

AUK

# CHRONICLE

DECEMBER 2011

## AUK AWARDED AAALE ACCREDITATION



**MATT LAMB  
UMBRELLAS FOR  
PEACE PROJECT:**  
AUK RAISES  
AWARENESS FOR  
PEACE

**INSTITUTIONAL  
EFFECTIVENESS  
WORKSHOPS:**  
WORKING  
TOGETHER TOWARDS A  
CULTURE OF EVIDENCE AND  
WONDER

SUMMER 2011 SETS NEW RECORD FOR  
AUK STUDENTS AND FACULTY AT  
DARTMOUTH



# OUR PROGRAMS ARE INTERNATIONALLY ACCREDITED

The American University of Kuwait was awarded International Program Accreditation from The American Academy for Liberal Education's (AALE) Board of Trustees for its Arts and Humanities Division, Social Sciences Division as well as the University General Education Program for a five (5) year period, ending September 30, 2016.



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The **AUK Chronicle** is a fully licensed magazine dedicated primarily to issues of Higher Education in Kuwait and the region. Published on a bi-annual 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 the Academia sector, as well as major corporate stakeholders to take part by sharing their research and articles and ensuring that Higher Education attains the appropriate attention as a tool of social change.

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# AUK CHRONICLE

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# Message from the President

With pride and pleasure the Office of Public Affairs presents this issue of the Chronicle. It includes updates upon activities of our students, such as their internship experiences at our sister institution, Dartmouth College, and their participation in campus activities such as athletics. It highlights accomplishments of our faculty members, including their research and their contributions, along with members of our staff, to their professional organizations and associations.

More general topics of interest are our recent accreditation by the American Academy for Liberal Arts and efforts of our Information Technology Department to remain abreast of technological and communications advancements. I hope you will find this issue to be both informative and enjoyable.

Best wishes,

**Dr. Winfred Thompson**

# KIPCO Employees Help African Orphans Get a New Start



Amna developed a passion for reading.

Back in 2008, a group of 40 employees from companies including KIPCO, KAMCO and United Real Estate Company, joined together to help fund two orphaned children in Africa. For the past four years, this group has paid the expenses for the personal needs of the two children – Rasman and Amna – as well as their school tuition and healthcare. By donating just 100 fils (37 US cents) a month each, the employees have helped transform the future of both children.



A photograph of Rasman

The children have shown remarkable progress since the sponsorship began. Rasman, adopted by his new family in the KIPCO Group at the young age of seven, continues to live in his hometown of Bobu Dioulasso in Burkina Faso. Now ten, he is reported to be in good health and working hard at his school work, while also pursuing his new hobby – football!

Amna, who is now twelve, lives in Kigali, Rwanda. She is doing very well at school and has developed a passion for reading!

It only costs KD 16 a month to help children like Rasman and Amna live a happy and promising life. The project began with an email about a company in Bahrain that had raised almost US\$ 2,000 through a small group of employees making small regular charity donations. The KIPCO Group employees decided to use this technique and seven months after the project was born, the employees became the proud ‘parents’ of Rasman and Amna.

One of the employees involved said, “When we saw the photographs of these poor children it was unthinkable not to give just 100 fils a month to help them. They are from parts of Africa that continue to see terrible suffering, so we are glad to help. The way we look at it, a lot of a little adds up to a lot. By donating our 100 fils a month and coming together, we’re helping these two young people begin their lives again. What can be better than that?”

**“By donating our 100 fils a month and coming together, we’re helping these two young people begin their lives again. What can be better than that?”**

Another member of the group said, “One of the most satisfying aspects of our small monthly donation is to see how well both Rasman and Amna are doing. Both of them are studying hard at school and we get excellent reports from their teachers. When you think how hard their lives have been and how much they have suffered as a result of war and conflict, it shows you what can be done when someone chooses to care. Each member of our group looks forward to the latest report on Rasman’s and Amna’s progress because it makes us realize just how lucky we are to be living in a country like Kuwait. We’re very happy to be starting this fourth year of the sponsorship and would like it to continue for as long as Rasman and Amna need our help.”

Employees who would like to start a similar scheme are recommended to contact the Direct Aid Organization by telephoning (+965) 1-866 888 or through their website <http://direct-aid.org/website/index.php>.



# AALE ACCREDITATION: An Academic Task Met With Success

On September 7, 2011 the Board of Trustees of the American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE) considered the American University of Kuwait application for International Program Accreditation and voted to confer the status of International Program Accreditation on the American University of Kuwait for a period of five (5) years, ending September 30, 2016.

AALE accepted AUK's application for international accreditation on April 27, 2009; following the Academy's acceptance, AUK proceeded to develop and implement a committee structure responsible for steering the self-study process. AUK's self-study made every attempt to adhere to the AALE stipulations as outlined in AALE's acceptance letter of April 27, 2009 to the President.

In May 2009, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Nizar Hamzeh, was charged with overseeing the self-study process, reviewing the materials prepared to address the self-study standards, and serving as AUK's chief liaison to the AALE office. At his direction, Dr. Rawda Awwad, Assistant Dean for Accreditation and Curriculum, convened the Steering Committee in which all AUK academic and service units were represented. The Committee members were selected through a nomination process by members of the Dean's Council.

The AALE-SC was charged with identifying key issues of concern for the program(s) that will serve as a foci of the self-study process, assigning the responsibility for responding to various standards,



and coordinating the work of the individuals as well as overseeing the self-study process and ensuring that it provides an accurate reflection.

In September 2009, a formal announcement was sent to the University community from the Office of the President. The announcement summarized the responsibilities of the Academic Officers in charge and requested cooperation and support for the College from all University units throughout the process. In addition, the request was made that all members of the University

### The following members of the AALE-SC represented their respective University units:

- AALE-SC, Chair: **Dr. Rawda Awwad**, *Assistant Dean for Accreditation and Curriculum*
- Division of Humanities and Arts: **Dr. Craig Loomis**, *Division Head*; and **Mr. Chris Gottschalk**, *Humanities*
- Division of Social Sciences: **Dr. Chris Ohan**, *Division Head*
- Division of Student Affairs: **Mr. Theodore Kruse**, *Assistant to the President for Institutional Planning & Effectiveness*
- Finance and Administration: **Mr. Ernest Conklin**, *former Executive Director*
- Office of Public Affairs: **Ms. Amal Al-Binali**, *Assistant to the President for Admissions & Public Affairs*

acquaint themselves with the AALE mission and standards. A public posting was made of the Academy's website <http://www.aale.org> and AALE Standard descriptions on the AUK shared drive.

In accordance to the AALE accreditation requirements, the American University of Kuwait submitted the self study for the Division of Humanities and Arts, Division of Social Sciences and the General Education Curriculum on October 21, 2010 to AALE and members of the site-visit team. The AALE site visit took place November 2-4, 2010.

The Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences would like to thank the University's founder and Chair of the Board of Trustees, Shaikha Dana Nasser Al-Sabah; Co-Founder and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Meshal Ali; the former University President, Dr. Marina Tolmacheva; the former Interim President, Dr. Tim Sullivan, and Mrs. Jeanne Sullivan, in her capacity as final editor, and current President, Dr. Winfred L. Thompson, for their support throughout the process.

