

AUK CHRONICLE

FALL 2015

**SENIOR SEMINAR IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
WITH H.E. NABEELA AL-MULLA**

**THE CULTURAL
CIRCLE &
AUK LAUNCH
ALMULTAQA PRIZE**

**AUK AND GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY STUDENT
EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

**AUK WINS 3RD
TECHNOLOGY AWARD
FOR 2015**



CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS

4 COVER FEATURE

SENIOR SEMINAR WITH H.E. NABEELA AL-MULLA
AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT

6 **KIPCO** CORNER

8 **Dartmouth** CORNER

10

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT
GRADUATES ITS 10TH CLASS

14

THE CULTURAL CIRCLE & AUK LAUNCH
ALMULTAQA PRIZE

15 Dr. Lisa Urkevich Appointed Harvard Visiting Scholar and
Awarded University of Maryland Alumna of the Year

16 CGS Launches First Oral History and Documentation
Project

19 AUK Wins 3rd Technology Award For 2015

24 AUK Appoints Two New Deans

FEATURES

17 RISE Center
Commences its
Lecture Series

18 CCE Develops Workshop
For NUKS-USA Conference

20 **STAFF HIGHLIGHT**
Hala Al-Abdulrazzaq

22 AUK Supports the
Production of "Gulf Affairs"

25 AUK and George
Washington University
Student Exchange Program

26 AUK Program Analyst
Participates In Red Bull
Paper Wings 2015

28 **FACULTY HIGHLIGHT**
Joseph Fiannaca

30 The Department of
Electrical and Computer
Engineering Fosters Student
Research Engagement

31 Report on Attending GIMC6



The **AUK Chronicle** is a fully licensed magazine dedicated primarily to issues of Higher Education in Kuwait and the region. Published on a quarterly basis, it features editorials and opinions, research articles, and subjects of concern to Higher Education. The aim is to give Higher Education a voice and forum, whereby achievements, challenges, and debated issues can be published and discussed openly in an effort to further improve our knowledge and implementation of Higher Education. The AUK Chronicle is open to all faculty, staff, and other personnel working in academia, as well as major corporate stakeholders, to take part in sharing their research and articles and ensuring that Higher Education attains the appropriate attention as a tool of social change.

© FALL 2015 / AUK.OPA

EDITORIAL TEAM:

Amal Al-Binali

Vice President for Admissions and Public Affairs

Rehab El-Bahey

Assistant Director

PR & Marketing

Office of Public Affairs

Suliman Buhaimeed

University Editor

PR & Marketing

Office of Public Affairs

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Dr. Lisa Urkevich; Mr. Rusty E Bruns; Ms. Reem Al Ali; Ms. May Ramadhan; Mr. Qussay Nasser Aldin; Dr. Mohammed El Abd; Ms. Hanan Arnous; Kerry L. Laufer (*Dartmouth College*); Emily G. Nichols (*Dartmouth College*)

DESIGN & LAYOUT:

Amer El-Assaad

Director

PR & Marketing

Office of Public Affairs

Patrick Makhoul

Graphic Designer

PR & Marketing

Office of Public Affairs

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Office of Public Affairs

(except where noted)

PRINTING:

British Industries Printing and Packaging Co.
Shuwaikh, KUWAIT

INQUIRIES & SUBMISSIONS:

Rehab El-Bahey

Assistant Director

PR & Marketing

Office of Public Affairs

relbahey@auk.edu.kw



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY of KUWAIT

P.O. Box 3323, Safat 13034

Kuwait

Tel: 1-802040 / (+965) 2224-8399

Fax: (+965) 2224-8376

PR@auk.edu.kw

www.auk.edu.kw



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Members of the AUK community,

In this Chronicle issue, I am pleased to share that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (SPSC), which I had the honor to chair, has completed a 5-year Institutional Strategic Plan also known as “Plan-to-Plan” document. In this regard, it is worth noting that the SPSC met 22 times between September 2014 and June 2015. Following approval of the BOT, the plan will be disseminated to all AUK units, and SPSC will affirm a timeline for planning at the College, Division, and Department levels.

The plan is AUK’s first indigenous plan ever completed by senior administrators and at no cost. The plan wouldn’t have been possible without the support of the Board of Trustees and the diligent work of the SPSC members, in particular: Trustee Samer Khanachet, College Deans, Vice President for Admissions and PR, Assistant to the President for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, Director of AALSS, Chief Information Officer, Director of Finance, Director of Human Resources, Director of Campus Services, Student Council representative, and an Alumni representative.

I, also, would like to share that we have signed a 3-year MOU with the George Washington University (GW) for undergraduate student exchange, in addition to our existing student exchange agreements with other universities. To this effect, study abroad under student exchange agreements will be handled on the university level, and a Study Abroad Coordinator will be announced this Fall semester.

Aside from this brief message, I invite you to read the Chronicle and learn more about AUK’s faculty, staff and student activities. We are indeed appreciative of all of the Chronicle’s staff and PR Department continued effort in producing this important in-house-publication.



Nizar Hamzeh, Ph.D.
President

COVER FEATURE



H.E. AMBASSADOR NABEELA AL-MULLA TEACHES A SENIOR SEMINAR IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AT AUK

H.E. Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla delivering her keynote speech at AUK Commencement 2015

The American University of Kuwait is proud to announce that it has signed an affiliation agreement with H.E. Ambassador Nabeela Al-Mulla, a Representative to NATO and Former Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brussels, Luxembourg, and the European Union, for the academic year 2015-2016, in which the Ambassador will teach a Senior Seminar in International Law and Organizations for students of the International Relations (IR) department. The agreement stipulates that any monetary compensation accrued from the seminar will be donated directly to AUK's Scholarship and Financial Aid Fund.

The participation of Ambassador Al-Mulla offers a practical "real world" perspective that provides IR students with a deeper understanding of the practical application of international law. As a result, student-learning is pushed beyond discussions about the actors, machinery, and structure that are typically studied in this field. Equally important, having Ambassador Al-Mulla teach the seminar affords students in the IR program an opportunity to learn from and interact with an experienced professional who has distinguished accomplishments in international relations; an opportunity that traditionally does not present itself until graduate school.

"I believe the benefits to the IR department are two-fold. First and foremost, having someone like Professor Al-Mulla teach a Senior Seminar allows the department to integrate academic scholarship with practical experience in an advance level course. As a result, students in the IR department walk

Al-Mulla offers a practical "real world" perspective that provides IR students with a deeper understanding of the practical application of international law.

away with knowledge that will make them more competitive in graduate school, as well as the workplace. Second, Professor Al-Mulla's participation this semester offers the department an opportunity to experiment with a Professor of Practice series to complement the traditional academic learning that occurs in the Department of IR. Professors of Practice are typically distinguished and eminent professionals, either practicing or retired, who can contribute to the scholarly mission of an academic institution. This kind of opportunity could create a competitive advantage for the IR Department and AUK vis-à-

vis other institutions in Kuwait and the region," explained Dr. Roman Kulchitsky, Department Chair to the Department of International Relations.

Senior Seminars offer students an opportunity to reflect on the knowledge they have gained throughout their chosen educational path in international relations and to apply this knowledge in a learning environment that is comparable to that of the first year of graduate studies.

For her work with the International Atomic Energy Agency during the Korean and Iranian crises, Ambassador Al-Mulla was presented with the Austrian Grand Golden Decoration of Honor for First Class Merit in 2004, and was nominated by the Civil Society for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. She received her B.A. in Political Science and her M.A. in International Relations, with honors, from the American University of Beirut (AUB).

Ambassador Al-Mulla is the former resident Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Austria, Belgium, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and non-resident Ambassador to Botswana, Hungary, Luxembourg, Namibia, Mauritius, Slovakia and Slovenia. H.E. has represented Kuwait in the Arms Control and Regional Security in the Middle East (ACRE), the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). She was also the first woman from the Gulf Cooperation Council to serve as an ambassador, and the first Arab woman to serve as Permanent Representative to the United Nations. 🇰🇼



(left to right) Prof. Nizar Hamzeh, President of AUK; H.E. Nabeela Al Mulla; Dr. Rawda Awwad, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Roman Kulchitsky, International Relations Department Chair at the agreement signing ceremony.



