



Dear friends and colleagues of the AUB community,

After a short summer break in which the President's Perspective message was limited to one a month, I am delighted to return to our normal twice-monthly communication at the start of Academic Year 2017-18.

Embarking on a life-changing journey

It is my pleasure to have this opportunity to speak directly to the new cohort of undergraduate and postgraduate students entering our community for the first time. You have come here on a transformative life journey—like me you will look back on your days and years as an AUB student with such joy, such pride, such Technicolor clarity, that they will stay with you, inspire you and drive you forward for the rest of your lives.

You will learn some of my favorite catchphrases—such as “the best and brightest of a generation” whose time at AUB prepares them to be “tomorrow’s leaders who will go out and change the world”. That’s you! It might seem a daunting prospect today, as you perhaps feel the anxiety of entering a new, more grown-up world, apprehensive about your workload and academic requirements, whether or not you will fit in. Don’t worry.



This is a community founded on renewal and constant acceptance of eager new members, and when I or my successor hands you your degree, you won't just believe you'll change the world, you will actually go out and do it!

In the few short years in between, I urge you to make the most of everything that this university has to offer.

Volunteer for every opportunity; test yourself in this unique intellectual sandbox; don't let anyone tell you *what* to think, but seize every chance from the great minds here to learn *how* to think. Join the student clubs that interest you; participate and give of yourself and of your time for those less fortunate; join one of our more than 200 student clubs and societies and stand for election; engage in peaceful debate with people who do not share your views; take up a new sport.

Always remember that true satisfaction in life comes not from the transitory success of gaining top marks in an exam or winning the cup; it comes from changing someone else's life for the better however that is achieved. AUB is where you can maximize your capacity to change the lives of others for the better.



Congratulations on taking the first major step—you have now become an AUB-ite. It will not be long before you become an AUB alumna or alumnus, joining one of the most extraordinary communities of leaders, innovators and servants of society around the world. Go boldly towards that goal and enjoy every step of the journey.

Critical international dimension

Every new student that steps through our gates is important—as the incomparable AUB Provost Mohamed Harajli is fond of saying, our students are everything to us; without them we wouldn't have a university! Nevertheless I would like to extend a particularly warm welcome to those who have arrived by land, by sea, but mostly by air into this beautiful and vibrant, if occasionally chaotic country to pursue your academic goals.

The hardworking [Office of International Programs \(OIP\)](#) has already helped guide you along your first steps through the maze of registrations, official paperwork, accommodation, etc. alongside the specialized orientation teams which have mediated the induction of a new wave of [students](#) from Lebanon and [new faculty](#) from some of the outstanding universities of the world and from our Lebanese peers.

The international students' induction is supported by a team of dedicated OIP Mentors trained and prepared by the office every semester to ensure meaningful and sustainable peer-to-peer guidance during the first week, but also throughout the students' stay with us. Sincere thanks to them, and to all who have made Orientation Week such a success.



Our international diversity is a factor that we have always prized at AUB and we will explore every available avenue to restore a situation that approaches the magnificent pre-war days when some half of students came from outside Lebanon. The mixture of students of assorted backgrounds is the best preparation for what you will encounter in the outside world; it makes you more resilient, more tolerant, and more capable of success, especially in the polyglot atmospheres that mark the most healthy, crosscutting, and transformative communities.

Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the OIP Welcome Day for international students that took place on August 22, when 140 new students from 61 countries joyfully came together in precisely this context. They included exchange students, MCF, MEPI-TL and Al Ghurair Foundation scholars, freshmen, sophomore and graduate students. Reports have reached me of a unique ambiance that promises to deliver untold opportunities for all our students to discover what separates and unites them, whether they hail from Europe's most developed metropolis or an informal settlement in war-torn Mogadishu. I salute the unquenchable intellectual curiosity that brings one from their advantaged setting in the Global North and the indomitable spirit that raises another out of the debilitating embrace of war, poverty and exclusion of the Global South. You are all now part of the AUB story, and your contribution is priceless.

Great Registrar leaves great legacy

Like any august institution, AUB has its fair share of revered figures, but few attract the universal respect and devotion that our retiring University Registrar Dr. Moueen Salameh has. He joined AUB's mechanical engineering department in 1979 and has served unstintingly with great distinction in academic and administrative roles for all of those 38 years.



His tenure in the Office of the Registrar since 2000 ushered in new standards of systematic efficiency that has raised this critical office of record-keeping to become the pride of our academic community. Dr. Salameh's achievements include developing a cutting-edge centralized final exam scheduling software, in-house printing of certificates, comprehensive automation, and the electronic archiving of records so that they now comprise the entirety of the University's registration archive stretching back to 1866.

One of the hallmarks of great leadership is a predisposition to empower others while taking full responsibility themselves. Another is the tendency to share decision-making as inclusively and consensually as possible, but yet to show sharp judgment and decisiveness when necessary to establish new practices and improve existing ones. These qualities may be a rarity, but Dr. Salameh is an exemplar of them. Another rarity is to encounter such a trailblazer who displays so utterly the old-fashioned virtues of dignified bearing, ineffable courtesy, and devotion and affection towards students, faculty and staff, treating them as family and friends.



We wish Moueen Salameh a full and happy retirement secure in the knowledge that he leaves behind a highly motivated and accomplished team that will follow the path that he has set. They and we all will genuinely miss Moueen's benign presence, and will benefit from his legacy for a long time to come.

Best regards,

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President