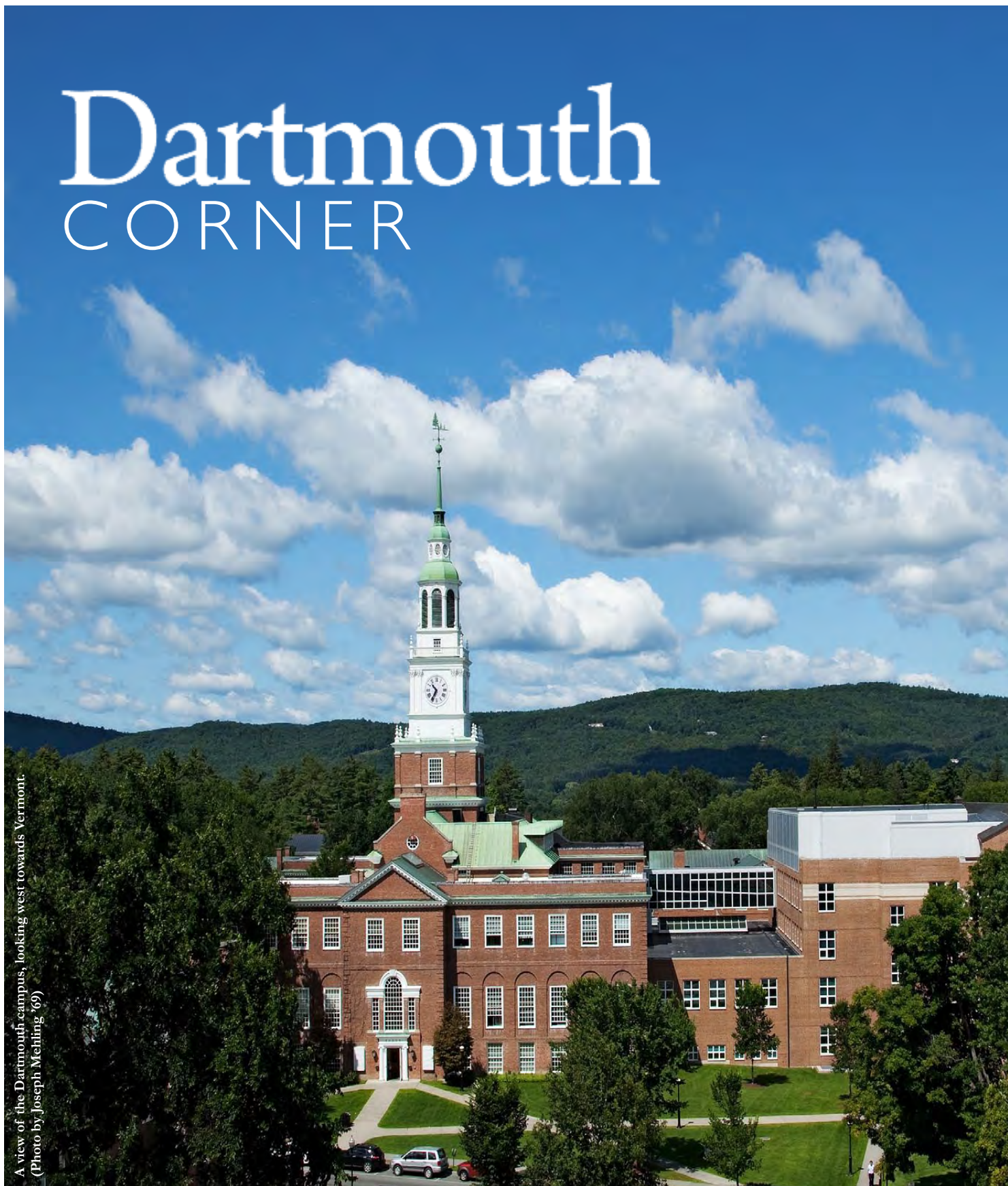
A special thank you to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Nizar Hamzeh, the AALE Steering Committee, sub-committees, deans, division heads, program leads, coordinators, directors and staff of all University units who have been generous with their time and effort offered toward attaining International Program Accreditation.



The American Academy for Liberal Education (AALE) is a national association for the accreditation of institutions and programs offering outstanding general education in the liberal arts that meet the Academy's education, administrative and fiscal standards and criteria.

Accreditation by AALE signifies institutional integrity and a strong commitment to liberal education. Membership certifies that the institution meets or exceeds the Academy's independently established Education Standards.

# Dartmouth CORNER



A view of the Dartmouth campus, looking west towards Vermont.  
(Photo by Joseph Meching '69)

## Summer 2011 Sets New Record for AUK Students and Faculty at Dartmouth

Five American University of Kuwait students and two faculty members studied, held internships, and conducted research at Dartmouth in summer 2011 – the largest AUK contingent to visit the campus since the two institutions began working together eight years ago.

Hala Botros, Sara Soliman, and Nada Bedir, worked in departments across the campus, while Dalaa Al-Qathani and Thamer Al-Mayyan participated in Dartmouth's Secure Information Systems Mentoring and Training (SISMAT) program.

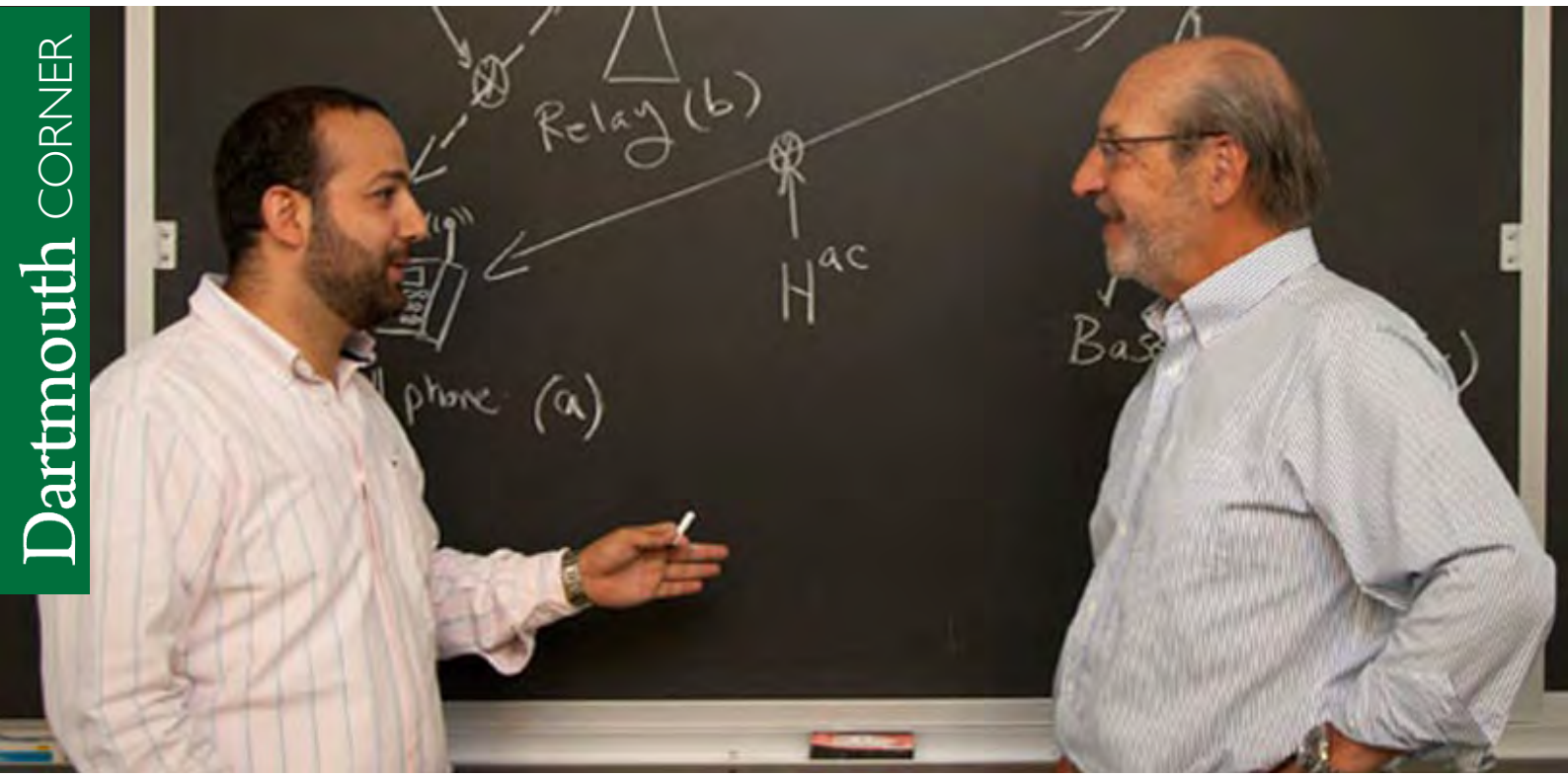
Assistant Professor of Computer and Electrical Engineering Mohamad Awad, AUK's third Faculty Fellow, worked with George Cybenko, Dorothy and Walter Gramm Professor of Engineering at Thayer School of Engineering, and AUK Assistant Professor of English James McDougall participated in Professor Donald Pease's "New Futures of American Studies Institute." Pease is the Ted and Helen Geisel Third Century Professor in the Humanities at Dartmouth.

