from 1971 traces the struggle for academic freedom back to medieval times: “The struggles of the ‘free thinker’ in Islam have a bearing on the rise of universities in Spain, and it is the Spanish universities that carried the seeds of the European renaissance. The struggles of academic freedom in Islam may even have a bearing on certain problems of academic freedom in AUB today.”

It wasn’t until 1985, during the height of the Civil War, that AUB decided that it could no longer maintain its tenure commitments. On March 15 of that year, the Board of Trustees voted 85-20 to freeze tenure, as many faculty left the country and the University suffered a “gradual erosion of sound administrative control,” according to a board report from that year.

Interestingly, at around the same time some American universities were beginning to erode their tenure protections as well due primarily to the spread of Reagan-era economic ideas that called for the dismantling of unions and more flexible employment contracts.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) estimates that around 21 percent of higher education faculty in the United States in 2017 were tenured, which represents the culmination of a long, steady decline going back to the 1970s when the majority of higher-ed faculty were tenured.

AUB started assessing the possibility of reinstating tenure more than a decade ago, under President John Waterbury, following a report by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The report, according to Provost Mohamed Harajli, noted that “[faculty] were not happy with their employment situation, job security, and freedom of expression because they were not tenured.”

In 2006, Waterbury invited former MIT President Charles Vest to assess the feasibility of reinstating tenure at the University. “A task force was formed and a report was filed,” says Harajli, which called for blanket tenure for full professors. That idea was soon scrapped. “It’s a very complex topic,” says Associate Provost Zaher Dawy. “The reinstatement of tenure in a university as old, big, and well-established as AUB touches on lots of administrative operations that relate to faculty evaluation,” he says. “To be able to move forward requires engagement of so many stakeholders.”

A second task force formed under President Peter Dorman hit the same stumbling block as the first: how to handle full professors. “Full professors are a diverse group,” says Dawy. “Some were promoted a year ago, some 30 years ago, some 20 years ago. All of them have already overcome a number of hurdles to become full professors. How to deal with this major group of faculty has been one of the biggest challenges throughout.”

Then as now, university administrators feared creating a situation whereby some full professors had tenure, while others did not. There is a recognition though that this will be the situation at AUB at least temporarily since it is assumed that some of the 107 full professors who have applied for tenure will not be successful.

Harajli says that the decision to reintroduce tenure is less about this current generation of full professors than the coming one. “It’s only a matter of time before this two-tier system will dissipate.”

AUB’s new tenure system will follow the American model meaning faculty will be tenured when they are promoted to the rank of associate professor. Former FAS Dean Khalil Bitar suggests that because AUB professors have a harder time accessing research funds than their counterparts in the US, producing sufficient research during the six or seven years before tenure review will be challenging for AUB professors. Tenure at AUB, he says, should come not at associate, but at the level of full professor.

Harajli disagrees. Faculty will be given extensions, he says, and as far as resources, tenure will incentivize them to apply for competitive funding. “You have to throw the kids in the pool, so they can learn to swim,” he says. Not everyone will apply for tenure. “Those who are excellent teachers can remain as professors of practice.”
According to the World Health Organization’s (WHO) latest fact sheet, the number of people with diabetes has risen from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. The global prevalence of diabetes among adults over 18 years of age has risen from 4.7 percent to 8.5 percent during the same period. In Lebanon, prevalence sits well above the global average at 13 percent. These statistics speak to the potential importance of a system called ediamond, a wearable, non-invasive blood glucose monitoring device being developed by Joseph Costantine and Rouwaida Kanj, both professors at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, and Assaad Eid, a professor at the Department of Anatomy, Cell Biology and Physiology at the Faculty of Medicine. The device’s innovation will be to provide a highly accurate, wireless reading of blood glucose; current non-invasive blood glucose monitoring technology must be heavily supplemented with traditional readings from the pin prick method due to accuracy concerns.

The device comprises one or more wearable sensors whose electromagnetic response will vary depending on the wearer’s blood glucose levels. “Wireless waves propagate through the human tissue to reach the bloodstream. If the composition of the blood changes due to variation in glucose levels, then the wave transmission and reflection characteristics vary,” Costantine says.

The device’s response can be calibrated against the finger prick test, the standard in blood glucose measurement. “Our objective,” he says, “is to differentiate between glucose and other blood properties to improve accuracy.”

Achieving consistent correlation between the wireless signal readout and blood glucose levels is critical. “Our goal is to reach above 90 percent accuracy, which would be tremendous,” Costantine says. Furthermore, “the device improves upon current minimally-invasive diabetic technologies that rely on measurement from the interstitial fluids—between blood vessels—to measure the glucose variation,” Eid says.

Timeliness is a factor too. “The device will estimate the level of glucose in a continuous manner, and the data will be conveyed to an electronic web registry that will be used to trigger insulin injections. Furthermore, the wearable device will be adapted to suit different age groups,” Kanj says.

Even more significant is that ediamond helps diabetics avoid the pain and soreness that comes with constant finger pricks. “This would be a special relief for children,” Eid says.

UK Lebanon Tech Hub, a joint venture between Lebanon’s Central Bank and the UK government, supported this project with over $1 million in funding. The research team plans to initiate clinical trials by April 2019. “We’ve already proven ediamond’s effectiveness on synthetic skin,” Eid says. “We are now moving to animal trials.”
The Post Office Becomes a Bookstore

When was the last time you went to the Post Office and received a letter from a loved one recounting the rhythms of daily life abroad, or the pinings of a broken heart? If you’re a current AUB student, then the answer is likely never, which is why AUB has decided to carve out space from the Post Office under Ada Dodge Hall to make room for a new bookstore. “Students are not using the letter boxes any more,” says Director of Facilities Bassem Barhoumi.

The new dropped ceilings hang low over the cave-like space where students now come to stock up on such titles as *Principles of Economics* and *Campbell Essential Biology with Physiology*, which, according to bookstore staff, were among the most popular textbooks sold last term.

The colorful displays of pens and markers offset the bunker aesthetic. One feels safe here and at the heart of it all. But what about the old bookstore behind Daniel Bliss Hall? “It’s being converted into a computer lab for the Math Department,” says Barhoumi. And so the sea of campus buildings roils and shifts as spaces change hands and students shed the technologies of a bygone era.
Lebanon is a treasure trove of excavated and pristine archaeological riches; the perfect place for AUB’s Department of History and Archaeology to produce fine scholarship in the field. In a sun-drenched office tucked away on the fourth floor of College Hall, Dr. Hermann Genz, chairman and professor of archaeology, is carrying on this tradition.

Asked about various methods for documenting finds, Dr. Genz comments, “Drawing by hand certainly takes some time and skill, but it has the advantage of forcing me to look closely at every individual piece. After having drawn thousands of vessels and sherds, one becomes an expert in the pottery of a certain region and a certain period. Drawings could definitely be done more quickly with a 3-D scanner, but the speed eliminates the contemplative time an archaeologist would spend looking at the details of individual pieces.”

The professor explained that a wide range of tools and techniques is used to study sites and artifacts. These range from very traditional methods, such as fieldwalking to find new sites; excavations with shovels, pickaxes or fine dental tools—depending on how delicate and important the discoveries are—to high-tech methods such as the study of satellite or drone images, 3-D scans of buildings, and chemical and physical investigations.

Dr. Genz’s research interests in the Levant include the transition from village communities to more complex forms of socio-political organization, often called “city-states” in the late 4th to early 3rd millennium BC, and the ultimate incorporation of the Levant into large empires in the 2nd millennium BC. Further fields are the chronological and functional aspects of Bronze Age pottery, the storage and trade of agricultural goods, mining and metallurgy, and trade relations between the Levant and the neighboring regions as well as interrelations between human societies and their environment.
Recycling Rubble

After the 2006 Israeli bombardment of Lebanon, contractors scooped up the rubble and poured it into the sea. In places like Yemen and Syria, ruined buildings simply lie in wait for a ceasefire. Nour Madi (BE ’12, ME ’16) admits she doesn’t know when that ceasefire will come, but when it does, she says, the residents of ruined cities should think about recycling the rubble in their midst.

Together with fellow AUB graduates Jad Melki (BArch ’12) and Ghaith Abi Ghanem (BArch ’12), she put together a proposal for how it might be done in the city of Aleppo and submitted it to Swiss building manufacturer LafargeHolcim’s sustainable design competition. The team won second prize in the Next Generation category.

Madi began thinking about construction waste in Syria as a civil engineering master’s candidate. “I wanted to get a sense of how much [waste] there was,” she says. So she logged into HDX, an open access database of humanitarian information, where she found damage assessments for different parts of the country. She called the Syrian Order of Engineers and received municipal blueprints, eventually gathering enough information to arrive at a rough estimate of concrete waste produced in several Syrian cities. Aleppo, with an estimated toll of 35,926 destroyed buildings, had the most rubble by far.

Recycling concrete involves crushing it down to its original aggregates—sand, gravel, crushed stone, and cement—and reusing those aggregates in new concrete mixes. The primary efficiency gains come from the amount of readily available debris in destroyed cities, like Aleppo, and from recent advances in available technology used for distilling aggregates. A primary function of the modular facilities will involve crushing concrete, distilling aggregates, and sorting them into types—stone, sand, metal—for use in future concrete mixes.

“The primary efficiency gains come from the amount of readily available debris in destroyed cities, like Aleppo…”

Recycling concrete involves crushing it down to its original aggregates—sand, gravel, crushed stone, and cement—and reusing those aggregates in new concrete mixes. The primary efficiency gains come from the amount of readily available debris in destroyed cities, like Aleppo, and from recent advances in available technology used for distilling aggregates. A primary function of the modular facilities will involve crushing concrete, distilling aggregates, and sorting them into types—stone, sand, metal—for use in future concrete mixes.

“Beyond the recycling, these units will help the local communities,” Melki says, by employing people and perhaps doubling as a community center. The residents might even find something of the city’s lost soul in new buildings wrought from old debris.

Abi Ghanem points out that unlike municipalities in Europe and North America, which mandate concrete recycling, there are very few such requirements in the Middle East and none in Lebanon.

Since winning the competition, Madi says, she has been approached by a contractor interested in implementing her solution. “He said he had political connections. It was all under the pretense of him dealing with stakeholders and us providing technical guidance.”

She didn't follow up: “He didn't share our environmental and sustainable values.” And so the team has decided to hold out for more transparent financing from the government or an NGO, lest their project be compromised.
According to the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization, the Middle East and North Africa region is facing a food crisis. The conflict-ridden countries of Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan have been hit hardest, but long-term trends in demography, agriculture, trade, and geopolitics threaten the entire region.

Assistant Professor of Food Security Martin Keulertz outlined the trends and challenges facing the region during the inaugural AUB-New York City Briefing this past December. “Everything starts with demography,” says Keulertz. “The region will grow to one billion people by the end of the century and they will need to be fed.”

The problem is that Arab countries import the vast majority of their food. A dearth of arable land and water limits most regional production to three “food bowls”: the Jordan River basin, Nile basin, and Euphrates and Tigris.

Keulertz believes that the continued erosion of what arable land currently remains will push more people into cities, which Rabi Mohtar, who moved from Texas A&M University to become dean of AUB’s Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences in January, believes will create recycling opportunities as waste aggregates in a single location. “Cities’ waste water can be used for food production,” Mohtar says.

Stable geopolitics are critical to addressing food security challenges as well, Keulertz says. Countries sometimes weaponize food to achieve foreign policy ends. “Turkish dams on both the Euphrates and Tigris rivers have, to some extent, deprived Syria and Iraq of their water supplies,” Keulertz says. “And historically, the Americans brought [Gamal Abdel] Nasser back into their orbit by essentially providing him with free wheat.” Yet Nasser continued to maintain relations with the Soviets and at times openly criticized American interference in Egyptian affairs.

Keulertz sees food prices as a potential source of political unrest and believes they played a role in the Arab Spring. “If you don’t pay attention to your food supply, you might not survive in government,” he says.