TWO AUK ALUMNI WIN KIPCO TMKEEN AWARD FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

PRIZE IS WORTH US \$100,000 IN SERVICES FROM THE KIPCO GROUP

Talal Alyaseen and Ali Ahmad Taqi are no strangers to ranking high in local and regional technology competitions. The two AUK alumni of 2012 have competed as students of AUK in the Microsoft Imagine Cup World Finals (in 2011 and 2012) where they presented their ideas for mobile applications. Now, as part of a team of young entrepreneurs, they have become the first-time winners of the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs, a collaboration between KIPCO – Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) – and the Youth Empowerment Symposium (Tmkeen).

Ten young entrepreneurs running media and technology businesses in Kuwait competed to present their initiatives to a final judging panel for a chance to win US \$100,000 worth of services provided from KIPCO Group, which include financial, strategic and operational consultation sessions, market studies, insurance coverage and advertising services. In an announcement made during the opening of the Youth Empowerment Symposium, held under the patronage of H.H. the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Ajar Online was named the winner.

Ajar Online is a cloud service built for the real estate market in Kuwait and the GCC. It offers users a quick and efficient online rent collection service via SMS and email. The online platform for the payment and collection of rent was co-founded by young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs Shaheen Alkhudhari and Talal Alyaseen. They presented their project to a panel of judges, which included the Co-Founder and CEO of Storehouse, Mr. Mark Kawano; Co-Founder of Storehouse, Timothy Donnelly; Founding Director of the American United School of Kuwait, Dr. Jennifer J. Beckwith; Kuwaiti IT expert, Eng. Manar Al Hashash; and General Manager of Ghaliyah Technology, Mr. Abdulrazag Al Mutawa, who recognized them as the winners of the first-ever KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs.

The winning team also included Mohammad Eid Ebrahim and Ali Ahmad Taqi.

ABOVE: AUK Alum, Ali Taqi (left) COO of Ajar Online; and Talal Alyaseen (right) CTO & Co-founder of Ajar Online

Ms. Eman Al Awadhi, KIPCO's Group Communications Director, explained that KIPCO sees such opportunities as important ones to participate in. "KIPCO is a strong believer in the important role that young people can play to make the future of Kuwait a brighter one. Our collaboration with Tmkeen has allowed us to engage in a dialogue with Kuwait's talented, young business community and to understand how we can support them to make their businesses more sustainable. This has been an exciting journey for us at KIPCO, and we look forward to seeing the businesses that participated with us grow and prosper," she said.

On his part, Mr. Ali Al Ibrahim, CEO of the Youth Empowerment Organization, explained to KIPCO that "Empowerment of young people is the driver at Tmkeen, and this award has given us the opportunity to work more closely with young Kuwaitis who require mentorship and support in order to take their businesses to a higher level. KIPCO's expertise in diverse sectors has made it possible for us to provide such support. We look forward to seeing the fruits of these efforts as we continue to inspire our young generation to pursue their passion in business."



Ali and Talal found the experience to be a beneficial one. "A strong building is only as strong as its foundation, and that is what AUK did for me. I did not have any prior experience with programming, and so I started from scratch. In addition, being involved in competitions like ACPC and Imagine Cup gave me experience of dealing with tasks under pressure," explained Ali. "The CSIS program at AUK always challenged us as students. It provided us with all the tools and knowledge required to take our career to the next level. In addition to that, we've frequently been involved with ICPC-ACM and the Imagine cup. With that I thank the CSIS faculty for the great mentorship and guidance," Talal added.

KIPCO Group companies – including Burgan Bank, OSN, Gulf Insurance Group, KAMCO Investment Company, United Real Estate, Qurain Petrochemical Industries, AUK, AUS, United Networks and Marina FM – are supporters of the KIPCO Tmkeen Award for Young Entrepreneurs. ★

ABOVE: Regional Microsoft Imagine Cup contest in 2012 with Talal Alyaseen and Ali Taqi among the winners (as seen in the front row)



The **KIPCO Group** is one of the biggest holding companies in the Middle East and North Africa, with consolidated assets of US\$ 31.3 billion as at 31 March 2015. The Group has significant ownership interests in over 60 companies operating across 24 countries. The group's main business sectors are financial services, media, real estate and manufacturing. Through its core companies, subsidiaries and affiliates, KIPCO also has interests in the education and medical sectors.



The First Youth Empowerment Symposium was held in 2012, and the annual event grew to become the starting point of Youth Empowerment Organization, which was officially formed in 2014. The Youth Empowerment Organization is an independent, private Non-Profit Organization (NPO) & Non-Governmental Organization (NGO).

It is a national initiative that is delivered by youth to youth in a professional setting, with a global outreach towards economic advancements worldwide. The organization's vision is to empower young people in order to drive a new era of economic development, growth and productivity.

Andrei Zavalii,
Associate Professor
of Philosophy



SEVENTH AUK FELLOW CONCLUDES HIS VISIT TO DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

AUK Associate Professor of Philosophy, Andrei Zavalii, concluded his summer fellowship program at Dartmouth, which is part of the Dartmouth-AUK faculty fellowship program that was launched in 2009. Zavalii's research grant was sponsored by the Department of Philosophy at Dartmouth College.

In an interview at Dartmouth, Zavalii said, "The endless rows of bookshelves at Baker-Berry Library are one of the main reasons why scholars from various fields seek to secure a fellowship at Dartmouth. I had immediate access to all the books and periodicals that I could conceivably need for my project." Over the course of 8 weeks, Zavalii worked on his research on "the nature of an other-directed moral evaluation and its function in the overall structure of moral agency", among other projects.

The Dartmouth-AUK faculty fellowship program is one of many collaborative programs that link Dartmouth and AUK. Dartmouth has already hosted six AUK fellows on this program prior to Zavalii. The fellows were sponsored by the Leslie Center for the Humanities; the Thayer School of Engineering; the medical school's Institute for Quantitative Biomedical Sciences (iQBS); and the Department of English, respectively.

The fellowship opportunity is open to AUK faculty members who are conducting research that can be facilitated by having access to Dartmouth's libraries and museum collections, or to senior administrators pursuing professional development projects that can be guided by Dartmouth mentors.

The fellowship application criteria include the proposal's promise of research outcomes or professional development, alignment with the Strategic Planning Goals of AUK, a project timeline, and appropriate use of Dartmouth resources.

Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, is the international partner institution to the American University of Kuwait (AUK), as defined by the Private Universities Council of the State of Kuwait (Resolution no. PUC (5/21-2/2005). Dartmouth and AUK have worked closely together since 2003, when the two institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding that facilitated a series of advisory, consultative, and cooperative projects. The initial agreement was renewed for a third time in April 2013 to extend through 2018.

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE AND AUK COOPERATION EXPANDS TO TUCK SCHOOL OF BUSINESS STRATEGY CONSULTING EXPERTISE

MULTIFACETED COOPERATION ENGAGES TUCK MBAs IN LONG-TERM PLANNING EXERCISE FOR AUK'S COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

During the 2016-2017 academic year, the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College will engage with the American University of Kuwait by sending Tuck students to Kuwait as part of Tuck's OnSite Global Consulting Program. The team will work for AUK, researching and recommending methods to enhance the current Business and Economics curriculum, and conducting market studies to determine demand for growth and expansion in AUK Business and Economics offerings.

"We are eager to welcome the Tuck MBA students to our university and benefit from the experience and perspective they can offer in our strategic planning process," said Nizar Hamzeh, President of the American University of Kuwait. "AUK has a well-established undergraduate business program and is currently under consideration for accreditation by the AACSB program – we believe the in-depth research and strategic guidance the Tuck team provides will build nicely on our foundation of quality education and drive us even further in that direction." Dean Jin Wang of AUK's College of Business and Economics added, "We are committed to continuous improvement and to preparing our students to envision and serve domestic, regional, and international needs. Tuck and AUK can learn from one another."