AUK senior Nada Bedir interned with Dartmouth's Rassias Center and audited courses in Anthropology and Government. Recent AUK graduate Hala Botros and junior Sara Soliman held internships in Dartmouth's Office of Public Affairs, Hood, and Film and Media Studies.

Soliman, a flautist, says she enjoyed conversations with students and visiting Dartmouth's Paddock Music Library. "I could have spent hours leafing through scores," she said. Editor-in-chief of the *AUK Literary Review*, Soliman also met with Krista Oehlke '13 and Naomi Ellis '13, co-editors of Dartmouth's *Stonefence Review*.



(L-R) Sara Soliman, Hala Botros, and Nada Bedir participate in a forum at Dartmouth's Dickey Center for International Understanding during their summer 2011 internships at Dartmouth. (Photo by Joseph Mehling '69)



Assistant Professor of Computer Engineering Mohamad Awad (l) and Dartmouth Professor of Engineering George Cybenko (r) discuss their collaborative research. (Photo by Joseph Mehling '69)

## Faculty Fellows Pursue Research with Dartmouth Colleagues

For the second consecutive year, an AUK Faculty Fellow worked at Dartmouth's Thayer School of Engineering in a group led by Dartmouth Professor of Engineering George Cybenko. This past summer, Dr. Mohamad Awad, Assistant Professor of Computer Engineering, worked with Cybenko's group on understanding behavioral modeling for telecommunications customers.

"George and his research group are world-leading experts in this field," said Awad. "He is a man of great humanity, and working with him is having a positive impact on every aspect of my research."

Outside the lab, Awad canoed on the Connecticut River, took his family horseback riding at Dartmouth's Morton Farm, and traveled throughout New England.

In summer 2010, AUK Assistant Professor of Computer Engineering Amir Zeid conducted research on gender and computer science with Cybenko, working with faculty colleagues in Sociology as well.

The AUK Fellowship, initiated in 2009, supports an AUK faculty member or senior administrator interested in pursuing research at Dartmouth.



# New Collaboration Between Dartmouth and AUK Offers Students a Hands-on Approach to Internet Security Studies

The work begun in 2010 on gender and computer science by AUK Faculty Fellow Amir Zeid culminated this summer with the participation in Dartmouth's SISMAT program by Dalaa Al-Qathani and Thamer Al-Mayyan. Zeid, in collaboration with Professor and Chair of Dartmouth's Department of Sociology Denise Anthony, are interested in why women choose to major in Computer Science. Noting that more women major in Computer Science at AUK than at Dartmouth, they worked with the Dartmouth-AUK Office to coordinate a video conference that brought students at both institutions together to discuss gender and technology.

Anthony also directs Dartmouth's Institute for Security, Technology, and Society (ISTS). "The video conversation among women computer science students," she said, "initiated a cross-cultural discussion."

To keep that discussion going, Anthony and Associate Research Director at ISTS Tom Candon invited two AUK students to Dartmouth to participate in the Secure Information Systems Mentoring and Training (SISMAT) program.

"This was the first of what we hope to be many ISTS-AUK collaborations," said Candon. "We look forward to welcoming two more AUK students to the program next summer."

ISTS was established in 2000 and designated a "National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research" in 2008 by the U.S. National Security Agency.

Writing about her participation in last year's videoconference, Dartmouth's current intern at AUK, Shloka Kini '13 said there was "an undeniable connection" between the students. "Perhaps in the future we will all have changed the world with this conversation."



AUK students Thamer Al-Mayyan (Upper Left) and Dalaa Al-Qathani (Lower Right) tackle Internet security problems at the Secure Information Systems Mentoring and Training (SISMAT) program in June 2011. (Photo by Joseph Mehling '09)

## By the Numbers

**22** Dartmouth students have held internships at AUK since 2005.

**19** AUK students have visited Dartmouth since 2007.

**3** AUK faculty members have served as Faculty Fellows at Dartmouth since 2009.

**23** AUK faculty and administrators have visited Dartmouth to consult with colleagues in the departments of English, Engineering, Computer Science, Anthropology, Government, and the offices of Communications, Alumni Relations, Development, Student Services, and Information Technology.

**12** Dartmouth faculty members and administrators have visited AUK since 2003.

**30** Dartmouth faculty members have helped review AUK programs at the request of the university or for the Kuwait Private Universities Council (PUC).



A group photo of the AUK Mission Review Committee

# AUK Mission Statement Review Process Update

AUK's current Mission Statement is prominently displayed in many locations throughout the campus and in major University publications since approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2005. Part of a university's ongoing commitment to self-improvement is to periodically review the institutional mission statement. This is an important step because universities articulate their sense of purpose through their mission, which serves as the foundation for the institution's strategic planning initiatives and ongoing development. Mission statements communicate a clear understanding of what an institution is supposed to be doing, the way in which it goes about doing it and clearly identifies the role of community members. As such, mission statements serve as the core principle for institutional assessment making them an essential component to US regional accreditation processes. This is specifically addressed in the first Standard of Accreditation of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), one of the US regional institutional accrediting bodies. With this

in mind, coupled with AUK's commitment to growth as an institution of higher learning, a need for review of the Mission Statement is timely.