Both Keulertz and Mohtar believe academia can play a role in supporting regional food security through research and advocacy. Academics, they say, can help in the development of creative food production solutions, like urban and dryland agriculture. Keulertz suggests countries promote plant-based, climate-smart diets that use less water and have a smaller carbon footprint, and that Arab countries pool their buying power on the global food market. No matter what, Mohtar says, food security must be addressed holistically as a tripartite system of water, food, and energy production systems, since water, food, energy access, and pricing impact one another.
Quiz

What’s the Score?
AUB has been moving up in several widely respected university rankings recently. See how much you know about what determines a university’s rank—and how AUB stacks up against the competition.

1. Did AUB rank higher in the 2017/18 QS Arab Region University Rankings, the 2018 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, or the U.S. News & World Report 2016 Best Arab Region Universities?

2. AUB was one of only five universities from the Arab world to rank among the top 10 in all five categories (teaching, research, citations, international outlook, and industry income) in the 2018 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. In which of these five categories did AUB rank highest?

3. Three of these five categories account for 90% of the total score in the THE World University Rankings. What are the three categories?

4. AUB placed first among 1,000 universities in the Arab world in the 2017/18 QS Arab Region University Rankings. Did it rank highest in academic reputation, employer reputation, or faculty-student ratio?

5. Which university placed second in the 2017/18 QS Arab Region University Rankings? American University in Cairo; Qatar University; or King Fahd University of Petroleum and Mines?

6. Three of the top 5 universities in the 2017/18 QS Arab Region University Rankings were located in one country. Which country was it? UAE, Lebanon, or Saudi Arabia?

7. In the 2017 QS rankings by subject, AUB ranked number 1 in the Arab world in two subjects. No other institution in the Arab world was ranked in these two subject areas. Which two subjects were they? Hint: they are both taught in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.
Sports as Politics

Just around the corner from the Commodore Hotel in Hamra, Beirut, sits a junk-strewn parking lot where children play football using old tires as goal posts and bits of scrap metal to delineate the playing field’s edge. Spectators crowd at the fences to watch what they see as the future of Lebanese football, and what AUB Professor of Comparative Politics Danyel Reiche sees as a kind of athletic grist for Lebanese politicians who, through client-patronage relationships, wield the country’s best athletes as tools of political influence.

While pundits mind the region’s battlefield wins and losses and parliamentary shouting matches, Reiche focuses on a subtler form of politics: sports. In fact, he’s fast becoming a go-to expert on the sports-politics connection, having spoken on the subject with the Washington Post, Guardian, Wall Street Journal, and other publications.

MainGate spoke to Reiche to get a sense of how politicians in Lebanon and the wider region are using sports in their agendas. In Lebanon, Reiche says, the country’s sporting culture mirrors its confessional system. “Almost all professional sports clubs have clear sectarian and political affiliations,” he says. In a paper published in Third World Quarterly, Reiche went so far as to link every major football and basketball team to one of the two primary political blocs: March 8 and March 14.

“In Lebanon, Reiche says, the country’s sporting culture mirrors its confessional system.”

In Qatar, he finds sports are less about domestic rivalries, and more a means to “punch above one’s geopolitical weight.” Just as they’ve transformed themselves into a media powerhouse through Al Jazeera, the peninsula has deployed its considerable financial resources to make a name for itself in global sports. The most powerful example of this is Qatar’s winning bid to host the 2022 World Cup. The significance of that bid was such that some see it as having inspired the ongoing blockade against the country by its Arab Gulf neighbors.

“When they transferred Neymar [the celebrated Brazilian player] to Paris Saint Germain [a football club, which Qatar owns], it was to push news of Saudi Arabia’s blockade [of Qatar] out of the headlines and that was successful,” Reiche says. He believes that Qatari efforts to keep themselves in the sports headlines are rooted in their fear of aggression on the part of larger neighbors, like Saudi Arabia. “They looked at what happened to Kuwait in 1991,” Reiche says, referring to Iraq’s brief takeover of Kuwait that led to the first Gulf War.

The Emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi have followed Qatar’s path, if to a lesser degree; the Dubai Sevens, for example, has become, since its 1999 inauguration, one of rugby’s most important international tournaments, and Abu Dhabi is set to hold the Special Olympics in 2019.

“Every nation uses [sports] for its own purpose,” Reiche says, “whether it be national security, to affirm statehood, or as a political, ideological tool of some other kind.” And in Lebanon, he says, sports stand as a healthy outlet for the release of political sectarian rivalries and frustrations.

Discoveries
Wellness

Health and Medicine

Global Health Institute
An idea whose time has come

World Tobacco Conference
AUB invites experts to consider the state of global tobacco and how best to combat it

Check-up
Dr. Fadi Sawaya discusses cardiac intervention and pioneering procedures

Lancet Commission
The AUB-Lancet Commission gets high-profile support for its cause

Sahtei
Zaatar tart; Lamia Kawar’s fool-proof recipe for a savory treat
The Global Health Institute (GHI)

What Vision, Leadership, and Synergy Can Do

It’s hard to imagine a large-scale academic project materializing faster than AUB’s Global Health Institute (GHI). Officially launched this past July, GHI has been running at breakneck speed since President Khuri first mentioned it as an aspiration in his January 2016 inauguration speech. While it can hold its own as a stand-alone unit within the University, GHI is actually a component of the much more ambitious HEALTH 2025 vision, which will establish a Health Sciences Complex (HSC) at AUB to align all core health units strategically and functionally within the University. Currently, these units include the Faculty of Medicine and the AUB Medical Center, the Faculty of Health Sciences, the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing, and the Global Health Institute, as well as other affiliate units such as nutrition. However, this is not an exclusive or static enterprise. The envisioned HSC will further comprise additional planned health units within AUB. The ultimate aim is to position AUB to better serve the clinical and population health needs of Lebanon, the region, and beyond.

As an integral component of the HEALTH 2025 vision, GHI is a university-wide platform that welcomes any qualified AUB unit seeking a central resource for multi-disciplinary global health projects. To lead this effort, President Khuri appointed Professor Shadi Saleh, associate vice president for health affairs, as GHI’s founding director. Asked why there is a need for a global health institution, Saleh commented, “For decades, the Global South has been at the epicenter of health challenges. These include the Ebola outbreak in 2014, the one million cases of cholera in Yemen today, the intersection of conflict and health

“Geographically and in terms of the exceptional resources it offers, AUB is well positioned to host the first global health institute to serve the MENA region with its population of some 300 million people.”

including the refugee crisis among many others. Yet, voices from Global South-based institutions are not being heard. This underscores the necessity to foster ‘local’ health leaders and contextualize relevant knowledge and tools that can effectively respond to imminent and long-term health threats. Geographically, and in terms of the

exceptional resources it offers, AUB is well positioned to host the first global health institute to serve the MENA region with its population of some 300 million people.”

In its inaugural year, GHI launched its programmatic work with three initiatives that are particularly relevant to the MENA region: the Conflict Medicine Program (CMP), the Nutrition Obesity and Related Diseases (NORD) program, and the Refugee Health Program (RHP). All have broad mandates to address pressing issues related to these topics comprehensively and holistically. The CMP, for example, focuses on providing healthcare in conflict areas and the associated sociological and anthropological effects of prolonged conflict; NORD addresses
the many health risks associated with obesity in the MENA region, including stroke, diabetes, and cancer; while the RHP targets arguably the highest concentration of refugees in the world. The rapidly growing GHI team includes faculty from FAFS, FM, FHS, and FAS. With strategic leadership from Executive Vice President Mohamed H. Sayegh, the institute has already established a reputation as an incubator for ideas on global health across the University.

Keeping up with the demands generated by seemingly overwhelming, long-term regional instability requires even greater resources. To help meet this need, the Global Health Institute Academy was launched in early November to provide individuals, organizations, and communities with knowledge, training, and professional development. Wasting no time, the GHI Academy organized the first Global Health Diplomacy workshop with the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and signed an agreement with the Humanitarian Leadership Academy to work together on an ambitious project to Arabize and contextualize all existing humanitarian knowledge.

In only 18 months, GHI has created four portfolios which have generated external funding close to $5 million through a home-developed approach, Funding for Impact (FFI) model. Contributors include the Canadian International Development Research Centre that provided foundational support; entities in the UK with funding to treat mental health and chronic diseases in conflict areas; and the electronic medical record software company, Epic, for the Sijilli project to provide mobile electronic health records so that refugees can keep their medical records with them wherever they go. The portfolio also includes funding for capacity building of humanitarian learning; research in conflict settings; blended learning to provide diplomas for refugees; and AUB Mobile for Health in collaboration with the Open Society Foundations to build the professional health skills of refugees using mobile classrooms and distance learning. As impressive as this is, the scale of the challenges in the region are such that Saleh believes that fundraising will always be a priority for him and his team.

The Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) recently elected Saleh to its board of directors. This consortium consists of approximately 150 universities including Yale, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Edinburgh. Saleh, the first and only CUGH board member from the MENA region, will lead the effort to give the region and the Global South an active voice in the global health dialogue. Through its programs, collaborations, and academy, GHI is already gaining recognition as an institution that promises to advance the health agenda of the Global South by promoting evidence-based, sustainable interventions, and acting as an incubator for innovative, interdisciplinary solutions for the region’s most intractable health challenges. Based on a well-conceived collaborative model, GHI is a cornerstone for the foundation that is being laid for AUB’s ambitious Health Sciences Complex.
Empowering Breast Cancer Sufferers

This past October, the Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation held its second annual patient empowerment workshop in collaboration with the Breast Cancer Center of Excellence at the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute. The purpose of the workshop was to spread hope and courage among women with advanced-stage breast cancer.

The workshop shed light on the medical needs and quality of life issues facing patients and included formal lectures and small group discussions among doctors, nurses, psychologists, and other specialists. Among the topics covered were nutrition, exercise, sexuality, and family dynamics.

Grace Khleif, a certified life coach and hypnotherapist, opened the workshop with a meditation session, which was followed by a discussion on the importance of a healthy, balanced diet and daily physical activity led by Ms. Fatima Beydoun, an experienced nurse working closely with cancer patients. Ms. Rebecca El Asmar, an adult oncology clinical nurse specialist, spoke about sexual intimacy.

Director of the Breast Cancer Center of Excellence Dr. Nagi El Saghir says: “This workshop aims at empowering women with education and courage to ensure better living while getting the most advanced and best cancer treatment with full dignity and support. The support of the patient’s family, as well as friends, volunteers, staff, nurses, and doctors is key to hope, perseverance, and standing up against cancer.”

Support for Local Sex Education

Nuffic, which funds projects on behalf of the Dutch Foreign Ministry, awarded AUB a 75,000 euro grant to support the training of local sexual and reproductive health staff in collaboration with the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health Primary Health Clinics Network and with Syrian refugee relief organizations.

Dr. Zakia Dimassi, research associate in the Medical Education Unit, Dr. Faysal El-Kak of the Faculty of Health Sciences, and Dr. Mona Osman of the Department of Family Medicine will lead the project, which fits in with a larger trend to gather and disseminate data on sexual and reproductive health in the region. The long-term goal is to improve maternal health and family planning.
This past November, AUB hosted the Third International Conference on Waterpipe Tobacco Smoking Research under the banner “Translating waterpipe tobacco smoking research evidence into practice, policy and regulation.” The conference brought together experts on tobacco control, waterpipe smoking, public health advocacy, policy makers, civil society organizations, and media to strategize over the best way to curb waterpipe smoking globally.

The conference’s major highlight was the establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) Knowledge Hub for Waterpipe Research by AUB’s Faculty of Health Sciences and the Syrian Center for Tobacco Studies, with support from the National Institute on Drug Abuse in the United States. The hub’s aim is to promote collaborative, impactful scholarship; it is the first such health knowledge-to-policy hub in the Middle East and only the third of its kind in the world.

The hub’s launch comes as the pastime has spread from its traditional home in the Middle East and North Africa—where it has been a fixture in restaurants and cafés for some 400 years—to become a global practice despite a growing body of research that shows its deleterious effects on cardiovascular health.

“It is our hope that with the support of all the concerned stakeholders, this knowledge hub will meet its objectives in assessing and disseminating knowledge on waterpipe smoking through virtual platforms of informational exchange, organizing activities to share this information and experiences, and advising regulatory bodies on effective control measures to curb this growing epidemic,” says Associate Professor Rima Nakkash, who is the chair of the Tobacco-Free AUB 2018 Task Force.