Matthew Slaughter, Dean of the Tuck School of Business commented, "As we prepare future global business leaders at Tuck, nothing is more critical than hands-on experience engaging with other cultures. The launch of TuckGO this year ensures that all Tuck students have an immersive global business experience in a country new to them moving forward. We are proud to provide experiences like these in partnership with schools like AUK who are leaders in important global markets."

In addition to sending Tuck MBAs to Kuwait for consulting purposes, TuckGO will welcome two AUK student interns in the summer of 2016. The students will work with the various TuckGO international programs and participate in educational seminars to gain exposure to the operations of an American graduate business school. Dale F. Eickelman, Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Relationship Coordinator for the Dartmouth AUK Program added, "The Dartmouth-AUK program has welcomed interns since 2005. The addition of AUK internships for students at Tuck in 2016 is a first for both institutions, and a first step toward exploring other co-operative possibilities." Beth Hindmarsh, Dartmouth-AUK Program Coordinator added, "This collaboration with Tuck adds an exciting dimension to the offerings we have for AUK students who come to Dartmouth in the summer."

OnSite Global Consulting is a core offering of Tuck's global programming. The course offers a wide range of international consulting services to corporations, not-for-profits, and governments where additional resources and strategic support are needed. Projects are short-term (10-12 weeks), highly focused, and concentrate on delivering immediate solutions to specific operational and business development challenges. OnSite is one of the programs central to the TuckGO global initiative at Tuck.

ABOVE: Left to Right - Beth Hindmarsh, Program Manager, Dartmouth-AUK Program; Kerry Laufer, Director, Tuck OnSite Global Consulting; Matthew Slaughter, Dean, Tuck School of Business; Dale Eickelman, Relationship Coordinator, Dartmouth-AUK Program – *Photo Courtesy of Dartmouth College*

A group of graduates in black gowns and caps at a ceremony. The graduates are wearing black gowns with gold stoles and black mortarboard caps with gold tassels. They are standing in rows, and the background is a blurred stage with warm, golden lighting. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

**THE
AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF KUWAIT
GRADUATES
ITS 10TH CLASS**



AUK held the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2015 at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref, where 315 students received their degrees and officially became AUK graduates. The ceremony was attended by Shaikha Dana Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Founder and Chair of AUK, along with members of the AUK Board of Trustees, diplomats, dignitaries, and the families and friends of this year's graduates.

Ms. Amal Al-Binali, Vice President for Admissions & Public Affairs, welcomed the guests and family members of the graduates to AUK's 10th graduation ceremony, and officially commenced the ceremony by announcing the traditional faculty processional.

The Class of 2015 followed the faculty processional into the hall. The faculty of the College of Arts & Sciences were led by the Associate Dean of the College, Dr. Ali Charara, the faculty of the College of Business & Economics were led by Professor Rafiqul Bhuyan, Chair of the Department of Finance in the College of Business & Economics, and the students were led by the Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Hanan Muzaffar.

The President's party was led by the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Rawda Awwad, bearer of the University mace - a symbol of protection for the University President. She was followed by former ambassador to the U.N. H.E Nabeela Al-Mulla, the Associate Dean for Accreditation in the College of Business and Economics, Dr. Marcelline Fusilier, AUK's Registrar, Dr. Pierre Murr, Chief Information Officer, Mr. Rusty Bruns and AUK President, Dr. Nizar Hamzeh.

Following the processional, graduates and guests were asked to rise for the National Anthem, which was followed by a recitation from the Holy Quran.

After the recitation, Professor Dr. Nizar Hamzeh addressed the graduates and congratulated them for successfully passing a major milestone in their lives and shared with them what he believes all societies need in order to develop and progress. "Commencement has a magical quality of lifting up our line of sight and letting us view our lives across a wide swath of time. I deeply believe that the two most important axioms for development and progress of societies are new ideas and their application on the one hand, and the leaders who will carry those new ideas forward, and bring them into completion on the other." He also took the time to motivate the graduates with a statement he hopes they will always carry with them as graduates of AUK; "Remember where you are from: At AUK, we don't wait for the future; we create it."

The President introduced this year's keynote speaker, H.E Ambassador Al-Mulla, a Representative to NATO, and Former



AUK President Nizar Hamzeh delivering opening speech at AUK Commencement 2015

Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brussels, Luxembourg, and the European Union, who is also a Former Honorary Member of the AUK Board of Trustees, and invited her to the stage to deliver her keynote address to the students.

H.E Ambassador Al-Mulla explained that students receiving their degrees marked not only an ending of a phase, but a beginning of a new one, and advised them to be honest with themselves and to cast away self-doubt. “Reflect on your decisions, seek advice, but be decisive. Do not agonize over changing tracks if you realize that path is not for you to follow. Your path, even with its detours, is a process of life - like a game of Snakes and Ladders, with its ups and downs. Success and achievements are not take-out orders. Remember that at the end of the day, you have yourself to contend with your integrity and self-satisfaction within,” she said.

H.E Ambassador Al-Mulla also reminded the graduates that, although they possess their degrees and the skies seem limitless, they must maintain strong roots in the ground. “Yes, you have earned wings, but remember too that you have roots that need to be strengthened and nurtured. You shall embrace the ‘global village’, but your roots remain at home, with your family and your community. They are your life line; ever present, ever embracing. Be true to them as you remain true to yourself; all inclusive as an achiever,” she said.

Following the keynote address, Dr. Hanan Muzaffar, Dean for Student Affairs, was invited to speak to the students. She let them know that all the members of the AUK community who were present, as well as their families and friends, were at the ceremony to celebrate their accomplishments as AUK’s latest generation of Wolfpacks, and to wish them success in taking the experiences and the knowledge that AUK equipped them with and use them to start building and rebuilding the world. “Gloria Anzaldua, a personal favorite writer of mine, reminds us that awareness of ourselves is vital to affect change in society, adding that “nothing changes in the real world unless it first happens in the images in our head.” And I’d say that a university education is the best tool that equips you to be aware of yourself and your possibilities, and the American University of Kuwait especially excels at nurturing these images in your head so you can make them into realities,” she said. Dr. Muzaffar then introduced this year’s valedictorians, Yasser Khalil from the College of Arts & Sciences, who earned the valedictorian distinction with a 3.95 GPA, and Aisha Al-Hunaidi from the College of Business and Economics, who earned the distinction with a 4.0 GPA, and invited Aisha to deliver a speech to her peers and guests.

“We have a great journey ahead of us, one where we can pursue our goals and make our dreams come true. The starting point of all this is today. As a class, we have grown and matured together. We made it through all the hardships and obstacles that we faced with dignity and pride, and we proudly stand here today. I am proud to be part of this class and part of AUK’s diverse and active community,” expressed Aisha.

The event then proceeded to the part of the ceremony that the graduates have been anticipating; the distribution of their earned degrees. The Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Rawda Awwad, recommended the conferral of degrees for the graduates of the College of Arts & Sciences, while Associate Dean for Accreditation in the College of Business & Economics, Dr. Marcelline Fusilier, recommended the conferral of degrees for the graduates of the College of Business & Economics, to President Hamzeh, who then conferred upon the graduates their respective degrees. The graduates were then awarded their bachelor’s degree diplomas by Dr. Hamzeh, H.E Ambassador Nabeela Al-Mulla, Dr. Rawda Awwad, and Dr. Marcelline Fusilier.

In keeping with the academic tradition, the graduates were requested to shift the tassels on their caps from right to left, thereby marking their official graduation from AUK. As the ceremony drew to its conclusion, the graduating class celebrated the traditional cutting of the Class of 2015 cake, and took photos with their families and friends. 🌟



AUK 2015 valedictorian, Aisha Al-Hunaidi, delivering her graduation speech



H.E. Ambassador Nabeela Al Mulla, the Keynote speaker of 2015



“ At AUK, we don't wait for the future. We create it. ”
Dr. Nizar Hamzeh



THE CULTURAL CIRCLE & AUK LAUNCH ALMUTAQA PRIZE FOR ARABIC SHORT STORY

The Cultural Circle, in partnership with AUK, has launched the **Cultural Circle Prize for Arabic Short Story (AlMultaqa)**. The Prize initiative aims to promote and encourage writers to pursue and master the art of writing Arabic short stories. Writers and publishers, from this region and around the world, will be recognized for their creative contributions to Arabic short stories.