In May 2011, AUK's Board of Trustees approved a review of the current Mission Statement, Values, and Vision as the initial step in a strategic planning process. As a result, the President appointed a Mission Review Committee comprised of faculty, staff, alumni and Board members. The Committee was charged to conduct a comprehensive review, during the Fall 2011 semester, of the University's Mission Statement and Values, to collect and analyze feedback from both internal and external constituents, and where appropriate, make recommendations based on the input received.

The Committee began the review process in September and engaged the internal and external campus community through feedback and dialogue regarding the current Mission/Values/Vision and suggestions for revision.

Information was actively solicited through a range of venues and processes including online surveys, focus groups, open forums as well as internal and external environmental scanning.

Surveys were sent out to the AUK community and there were approximately 360 responses of which approximately 72% indicated they were current students. Of the remaining respondents, approximately 5% indicated they were Alumni, 9% faculty, and 14% staff. In addition, approximately 60 people participated in five focus groups (of seven that were scheduled) and two open forums. Members of the focus groups were randomly selected and forums were open to all members of the community. Similar efforts were made to reach out to various external groups including alumni, parents, employers, and local high schools. The feedback received has been relevant and thought provoking supplying the Committee with valuable information.

The Committee reviewed the University's Mission, Values and Vision based on the input provided by all stakeholders, the environment within which the institution operates, and in light of the growth and development of the University. Upon completion of the review cycle, the Committee made recommendations to the President for subsequent transmission to the Board of Trustees.

## In May 2005, the Board of Trustees approved our current Mission Statement:

The American University of Kuwait is a liberal arts institution based on the American model of higher education. It is dedicated to providing students with knowledge, self-awareness, and personal growth experiences that can enhance critical thinking, effective communication, and respect for diversity. AUK seeks to create leaders and lifelong learners who aspire to the highest standards of moral and ethical responsibility in their societies.

As the American University of Kuwait looks to the future this review of the Mission, Values, and Vision is essential to guiding the strategic direction of the institution and the Mission Statement Review Committee would like to thank members of the AUK community who have actively participated in this review process. Together, we have taken part in a conversation that may guide the University's future direction in its charge to best serve the AUK University community.



## AUK Mission Review Committee

**Dr. Rawda Awwad**

**Mr. Tadd Kruse**

**Shaikha Dana Nasser Al-Sabah**

**Dr. Winfred Thompson**

**Mr. Samer Khanachet**

**Dr. Craig Loomis**

**Dr. Amir Zeid**

**Dr. James Goodpasture**

**Dr. Farah Al-Nakib**

**Ms. Eman Kamel**

**Ms. Debra Hoffer**

**Ms. Jawaher Ali-Reda**

**Mr. Nizar Mashal**

Assistant Dean for Accreditation and Curriculum (Co-Chair)

Assistant to the President for Inst. Planning & Effectiveness (Co-Chair)

Founder and Chair, Board of Trustees (ex officio)

President (ex officio)

Group Chief Operating Officer (KIPCO), Board of Trustees

Division Head/ Associate Professor of English

Assistant Professor of Computer Science

Visiting Assistant Professor of Accounting

Assistant Professor of History

Assistant Director of Admissions

Oral Communication Coordinator/ Sr. Instructor, IEP

AUK Alumni, Class of 2007

AUK Alumni, Class of 2010

# INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHOPS: Working Together Towards a Culture of Evidence and Wonder

An essential aspect of any institution's development is to systematically implement an internal process for evaluating the programs and services and the quality of the overall institution. To ensure that all of the AUK staff and faculty understand the internal processes and are aware of the interconnected components necessary to develop a self-sustaining culture of planning, evaluation, and effectiveness workshops are being conducted throughout the Fall 2011 semester.

While most individuals working in higher education are somewhat familiar with the terms assessment and strategic planning, for some, institutional effectiveness is a rather obscure concept. Institutional effectiveness plays a critical role in quality assurance and self-improvement while providing for generally consistent approaches and vocabulary across all areas of the institution. Quite often, institutional effectiveness is described as a systematic, multi-year, multi-layer process that demonstrates keen attention to institutional initiatives, student learning outcomes and operational objectives through strategic planning for an honest appraisal of institutional capabilities and improvement. To put it simply institutional effectiveness is really asking *how well are we doing what we say we are doing?* **Allen Goben (2007)**, a prolific author in higher educational assessment, asserts that true learning post-secondary institutions should be “. . . a culture of ‘wonder’ instead of a culture of ‘blame’ – one where data-supported intelligence can be agreed upon so people can focus on being successful rather than arguing about who is right.”<sup>1</sup>



Mr. Tadd Kruse, Assistant to the President for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

During AUK's brief eight year history the institution has had success in demonstrating the ability to assess and plan for both non-academic and academic units. This is further exhibited through the various academic programmatic accreditation inclusive of the Intensive English Programs Commission on English Language program Accreditation (CEA), the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) accreditation, and the American Academy for Liberal Education accreditation (AALE). Building upon these accomplishments the institution is ready to undertake a comprehensive institutional effectiveness process.

<sup>1</sup> Goben, A. (2007). Collaborative leading institutional effectiveness efforts in higher education institutions. SAS White Paper.



As an institution the American University of Kuwait has been accredited by the Private Universities Council (PUC), Ministry of Higher Education –State of Kuwait since 2006. The University is pursuing eligibility towards US regional accreditation. Such accrediting bodies place great value on the ability of an institution to self-assess and have in place mechanisms for measuring and improving effectiveness. To illustrate this point the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education - New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) has its own policy statement for institutional effectiveness. Within this document the importance of institutional effectiveness and the role it places in overall institutional improvement is stated.

*The Commission expects each institution, as part of its dedication to institutional improvement, to monitor its effectiveness in achieving its mission and purposes. Accordingly, the institution collects and analyzes relevant data and uses this information in the institutional planning process as a basis for sustaining quality and self-improvement. Thus, assessment functions as a tool for the encouragement of such improvement as well as a basis for quality assurance.*<sup>2</sup>

The workshops being conducted for AUK faculty and staff are designed to address the above as well as the following learning outcomes such that the participants of each workshop should be able to:

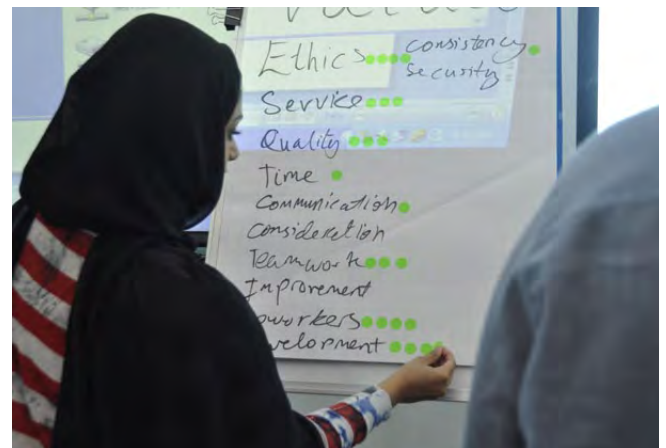
- Define Strategic Planning
- Define Assessment
- Define Institutional Effectiveness
- Explain how Assessment and Strategic Planning are integrated within Institutional Effectiveness and are necessary for Institutional accreditation.
- Identify values and the operating principles that define them.
- Identify and explain the four components of a SWOT analysis and contribute to one for their given unit.
- Identify and explain the four parts of a PLAN → DO → CHECK → ACT cycle and how it relates to Institutional Effectiveness.