“This knowledge hub is for assessing the situation, sharing knowledge, creating platforms for exchanging information, and holding workshops for regulators,” says Ghazi Zaatari, chairman of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at AUBMC. “The situation here is very alarming,” he says, pointing to the waterpipe as having “torn our communities [apart] and seriously harmed the well-being of our young generation.”

AUB has been a leader in the domain of tobacco control in Lebanon. On January 1, 2018, AUB became the first entirely tobacco-free university in Lebanon. “Making AUB fully tobacco-free is a transformative change leading to a more beautiful and wholesome campus as well as a healthier campus community,” President Khuri says. The tobacco industry is prohibited from funding research at AUB, recruiting students through career services, or promoting products on campus.

While the experts commend the establishment of the hub and the tobacco ban as important milestones, they concur that tobacco use in the region remains stubbornly high. “Our cancer treatment center is overflowing” says Alan Shihadeh, dean of the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, “with the human collateral of the tobacco industry’s decades-long campaigns to hook more consumers, especially youth.”
Check Up:

Fadi Sawaya, MD  
(BS '04)  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Internal Medicine
Q. So, let’s start off with your specialty. You’re an interventional cardiologist. What does that involve?
A. I do stentings, that is, I put stents in the arteries of the heart. I also change heart valves and close holes in people’s hearts. Really, I do any procedure that’s heart-related. I fix tight valves, also leaky ones. I perform necessary cardiac interventions, but I don’t do bypass surgery. I do minimally-invasive procedures.

Q. How does one go about inserting a stent into someone’s heart in a minimally invasive way?
A. Well, you put the patient on the table, clean everything up, sterilize. Then you drape the patient, get the x-ray machine ready. You find the artery, whether in the arm or leg, and enter it through the skin with a catheter, which is a tube about two to three millimeters in diameter. The patient, who isn’t sedated, feels a localized prick. The tube winds its way through the arteries until it reaches the heart. Through the tube, you pump a material called contrast medium. Then you take some x-rays of the patient. If the valves show black [on the x-ray], if there’s a black strip, that means they’re clear. The black is blood. But if there’s some white, then there’s a blockage.

Q. And how do you address the blockage? With a stent?
A. Yes. We insert the stent, mounted on a tiny balloon, inside the catheter and push it along with a wire. The patient doesn’t feel anything, as you’re moving inside the body where there are no nerves. Once the stent reaches the location of the damaged artery, the balloon expands, pushing back the plaque and restoring blood flow. Then the stent expands, forming a metal frame supporting the arterial walls. The balloon is deflated and sucked back through the tube, while the stent remains permanently. The procedure takes about an hour. And the patient can usually go home the next day.

Q. Then there’s the valve replacement. If the valve has significantly deteriorated, you need to replace it, correct?
A. In the past, it was about cutting open the chest and exposing the heart. Now valves can be deployed through a catheter, like a stent. The valve, which is made of an elastic material called nitinol, is sent through a large artery. Once it’s expanded, it pushes the old valve out of the way and the tissue in the new valve takes over. It’s made of porcine tissue, from the pig, treated with formaldehyde, so there’s no reaction, no rejection by the body. This is a fairly new procedure; we’ve only been doing valve replacements in Lebanon for the past two or three years and stents for the past 15 or 16 years.

Q. How often do you perform the standard version of these procedures, that is valve and stent replacements? Who are the candidates?
A. Stents I do every day. Valves, maybe once a week. A candidate for a stent can be anywhere from 40 to 90, depending on risk factors: smoking, family history of cardiac problems. For valves, the population is older, between 70 and 80. Valves become calcified with age. Yesterday I replaced a 93-year-old’s valve. It took an hour and a half. He’s fine, walking, going home tomorrow.

Q. How much do these procedures cost?
A. Stenting costs between $7,000 and $8,000. All insurance plans cover stenting. Cost can be an issue here with replacement valves since insurance doesn’t always pay. The valve replacement procedure costs around $60,000 in Lebanon. The valves are made outside Lebanon, mostly in the United States, so you have to ship them here. Around 50 percent of the patients I see are covered by national insurance; the others are privately insured, or self-funded.

Q. You were recently featured in the Lebanese media for a pioneering valve replacement procedure. Can you talk about that?
A. So, sometimes you can’t pass through the legs, or groin, if the legs are too small, diseased, or stenotic (have narrowed arteries). So we use a vein instead, which is usually bigger. You push the catheter through the vein until you reach a point where you have to cross over into an artery. The crossover is risky, and can lead to death. If the hole created in the system isn’t closed, the patient will bleed internally. I did this procedure, the transcaval, on a woman who needed a valve. It was her only option. The procedure had been done six times in Europe, and a couple times in the United States, but this was a first for Asia.

Q. How did you decide to become an interventional cardiologist?
A. My dad is a cardiologist and he took me everywhere with him when I was young, so it just felt natural that I become a doctor. I did my residency in the US and ended up doing interventional cardiology. I wanted to come back to continue my father’s legacy. He’s been here for 40 years now. He’s a professor at AUBMC, Jaber Sawaya (MD ’68). I wanted to help him out before he retires.

Q. Any advice for our readers as far as how they can avoid having to see you?
A. Sure, the standard advice. Exercise, don’t smoke, eat healthy. Get the appropriate tests and follow-up done. It’s about not falling into bad habits, really.
It’s been a year since AUB and The Lancet journal partnered on the AUB-Lancet Commission on Syria, which aims to explore the myriad implications of Syria’s ongoing conflict for people’s health and health systems in Syria and for global health more broadly. As it seeks to ferret out the ripple effects of a long war, the commission is looking at those implications through a wide-angle lens. “We’re talking with all stakeholders willing to share evidence...”
perspectives and give evidence,” says Commission Co-chair and AUB Associate Professor of Public Health Practice Samer Jabbour.

That wide-angle focus has led the commission to a specific issue, the deliberate targeting of healthcare workers and facilities by military forces, or what commission researchers have coined “the weaponization of healthcare.” These researchers have presented sobering statistics on the number of health workers killed and facilities targeted since the conflict started and reviewed evidence on the perpetrators of such targeting.

Major media outlets, like Reuters, BBC, and The Guardian, have picked up on those statistics and pushed them out to a wider audience. “Since it was released on the sixth anniversary of the horrific and ongoing conflict, there has been a lot of interest in the new concept of weaponization of healthcare,” Jabbour says.

This past September, the commission followed up this research work with advocacy and policy reach and secured an even greater coup for its cause when member states sponsored a high-level side event during the United Nations General Assembly titled “Protecting Healthcare in Armed Conflict.”

The side event brought together ministerial and ambassadorial level delegations which recounted harrowing anecdotes and statistics that spoke of the breadth and depth of attacks. They called for improved enforcement of UN Security Council Resolution 2286, which provides a mandate and mechanism to halt attacks against health workers and facilities. “On behalf of Canada, I stand here today to tell you that we are deeply concerned about what has been called, the ‘weaponization’ of healthcare,” Canadian Minister of Health Ginette Taylor said.

Following the side event, panelists and others gathered at AUB’s New York Office to further plumb issues of data collection, advocacy, and accountability. Johns Hopkins’ senior scientist and chair of the Safeguarding Health in Conflict coalition, Leonard Rubenstein, said that building relationships with governments interested in this cause is key to success. Commission Co-chair and Professor at the Harvard FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, Jennifer Leaning, spoke of the need for “imaginative” data collection: “You have to figure out what categories you’re monitoring, then you learn that one category is wrong and you have to fix it, or the situation changes, and you have to add something. It’s iterative.” She emphasized the need to maintain a broad campaign that keeps stakeholders engaged and ready to act once the next crisis hits. Homer Venter’s from Physicians for Human Rights, who moderated the side event, said that monitoring systems must develop at the grassroots level to capture realities most essential to local people. Ahmad Tarakji, president of the Syrian American Medical Association and a commissioner, said that war-torn countries often have limited tools and know-how when it comes to monitoring and responding to attacks on healthcare. He also said that many NGOs performing the gritty work of war-zone data collection “feel isolated and exploited while analysts “sit elsewhere and discuss.”

Commission Co-chair and AUB Faculty of Health Sciences Dean Iman Nuwayhid said that international organizations don’t begin to take conflict seriously until it’s already spiraled out of control: “They want to see people dead and bodies piled up first.” Only once a conflict has become quite serious, he says, will donors and funding agencies begin to take it seriously. “If you go to someone and say, a war is erupting here, give me money to start a documentation system, they won’t give you anything.”

Moving forward, Jabbour indicates that dignitaries and panelists who participated in the side-event are working on a joint comment, to be published in The Lancet, that condemns attacks on healthcare and calls for specific actions to strengthen accountability. Nuwayhid is hoping for a statement from presidents of universities from around the world that shows the commitment of academia to ending the quagmire. AUB, he says, can and will be a strong global force for civic good, health, and dignity.
Preheat oven to 180 degrees C or 350 degrees F

INGREDIENTS FOR HOMEMADE PIE CRUST DUGH (OR PÂTE BRISÉE):

• 375 g or 3 cups all-purpose flour
• 225 g or 1 cup unsalted butter
• 1 egg yoke
• 60 ml or ¼ cup milk
• ½ tsp salt

PREPARATION:

To prepare the homemade dough: mix the flour, butter, egg yolk, milk, and salt in a mixer until combined. Place on a board and knead lightly to form dough. Cover and let rest in the refrigerator for one hour. Roll out the dough to fit in a 28 cm or 11” circular pie pan or dish. Prebake shell for 5 to 7 minutes. Cool.

(Alternatively, you can use one ready-made sheet of puff pastry)

INGREDIENTS FOR PIE FILLING

• 240 ml or 1 cup milk
• 240 ml or 1 cup whipping cream
• 2 eggs
• ½ tsp salt
• ¼ tsp ground white pepper
• 150 g or 5 oz Bulgarian feta cheese, crumbled
• 150 g or 5 oz Gruyère or Emmental cheese, shredded
• 6 tbsp fresh thyme or fresh zaatar or 3 tbsp zaatar mix

PREPARATION:

To prepare the filling: whisk milk, cream, eggs, salt, and pepper and set aside. Layer the cheeses and thyme or zaatar on the crust and cover with milk mixture. Bake for approximately 40 minutes or until golden brown.

Makes 16 servings

If you are concerned about high fat and/or sodium content, substitute low fat ingredients and use goat cheese in place of the Bulgarian feta. Goat cheese may be marginally higher in fat, but it is significantly lower in sodium and higher in calcium.
Impact

Regional impact, advocacy, and policy initiatives

The new Penrose dorms
This old house gets a new lease on life

Graduate Employability
Why are AUB students so consistently employable?

Better Access
IFI illustrates the problems facing Lebanon's differently abled population in seeking care

Vacant Towers
Why is AUB surrounded by largely empty skyscrapers?

Bold Steps
EVP Mohamed Sayegh on leading AUBMC's vision and the future of medical care in the region

The Next Step Program
Towards a society that allows children with Down's syndrome to reach their full potential
AUB alumnus Fouad Maksoud (ME ’16) won the prestigious—and popular—regional scientific TV show *StarsofScience* on November 24, 2017 for NanoSkin, an electro-spinning nano-technology machine that transforms clothes into waterproof material and injects a nano-technology drug delivery system that heals wounds, third degree burns, muscle strains, and diabetes ulcers.

AUB’s Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS) has organized an English Teaching Program since 2014 to help Syrian refugees improve their English language skills. The program is targeted at university-aged and working adults. Three hundred Syrians and 50 AUB volunteers participated in the program in 2016-17.

The AUB Neighborhood Initiative (NI) is partnering with CCECS, organizations, and individuals in the Hamra neighborhood, and the Municipality of Beirut to make Jeanne d’Arc Street a model, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly street.

AUB’s Department of Education organized a two-day conference in October 2017 on mental health for disadvantaged youth and families in cooperation with the National Institution of Social Care and Vocational Training (NISCVT), better known as Beit Atfal Assumoud, with support from the humanitarian organization Norwegian Aid Committee (NORWAC).

Dr. Huda Y. Zoghbi, AUB trustee and alumna, was awarded the National Order of the Cedar, Knight grade, by Lebanese President Michel Aoun at a ceremony on January 15, 2018 at the Presidential Palace in Baabda.