The annual Prize will recognize an exceptional writer or publisher who has creatively contributed to Arabic short story writing. The winner will receive USD 20,000, a trophy, a Certificate of Recognition, and an opportunity to have their winning piece translated to English for further publication. A jury comprised of accomplished writers, critics, and professors will review the submissions and determine the winner of the Prize.

During the launch event, AUK President, Professor Nizar Hamzeh gave a speech where he affirmed the reason for the University's involvement with the Prize, claiming, "The role of the American University of Kuwait not only includes providing our students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in their careers and prosper in communities, but to also encourage students to participate in cultural and creative initiatives. As such, we are honored to partner with the Cultural Circle to launch the Kuwaiti, Arab and global AlMultaqa Prize for Arabic Short Stories."

The founder of the Cultural Circle and Head of the AlMultaqa Prize, Taleb Al-Refai acknowledged the value of this initiative, saying, "I must admit that the AlMultaqa Prize would not have seen the light without the kind support of Shaikha Dana Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Founder and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Kuwait. It is the first time that an international prize has risen through cooperation between an academic institution (AUK) and a local, cultural circle to promote and celebrate the art of Arabic short story writing in the Gulf and Arab world. After 35 years of being a short story writer, I am proud and honored to be a part of such a significant initiative with AUK to represent Kuwait on a global level in celebrating literary and cultural achievements."✳

The Prize will start accepting submissions from 1 January to 31 March, 2016. More information can be found on the Prize website: www.auk.edu.kw/almultaqa



جائزة الملتقى
ALMUTAQA PRIZE



DR. LISA URKEVICH APPOINTED HARVARD VISITING SCHOLAR AND AWARDED UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

The Chair of the Department of Music and Drama at AUK, Dr. Lisa Urkevich, has been appointed as Visiting Scholar at Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies for the academic year 2015-2016, where she will study the earliest known recordings from the Arabian Peninsula; the Hijazi sound files of 1906-09. Urkevich has already spent three months stationed at Harvard investigating the sound files which were originally recorded on wax cylinders and discovered in Makkah, Jeddah, and surrounding areas. They have not yet been thoroughly examined by the scholarly community.

Around twenty hours of recordings, or almost three hundred individual recordings survive. Although many include Call to Prayer (Athān), street-life sounds, and Quranic recitations, they are mostly dominated by music; wedding songs performed by women, children's songs, work songs, and songs performed by professional male musicians. She will return to Harvard two more times during this academic year to complete her research and in Spring 2016, she will present her research findings at Harvard University.

In October 2015, Dr. Urkevich's accomplishments were recognized as she received the Alumna of the Year Award in Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. The Alumni Association recognizes people who have made outstanding contributions to the University, their fields, and their communities. This year, the honor was extended to Dr. Urkevich, who received a BA degree from the University of Maryland in 1986. She was selected from thousands of other alumni for this distinguished honor. At the Award Ceremony, the presenter was the Chair of the Music Department Dr. Linda Dusman. She showed photographs and video footage of Dr. Urkevich engaging in fieldwork in the Arabian Peninsula while speaking extensively of Urkevich's professional achievements. ★



Oral history workshop - featured in photos: Dr. Farah Al-Nakib, Director of CGS and Rib Davis, a renowned oral historian and trainer.

CGS LAUNCHES FIRST ORAL HISTORY AND DOCUMENTATION PROJECT IN KUWAIT

The Center for Gulf Studies (CGS) at AUK launched the Oral History and Documentation Project (OHDP) in the Fall, 2015 semester. It is the first comprehensive program to be established in Kuwait to actively conduct oral histories on a wide range of topics and themes, in order to preserve the voices, memories, and experiences of generations of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis while they are still alive. Dr. Farah Al-Nakib, Director of the Center for Gulf Studies, noted that the development of a substantial archive of oral histories can serve to widen the field of historical research and open the door for more diverse economic, social, and cultural historical studies to be conducted on Kuwait and the Gulf region at large.

Through this on-going project, in-depth interviews will be audio recorded with diverse people on various aspects of Kuwait's history in order to build up an archive of oral testimonies and supplemental written and visual records to be housed in the AUK library. The archive will be open to students, researchers, artists, and the general public, to be used for the study and public understanding of Kuwait's past. The urgency and importance of this project lies in the dearth of written information and resources documenting Kuwait's past, coupled with the reality that many potential interviewees may not be available much longer.

As this year commemorates the 25th anniversary of the 1990-91 invasion/liberation of Kuwait, the pilot project that the OHDP is launching this academic year involves collecting interviews and documents on different themes relating to the seven-month occupation and its aftermath.

As part of the launch of the OHDP, the CGS hosted a training workshop in oral history conducted by Rib Davis, a renowned oral historian and trainer from the British Library and the Oral History Society in the UK. The three-day workshop was held between October 27-29. Faculty, staff, and volunteers received intensive training in oral history in order to serve as interviewers for the OHDP. The training covered interviewing techniques, the use of recording equipment, tips on transcribing and summarizing interviews, and archiving. During the training, Davis also discussed the ethics and legalities of conducting oral histories, and explored how to develop oral narratives into books, websites, exhibitions, and theatrical plays. 🌟



*The **Center for Gulf Studies (CGS)** is a research center under the College of Arts and Sciences at the American University of Kuwait. CGS aims to promote greater cultural understanding of and increased intellectual interest in the Gulf, by facilitating free and open academic discourse on a range of issues that both shape and challenge this critical region of the world. The goal of CGS is to enable scholars as well as political and civil society actors both within and outside the region to contribute and add value to the burgeoning field of Gulf Studies. To this end, CGS seeks to encourage, support, and cultivate interesting and original research on the Gulf, and to create an environment in which our students and faculty can interact and collaborate with researchers and activists from around the world in creative and engaging ways.*



(Left to right) Dr. Ali Charara; Dr. Ridel Jesus Febles Sanabria; Dr. Lianet Rodriguez Cabrera; HE Ambassador Andres Gonzalez Garrido and his wife; Dr. Amir Zeid ; and Dr. Rawda Awwad

RISE COMMENCES ITS LECTURE SERIES WITH A PRESENTATION ON A SUCCESSFUL MEDICAL COLLABORATION

The Center for Research in Informatics, Sciences and Engineering (RISE) at AUK inaugurated its annual Lecture Series in November with a lecture entitled, “Cuban Biotechnology vs. the Diabetic Foot: Strategy, Results and Kuwait Clinical Trials.” The event was attended by H.E the Ambassador of Cuba to Kuwait, Andres Gonzalez Garrido, and his wife, in addition to members of the AUK community.

The lecture highlighted the ongoing collaboration between the Cuban Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB) and Kuwait’s Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), in which the two bodies have successfully wielded Cuban research in the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers in Kuwait. “We have chosen to commence our Lecture Series with this beacon of scientific hope,” Dr. Zeid, Director of RISE, said. “A little over a year ago, we had a dream of creating this intellectual hub for innovators from all walks of life, or corners of earth, to come voice their visions here at AUK. This is what RISE is about. I’m glad to have witnessed this vision materialize here tonight,” he added.

Presentations conducted by CIGB Assistant Researchers Dr. Lianet Rodriguez Cabrera and Dr. Ridel Jesus Febles Sanabria tackled the latest Cuban innovation in biotechnology, health sciences and medicine. “This is a great opportunity on so many levels,” Dr. Rodriguez noted, “Getting to share scientific experiences and interact with the Kuwaiti audience here tonight truly is a remarkable leap forward.”

Dr. Rodriguez obtained her PhD in Biological Sciences with a specialization in Molecular Biosciences from the University of Havana, Cuba, in 2013. Dr. Febles, on the other hand, is an Angiology and Vascular Surgery Specialist at the Cuban Jose R. Lopez Tabranes Provincial Teaching Hospital. Both scientists are members of a team of experts currently overseeing the center’s clinical trials at DDI.

The evening launched this year’s RISE Lecture Series, which is set to cover a plethora of academic disciplines and interests. Dr. Awwad said, “For us to advance this process forward, outreach and partnerships between higher education and the economic sector, public and private enterprises are essential in linking new knowledge to development goals.”