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from: CIHE-NEASC Website: [http://cihe.neasc.org/downloads/POLICIES/Pp45\\_Institutional\\_Effectiveness.pdf](http://cihe.neasc.org/downloads/POLICIES/Pp45_Institutional_Effectiveness.pdf)

Although AUK is a relatively young institution it is important for members of the AUK community to better understand how assessment and strategic planning are integrated within institutional effectiveness. These workshops will contribute to the AUK community attainment of an institutional effectiveness culture, and contribute to AUK's commitment to educational excellence.



Dr. Jeanine Romano, Assistant to the President for Institutional Research and Assessment



Workshop attendees participate in the group exercises



## AUK's Dr. Mutlaq Al-Mutairi Patents New Medical Invention

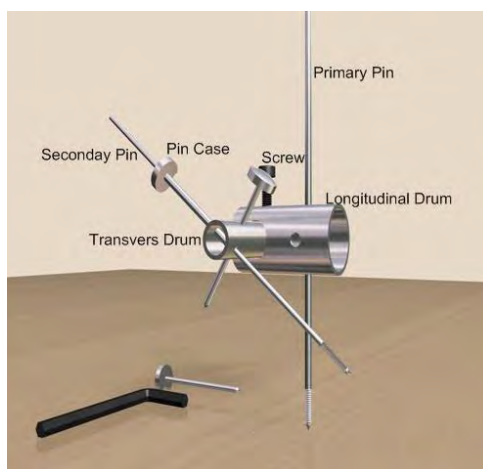
AUK's Assistant Professor of Mathematics Dr. Mutlaq Al-Mutairi and his colleague Dr. Hussein Al-Mutairi, a surgeon at AlRazi hospital have recently been awarded a US patent US 044054/13 for a medical surgical tool that they invented and designed in Kuwait and sponsored by the Kuwaiti Government.

For the past five years Dr. Mutlaq and Dr. Hussein tested their device in nine surgeries, a requirement by the US Patency Agency, before they perfected their surgical guiding tool. According to the US Patency Agency, Drs. Mutlaq and Hussein are the first medical group to invent a medical orthopedics device in the Middle East, a great achievement for the field of biomedical engineering in Kuwait.

Dr. Mutlaq explained that the guiding tool is used specifically for complicated shoulder fractures to

enable surgeons to assess the damage more accurately. The problem has been that X rays are unable to show the complete extent of a complicated fracture in the shoulder, allowing for a less than optimal diagnosis prior to surgery. What Dr. Mutlaq and Dr. Hussein have done is invent a device that enables doctors to perform these surgeries without an open wound as well as cutting surgery time from approximately 9 hours to a mere hour and half. This allows the patient to recover at a much faster rate than is usual while ensuring that doctors are able to perform these surgeries in a less invasive manner and with more accuracy.

When asked what the next step would be, Dr. Mutlaq said, "Robotics. I am currently in collaboration with Kuwait University's Computer Engineering Department to make our device robotic." What this essentially means is that the device



An illustration of Dr. Al-Mutairi's medical surgical tool

will operate without intervention from the surgeon. A camera will be mounted on the device, it will take X-rays and adjust itself automatically. This will significantly decrease the chances of a human error and increase accuracy.

Dr. Mutlaq said, "We have completed maybe 60% of the project so far. We are still in the trial basis but we are getting wonderful results."

## AUK's Dr. Nassir Authors New Book

Associate Professor of English Language & Literature at AUK Dr. Ghazi Q. Nassir authored a new book titled *Samuel Johnson's Attitude Toward Islam: A Study of His Oriental Readings and Writings* to be released October 31, 2011 by the Edwin Mellen Press.

The main purpose of the book is to demonstrate how Samuel Johnson's *Irene*, *Rasselas* and his other short Oriental tales (four in the *Rambler* and three in the *Idler*) share, with previous Oriental writings, a common focus on Islam, Arabs, their culture, and political systems. Johnson's assessments of and observations on Islam and Arab cultures in both his writings and conversations clearly prove that he looked at them less objectively. His treatment of the Orient was highly biased. The book seeks to furnish students of Eighteenth Century English Literature, Johnsonian scholars and orientalists with some useful observations on Johnson's Orientalism, as a whole, as well as on particular works in light of what is now known of Samuel Johnson's life, personality, psychological profile, and the intellectual and literary milieu in which he wrote.

The author's main concern is the attitude and the opinions of Johnson, more than the sources that were available to him. By the same token, the use that he made of these sources is a strong indication of his attitude. Generally speaking, when an author like Johnson, who is famous for his fantastic memory, deletes or adds information, this allows readers to see that he purposely knew the information was wrong, and absurd. Moreover, Johnson spoiled the effect of his Orientalism with his strong sense of the West's superiority over the East.



However, his lack of sympathy with and understanding of Islam and the Muslim culture destroys the integrity of the main characters of both *Irene* and *Rasselas*. In fact, Johnson was temperamentally hostile to Islamic culture, particularly to the Prophet Mohammed and Muslims. In general, all Johnson's letters, conversations, and writings indicate that his opinions and attitudes about the Orient, its customs, its civilization, and its religion were not flattering. Similarly, his ideas about Mohammed and Islam were dictated by old inherited prejudices. Following the tradition of old polemics, he regarded Mohammed as a false prophet, an enthusiast who manipulated his religion to gratify his sexual desires. His followers were merely dupes or lustful and lazy people.

# AUK Hosts Exclusive Art Exhibition, Raises Awareness for Peace

The American University of Kuwait hosted an exclusive art Exhibition featuring the works of internationally famous artist Matt Lamb, as well as held workshops where, students, faculty, staff as well as the general public painted umbrellas to raise awareness for peace.

The Matt Lamb Umbrellas for Peace<sup>SM</sup> Project is a global art project involving painting and decorating umbrellas by children and adults. The individual will artistically design umbrellas that represent their personal values of world peace. The first day saw approximately 150 AUK students painting umbrellas that were then hung from the ceiling of the AUK Liberal Arts Building. High School students from KES, GES, ACA and KAS also shared in the fun, visiting the AUK campus to take part in this peace initiative and participated in the umbrella painting.

AUK invited Matt Lamb as well as the Matt Lamb Umbrella for Peace<sup>SM</sup> project to raise awareness among our student body as well as the rest of the country on issues of peace. This event goes hand in hand with AUK's liberal arts values and gives AUK the opportunity to showcase a great artist as well as a great cause.





# ONE MEDIUM IS NOT ENOUGH: Media Multitasking Among AUK Students

**Dr. Anastasia Kononova**, *AUK Assistant Professor of Journalism*

Media multitasking is a popular media use behavior among students in Kuwait, a study conducted by a professor at the American University of Kuwait suggests.

Anastasia Kononova, Assistant Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, surveyed AUK students to examine the extent of their media use, media multitasking patterns, and factors that affect these patterns. The study was presented at the 16th annual conference of Arab-U.S. Association of Communication Educators (AUSACE) held in Beirut in October.

“Media multitasking means using more than one medium at a time or being engaged in nonmedia activities while simultaneously using media,” Kononova said. “Watching television and surfing Internet, or listening to music and driving at the same time are the cases of media multitasking.”

In addition to being heavy electronic media users, the surveyed students reported they often multitasked with these types of media. Thus, the use of the phone, Internet, television, and devices to listen to music were often paired with each other, as well as with nonmedia activities, such as eating, driving, socializing, exercising, and doing homework.