AUB received the Energy Ambassador Award in the not-for-profit institution category at the International Beirut Energy Forum (IBEF) for Sustainable Development 2017 for its solar electric power plant that converts sunlight into electricity through photovoltaic modules. The plant on the AUB campus currently generates about one-third of the electricity consumed in the Bechtel Building.

In October 2017, AUB’s Suliman S. Olayan School of Business hosted the Multi-Stakeholder SDG Forum, which was created to provide a platform to discuss key issues related to implementation of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Lebanon. The Global Compact Network Lebanon (GCNL) organized the high-level gathering that attracted more than 400 people from throughout Lebanon.

AUB is now home to the Lebanese Linear Plasma Device (LLPD), which will be used to conduct research on plasma and fusion energy. It is the first of its kind in Lebanon and the region.

Dozens of groups and individuals were recognized during an event on campus on December 5, UN International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development.

Learn about the misperceptions of students studying in the Middle East [www.goabroad.com/articles/study-abroad/misconceptions-about-middle-east](http://www.goabroad.com/articles/study-abroad/misconceptions-about-middle-east)
The Penrose Dorms; Past, Present, and Future

When it was built almost 60 years ago, Penrose Hall, named after AUB president Stephen B. L. Penrose, Jr. (1948-54), "competed in grandeur with Beirut’s most luxurious apartment houses." One of two men's residence halls on the AUB campus, Penrose Hall is located just off Bliss Street. The other men's dorm is Kerr I, named for former AUB president Dr. Malcolm Kerr. Although many current and former students have fond memories of their times at Penrose, it is safe to say that it has been a while since anyone thought the accommodations were luxurious. In fact, some of their memories make quite the opposite point. Haytham Kaafarani (BS '99, MD '03), for example, remembers "an aggressive buzzer" in his room that would alert him that he needed to run "to the remote side of the hallway to pick up a phone call." Mohamad Ali Tfaily (BS '16) remembers "a mystery extra mirror in the room" that was left over from when the dad of a fellow resident had lived at Penrose 25 years earlier.

There have been several initiatives over the years to upgrade the facilities at Penrose and other student dorms. In 2012, for example, the President's Club, which raises money to support a wide range of projects to enhance student life at AUB, paid for the renovation of a student lounge at Penrose. Despite these and other efforts, the University has known for some time that Penrose was badly in need of a complete overhaul. It hasn’t been easy though to schedule this project in part because of the lack of affordable housing in Ras Beirut. AUB's Office of Student Affairs has helped students who would normally be living at Penrose to find alternative accommodation off-campus.

The renovation of Penrose Hall is being done as part of a Campus Master Plan that includes the new Munib and Angela Masri Building on lower campus and the recently inaugurated Halim and Aida Daniel Academic and Clinical Center (ACC) at the Medical Center. Director of Facilities Bassem Barhoumi says that the new Penrose Hall, which is scheduled to reopen in August 2019, will include 106 single, double, and triple rooms for 266 students. Some rooms are being designed to accommodate students with limited mobility. In addition to dorm rooms, Penrose Hall will also include a study hall, recreation hall, TV lounges, a reception lounge, shared kitchen area, laundry, outdoor seating and assembly spaces, and landscaped gardens. There are also plans to improve internet connectivity.

The new Penrose Hall will be environmentally sustainable. This is one of several current AUB projects that are registered to receive Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The Ray R. Irani-Oxy Engineering Complex, which opened in fall 2014, received the LEED GOLD certification in April 2015 becoming only the 4th LEED certified project in Lebanon.

AUB is hoping to secure the funds it needs to renovate other student residence halls to accommodate the growing number of students who want to live on campus. "Many of our students—especially those coming from outside Lebanon—prefer to live on campus. It makes it easier for them to take advantage of extracurricular activities and also speeds up the adjustment period," said Dr. Talal Nizameddin, dean of student affairs.
Students and their Careers

This past September, QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) published its annual QS Graduate Employability Rankings, which addresses the questions: “Which universities are best at creating student-employer connections? Which claim the most impressive alumni outcomes, or have the strongest reputation among employers?” AUB came in 41st worldwide, ahead of universities such as Brown, Carnegie Mellon, and Johns Hopkins. Part of that success is due to the rise of the global labor market, where mobile, multilingual, entrepreneurial students, like those at AUB, have a leg up. And part of it is due to the quality of AUB’s educational and career services offerings.

The Office of Career Services, Dean of Student Affairs Talal Nizameddin says, “has managed to build relationships with regional and international companies,” through alumni who hold managerial positions at those places. These firms, including Apple and Google, rate AUB highly as a partner institution. AUB hosts the Arab world’s largest job fair annually in April, a highly prestigious affair attended by roughly 140 major employers. “We work with their human resources departments. Many fight to get a slot,” Nizameddin says.

The office is always trying to stay ahead of global market trends. Nizameddin acknowledges that many of the jobs students will be angling for in the coming years don’t yet exist. “And companies know that too, which is why they’re looking more for fundamental character traits—general analytical ability, emotional intelligence, attitude—than specific skills.”

Students like Joseph Matar, Tony Tohme, Elie Lebbos, Fred Gebrael, and Johnny Toumieh (all of whom expect to graduate with BAs in 2018) showed those traits when they created Foodbite, an app to encourage anonymous food donations, during a hackathon. Omar Tantawi (BS ’17) did too when he led a recycling project in his village.

Yet for all their ingenuity, many students on entering university, and often well into their studies, have only the vaguest impressions of a future professional life. “I honestly had no idea what I wanted to do before I came to AUB,” Silvia Ezkarkova (BFA ’15, MAEd expected ’19) says. “I came to AUB because it was the thing to do. My father and uncle went to university. I had to go to university, get my diploma, then I’d figure it all out.”

It wasn’t until she began working part-time for recently retired head of Career and Placement Services Dr. Maryam Ghandour that she began considering her job prospects and what applying for a job entails. “[Ghandour] taught me professionalism, assertiveness. She put me in charge of liaising with HR managers and CEOs, and taught me the ins and outs of resume writing.”

On the other end of the spectrum, you have students like Wael Itani (BE expected ’18), who consciously considered how his time at AUB might best be exploited to benefit a future career before entering the university. “I got the catalog and skimmed through the courses,” he says. “I selected the major that had most of the courses I was interested in, which was more systematic than usual, I think.” That led him to mechanical engineering, which he feels is broad enough to allow for multiple career options.

Taking over this year from the redoubtable Ghandour is former Dubai-based HR and recruitment professional Melina Harb, who has ambitious plans to upgrade the service into a three/four-year career engagement plan for all students. “It’s an advantage to come from that world, speaking the same language and understanding the latest trends and techniques in recruitment. To maximize their employment opportunities, AUB students should be involved in clubs and societies, attending seminars, volunteering, taking on projects. Nowadays, employers are looking for experiential learning—what impact do students have, what motivation, what are their passions? These are all major factors in success.”

Both Ezkarkova and Itani agree that the Office of Career Services should be expanded and better advertised on campus. Itani believes students should be required to visit the office at least once a year. Ezkarkova thinks the office can help students make more informed decisions about their majors. “Everyone wants to be a doctor or an engineer,” she says, “but not everyone’s good at that. Why not go to Career Services and find out how you can maximize your potential?”

The new AUB Alumni Mentoring Platform (AAMP) is off to a great start.

Hundreds of young alumni are benefitting from the insights of seasoned AUB professionals.

Salim Bousleiman (BE ‘91) has given multiple consultations, and has found the experience of giving advice to up-and-coming professionals very rewarding.

Read more about Salim’s experience and that of recent graduate, Hibaa Doudar (BS ’17)

To register for the AUB Online Community, visit the AUB alumni web page: alumni@aub.edu.lb

If you’re already part of the Online Community, and are ready to explore AAMP, visit: aubfirsthand.co/
Improving Health Access for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) in Lebanon
Together in Justice for Service Provision

In a survey conducted among Syrian refugees (82.7%), Palestinian refugees from Syria (6.5%), and Lebanese (10.7%) with a disability, respondents cited the following barriers to accessing healthcare:

- Financial ability (78.5%)
- Lack of trust and credibility (32.2%)
- Unequipped centers (18.5%) and inadequately trained staff (20.0%)
- Lack of coverage of certain healthcare services (55.8%)
- Lack of information about available healthcare services (29.2%)

Introducing a monitoring and accountability framework and a complaint system at the ministerial and healthcare institutional levels.

Equipping healthcare centers and institutions, and training staff to deal with PwDs.

Unifying disability classification, conducting a national level health needs assessment, and mapping the services already available for PwDs.

Financing and providing services to PwDs in an equitable manner, including ensuring full coverage of all essential healthcare services.

Providing relevant and accessible information to PwDs on the health services available to them.

This infographic is based on the results of a participatory research study conducted in partnership with informal groups of PwDs from the Baabaa and north Lebanon regions. The study was conducted by the Arab R&D Network for Development, in collaboration with the beam People Institute, as part of the "Right to a Future for People Affected by the Syrian Displacement Crisis" project implemented by Oxfam in Lebanon in partnership with ALEF - Act for human rights, and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.
The Vacant Towers

Take a stroll along the Corniche and look up at the giant towers of glass and steel to the left of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business. Are the lights on? Not likely. The vacant apartments form thousands of shadowy eyes peering across the Mediterranean. Keep walking, past Zeytuna Bay until you reach downtown. Not a soul peeks out from the small terraces clustered above the shops. The tan-colored stone reflects only the sun and bits of dust gathered in the streets below, not voices, or footfalls, or the spirit of the heart of the city.

But why? Why is it that so many buildings and apartments remain empty, especially those grand towers that loom on the edges of AUB’s skyline in Ras Beirut? To answer that question, MainGate spoke with Urban Planning and Studies Professor Mona Fawaz (BArch ’95), Orient Institut Post Doctoral Fellow Marieke Krijnen (MA ’10), and local developer Marc Geara.

At the heart of it, says Fawaz, is the Ministry of Finance’s decision to forgo tax collection on apartments declared “officially vacant.” This has encouraged wealthy members of the Lebanese diaspora to buy and hold real estate, and stands in sharp contrast to policies in other global cities, like Paris, which tax vacant apartments at a rate that is 60 percent higher than owner-occupied ones.

At the heart of it, says Fawaz, is the Ministry of Finance’s decision to forgo tax collection on apartments declared “officially vacant.”

Beirut’s real estate laws support mobile foreign capital, as opposed to diverse local communities and their growth. “Most of these Lebanese expat owners live either in Africa or in the Gulf where they actually cannot grow old,” says Fawaz. “They know they want to retire in Lebanon,” which places large swaths of the city in a kind of time capsule as it awaits the return of its lifeblood: people.
“Higher apartment buildings lead to higher prices,” says Geara. Indeed developers stand to make far higher profits selling luxury apartments to wealthy expats who can pay the average cost of $538,546 for an apartment in Beirut, according to Global Property Guide.

The Lebanese Central Bank helps facilitate those profits too. Real estate, says Fawaz, figured prominently in the Lebanese Central Bank’s post-war economic plan, as the bank made driving foreign capital towards real estate a priority. “We needed constant foreign direct investment to support the Lebanese pound [which is pegged to the US dollar],” says Fawaz. “We call real estate the productive sector.” Consequently, the Lebanese Central Bank has been offering historically low interest rates for loans released in Lebanese pounds meant for the real estate sector.

The current government seems to be going in two different directions regarding the sector’s future. Last April, a proposed measure called for an end to the vacant apartment tax exemption, which the Lebanese financial monthly, Executive, panned as deterring “potential investors looking to place their money in Lebanese real estate.” Meanwhile, the budget passed this past October contains a provision that allows developers to write down the value of their assets to lower any tax burden on profits that might come with a sale.

Fawaz and Krijnen explain Lebanon’s real estate sector through the lens of Lebanon’s history as a business-minded, trading nation politically dominated by a small class of merchants; and the victory of laissez-faire, pro-privatization capitalism in the wake of the Cold War. These two forces merged, as the merchant class could now promote its policies as an extension of prevailing political economic wisdom.