A primary source of AUK’s interdisciplinary research and development endeavors, RISE aims at forging strong intellectual connections among local and international innovators, as well as academia and industry practitioners – whilst concurrently fostering efforts for community engagement and outreach. ✨

RISE

CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN INFORMATICS,
SCIENCES, AND ENGINEERING

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT

The AUK **Center for Research in Informatics, Sciences, and Engineering (RISE)** serves as AUK’s primary source for research and development activities, a bridge to industry, and an important venue for community outreach. RISE adapts an integrative model by forging connections between academic disciplines, local & international innovators, academia & industry, as well as technology & society.



CCE DEVELOPS WORKSHOP FOR NUKS-USA CONFERENCE

The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at the American University of Kuwait has developed a workshop, “Campus to Corporate”, that was facilitated with Burgan Bank at the 32nd Conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students – USA Branch (NUKS-USA) in November 2015. Both, Burgan Bank and AUK, are part of the KIPCO Group, which supported the conference for the fifth consecutive year as a Platinum Sponsor.

Campus to Corporate was designed to prepare Kuwaiti students who are pursuing their studies in campuses across the US succeed in their careers after they graduate. The workshop covered topics such as the importance of being mindful of body language during meetings, presentations and interviews, and how to apply personal strengths to become productive employees.

Talah Al Abdulaaly and Jasem Sabeeh Abul, Organizational Development Officers at Burgan Bank, conducted the workshop, while Eman M. Al Awadhi, Communications Director of KIPCO Group, delivered a motivating speech to the students. The workshop concluded with a ceremony in which participating students received certificates of completion from CCE.

CCE was established in 2004 and, in addition to offering language courses in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, offers an array of courses and workshops aimed to assist in the personal and professional development of individuals and groups within the public and private sectors. Course offerings are specifically tailored to meet the needs of their clients, whether they are independent groups or corporations. 🌟



CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION
مركز التعليم المستمر
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY of KUWAIT

The **Center for Continuing Education** offers a wide range of educational, development programs and services for individual professionals, corporations and AUK Alumni since its establishment in 2006. In addition to these programs - workshops, university entrance preparation courses and international examination proctoring services are also provided.



AUK WINS THREE TECHNOLOGY AWARDS FOR 2015

For AUK's Information Technology (IT) Department, 2015 was a stellar year; it was nominated for four technology awards and won three. It also published 4 press releases on technology advancement, and presented seven times at four different conferences.

In November, IT received an award during the Ellucian Live Middle East 2015 conference in Dubai, UAE. The Ellucian Live Middle East Awards recognize regional customers who apply Ellucian technologies or services in innovative ways to improve operational efficiency, better serve constituents, and improve student success at their institutions. AUK won this award for enhancing services to its constituents (faculty, staff and students) by streamlining several processes that helped improve the customer service experience and enhanced productivity.

The Ellucian Live 2015 Annual Conference was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, in April. The conference saw more than 8,800 registered attendees and more than 2,400 clients hailing from 40 countries. At the annual conference, one educational institution is presented with the Innovative Technology Award. It is reserved for institutions that use Ellucian software in innovative ways to improve services. AUK won this award for specifically addressing challenges faced by students in the areas of registration and communication - both of which were improved by applying Ellucian solutions. The 2015 Ellucian Innovation Award recognized two specific innovations at AUK; the use of Banner Workflow to replace the manual course override process, and the use of Ellucian Mobile, where students can view news feed messages including grades, schedules, events and maps all on their mobile phones. AUK is the first institution outside the United States to receive this award.

Finally, in January, Computer News Middle East Magazine honored the top 100 C-level IT talent from across the region. Endorsed by International Data Group, the CIO 100 Awards have been taking place in the United States for the last 30 years, but have finally made their way to the Middle East. The Jumeirah Beach Hotel procession celebrated 100 organizations and their IT figureheads that have been using technology innovatively throughout 2014 to deliver business value. Applicants had to show not only that they had executed a project well, but also that they had done so in uncommon, innovative ways; pioneering a new technology, applying a familiar technology to a new purpose, or setting the bar higher for their competitors. AUK was honored to receive this award.

"We continually look for innovative ways to meet customer's needs by simply asking, what is wrong, what can we do to make it better and are we meeting your expectations? The awards are a bonus for providing our customers the best possible solutions in some unique ways, always ensuring we do not lose the focus that we provide a service/product that promotes the institution's success," says Rusty Bruns, Chief Information Officer at AUK. 🌟



Q | A

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

Hala Al-Abdulrazzaq

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Academic Advising Center

Please introduce yourself.

I'm the Assistant Director for the Academic Advising Center. I graduated from The George Washington University (GW) and graduated with a B.A in Psychology. I started out my career after coming back to Kuwait working for an investment company for some time and then moved to work at a local higher education institution as a Student Support Officer prior to joining AUK.

When did you join AUK and how has your role within the University changed over the years?

I joined AUK in September 2008 as an Academic Advisor at the Student Success Center (SSC), which at the time was under Student Affairs and offered several student services, not strictly related to academic advising. In 2011, academic advising became part of a separate unit and moved under the Academic Affairs department as the Academic Advising Center (AAC). With the creation of the AAC, I was appointed as Senior Academic Retention Advisor, where I focused on assisting all students who were under probation. After some time, I was promoted to Assistant Director of AAC in 2012, where I work closely with all undeclared students, helping them better understand their degree requirements and keep them up-to-date on the latest academic policies.

How was your first year at AUK?

The first year was very challenging. Students need to trust their advisors. Some of the students were already accustomed to other advisors, so being an unfamiliar face to them meant that I had to work hard on gaining their trust. I also made sure to familiarize myself with all academic related policies and procedures, and their updates, to ensure that the advice I was providing was accurate. I was seldom seen without the AUK Catalog within my reach during any advising session!

From your interaction with the students, do you think there are common characteristics that students share? What are they?

I believe that college students around the world are the same; they have similar expectations and concerns, especially first year and/or undeclared students. I have come across many types of students; some who had a clear idea of the path they wanted to pursue academically, while others needed some help in finding a direction. In both cases, all students needed to be assured, and reassured, that they were on a secure path towards achieving their academic objectives.

What qualities do you think the ideal student should embody?

I think the ideal student should be proactive, both, academically and with their involvement in student activities.

The ideal student must also be honest with themselves and others, and be responsible for their actions. Finally, the ideal student must be aware that they are part of a university community and respect all members of that community and the campus and what they stand for.

What is the biggest misconception students have about advising?

Many of our students think that advising, or visiting the AAC, is about obtaining a Registration Access Code (RAC), which enables them to register via AUK Self-service. Although that is one of our functions, we are also there to explain to them what degree requirements are and the importance of completing their general education requirements in order for them to proceed and declare their majors, as we are mostly dealing with first-year or undeclared students.

Are there any upcoming projects/initiatives that you are currently working on that you would like to share with our readers?

Yes! There is a new advising tool which we will roll out to students in 2016 called Degree Works. This tool will enable students to view their academic progress without the need of completing a manual major checklist. This will grant students direct access to their progress and help them map out the paths to their graduation. It is exciting and I am looking forward to it being launched.

What motivates you on a day-to-day basis?

Students motivate me. Knowing that I had a hand in helping students achieve their academic goals, especially those who have overcome challenges, motivates me. Whenever I see a student I have advised succeed academically, I cannot help but feel proud of them. It is truly rewarding!

What is the one piece of advice you would like to give to our students?

Always have the proper documentation to support your claims!
★

“Whenever I see a student I have advised succeed academically, I cannot help but feel proud of them.”