Even though the four types of electronic media are highly involved in multitasking, their use qualitatively differed, Kononova said.

“Television is often paired with using phone, Internet, eating, and socializing. Listening to music is a popular activity combined with the use of the phone, Internet, driving and exercising. Respondents multitask with the Internet while watching TV, listening to music, using the phone, eating, interacting with others, and doing homework,” Kononova’s AUSACE conference paper reads. “Finally, the phone identified its presence in almost all spheres of respondents’ life as it is used concurrently

with television, music devices, and the Internet, and combined with eating, driving, socializing, and doing homework.”

The study indicated that print media were not highly involved in media multitasking. Kononova explained the reason for such findings by the low level of print media use. The respondents reported they spent less than two hours a week (only 15-20 minutes a day) reading newspapers, magazines, and books.

Not only did the study shed light on the most common media multitasking pairs among the youth in Kuwait but also it supported the existing theoretical associations between media multitasking and other factors. First of all, media multitasking has been directly linked to the psychological variable of sensation seeking, or seeking adventures, novel and risky experiences (Foehr, 2006; Jeong & Fishbein, 2007). The results of Kononova’s survey showed that AUK students who scored high on sensation seeking tended to multitask with media more than those who were low sensation seekers. Second, owning and having access to a large number of media increased media multitasking behaviors of the respondents, which is also consistent with the existing theory (Foehr, 2006; Jeong & Fishbein, 2007; Rideout et al., 2010).

As for demographic differences, it has been found that female AUK students multitask with media more than men. This finding is consistent with the existing evidence acquired previously (Foehr, 2006). In addition, even a little difference in age significantly affected the level of media multitasking. Younger respondents, who were 20 years of age or less, multitasked with media significantly more than their older counterparts.

“The results of the survey showed that students in Kuwait are receptive to new media use trends emerging in the world,” Kononova said.



## STAFF HIGHLIGHT:

*Hussein Diab*

Senior Database Administrator  
I.T. Department



**1) What made you decide to join the AUK community?**

I decided to join AUK back in 2004 because it was a new organization with big potential. When I was interviewed for the position, I liked the atmosphere and the environment. In addition, new organization means new challenges, and I like challenges.

**2) How does your department fit into the long-term plan?**

It fits perfectly.

**3) What do you like most about your job? What do you like least?**

I like most the “family environment”, and what I like least is the lack of activities for staff and faculty.

**4) Who were your childhood heroes?**

My childhood and forever hero is Imam Ali Bin Abi Taleb.

**5) If you could be or do anything else - what?**

I would like to be a faculty member.

**6) If you could live in any other time, when might that be and why?**

I will choose to live in the 1970s, this is because at that time everything was simple and easy. Life wasn't so complicated.

**7) If you could have dinner with five famous people from history, who would they be?**

Jamal Abdel-Naser, John Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Che Guevara, and Jobran Khalil Jobran.

**8) What are you most proud of?**

My kids.

**9) What are you currently working on?**

I am working on my master's degree on Information Systems Management with University of Liverpool.

**10) What are some of the difficulties you face as a staff member living in Kuwait?**

Life expenses are going up rapidly.

Sports have always been an intricate part of the AUK experience. Since the University's inception in 2004, organized athletic competitions have been a celebrated extracurricular activity for students, offering participants a chance to be involved in friendly competitions while improving their fitness level and athletic skills. While the physical benefit of sports is vast, it is not the only reason AUK offers athletics. AUK seeks to offer experiences that can generate personal growth within its students. Athletics give those involved the opportunity to develop important social, emotional, and intellectual skills that will

Unfortunately, the Higher Education Sports Association only caters to male student-athletes. As a result, AUK looked internationally to find additional tournaments that involved male and female student-athletes. In 2010, AUK participated in the Beirut Unisports Tournament in Lebanon. This tournament gave student-athletes a chance to represent AUK and Kuwait, competing against universities from twelve different countries. Also in 2010, AUK organized its own regional tournament, inviting Carnegie Mellon University from Qatar, in the first regional intercollegiate basketball tournament in Kuwait.

# ATHLETICS

## at AUK



Trevor Taylor, *AUK Sports Coordinator*

help them become well rounded individuals. Through a positive sporting experience, AUK hopes to impart the importance of high moral standards and create leaders that will take what they learned on the field and use that knowledge in everyday life.

In 2005, AUK decided to expand its commitment to athletics by creating the first private universities tournament in Kuwait, the University Championship Cup (UCC). With the formation of the UCC, AUK began to compete against other private universities in Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Tennis and Table Tennis. This intercollegiate athletic competition was designed to offer sporting opportunities for male and female student-athletes. The UCC has taken place a total five times since it began, with AUK being crowned UCC champion four times. AUK's most recent victory was last year (2010-2011), making AUK the reigning champions.

Besides the UCC, AUK has been involved in various other intercollegiate competitions over the years. In 2008, AUK joined the newly formed Higher Education Sports Association. This association organized tournaments that involved public and private universities within Kuwait. Competing against public colleges gave AUK student-athletes the opportunity to play against new teams and compete in a higher level of competition.

During this 2011-2012 academic year, AUK is still committed to improving its athletic program. This year many changes are taking place, the most noticeable being the addition of two sports. Swimming and Squash have been officially added to AUK's list of intercollegiate sports, bringing the overall total to seven intercollegiate sports for male and female students. With a growth in the number of sports and the desire from student-athletes to play more games, AUK has reinvented the UCC to meet these needs. UCC 2011-2012 will consist of seven sporting events: Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Tennis, Table Tennis, Swimming, and Squash. Also, the UCC will





no longer be a 1 month tournament. Instead, each sport will have its own month long season, doubling the amount of games played in the past. Seasons will be spread out over the entire academic year, giving student-athletes the opportunity to participate in multiple sports by minimizing the overlap of different sports.

AUK will also be involved in other local and international tournaments this year, continuing to participate in tournaments organized by the Higher Education Sports Association, as well as returning back to the Beirut Unisports Tournament in Lebanon and possibly competing in other international tournaments. It is going to be a very active and exciting year for athletics at AUK. With nearly 100 student-athletes representing AUK and 112 games already scheduled, don't miss your chance to come out and support AUK Athletics. Go Wolf Pack!





## FACULTY HIGHLIGHT:

*Dr. Farah Al-Nakib*

Assistant Professor of History  
Division of Social Sciences



the University beginning in March 2003, and was then the Director of Admissions from September 2003 until the end of AUK's first academic year in June 2005.

In the intervening six years I obtained my MA and PhD in history from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, specializing in the urban history of Kuwait City. Most of what I've learned about Gulf history I learned abroad, as history is quite undervalued in our part of the world. As such, one of my ultimate objectives in getting my PhD was to be able to come back and teach the region's history in the region, to the region. AUK was always my primary choice in this regard. When we were working to establish the University back in 2003-2004, one of my personal goals was to help build an institution where young Kuwaiti scholars like myself could come back to teach in the same language of instruction in which

**1) What made you decide to join the AUK community?**

Though I joined full-time as an Assistant Professor of History in the Spring 2011 semester, I have a long history with AUK. I was a member of the team that founded

we obtained our doctorates, where we could have an impact on the local society, and in which we could build our careers while simultaneously contributing to the University's own growth process. When I finally finished my PhD there was therefore no doubt that I wanted to make AUK my academic home.