To bring people back, to help revive the city’s once cosmopolitan character, to safeguard its many architectural artifacts, Fawaz proposes a multi-faceted urban planning strategy. “Some properties in the city should be outside the market,” she says. Banks and investors, she says, should not be allowed to count the land value of certain properties in accounting and financial statements, which means “the price will dip and those plots can be used for affordable housing.”

Some properties in the city should be outside the market…”

“In the United States, they demand that developers make a certain percentage of housing affordable,” she says. “Cities need to intervene in their markets to produce this housing.”

She adds that preservation laws must be strengthened to protect buildings that “speak to our common heritage.” A draft law sent to parliament last October incentivizes landowners to preserve “sites of cultural significance” by letting them sell development rights to large firms capable of preserving the site, while retaining ownership of the land.

Ultimately, Fawaz says, Beirut needs a broad planning vision for the entire city, “one that incentivizes builders to build in some areas, but not others,” takes a neighborhood’s character into account, and assigns the cost of public goods to those who profit from them. “Here you have none of that. They sell the view on the sea and then give tax breaks.”

The best view of the skyline is from the cargo ships a mile or so off the coast. From those bobbing ships the transition from AUB’s red-tiled roofs to towering skyscrapers becomes stark; the University now sits between grand symbols of global wealth. During the day, the glass panels catch the sun and throw it back at the sky. During the night, they go black.
Many of AUB’s most illustrious returnees have an anecdote about what tempted them back to the University after years of achievement in far-flung places. Dr. Mohamed “Mo” Sayegh, executive vice president for medicine and global strategy, Raja N. Khuri dean of medicine, and AUB’s most cited researcher, is no exception, although his story is written more boldly than most. “I had little interest in coming back for many reasons—my career, family, the situation in Lebanon, the situation at the University. We lived in our history here and our legacy, not changing the post-war inertia by taking calculated risks.” However, at the peak of his career, four years into his occupation of an endowed chair in transplantation medicine at Harvard Medical School, Sayegh admits to having felt “a touch bored academically.” The challenge which presented itself was that of not just leading the faculty and Medical Center at his alma mater where he earned his MD in 1984 but to transform it.

“I put together a plan that was the basis of what became the AUBMC 2020 Vision and presented it to the search committee on January 18, 2009. It was very simple but ambitious—to be the best Medical Center not only in the Middle East but to compete with our peers in the US.” Instead of being told his vision was a pipe dream, as Sayegh expected, the committee, chaired by Trustee David Bickers, was enthralled by the prospect and Sayegh was offered the job. Nine years later, the 10-year, $400 million plan is on track and the 2020 Medical Complex is a dream no more.

Given the challenges of realizing complex projects in Lebanon, Sayegh says the key has been a three-tier oversight regime. An engineering team working closely with the contractor to monitor progress; a multidisciplinary projects team of engineers, physicians, directors, budget and finance representatives meeting weekly to solve obstacles promptly; and close liaison with internal auditing and purchasing
to conduct second- and third-level negotiations to gain extra savings. These tight mechanisms are being adopted for major AUB projects on the horizon.

“We have focused on the delivery of medical care, recruited more than 180 new faculty, two-thirds of them from North America, and expanded our facilities. For those doctors to return, they wanted proof they could practice North American- or European-type medicine. I believed if I could recruit the best physicians, we would be able to attract patients. We opened several centers of excellence, and they are working at full capacity. But the 2020 Vision was just the beginning!” The focus is moving to include population health under President Khuri’s 2025 Initiative, with all health units aligning to deliver patient care, education, research, influence, policy, regional and global health issues. The establishment of the Global Health Institute with Dr. Shadi Saleh as the founding director, will further enhance AUB’s leading regional position and its global prominence in health.

Sayegh’s approach to major change is to build multi-stakeholder confidence by delivering on an inspiring vision. “When we got the first big gift, the $32 million Daniel gift for the Halim and Aida Daniel Academic and Clinical Center (Daniel ACC), there was a lot of skepticism—and rightfully so—because AUB had never delivered such a big project before. But last week, Jamal [Daniel] was here. He looked at the ready-to-move in building and was captivated. Donors have to see a vision, a plan, and credible delivery. We cannot take people’s money without showing we have transformed something, something that is their passion. Donors have different passions. Some have the urge to see a building up and running; others seek satisfaction through helping a patient, while some others prefer to educate a student. We need to understand their passions and deliver on that.”

Internally, Sayegh has found, people like “the change,” but they don’t like “to change.” Offering a doctor a top-floor corner office in a state-of-the-art new building is one thing but sending them to temporary accommodation in a basement for six months in order to build it is quite another! “The most important thing is to continue pushing forward. As we delivered one project after another, the Sawwaf building, the Medical Administration Building, the renovated medical school, more people started believing. Of course, you never have complete buy-in, but I do accept a 99 percent approval rating,” he adds with a chuckle.

“When I talk to our students, I tell them: ‘One of you will come back as the future Mo.’”

Sayegh’s first six- or seven-figure donation vindicated his scrupulous one-to-one engagement with supporter and skeptic alike. In mid-2009, a lady emailed him unhappy about the cancer treatment her dying mother had received. They exchanged correspondence, and Sayegh invited her to come and discuss what had transpired. A few months later, he discovered she’d become a donor. “When I saw her, I said, ‘This is unexpected! How do you shift from being a critic to becoming a donor?’ She told me it was a bet. Her friends had told her that AUB would never answer her email. She challenged them by pledging to donate if they ever did. She saw that there was going to be change, which turned her from a disgruntled complainer to a donor overnight. This is the key: Change.” Sayegh is reluctant to take credit for the revolution that characterizes his leadership. His motto, appropriately, is “Leadership is about creating leaders.” His team has doubled patient numbers, with 404,958 attending outpatient clinics, 55,789 emergency cases seen, and 42,230 hospital admissions last year. Objective criteria include multiple accreditations, including JCI for AUBMC as an academic Medical Center, Magnet for nursing, and several specialized laboratory accreditations. The medical school has ranked first in the Arab world and has been chosen among the 300 elite universities worldwide based on the QS rankings. For Sayegh, this answers any criticism of corporatizing AUBMC at the expense of academics. “If you focus only on education and research, you would be bankrupt. But how can you be accused of corporatization if for three years in a row you are number one in QS, based predominantly on publishing and academic reputation?” Excellence in medical education brings us full circle, as we see ever larger numbers of newly AUB-trained doctors follow their dean’s former path onto the global stage, to practice medicine and become leaders themselves. “When I talk to our students or residents, I tell them: ‘In 20 years one of you will come back as the future Mo.’”

Given his specialism in the immunology lab, it is tempting to think of Sayegh as an enabler in the transplantation not just of human organs but human talent—he sees it from a surprising, fresh angle. “My research focused on developing immunologic tolerance to fool the immune system to accept a foreign organ as one that is not foreign. The link to transplantation is tolerance—AUBMC is only one component of this dream!”

-MA
Everyone Can Help

The Next Step Program is now in its second year at AUB. Part of the Continuing Education Center (CEC), which caters to learners from all walks of life, including those coming from outside the AUB community, the program aims to teach students with intellectual disabilities the skills they need to enter the workforce and to help them explore professional options.

The program’s founder, Hana Abu Khadra Salem, education committee coordinator at the Lebanese Down Syndrome Association, took inspiration from the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Lesley University’s Threshold Program to create a kind of mini-university and vocational training center for people with severe learning disabilities.

Her interest in bridging the gap to employment for the intellectually disabled comes from her experience with her 27-year-old daughter Zeina, a Next Step student with Down Syndrome (DS). According to Salem, Zeina is one of a handful of people with DS in Lebanon who holds down a job; she works in catering at a diet center three days a week. Over many years, Salem says the only employed people with DS she has met have been “a waiter, an office worker, and there’s one other person who works at the diet center with Zeina.”

From the outset, Salem says, she was determined to see her daughter realize her full potential, which meant avoiding institutionalization or a homebound existence. She hoped to educate Zeina in an integrated school environment. “I took her to the American Community School, thinking they would follow the American system of educating special needs children, but they said, ‘we’re not ready,’” Eventually, Zeina went to Heritage School in Beirut’s southern suburbs, that, she says, “was willing to try.”

Salem sees Next Step as offering a first-of-its-kind model for Lebanon and the region. The program spans three years: a foundation year covering basic literacy, math, and English, mixed with weekly sessions of computer literacy, art, and drama therapy; and second and third years covering home and money management, food, health, and citizenship. “An apprenticeship should also come in the third year,” says Salem, “though that’s theoretical at this point.”

In terms of pedagogy, the program adheres to the Universal Learning Design (ULD) framework, which emphasizes students’ unique learning patterns and ways of expressing knowledge. “Some learn best by hearing, others by seeing, and the same goes for expression. Some students may draw a concept, while others may speak it out loud.”

This thinking lines up with the current pedagogy at elite progressive schools. “It’s close to the model followed by the International Baccalaureate program,” says CEC Director Ziad Shabaan.

The classroom inside the Regional External Programs building accommodates 11 students and features a variety of audiovisual equipment. Teachers have master’s degrees, either in special education or educational psychology.

Tuition for the program stands at $7,900 for two 16-week semesters, which, Salem acknowledges, is beyond the reach of many parents already burdened by the extra costs associated with caring for a young adult with special needs.

Outside the classroom, Salem is considering disabled rights and social inclusion more broadly. For her, it’s as much about marshalling available resources as it is about making sure no one gets left behind. She works with the UN’s Global Compact Network to connect with businesses interested in employing those with special needs. “So far, we’ve gotten good responses from Bank Audi.”

“We were contacted by people from Saudi Arabia and Jordan about sending children to us,” Salem says. “We are hoping to open doors to many young adults who have potential and are waiting to find a way to use that potential.”
AUB Everywhere

Alumni lives in action around the globe

Alumni Profile 54
The literature of Emily Nasrallah (BA '58) explores one of Lebanon’s most central narratives, migration

Standing OUTstanding 56
Nabil Bukhalid (BE '81, EMBA '05) on bringing the Internet to Lebanon

WAAAUB's new leadership 57
Newly elected Interim President Hisham Jaroudi

WAAAUB Around the Globe 58
Chapter events

Class Notes 60
Where are they now?

In Memoriam 65
Lebanon, the country whose diaspora population is double or triple the size of its in-country one, has always needed an artful writer to tell the immigrant story in all its forms. Since 1963, when she published her first novel, *Birds of September*, Emily Nasrallah (BA ’58) has filled that role. She’s written of her village, Kfeir, its wheat fields, rolling hills, and of the great birds that signal winter’s coming, who, in their departure, symbolize the flight of the village’s own people. She’s written too of the struggles facing immigrants in unfamiliar lands and cities, and of the particular challenges facing women who choose to break with tradition and pursue their ambitions beyond the confines of the home.

For her many works, at times poetic, autobiographical, but mostly fictional, she received the Goethe Medal in 2017. When her grandmother, in the middle of the last century said that Lebanon is “the land that does not hold its people,” she inadvertently foreshadowed a central theme in Nasrallah’s oeuvre, migration. She herself, however, has made a point of staying in the country through its many trials.

*Birds of September* was born out of the pain of her brother’s departure to Canada in the early 1960s. “Tears fell on the page as I wrote,” she says. From those tears, she wrought a novel that captured the universal elements of her village, Kfeir, as she knew it as part of Greater Syria under the French Mandate. In capturing those elements—particularly the pace of life—she coaxed her readers into a warm nostalgia for a simpler time. The notion of time, or history, features prominently in the novel, conferring on villagers a sense of identity and roots that is lost on migrants.

She did spend significant time outside Lebanon to accompany her parents during their visit to Canada to see their grandchildren. That experience produced *Flight Against Time*, whereby an older couple suffers the effects of loneliness and social alienation brought on by immigration. The protagonist, Radwan, finds himself in a state of perpetual loss in the face of technology and customs he can’t comprehend, and ultimately abandons his immigrant life and returns to Lebanon. “My father kept saying ‘God keep the country for its people.’ That’s the essence of the book.”

In her later years, she recreated the story of her husband’s uncle Nicola’s final hours on board the Titanic in a book of short stories titled *Days Recounted*. Drawing on family anecdotes of his courage, she told of how he saved his wife and many stranded children before ultimately succumbing to the sea.