OXFORD
GULF & ARABIAN
PENINSULA STUDIES
FORUM



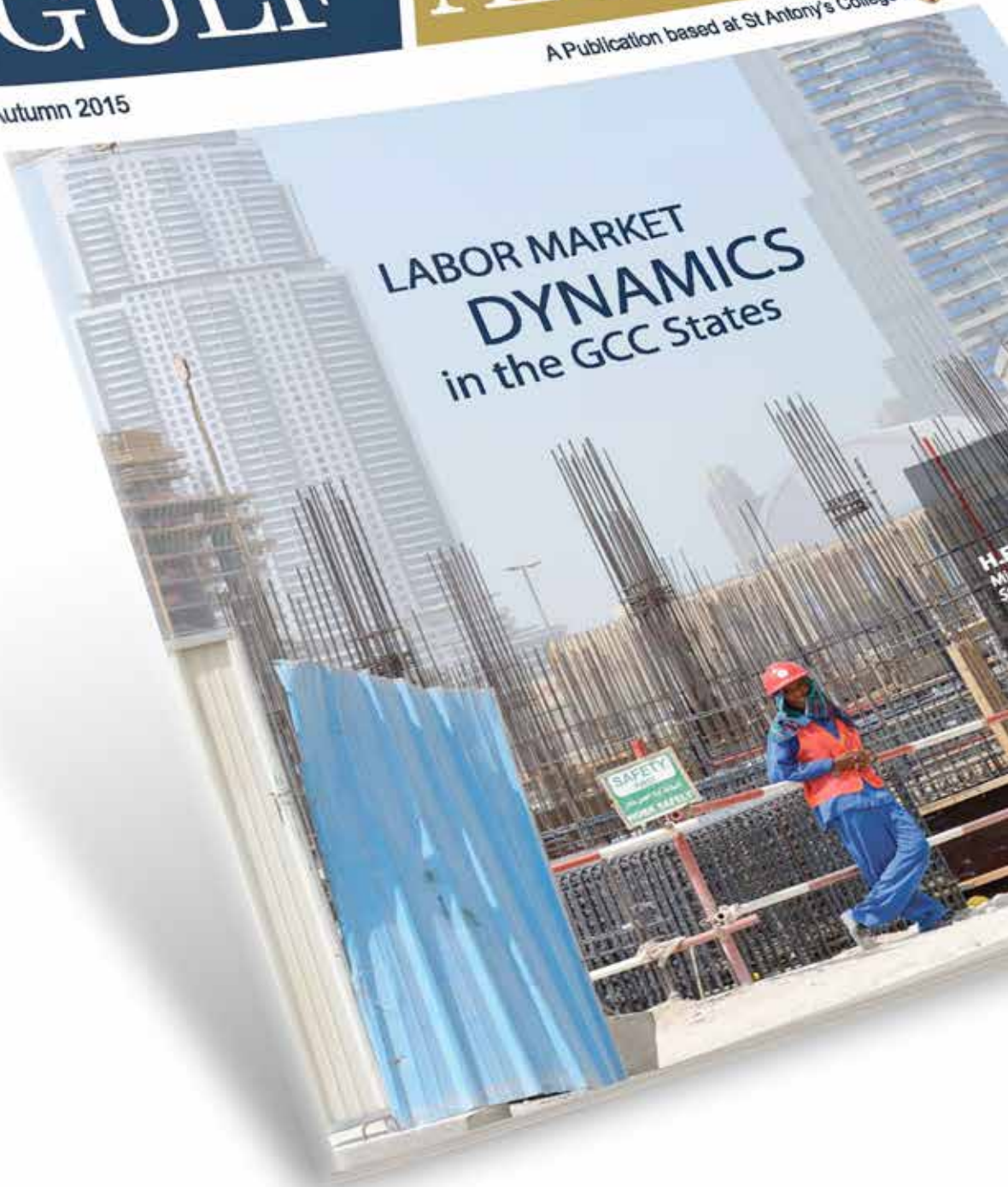
GULF

AFFAIRS

A Publication based at St Antony's College 

Autumn 2015

**LABOR MARKET
DYNAMICS
in the GCC States**



THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT SUPPORTS THE PRODUCTION OF “GULF AFFAIRS”

The American University of Kuwait has recently supported the production of a newly founded academic journal issued by Oxford Gulf & Arabian Peninsula Studies Forum (OxGAPS) – a University of Oxford-based platform, called Gulf Affairs.

The initiative was facilitated by one of the founders of the journal, Suliman Al-Atiqi, an AUK 2008 alumnus, who is currently a doctoral candidate at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford.

Gulf Affairs is an independent, non-partisan journal that aims to bridge the voices of scholars, practitioners, and policy-makers to further the knowledge and dialogue on pressing issues, challenges and opportunities facing the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Each issue of the journal revolves around a specific theme, focusing on the most pressing matters related to the GCC and contains contributions from experts in various disciplines and professions who address each issue’s theme.

The inaugural issue of the journal entitled, “Labor Market Dynamics in the GCC States” was released on September 7, 2015. It featured a range of scholarly analyses that shed light on contemporary challenges and opportunities facing the GCC labor markets at large, as well as cover the ongoing efforts to support labor market reforms. Among the articles featured in this issue are:

- Renegotiating the ‘Social Contract’ in the GCC, by Zaid Belbagi
- Kafala System Remains Resilient in the GCC, by Kaltham Al-Ghanim
- The Politics of Labor Policy Reform in Bahrain, by Laurence Louër
- Challenges to Employing Kuwaitis in the Private Sector, by Osman Gulseven
- Battle against the Thawb Syndrome: Labor Nationalization, Industrial Diversification, and Education Reform in Saudi Arabia, by Makio Yamada
- Rent Distribution and Labor Market Reforms in the UAE, by Steffen Hertog

The journal issue also featured expert commentary and interviews with senior authorities in the GCC that provide an insider’s view of the pressing topics of the region.

Eugene Rogan, Senior Member of the OxGAPS Forum and Director of the Middle East Centre, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, provided the introduction to the inaugural issue of Gulf Affairs, in which he explained why the existence of such a journal is important. “The publication of the inaugural issue of Gulf Affairs marks a new departure for Arab Gulf studies in Oxford and Britain more generally. There has been a pressing need for an independent and non-partisan periodical to provide reliable research and analysis on this geostrategic region... We hope that Gulf Affairs will encourage new scholarship and debate on the GCC and its member states,” he wrote.

Suliman Al-Atiqi is a remarkable example of an AUK alumnus who managed to apply the lifelong learning skills he gained as a student at AUK to pursue initiatives that benefit his country and the GCC region at large. He is the Committee Chairman of the Oxford Gulf & Arabian Peninsula Studies Forum and the Managing Editor of its journal, Gulf Affairs. Suliman is also the general section co-editor of the St. Antony’s International Review. He previously served as an analyst for the United Nations Development Program and was the Program Lead of its “Barriers and Opportunities at the Base of the Pyramid” global research initiative. His current scholarly research focuses on the Gulf Arab states in international relations. 🌟

The full issue of Gulf Affairs can be accessed at:

<http://www.oxgaps.org/gulf-affairs/publications/labor-market-dynamics-in-the-gcc-states>

AUK APPOINTS TWO NEW DEANS

PROFESSOR JIN WANG, DEAN OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS



In Fall 2015, AUK welcomed Professor Jin Wang, Professor of Economics, as the new Dean for the College of Business & Economics (CBE). Professor Wang joins AUK from Westminster College, Salt Lake City, where he served as Assistant to the President for International Programs.

Of his appointment as Dean of CBE, Professor Wang said, “It is a great honor to join the College of Business & Economics at AUK. I am privileged to work with our dedicated and outstanding colleagues who are focused on student learning and success in the world of business. We strive for excellence in teaching and academic scholarship, and provide our students with a rich learning environment that supports their intellectual, professional, and personal development. I have met with many and look forward to meeting with more students in the near future to learn and appreciate their aspirations and challenges.”

Professor Wang added that AUK is an exciting place to be. “My wife, June, joins me in expressing our heartfelt appreciation to the entire university community for your kindness, friendship, hospitality, and support,” he said.

Professor Wang holds an MA in Economics from Ohio University and a Ph.D. in Economics from Kansas State University. Throughout his career, he has served in different academic and executive positions including, Dean of the Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business, Professor of Economics at Westminster College (2011-2014), Associate Provost and Dean of Academic Services at the University of Tampa (2007-2011), Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Professor of Economics at Rowan University (2003-2007), Associate Dean of the College of Letters and Science, and Professor of Economics at the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point (1992-2003).