## 2) How does your department fit into the long-term plan?

I teach history, which at AUK is tied to the International Studies program and is offered as a minor. I think our program is a perfect example of what AUK is and continues to aspire to be: a liberal arts university that challenges students and makes them ask and find solutions to the difficult questions. History in particular, to me, is the cornerstone of a liberal arts education. Our students come to AUK knowing so little about history—be it about Kuwait, the region, or the world at large. But as James Joyce famously wrote, “The past is consumed in the present, and the present is living only because it brings forth the future.” Whether we’re talking about their own futures, the University’s future, or the country’s future, understanding the past will allow our students to more critically examine the present and become more effective agents of change in the future. As far as the long-term plan goes, I do hope to one day see history offered as a major at AUK rather than just a minor!

From my perspective as the Director of the Gulf Studies Center, our main objective is to make the Center more research-focused and better integrated with AUK’s academic pursuits. We aim to promote research on Kuwait and the Gulf amongst our faculty and students and to cultivate an environment in which our community and members of the academic world at large can actively debate, discuss, and share their ideas on a diverse range of topics. In so doing we hope to fit into the University’s long-term goals of becoming a competitive and respected institution with a distinct identity in the region and around the world.

## 3) What do you like most about your job? What do you like least?

I absolutely love teaching: being inside the classroom and engaging with students. It can be exhausting, but it is also the most rewarding job I can think of.

It’s still too early in my career to dislike anything much (or at least to admit to disliking anything)!

## 4) Who were your childhood heroes?

My parents and my sisters. I am the youngest in the family and so I had a household of inspiring and hard-working

“It [teaching] can be exhausting, but it is also the most rewarding job I can think of”

people to look up to and learn from. Through their own actions and their constant support, they encouraged me to become a strong, independent, and reliable person.

## 5) If you could be or do anything else - what?

If I hadn’t gone into academia I would have loved to train and work as a chef! I love food and cooking is my therapy at the end of a long day. I admire anyone who chooses to make their career in the food industry. But while I love being in the kitchen, I’m still happiest inside the classroom!

## 6) If you could live in any other time, when might that be and why?

Kuwait in the 1950s-1960s. It was such an exciting and dynamic time, and I would have loved to witness the changes the country was going through, to be a part of that change, and to experience the distinct cosmopolitan lifestyle that characterized that era. People in Kuwait at that time were optimistic and eager to experiment and experience new things. Society was more open, more tolerant, and more accepting of difference and innovation. I think Kuwait today has a lot to learn from where we were fifty years ago.

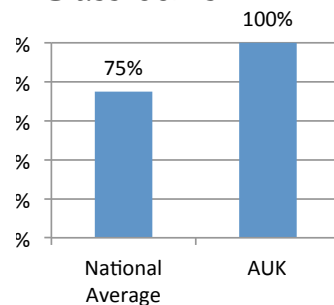
Of course I would also love to take a peek at what Kuwait was like before oil too!

## 7) What are you currently working on?

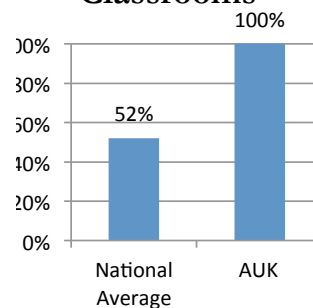
I am in the process of finalizing a few articles that came out of my doctoral research on Kuwait’s urban history to be published in academic journals and edited volumes (a couple of which should be coming out within the year), while simultaneously developing my dissertation into a book manuscript. I’m also working on a new project on memory in relation to the built environment in Kuwait and the Gulf.



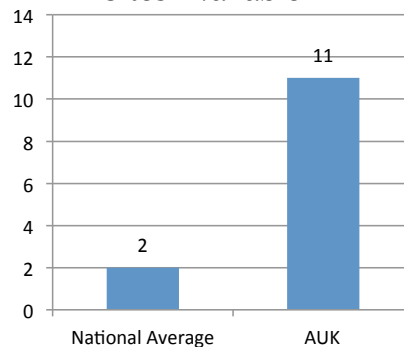
### Projectors in Classrooms



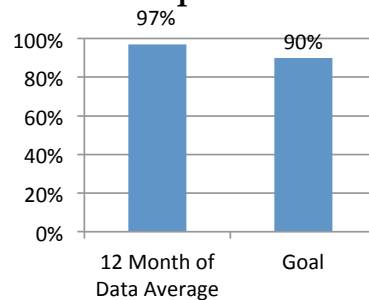
### Sound in the Classrooms



### Video Conferencing Sites Available



### Help Desk Completions

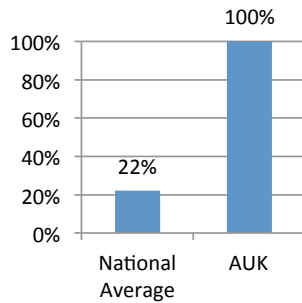


AUK's technology data was gathered from September 18, 2011 through September 30, 2011 and is representative of one calendar year. The report is a comparative analysis. AUK's data was compared to data retrieved from the Educause Core Data Study and the Campus Computing Project. These two studies are produced annually and are summarized based on surveys sent to all American Universities. The Educause data is representative of 879 colleges and universities responding to technology specific survey questions. Of the 879 respondents, 113 colleges and universities fell into the same class as AUK. AUK is a private, liberal arts bachelor degree conferring university. The Campus Computing Study had 523 respondents of which 179 fell into the same category as AUK. Both studies are accepted throughout the United States as benchmark studies by which other colleges and universities compare their technology status.

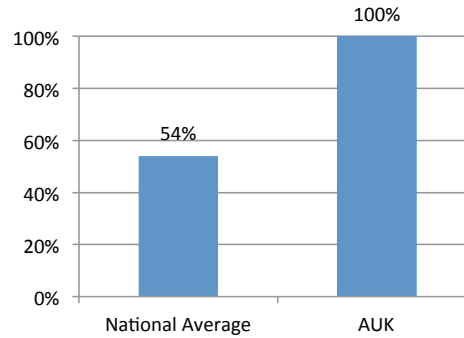
Additionally, while AUK was benchmarked against like schools, AUK fared very well across all categories of schools. Overall, AUK is technologically sound and in the upper tier with only a few exceptions. This is a very positive report and much credit should be given to the IT team for their efforts.

**Strengths:** Classroom technologies, database storage, help desk support and wired and wireless network operations.

### Wireless Open to Campus

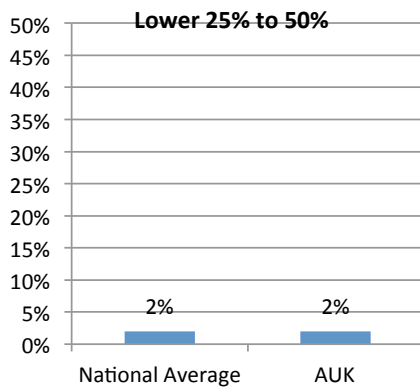


### Network Speed 100Mbps

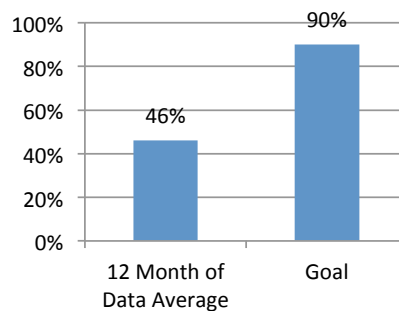


**Weaknesses:** Smart boards (lower 50% of national average); no security assessment and not completing the paperwork when work orders have been closed.