What pushed Emily Nasrallah, the self-described “peasant woman,” to break with custom, leave the village of Kfeir, and write its history in novel form? The answer may be as simple as ambition. “I always wanted to be the best,” she says. So precociously bookish was she that she hid out in classrooms during high school picnics to study. “I was coming from a place where the standard of education was very low, and I wanted to rise.”

As a young girl, she picked olives and grapes in the predawn hours until she bloodied her hands. One of her earliest memories is of sitting under the window of Kfeir’s Russian-built school where the teacher let her audit from the age of five on the condition that she abscond when the local inspector made his rounds. “One day, the students said, ‘the inspector is here!’ I ran home and cried, thinking the inspector might kill me. My father slapped me and told me to be courageous.” It is perhaps those years of early hardship and Old World discipline that reveal themselves in her manner.

Her brilliant uncle, a writer and editor consigned to the family home by Parkinson’s disease, encouraged her literary ambition. “He asked me to describe the trees, the houses,” she says. But the village, as she saw it in childhood only offered so much intellectual grist. She repeated the third grade, the highest grade level
taught in Kfeir, three times, before another uncle living in the United States agreed to pay her tuition at the elite high school, International School of Choueifat.

On graduating, she worked as a journalist for the women’s magazine, Sawt al Mar’a, and for the political magazine, Al Sayyad, before coming to AUB. There she experienced for the first time collegial relationships with male peers, and yet she insisted on passing through Main Gate unaccompanied by men, lest she be spotted by someone from Kfeir and reported on. Thus were Kfeir’s conservative mores, which she, as one of the first women of her village to leave for her education, felt the need to uphold.

She soon began work at another literary magazine, where she met her husband Philip, a Stanford-educated chemist and poultry farming pioneer, whose mother served as editor-in-chief. “He would take my articles to her.” He was also her biggest supporter, encouraging her to write freely and always telling her, “you can do better.”

To achieve a sustained literary output, she set aside at least two hours daily for writing. “Once I start a book, I can’t stop. I write every single day until it’s finished.” Only after the sum of her thoughts finds expression on the page does she begin the editing process. Why fiction? “It gives a better taste than reality.” And how did she hone her craft? Through trial, error, and lots of reading. She loves Khalil Gibran, Naguib Mahfouz, Tawfik Al Hakim, Tolstoy.

She laments the current state of literature in the Arab world. “The readership has disappeared and publishers are suffering.” She believes that new media in the form of lists, tweets, and short posts supports surface level reading, rather than deep reading, which literature requires. Add to that the poor state of Arabic language pedagogy and you have a recipe for literary crisis. “I don’t see a lot of promise for the future. My grandchildren don’t read Arabic. They haven’t read my books.” Fortunately, her books have been translated into many languages. Her largest readership may be in Germany, a country she has visited several times for literary conferences and seminars. Thus the Goethe Medal comes as a symbol not just of recognition, but of gratitude for revealing in the form of literary sketches the contours of a land and a life otherwise lost to history.
Q. Nabil Bukhalid (BE ’81, EMBA ’05), you led the AUB team that was responsible for bringing the internet to Lebanon—and the region. What were some of the challenges?

A. Naturally, experimenting with fast evolving technologies in the late 1980s in virgin territory like Beirut was very challenging, but also extremely exhilarating. AUB established its Computing and Networking Services (CNS) Department in 1989 with the mandate to introduce and deploy leading-edge computing and communication technologies throughout the University. So, very early on we knew we had to aggressively take risks with unfamiliar emerging technologies and be prepared to change course when better technologies/solutions materialized. CNS embraced an open culture and encouraged team members to develop their competencies, contribute to the strategic vision, and ideate in ways that were aligned with the University’s mission. It is worth mentioning that CNS enjoyed direct access to the best talent source in the region—AUB’s students, graduates, and faculty members.

Some of the biggest challenges connecting Lebanon to the internet were barriers imposed by the Ministry of Post Telephone and Telegraph (MPT), a government-run monopoly providing substandard local and long-distance telephony services at exorbitant rates, a badly damaged and obsolete public telecom infrastructure, and archaic telecom regulations and policies that levied outrageous taxes on telecom services to fund the treasury’s chronic deficits. In 1993, the post-conflict economic restructuring plan for Lebanon, “Horizon 2000,” concentrated exclusively on the rehabilitation of the physical telephony infrastructure while completely sidetracking data communication, digitization, and the internet. In my opinion this was a critical miscalculation which put Lebanon at risk of being left behind in the global economy. So, in bringing the internet to AUB and Lebanon in 1993, we had to be pragmatic and creative to work around the various obstacles. We believed that the internet would contribute significantly to the development of Lebanon and create tens of thousands of smart jobs. In contrast to the government ethos, our guiding principles were openness, transparency, collaboration, and inclusiveness.

Q. There’s the peril and the promise of the World Wide Web. Any thoughts about net neutrality, free speech, and digital security?

A. The Digital Revolution is still in its infancy and as such it holds many surprises and challenges. But, overall, I would say that I’m optimistic. I believe in its unique promise to create a more democratic, inclusive, innovative, and resilient society. Civil societies, businesses, and policy-makers have a critical role to play in sustaining internet neutrality, driving its innovation and investments, and solidifying its security, while protecting freedom of speech, human rights and privacy, and being engaged in its governance. The synergy between digital technologies (the internet, Big Data, blockchain technologies, 3D printing, artificial intelligence, and the internet of things) are disrupting and redefining traditional production mechanisms and transaction channels in the same way the World Wide Web disrupted and redefined content production and delivery and social interactions. Combined, they are fast becoming the engine of change throughout all sectors of the global economy.
The Worldwide Alumni Association of the American University of Beirut (WAAAUB) is developing a new vision and governance structure to meet the needs of its expanding and influential alumni community. In early November, President Fadlo R. Khuri appointed AUB alumnus Trustee Hisham Jaroudi (BAR ’66) as WAAAUB’s interim president. Jaroudi has served on the AUB Board of Trustees since 2015 when he was elected to the board by the alumni at large.

An architect, engineer, and developer whose large-scale residential, commercial, and public projects can be found throughout the Middle East, Jaroudi is well-known for his philanthropic works and civic engagement. The founder of the Izzat Jaroudi Foundation and the Beirut Heritage Foundation, he has served as the president of the Sporting Club (Al-Riyadi) of Beirut since 1990. Under his leadership, the club won the Lebanese National Men’s Basketball Championship 14 times (most recently in 2016-17 for a record 27th title), and was crowned Arab Champion five times and Asian Champion twice, in 2011 and 2017. Jaroudi is the recipient of the Lebanese Order of Merit at the rank of Knight.

President Khuri commented “Mr. Jaroudi has a challenging mission leading the AUB alumni association during this transition. He is more than up to the task, as an accomplished, gracious, determined, and dedicated son of AUB.” Jaroudi says he is looking forward to working with the AUB Board of Trustees, the University’s administration, and the AUB alumni leadership and chapters to make the most of one of AUB’s “most precious assets—its devoted alumni.”

Stay tuned for news about upcoming alumni elections which will occur after the new structure for the alumni association is in place.

**WAAAUB Interim President Hisham Jaroudi**

WAAAUB Events and Announcements

**Newly Elected Chapter Leadership**

**Abu Dhabi Chapter**
- **President:** Elias Assaf (BEN ’88)
- **Vice President:** Imad Fouad Richani (BEN ’83)
- **Treasurer:** Imad William Khalil (BS ’93)
- **Secretary:** Mohammad Hassan Mneimne (BS ’03)

**Ohio Valley Chapter**
- **President:** Hind Moussa (BS ’99, MD ’03)
- **Vice President:** Hala Zahreddine (BS ’99, MS ’01)
- **Treasurer:** Bassam Abu Jawdeh (BS ’99, MD ’03)
- **Secretary:** Ahmad Malli (BS ’06, MD ’10)

**United Kingdom Chapter**
- **President:** Christina Bilalian, MD (BS ’06)
- **After the passing of Dr. Talal Farah, Dr. Bilalian was promoted from vice president to president of the UK Chapter.**

**Central and North Florida Chapter**
- **President:** Ahmad Jalloul (BS ’89, MD ’94)
- **Vice President:** Ayman Koteish (BS ’90, MD ’94)
- **Treasurer:** Hala Pharaon Daftdar (BA ’89)
- **Secretary:** Noura Ghalayini (BBA ’09)

**Houston Chapter**
- **President:** Tania Shaheen (BS ’94)
- **Vice President:** Alfred Maksoud (BS ’84, MS ’86, MD ’89)
- **Treasurer:** Shereen Soubra Ghaoui (BS ’90)
- **Secretary:** Mona Maalouf Duna (BS ’87)
- **Outreach Officer:** Grace Khouri Zoorob (BS ’86)
- **Media Officer:** Christelle Chacar (BS ’05, MD ’09)
WAAAUB Around the Globe

For event details and photos, visit the alumni website: alumni.aub.edu.lb

North America

Baltimore

DINNER DANCE
Dean Nadia El Cheikh (third from right)
Trustee Marwan Muasher (far left)
Country Club of Maryland
Towson, MD
October 14, 2017

Dallas

HALLOWEEN BRUNCH
Zatar Lebanese Tapas & Bar
Dallas, TX
October 29, 2017

British Columbia

MEETING AND LUNCH
The Coffee Bar/Bridges Restaurant
Vancouver, BC
November 11, 2017

Houston

HALLOWEEN HARMONY
First gathering post-Hurricane Harvey
Fadi’s Banquet Hall
Houston, TX
October 27, 2017

Northern California

HOLIDAY LUNCH
Il Fornaio
Burlingame, CA
December 2, 2017

North Carolina

FALL PICNIC
Ritter Park
Cary, NC
October 29, 2017
Visit of President Fadlo R. Khuri
Home of chapter member
October 17-20, 2017

Quiz Night
City Center
Rotana Hotel
November 23, 2017

Annual Dinner
Gala Dinner
Hilton Habtoor Hotel
October 26, 2017

Christmas Party
Maggiano’s Little Italy at Tyson’s Galleria
McLean, VA
November 30, 2017

MIX AND MINGLE
JOEY Eaton Centre
Toronto, ON
November 10, 2017

Mount Lebanon
ANNUAL DINNER
Gala Dinner
Hilton Habtoor Hotel
October 26, 2017

Middle East
Chapter Visit to AUB Campus and Cities in Lebanon
November 10-11, 2017

Washington DC
CHRISTMAS PARTY
Maggiano’s Little Italy at Tyson’s Galleria
McLean, VA
November 30, 2017

Cyprus
CHAPTER VISIT TO AUB CAMPUS AND CITIES IN LEBANON
November 10-11, 2017
Musa Nazer, PhD (BS ’58, MS ’60) writes, “In spite of the armed conflict in Lebanon in 1958, the commencement ceremony was held at Marquand House. I followed my BS degree with an MS in chemistry under the outstanding mentorship of Costas Issidorides. In 1964, I went on to Harvard University for a PhD, and found myself with a distinguished group of AUB alumni, among whom were the Raja Khuri and Raja Tannous families. A memorable event then was the birth of the Khuri’s son Fadlo, the current president of AUB. I went back to Jordan in 1965 and joined the University of Jordan. Upon my retirement from there 50 years later, I received the King Hussein Medal for Distinction, First Order. My academic career included many sabbaticals that I spent at AUB teaching and doing research. This sustained association with AUB enriches my days as I step into my eighties.” mzn06@yahoo.com

Tarub Shubaylat (BA ’58) writes, “I never thought the day would come when we would join the ranks of those celebrating their 50th anniversary. So nostalgic! No words can express my love and gratitude to AUB. It influenced my entire life. Bless you all!”

Ziad S. Rafii (BS ’60, MD ’64) has retired from practice. He was director of Children’s Medical Services, a pioneer in early detection screening for children in Tripoli, Lebanon.

Helga Seeden, PhD (BA ’63, MA ’67) writes, “Fifty-seven years after arriving in Lebanon, I am still at AUB! Graduation in 1963 was a memorable event. Except for several career-related periods abroad, I continued to be part of the University. I taught even during the civil war, when AUB remained open despite the tremendous odds against it at that time. Many of my students encountered the secrets of archaeology for the first time in class and in the field. I am convinced that awareness of cultural resources instilled early in life raises the hope for heritage to be protected in the future.” Helga has been an AUB professor of archaeology at the Department of History and Archaeology since 1991. She has served as the editor of the international peer-reviewed journal Berytus since 1987.