Professor Wang has published in academic referred journals and was a recipient of the Fulbright Scholarship in 2003.

DR. HANAN MUZAFFAR, DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS



Dr. Hanan Muzaffar, Assistant Professor of English, was appointed Dean of Student Affairs at AUK in Summer 2015. Prior to her appointment, Dr. Muzaffar served as Assistant Professor of English at AUK (2014-2015) and at Kuwait University (2000-2011), where she also served as Head of the Student Guidance Office (2004-2006).

Speaking of her experience as Dean of Student Affairs at AUK, Dr. Muzaffar said, “Serving as Dean of Student Affairs is a thrilling feat, as I’m gradually discovering. AUK has an amazing community of students and I am often swept away by their enthusiasm and dedication. I’m looking forward to continuing the work I started last semester, to learn more about our wonderful student body, and to get involved in their projects and offer my guidance and assistance.”

Dr. Muzaffar earned her M.A. (1997) and Ph.D. (2000) in English Literature, with an emphasis on Literary Theory and Criticism, from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA. After completing her graduate studies, she joined Kuwait University (KU) as Assistant Professor of English from 2000 to 2011, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in literature and theory. Dr. Muzaffar’s research revolves around gender studies and minority writers. She currently serves on the editorial board of *Ibdaat Alamiya* - a publication of Kuwait’s National Council of Culture, Arts, and Letters. 🌟



AUK & GW ESTABLISH A PROGRAM FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EXCHANGE AND COLLABORATION

AUK entered an agreement with The George Washington University (GW) – Washington DC, to establish a program for undergraduate student exchange and collaboration, in which students from either institution may attend courses for up to a maximum of two academic semesters (fall or spring) at the other institution on a non-degree basis. Undergraduate students may each enroll at the other institution for no more than one academic year.

The Undergraduate Student Exchange Program was discussed during a visit by a delegation from AUK to GW in April 2015. The delegation, which consisted of the President of AUK, Professor Nizar Hamzeh and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science, Dr. Rawda Awwad, met with GW Provost, Dr. Steven Lerman, Associate Provost for International Programs, Dr. Donna Scarboro, Associate Provost for International Programs, Professor Edward W. Gnehm Jr, and other GW senior administrators, and discussed academic collaboration between the two institutions. Finally, in October 2015, an agreement was reached and a MOU was signed.

The Undergraduate Student Exchange Program will be administered through the Office of International Programs at GW and the Office of the President at AUK.

President Hamzeh explained that the purpose of the MOU is to promote academic collaboration between the two universities and to provide AUK and GW students with the opportunity to experience education outside their classrooms and environments. “Studying abroad must be viewed as an essential component of a college degree and critical to preparing future leaders,” said President Hamzeh. This is the first step towards a larger goal for the two institutions. “In the future, our mutual goal is to expand this academic collaboration to include faculty exchanges, research collaboration and development of new programs,” added President Hamzeh.

Dr. Donna Scarboro, Associate Provost for International Programs at GW said, “We look forward to our engagement with AUK. GW is very active in both receiving and sending students to provide a vital dimension to higher education. Students from abroad enrich our local classroom by bringing new perspectives and knowledge; and exchange gives our students a means to achieve nuanced awareness of world cultures, strengthening the links among citizens in the future.”★

**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

The **George Washington University** was created by an Act of Congress in 1821. Today, GW is the largest institution of higher education in the District of Columbia. The university offers comprehensive programs of undergraduate and graduate liberal arts study, as well as degree programs in medicine, public health, law, engineering, education, business and international affairs. Each year, GW enrolls a diverse population of undergraduate, graduate and professional students from across the country and around the world.

GW logo used as per GW's identity standards and guidelines. (www.gw.edu).
Photo Courtesy of The George Washington University.



AUK PROGRAM ANALYST PARTICIPATES IN RED BULL PAPER WINGS 2015

Red Bull Paper Wings is paper-plane flying competition held annually around the world. In it, participants compete in three disciplines; longest distance, longest airtime, and aerobatics. Every 3 years, qualifiers on national or regional levels meet in Salzburg, Austria, to participate in the Red Bull Paper Wings Final. The National Finals for the Red Bull Paper Wings in Kuwait took place at the Aviation Hall of the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) in March 2015. One day, while walking across AUK's campus, Qussay Nasser Aldin, Program Analyst at AUK's IT Department, noticed some activity taking place in the Multipurpose Room. Little did he know upon entering the room that he would leave it qualified to compete in the finals. Below is a personal account of his experience:

It all started on 22nd March, 2015, at AUK's Multipurpose Room. While I was on my way to visit the HR Department, I noticed a tournament taking place there that I had not heard about. When I walked inside to inquire, they asked me to fold a plane and throw it in the air. I folded one, like I used to do when I was in high school, and registered to compete for the Longest Distance and Longest Airtime categories.

I did not make the Longest Distance category after my paper plane couldn't fly beyond a distance of 10cm but when I tried for the Longest Airtime category, my paper plane managed to achieve a record of 3.21seconds in the air. Assuming I wouldn't win, I went back to my office. Three days later, I received an SMS informing me that I was qualified to compete in the National Finals Airtime category at ACK on 31st March. Winners of the National Finals were flown to Hangar 7, a multi-functional hangar owned by Red Bull, in Salzburg, Austria, and competed in the World Finals in May 2015.

I went to ACK to compete for the Longest Airtime and won with 7.24 seconds. I wasn't expecting to win at all because I went there only to have fun.

On 8th May, the winners of Kuwait's National Finals landed in Salzburg airport. The Red Bull team was waiting for the participants to arrive and took them to the hotel where they met other qualifiers for the World Finals. They asked the participants to wear their traditional outfits before heading to the Residenz Palace "Karabinieri-Saal" – a museum and one of

the most impressive attractions of the city. There, we met 197 Paper Wings Pilots from over 80 countries.

Although I did not qualify during the pre-elimination match to participate in the Red Bull Paper Wings Super Final, I did enjoy the experience and had a chance to meet Zach King, the world-famous video manipulation artist. 🌟



RIGHT PHOTO: Qussay Nasser Aldin (left) with Zach King (right), American social media celebrity



BOTTOM PHOTO: Paper Wings 2015 Finalists and Judges





Q | A

FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

Joseph Fiannaca

SENIOR INSTRUCTOR OF FRENCH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

Please introduce yourself.

I am a Senior Instructor of French Language at AUK. I hold a BA in Applied Languages (English and Italian) from Saint-Etienne University and a Master's degree in French for Foreigners from Grenoble University, France.

What made you decide to join AUK?

In 2004, I heard about the AUK project, which was a very exciting and promising one. I really liked the passion and the vision of the founders of this project. Whenever I drove near the AUK campus in Salmiya, which at the time was an old school under renovation, I thought to myself, "This is where I want to be." All the elements were there; the location, the atmosphere, the vision. I decided to make my dream come true and met the Dean. There were no existing French courses at the time, so we both agreed to start with offering a class for one semester to see how it would go. The class was very popular and the following semester I was offered a full time position.

Having been part of the AUK community for so long, how do you think the community has changed from when you first started teaching here?

It is still the same, just larger. One of the reasons I have been here for so long is that it is essential for me to work in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural environment. This is how I would describe the AUK community; dedicated, professional, qualified and diverse.

What was your experience like during your first year teaching at AUK?

I have very fond memories of my first year at AUK. Everyone was busy trying to make the first year a success. I was excited to be teaching in a new institution. There were a lot of possibilities and innovation, and I was strongly encouraged by the administration to take my students on a study abroad program. So I took my students to Cannes on an intensive two-week French course. It was an amazing experience that brought more authenticity to my teaching and a deep linguistic and cultural immersion for the students.

How would you describe the typical AUK student taking one of your classes?

I think students don't really know what to expect in the beginning.

They often tell me, "We love the way French sounds", "It's very refined", and they feel strongly attracted to it. But they are also worried about other aspects of the language like the spelling or the pronunciation and their fear of not doing well in class. Once they understand my teaching approach, there is a trust relationship that is established and students

understand that they will succeed if they put in the necessary effort in their daily practice, which all foreign languages require.