Mohammed Raja Alhussaini Alsharif (BA ’68) is currently retired. Formerly, he was Saudi Arabia’s ambassador to Canada and the Republic of Turkey, and ambassador from the League of Arab States to the United States. He worked as senior diplomat or Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the Saudi embassies in Manila, Caracas, and London; and as head of mission in Bamako as well as head of the Saudi consulate in Houston, Texas. Ambassador Alhussaini Alsharif earned a master’s degree in political science from University of the Philippines and a PhD in international relations from University of Houston in Texas.

Sayfuddin Kassir (BA ’68, MA ’71) After earning her master’s degree in history, Sayfuddin did her military service in Syria until 1974 when she returned to AUB as a doctoral student in Arab history. After two years her studies were interrupted by the Lebanese Civil War. She then joined the Ministry of Education in Syria as a history teacher at a secondary school in Raqqa. After 30 years of service, Sayfuddin retired and joined HE Aga Khan’s institutions in Syria as a volunteer in several different positions, the last of which was as a member for six years of the International Conciliation and Arbitration Board. Sayfuddin now works as a translator in conjunction with the Institute of Ismaili Studies in
Amin I. Kassis, PhD (BS ’68, MS ’71) recently received the Scientific and Technological Achievement Award from Takreem (www.takreem.net), an organization that honors Arabs who have excelled in their fields. Born in Aleppo, Syria of Armenian heritage, Amin received his PhD from McGill University. He is an emeritus professor of radiology at Harvard Medical School in Boston, and was the director of the Experimental Radionuclide Therapy and Radiobiology sections at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Amin is cofounder of two startup biotechnology companies: OncoTherapeutica, Inc., which develops EMCIT cancer imaging and therapy technology, and OncoCell MDx, Inc., which develops the SNEP cancer and other indications detection blood assay. He holds 46 issued and 106 pending US and world patents.

Rosalie Sadakian Kalebjian (BS ’68) earned her master’s degree as a clinical specialist in gerontology from the University of California, San Francisco in 1981. She and her husband Henry Kalebjian are enjoying family life with their three children and four grandchildren.

Haigaram Toroyan (BS ’68) writes, “I would like to add the following note 50 years after graduation. To my AUB: You were a fountain of incessant knowledge and experience. To the class of ’68: We were lucky to have graduated during AUB’s centennial (something that happens only once every 100 years). To my physics classmates: I miss the good old days we had together. And finally, to all alumni: We are the luckiest students in the world for having attended such a great university, and we are forever proud to be on the roster of AUB graduates.” [toroyanh@hotmail.com]

Nicholas Xyttas (Xitas) (BBA ’68) writes, “It is unbelievable that half a century has passed since the BBA graduation in 1968. We recently had a small reunion with some AUB graduates from North America in Cozumel, Mexico, at the home of Dan Tschirgi. I am semi-retired with three sons and a grandson. I live in Cyprus and occasionally visit Beirut. Last summer AUB graduates in Cyprus organized a visit to a mountain winery and met up with old friends who graduated in the 1960s. I welcome contact from AUB classmates or friends. [mecepus@cytanet.com.cy]

Sawas Halabi Ezzeddine, PhD (BS ’80, MA ’83) As a student at AUB’s School of Nursing in 1977, my classmates and I were taught by a pioneering nursing faculty to whom I am eternally indebted. We learned to accept and appreciate diversity and, most importantly, we loved each other. I never thought I would be the director of a nursing school one day, but I found myself assuming this responsibility only six years after graduation. I joined

John Gueverian (BAR ’73) writes, “Forty-five years have passed and our memories of AUB are still so fresh.” John lives and works in Cyprus. He is an award-winning architect of major public works including sports arenas, housing projects, and monuments. He also has a presence in the art world with a calendar of solo and group shows. An active member of the Armenian community, John is married with two daughters.

Fouad Mostapha (DIPL ’73) lives in Orlando, Florida. He writes, “I remember my 21 multinational classmates (nine nationalities). I will never forget my dedicated professors and instructors. May the souls of the departed rest in peace, and blessed are those who are still alive.”

Sami Pharaon (BBA ’73) has lived in Dubai for the past eight years. In 1992, he founded Devine SARL in Paris, a building materials and supplies company with distribution in the Middle East. Today Sami works in Dubai as a construction consultant for wood and steel doors, ironmongery, marble, and stone. He writes, “I graduated in 1973 with friends that I am still in contact with all over the world. That year in Lebanon was considered the last of the golden years . . . AUB was our second home. I wish new graduates success in their lives.” [samipharaon@hotmail.fr]
Adib Kouteili (BE ’83) is the managing director of PEB Steel. He writes, “At the age of 56, I received an EMBA degree from Université du Québec à Montréal while still managing my business in Southeast Asia. I feel proud that most of my 1983 classmates have achieved great success in their lives. AUB taught us to think critically and to adapt to change. This is proving increasingly crucial in our Artificial Intelligence Age.” Adib lives in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Shawki D. Saad (BS ’79, MD ’83) earned his bachelor’s degree in medical sciences with distinction at AUB. He completed a residency in general surgery at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, and a fellowship in vascular surgery at St. Mary’s Hospital, Long Beach, California. Shawki is proud to be an AUB alumnus and will always think of his experience there as an important chapter in his life. He is presently in private practice specializing in general, vascular, and endovascular surgery. In addition, Dr. Saad has been the medical director of trauma services at Dignity Health Northridge Hospital since 1994 where he is currently chief of staff. He is the recipient of numerous awards for his life-saving work from local, city, county, and state agencies, including one from former president Bill Clinton. His wife Teresita is also a physician. The couple has two daughters.

Jamil Soucar (BE ’83) writes: “Mazen Majzoub from the engineering class of 1983 started a “WhatsApp” group and in less than two weeks over 100 contacts were made. Names that we hadn’t heard in over 30 years suddenly popped back into our lives. This group has been actively chatting, reconnecting with old friends and former classmates, and even inviting each other to visit. A reunion dinner took place in Beirut last month. There are talks about another Beirut reunion soon and one in Brazil or the United States in 2018. The people who joined were from all over the world: the United States, Brazil, Dubai, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, England, and Australia—all talking as if they were in the same room. The instant bond was amazing. It felt like the intervening 35 years never happened. It was also a pleasure to see that all our old friends are successful in their work. Some stayed within their majors and others changed paths. The photos that were shared were the scary part. I could not recognize half of them, but some still had the same old features I remember.” Jamil lives in Los Angeles, California.

“AUB taught us to think critically and to adapt to change. This is proving increasingly crucial in our Artificial Intelligence Age.”

Adib Kouteili (BE ’83)
Sally Kaya (BA ’91, MA ’02) and Fouad Najjar (BBA ’87) After finishing a master’s degree in philosophy, Sally began working at the AUB Office of Communications where she is currently publications director. Fouad held several positions abroad after obtaining his CPA and CFE certificates in the United States. He is currently based in Lebanon as CFO of MTC Group. On September 28, 2016, Sally and Fouad became the proud parents of twin boys. They are particularly grateful to the doctors of AUBMC who stewarded Sally’s pregnancy and delivered two healthy babies, Elie and Alexander (held by Sally in the photo).

Rafka Bou Habib (BS ’93, MD ’97) After earning his MD, Rafka did a residency at AUBMC in obstetrics and gynecology. He has two clinics and works in six hospitals, including Clemenceau. Married with two children, Rafka reports that he is very fulfilled. “Twenty-five years after earning my biology degree at AUB, it feels like only yesterday. I have many good memories and even nostalgia for the good old days. I am so fond of my alma mater and would be happy if my kids made it to AUB, like I did. I feel that AUB has contributed a lot to the person I am today.” Rafka lives in Rabieh, Mt. Lebanon. [rafkabou@yahoo.com]

Jihad Abbas (BE ’98) graduated with a degree in electrical engineering. He was the recipient of the Penrose Award, the Charlie Korban Award, and the Distinguished Alumni Award. He earned a master’s degree at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte in 2000. That same year he joined Intel Corporation in Chandler, Arizona, where he lives today. As a design engineer, Jihad worked on several products ranging from high-end computer servers to low-power mobile SoCs (system-on-a-chip). He designed and led the development of several SoC interfaces including memory, camera, and display IPs. An avid supporter of local science fairs, Jihad has served as a grand award judge in several local and national science fairs—most notably the International Science and Engineering Fair in Phoenix, Arizona. When not working, he enjoys spending time with his family, watching sports, and exercising.

Fady Hocheimy (BBA ’01, MBA ’03) is the owner and managing director of MFH Group in Gambia, West Africa. The MFH Group is a holding company that acts as a distributor for a number of international consumer products and services including LG Electronics.

Raghid Bitar (BS ’98, MD ’02) Raghid did a general surgery residency with a fellowship in minimally invasive surgery at the University of North Carolina (UNC), Chapel Hill. He is currently an assistant professor of surgery at UNC’s School of Medicine, and chief of medical staff at Chatham Hospital. Raghid lives in Chapel Hill with his wife Sherene Whebe Bitar (BS ’99, MPH ’01) and children Leen (12), Abdallah (10), and Jude (4). He has been involved with the WAA Aub North Carolina Chapter since its inception.

Hassan Abou Jerji (BS ’03) writes, “It has been 15 years since our graduation from AUB! I have settled in Canada and work in the field of risk management and internal audit at TD Bank Group in Toronto.”
Tania Tarraf (BA ‘08) writes: “I believe that the years that I spent at AUB are what allowed me to have a versatile career which included work in research, public relations and policy, the news industry, and international humanitarian aid. In the heart of the Middle East, AUB offers its students a plethora of ideas, unforgettable experiences, and an unbreakable bond with its alumni. AUB has historically played a pivotal role in shaping the minds of the region and it will continue to do so. My favorite pastime includes walking around campus with my son and a good cup of coffee.”

Ward Wehbeh Christofi (BE ‘08) is currently working as a financial accountant and international financial reporting standards audit coordinator for an offshore group of companies. She is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, Associate Chartered Accountant (ACA) and the Cyprus Institute of Internal Auditors. Ward lives in Nicosia, Cyprus with her husband Giorgos Christofi and their two children: Eva (7); and Athanasios (3). [wwehby@hotmail.com]

Serge M. Mattar (MD ’13) is training to be an infertility specialist. After earning his medical degree, he completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at AUBMC. He then moved to Montreal to pursue a fellowship in reproductive endocrinology and infertility at Université de Montréal. His current challenges are researching novel risk factors for ectopic pregnancy in assisted reproduction and surviving the frosty winter of the city.

Salam Salem (BS ’13) writes, “Looking back I always thank AUB for making me the strong, independent woman I am today. Thank you for preparing me for the good and the bad. AUB, I am forever grateful.”

Ziad Yamut (BA ’14) Although Ziad enrolled in AUB in 1986, it wasn't until 2014 that he earned a degree in public administration. Forced to abandon his AUB studies to help his family during the civil war, the hardships he encountered did nothing to dampen his spirits. Working as an MSFEA library assistant is only the beginning for Ziad, who devotes as much time as he can to his passion for the arts. “The fine arts and performing arts refine your being. When you sing, draw, sculpt, and photograph, you find yourself connected with creative ideas that take you away from the physical, materialistic world.” His motto is, “Be yourself no matter what they say.” [zy02@aub.edu.lb]
In Memoriam

Alumni

Abdul Mohsen Al-Qattan (BBA ’51), passed away on December 4 in London, England. Born in Jaffa, Palestine in 1928, Al-Qattan’s family was forced to flee during the Nakba, while the 20-year-old Abdul Mohsen was enrolled at AUB. He went on to become an internationally successful businessman and a distinguished philanthropist dedicated to his homeland and to promoting education in the Arab world. He was a member of the AUB Board of Trustees from 1995 to 2003 and was subsequently elected as a trustee emeritus. After graduating from AUB, Al-Qattan worked as a teacher in Jordan and then moved to Kuwait where he was controller general of the Ministry of Water and Electricity. In 1963, he founded Al Hani Construction and Trading Company, which grew to become one of Kuwait’s largest construction firms. He went on to found and manage several successful companies operating in the Middle East and Europe. Deeply committed to education and supporting the Palestinian people and culture, Al-Qattan founded the A. M. Qattan Foundation (London, Ramallah, and Gaza) in 1993. Today, the foundation is one of the leading charitable institutions in the region. It focuses on development efforts for children, teachers, and young artists. A great believer in the power of education to transform and uplift, Al-Qattan generously supported Birzeit University and his alma mater, establishing an endowed scholarship at AUB and supporting the rebuilding of College Hall, among other contributions. He is predeceased by his wife Leila, and survived by his four children, Najwa (BA ’77), Hani, Leenah, and Omar.