In addition to your teaching responsibilities, have you been involved in any extracurricular projects? If so, can you tell us about the ones that you are particularly proud of?

I recently initiated a new club called the Hummingbirds. The idea came after my sabbatical semester from the University. Apart from the academic research I conducted, I also took the time to reconnect myself to nature and to a more simple and sustainable life. I participated in organic farming projects where I saw that it was possible to live a meaningful life. When I came back to Kuwait, I told my students about my experience and the idea of the Hummingbirds club. Our mission is to spread awareness about restoring the natural and necessary harmony and cooperation between the earth, animals and humans. This idea quickly became a reality with the official creation of the club.

Are there any upcoming projects that you are currently working on that you could share with us?

I have a project with my French classes that I am hoping to organize at the end of the semester. The idea is to raise awareness about the French speaking world and how, despite our differences, a common language can bring people together. And of course, there will be events organized by the Hummingbirds.

What motivates you on a day-to-day basis?

I always loved teaching beginners. It is like taking students on a journey. If they trust me and they put the necessary effort, they will love it and they will succeed. And for me, it is gratifying to see students at the end of the semester expressing themselves with confidence and fluency in a foreign language.

In my personal life, it is to see the sun every morning when I wake up and to feel alive, having gratitude to be where I am, and to be able to do and share the things I love. And, of course, the smell of a good coffee brewing in the kitchen!

If you could meet your 18 year old self, what would you tell him?

I would tell him, enjoy the ride! There will be ups and downs, don't be afraid to fall, keep it up, it is worth it!

Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

There is a quote I would like to share. It is taken from the book *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

"On ne voit bien qu'avec le coeur, l'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux."

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. The essential is invisible for the eye." 🌟

THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING FOSTERS STUDENT RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT

The Mission of the Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE) department is to provide high-quality engineering education centered around the key principles of liberal arts, specifically, lifelong-learning, critical thinking, and effective communication. ECE prepares students to become successful engineers who will be able to contribute effectively to their professions and communities.

In alignment with this Mission, the senior design capstone courses (CPEG475 and CPEG480) were carefully developed. The capstone project (CP) is an extensive piece of work that requires creative activity and thinking. In the capstone courses, students must deliver a product that has passed through the planning, design, implementation, analysis, testing, evaluation, and documentation stages. The CP is important for a number of reasons:

- (1) It is the major engineering design experience that the students undergo during their degree program.
- (2) It allows students to specialize in topics of their interests.
- (3) It is the experience that prospective employers will most likely ask about during a job interview.
- (4) It showcases the wide range of skills developed through the program.

The senior design capstone courses provide opportunities for the students to engage in undergraduate research under the supervision of faculty members. In order to maintain high quality and standards, the CP must satisfy the following criteria:

- (1) Be a practical problem-solving project that involves an engineering design approach.
- (2) Put the problem in context and survey the relevant literature.
- (3) Prepare a professional report on the product and the process, including problem definition and formulation,

literature review, design specifications and alternatives, justification of the chosen design, relationship to previous research on the project, analysis, and critical evaluation.

By satisfying the abovementioned requirements, students within the department go through the exact same steps that any researcher would in an academic environment.

One of the main objectives is to improve the student's ability to present his/her work, accept critique, and defend the work findings. For this, the ECE department holds its annual exhibition that showcases students' achievements in their senior design capstone courses. It provides the students with the opportunity to discuss their work with faculty members inside and outside the department, as well as with their fellow students. These exhibitions are very successful in preparing the students for similar presentation formats in regional and international conferences.

As a measure of the high quality work produced by engineering students in their capstone projects, many of these students have published the outcomes of their capstone projects in both regional and international conferences of high calibre.

Over the past two years, AUK engineering students have produced 12 refereed conference publications and 12 short papers, abstracts, and posters for regional and international conferences, including the IEEE-GCC, IEEE Canadian Conference on Electrical and Computer Engineering (CCECE), and The IEEE/TRB International Conference on Connected Vehicles & Expo. In 2015, AUK student representatives won two best poster presentation awards at the Undergraduate Research Conference, in Dubai, UAE, and received three awards for capstone projects exhibited in events and competitions in Kuwait during the IEEE Women in Engineering event and the first Workshop on Assistive Robotics. ★



ECE Student Researchers



ECE Student Salma Chiko – Poster Presentation

REPORT ON ATTENDING GIMC6 (6TH GLOBAL ISLAMIC MARKETING CONFERENCE) MAY 6-8, 2015 IN ISTANBUL



Following the success of its previous conferences, the International Marketing Association organized the 6th Global Islamic Marketing Conference (GIMC6) in Istanbul, Turkey, at Istanbul University in 2015, that attracted academics, researchers, and businesses from around the world. Since its inception, this annual conference has been the premier and leading conference on Islamic marketing that attracts businesspeople and academics who are interested in Islamic Marketing, including managers, policy makers, and practitioners.

Dr. Hanan Arnous, Instructor of Marketing at AUK, attended the conference and presented 2 papers; The Synergic Relationships Between Marketing and Quality in Creating Customer Value; and Emotional Intelligence and Customer Care. Dr. Arnous shares her experience with the AUK Chronicle below:

GIMC6 was more distinct from the previous conferences, as it was attended by the President of the Istanbul University, as well as the Dean of College of Business and Economics in Erciyes University, who presented valuable information about the continuous economic growth in Turkey during the last 12 years. A representative from the Turkish Central Bank also gave an excellent presentation about the Turkish economy.

In an era when there is an increased and renewed emphasis on teaching and learning business ethics, the highly pertinent question being raised is the role of faith and religious beliefs on business practices. Do religious beliefs help produce more ethical organizations and consumers? As a major world religion with clearly defined rules, restrictions and behavioral guidelines, what are Islam's teachings regarding ethical practices in commerce, and what are their implications? This conference aims to answer some of these questions by casting light on what has been known since the early Islamic periods fourteen centuries ago as the "rules of sales and commerce". It identifies the Islamic business ideals and their practical implications which organizations dealing with Muslim consumers need to adopt.

GIMC6 also allows those of us teaching in business ethics to learn of new resources and pedagogical approaches that will benefit the students at our home universities. Moreover, AUK's representation at an international conference of this caliber will help heighten its academic recognition amongst world scholars.

I presented two papers at GIMC6. The first paper was about "The synergic relationships between marketing and quality in creating customer value". In it, I explained that analyzing the relationships between total quality management (TQM) and marketing has important implications for managers as it provides insight into how the marketing concept can be oriented towards customer satisfaction, which is the key principle of the modern marketing paradigm. My second paper was about "Emotional Intelligence and Customer Care." Emotional Intelligence is something that affects every aspect of our life. Understanding the root causes of our emotions and how to use them can help us to effectively identify who we are and how we interact with others.

Emotional intelligence is about being honest. It is about being aware of feelings, ours and other people. And emotional intelligence is about being smart with our emotions, knowing how to use our passions to motivate ourselves and others, and how to keep your distressing emotions under control.

In this second paper, I introduced five dimensions of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and effective relationship.

The core of the second paper was to highlight the interconnection and relationship between emotional intelligence and customer service. When the staff is better equipped to understand their own emotions, they can more effectively temper their reactions to deal with the customer's issues. Likewise, being able to better understand customers' emotions will help them see through the clouds of reaction and approach each problem more clearly, deliver strong customer service and realize better customer retention.

Dr. Arnous' papers have been provisionally accepted for publication in the journals participating in the GIMC6. She has been assigned as a country chair in Kuwait for the GIMC for the third year by the chair of GIMC and the President of International Islamic Marketing Association, Dr. Baker Alserhan. This position is on voluntary basis to promote the conference and the message of Islamic Marketing in Kuwait within the social networks. ❀



AUK CHRONICLE

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY *of* KUWAIT
P.O. Box 3323, Safat 13034
Kuwait
Tel: 1802040 / (+965) 2224-8399
Fax: (+965) 2224-8376
PR@auk.edu.kw
www.auk.edu.kw

-  American University of Kuwait
-  auk_kuwait
-  @AUKtweets
-  theAUKvideos