Lutfi Najib Diab, PhD (BA ’51) was born in Jdeidet Marjeyoun and passed away in Beirut on September 29 at the age of 88. He served AUB with high distinction for over 40 years and helped shepherd the University through turbulent times as dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and as acting president. Dr. Diab graduated from AUB with a BA in psychology and received his PhD from the University of Oklahoma. He returned to AUB in 1957 to serve as an instructor in psychology and soon moved up the ranks to assistant, associate, and full professor, first in the Department of Psychology and later the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. He became assistant dean in 1968 and, one year later, associate dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences under Dean Edwin Terry Prothro, who was his colleague in psychology and with whom he co-authored the book, Changing Family Patterns in the Arab East, in 1974. In 1985, at the height of the Civil War, Dr. Diab became dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and remained in this post for 12 years, serving under four AUB presidents. This was at a time when AUB presidents worked from the New York Office, leaving the daily running of affairs to the deans and acting presidents in Beirut. During this period, Dr. Diab also served as acting president of the University (1986-87), first under Calvin Plimpton and then under Frederic P. Herter. After serving as acting president, he remained as dean until 1997 and as a professor until his retirement in 1999. Dr. Diab is survived by his wife...
Salwa Makdah (BA ’68, MA ’70) and five children—all graduates of AUB: Rula (BA ’92, MA ’96), Najib (BBA ’93, MBA ’95), Samar (BA ’95, MA ’99), Dima (BS ’98, MD ’02), and Dalia (BA ’01). President Fadlo R. Khuri commented, “His steadfast determination to maintain the integrity and high ideals of the University and its Medical Center against enormous odds remains an inspiration to us all. The entire AUB community owes Dr. Lutfi Diab a debt of gratitude for his exemplary service and dedication. We have lost a pillar of the University.”

Frances Elizabeth Shultz Skory (BA ’51) was born in 1928 and passed away on October 14. As an AUB student, she was an active member of the AUB Drama Club where she made life-long friends and met her husband, David. Mrs. Skory was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; grew up in Port Arthur, Texas; and traveled extensively with her husband, an international lawyer, and their growing family of six children. Always civically minded, Mrs. Skory received honors for her leadership of the Girl Scouts in the United States, Italy,

Mona Chemali Khalaf (BA ’61, MA ’64) passed away on January 6, 2018 while visiting her family in New York City. After earning her bachelor’s degree with distinction, Khalaf became the first woman to obtain a master’s degree in economics at AUB. She went on to become a faculty member at Beirut University College, which was renamed Lebanese American University (LAU) in 1994. A lifelong advocate for women’s rights and empowerment, Khalaf was a renowned intellectual and activist in gender and social development issues in the Arab world. She served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Advisory Board of the Gender Economic Research and Policy Analysis initiative (GERPA) established by the World Bank and the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research, the Lebanese NGO Commission for the Preparation of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women; the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW); and the Board of Trustees of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. From 1997-2005, Mrs. Khalaf was director of LAU’s Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World. She served on the editorial board of the institute’s journal, Al Raida (The Pioneer), and authored numerous publications.

Khalaf generously donated her exceptional energy, expertise, and leadership to her alma mater. She joined AUB’s President’s Club in 1992 and became its chair in 2011, working tirelessly to build on its philanthropic mission to improve the student experience. Under her visionary guidance, the President’s Club renovated student social spaces; equipped smart classrooms, computer labs, and fitness areas; sponsored international sports tournaments; supported social and cultural activities, and produced a number of stellar exhibitions and publications highlighting different aspects of AUB’s storied history, with research and archival assistance from the University Libraries and its Archives and Special Collections Department. Khalaf is survived by her son, Dr. Amin Khalaf (BA ’90), and her daughter Nada. She is predeceased by her husband, Dr. Nadim Khalaf, who was a longtime professor and former chair of AUB’s Economics Department.
Talal Toufic Farah, PhD (BA ’62, MA ’70) passed away on September 20, in London. He was born in 1939 in Baghdad, where his father Dr. Toufic Farah, an MD from Hamat, Batroun District in North Lebanon, had a medical practice. Educated at the Tripoli School for Boys, Talal enrolled at AUB in 1958 earning his BA in political science and public administration. Following graduation, he worked for the Ford Foundation and ARAMCO in Saudi Arabia. He obtained a Rockefeller Foundation scholarship that enabled him to earn a master’s degree while teaching at IC. In 1971, Dr. Farah enrolled in The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, on a British Council scholarship, and completed his doctorate in history in 1977, the same year he married Lella Zakharia. He later worked as a lecturer at SOAS and founded Talis House, a research and consultancy firm in London. Dr. Farah was an indispensable member of WAAAUB’s UK Chapter, having served as its chairman from 2006 until his death. He is deeply mourned by the chapter and a wide network of AUB friends. He is predeceased by his wife, his brother Elias, and his sister Najwa. His siblings Umayma and Farah survives him, along with his two sons, Toufic and Elias.

Raghid Kazem El-Solh, (BA ’64) was born in 1942 and passed away on February 1. He was buried in his beloved Beirut in February 2017. He earned a master’s in political science, University of London (1978) and a doctorate in politics/international relations, University of Oxford (1986). His consultancy work for the UN and other organizations covered Arab regional affairs, democracy and governance, justice, and human rights. In one of the many obituaries honoring his life and achievements, he was lauded as a “a model of moral human elegance.” Dr. El-Solh was a regular contributor to Al-Hayat (UK) and Al-Khaleeij (UAE) newspapers. He participated in various local and satellite TV political programs and lectured on and produced working papers for conferences on international and Arab regional issues. He authored several books, most notable of which are Britain’s Two Wars with Iraq and Lebanon and Arabism 1936-1945. He was also editor of The Sultanate of Oman Archival Series 1914-1945. Dr. El-Solh is survived by his older siblings Hana and Khaldoun, his Egyptian/Irish wife Camillia, daughter Lina, and two grandchildren.

Mari Ishii Darghawth (BA ’75)
The following memorial tribute was written by Mari’s husband and daughters: It is with great sorrow that we announce the peaceful passing of Mari Ishii Darghawth (BA ’75) on July 21, 2016, in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, at the age of 64, surrounded by her family. She was the cherished daughter of Fumio and Noriko Ishii, beloved wife of 37 years to Bashar Darghawth, (BS ’72, MS ’75), and devoted mother to Maya Darghawth-Sequeira and Rasha Darghawth. Mari was born in Japan (1952) and moved to Kuwait in 1966 where her parents resided and worked. She attended high school at the American School of Kuwait, Leysin American School in Switzerland, and then to AUB for her university studies. After graduating in 1975, Mari returned to Kuwait and worked at Japan Airlines Regional Vice President’s Office for 14 years. Due to the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the family moved to England, where she worked with Mizumi UK Corporation until moving back to Beirut, Lebanon in 1994. The family decided to immigrate to Canada in 1996 and settled in Mississauga, Ontario. Mari worked at the Head Office of Air Canada from 1997 until 2016 as a corporate accounts analyst. We will forever miss her innate calmness, quiet selflessness, and biting sense of humor.

“When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.” – Kahlil Gibran
Alumni

Talaat Mohammed Khalil (aka Todd Kaleel) (BS ’73, MD ’77) was born in 1950 and passed away after a long battle with lung cancer on September 28 at his home in Sand Key, Florida. He completed a fellowship in surgery at Alexandria University, Egypt and received board certification in family medicine at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. Dr. Khalil had a private medical practice in the Tampa Bay, Florida area for many years. His last position as a medical professional was chief medical officer at Bay Pines Veterans Hospital where he served US veterans. He will be remembered for his passion for history and world cultures and for his work helping people suffering from disease and oppression. Dr. Khalil is survived by his wife Marilyn; six siblings, Ibrahim, Gamal, Mohammed, Hamdi, Ahmed, and Samia; stepchildren Michelle, Heather, Sean, and Matthew; and six grandchildren.

Amal Abu Shakra (BA ’79), the daughter of the late Mohammad Abu Shakra (MD ’31), passed away in Durham, North Carolina on August 26 at the age of 61. Born in Chiyah in Beirut’s southern suburbs to a family from Ammatour, in the Shouf District in Mount Lebanon, Abu Shakra studied at the National College of Choueifat, now known as The International School of Choueifat. After earning her BS in agriculture and a Diploma of Ingenieur Agricole, Abu Shakra received an MS in food and management science from the University of London, UK, and a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Surrey, Guildford, UK. From 1987-93 she completed post-doctoral appointments at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and at the US Environmental Protection Agency, both in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. In 1994, she joined North Carolina Central University in Durham as a professor of biology and biochemistry. Abu Shakra is survived by her husband, Dr. Wittold Winnik (who works at the US Environmental Protection Agency), and her siblings Eyad, Maha, and Hassan, all of whom are AUB alumni. Her brother Eyad, is an active member of WAAAUB’s UK Chapter.

Charles D. Adwan (BA ’98) After earning a master’s degree in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, Mr. Adwan worked as a governance and anti-corruption specialist at the World Bank for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. He quickly established himself as an emerging leader in the field of governance, social development, and political and economic reform. He led work on governance and anti-corruption in Lebanon and on governance dialogue in Syria. Mr. Adwan was the founding executive director of the Lebanese Transparency Association (the Lebanon chapter of Transparency International) and played a substantive role in the establishment of several national, regional, and global networks such as the Arab Region Parliamentarians against Corruption (ARPAC) and the Lebanon Corporate Governance Task Force (LCGTF). His published research focused on pluralism and civil society, freedom of information, nepotism, electoral reform, and corruption in post-war reconstruction. He is survived by his wife Kelly and three-year old son, William Charles. Charles also leaves behind his parents, brother Najib, and sister Carla.

He is remembered by one of his professors, Dr. Charlotte Karam, associate professor of organizational behavior and associate dean of programs at the Olayan School of Business, “Full of life, deep commitments, and dreams for a better Lebanon, Charles was a game-changing strategist who loved smooth whiskey, Time-Out, Wittgenstein, and Cuban cigars. At AUB he was involved in the Student Representative Committee elections and in the lively political debates on campus. With his passion and vision, Charles mobilized many AUBites (and others), leading them toward significant impact through models and mechanisms of better governance, transparency, and policy reform. Throughout it all, he was a witty, optimistic, and kind human being; a proud AUB FAS alumni—one who left us far too early.”
Insights from Researchers on the Ground in the Arab World

AUB’s New York Office has launched a series of events entitled AUB New York City Briefings: Research Knowledge and Insights from the Arab World. This initiative pairs faculty, experts, and students in Beirut, the MENA region, and the United States to address cutting-edge issues in a live, video-linked briefing and roundtable.

On December 8, 2017 internationally syndicated columnist and journalist in residence Rami Khouri; media analyst and Washington Post columnist David Ignatius; and AUB Director of Media Studies May Farah addressed how US journalists cover the Middle East in the social media age. Other programs featured Assistant Professor Martin Keulertz and incoming FAFS Dean Rabi Mohtar discussing food security threats in the region, and a discussion of the impact of climate change with Professor Nadim Farajalla, director of IFI’s Climate Change and Environment Program, with Dr. Anders Jägerskog, a senior water resource management specialist at the World Bank.

For information on AUB’s upcoming New York-Beirut Briefings, contact: AUBNYOevents@aub.edu
Artist’s impression of the Center for Advancement in Science and Engineering (to be located in the lower northeast section of campus) as proposed in the Campus Master Plan by the Dar Group.