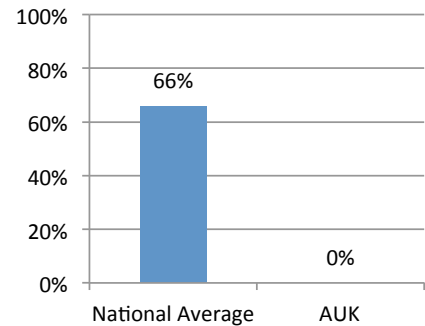
### Smart Boards



### AV Completion Work Completed not Documented

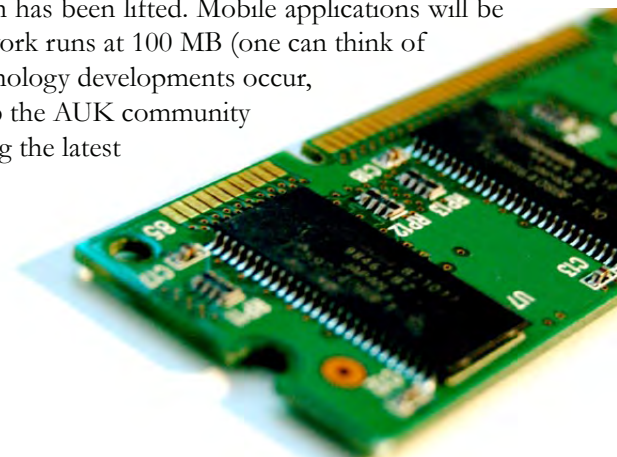


### Security Risk Assessment



AUK IT staff is currently receiving quotes to have a security assessment conducted, this will be complete by December 1st, 2011 and are reviewing vendor demonstrations to select Smart Boards that will lend to classroom instruction and October 2011 completion rate of Audiovisual (AV) is 100%.

Looking forward, the technology department is working with committees to develop a faculty and student technology survey to gauge areas where IT can be used to strengthen instruction in the classroom. On December 1, 2011, the campus bandwidth will have increased from 28 MB (September 2011) for faculty/staff/students to 40 MB. This was accomplished with a cost savings. The Facebook, Twitter and YouTube ban has been lifted. Mobile applications will be available for faculty/staff/students through smartphones. The current network runs at 100 MB (one can think of this as 100 KPH), within a year the network will be 10x faster. As new technology developments occur, the technology team will communicate with the campus in an effort to keep the AUK community abreast of planned changes. The IT Department takes pleasure in providing the latest technology to the campus at the highest standards for customer service.



# AUK NEWS

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### CONFERENCES & TRAINING

**Hussein Diab**, AUK's *Senior Database Administrator*, has been selected by SunGard along with three other individuals from among over 80 universities to become Programmer Trainers for the new system. Trainers play a key leadership role at the conference including delivering topics, facilitating events and training attendees. Banner 9 (also called *Banner Evolution*) will be launched soon and is based on new technologies, AUK's system provider, SunGard Higher Education, selected key individuals to be the first to learn about Banner 9's new technologies. The training will be conducted during SMEUG (SunGard Middle East Users Group) summit taking place in Dubai from December 12-14, 2011.

**Dr. Lisa Urkevich**, *Associate Professor of Musicology/Ethnomusicology* presented a paper entitled, "Taggat: Female African Drummers of the Arabian Peninsula" at the World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM), St. John's, Newfoundland, in July 2011. Dr. Urkevich, who has served as the Film/Video Reviews Editor of the ICTM Yearbook of Traditional Music since 2006, also took part in editorial meetings while at the conference. The International Council for Traditional Music, which dates back to 1947 and was one of the Founding Members of the International Music Council of UNESCO, is the oldest, and among the most substantial international ethnomusicology societies in the world.

### PATENTS

**Dr Karim Jallad**, *Associate Professor of Chemistry*, has received a US patent on his work on cancer tumor detection. Early detection and thorough tumor resection are essential in determining cancer survival statistics. This patented technique, which offers a sharp distinction between tumor and normal tissues, finds application in the localization and resection of tumor tissue during surgery or in the enhanced endoscopic detection and staging of cancers. Currently, the patented technology is undergoing clinical trials on ovarian cancer patients in Germany and arrangements are in the works with the Mayo Clinic (USA) for the next phase of clinical trials.

Jallad, Karim N.; Kennedy, Michael D.; Low, Philip S.; Ben-Amotz, Dor. Folate targeted enhanced tumor and folate receptor positive tissue optical imaging technology. U.S. Patent 8,043,602, filed February 6, 2003, and issued October 25, 2011.



*Assistant Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at the American University of Kuwait, Dr. Anastasia Kononova presented six papers at three major conferences in the field, following are summaries of each conference.*

- 1) Professor Anastasia Kononova and her esteemed colleagues presented two studies at the 2011 International Communication Association (ICA) conference that took place in Boston in May. One study presented at the conference explored the effects of news message structure on cognitive processing of stereotypical information about African-American story characters. In another paper, a theoretical model of cognitive processing of international news messages was tested.
- 2) Professor Kononova also attended the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) that was held in St. Louis in August. She and her co-authors presented three papers. One paper offered a comparative analysis of media multitasking behaviors of young adults in three countries: Kuwait, Russia, and USA. The second study concerned the effects of media multitasking habit on the processing of cognitively demanding information in news stories. The last study presented at ICA examined the motivations to use online social networks in Taiwan.
- 3) In October, Prof. Kononova presented a paper about media multitasking among the Kuwaiti youth at the 16th annual conference of Arab-U.S. Association of Communication Educators (AUSACE) held in Beirut.

The list of conference papers presented (in chronological order)

**Kononova, A.** (2011). Distracted: The effects of online news message elements on processing of stereotype-related information about African-American characters and evaluations of news messages. Presented at the 2011 *International Communication Association (ICA) Conference*, May 26-30, Boston, Massachusetts.

**Kononova, A.**, Winters, N.C, Myers, J.C., Williams, J.M., Dong, X., Bolls, P. (2011). Learning about the world: The model of cognitive processing of international news messages. Presented at the *2011 International Communication Association (ICA) Conference*, May 26-30, Boston, Massachusetts.

**Kononova, A.**, Alhabash, S., Zazorina, T., Diveeva, N., Kokoeva, A., & Chelokyan, A. (2011). Multitasking across borders: Media multitasking behavior in the U.S., Russia, and Kuwait. Presented at the Communication Technology (CTEC) Division of the *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Convention*, August 10-13, St. Louis, Missouri.

**Kononova, A.** (2011). Read, watch, learn: The effects of media multitasking on the processing of cognitively demanding information. Presented at the Communication Theory and Methodology (CT&M) Division of the *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Convention*, August 10-13, St. Louis, Missouri.

Alhabash, S., Park, H.-J., **Kononova, A.**, & Wise, K. (2011). Exploring the Motivations of Online Social Network Use in Taiwan. Presented at the Communication Technology (CTEC) Division of the *Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Annual Convention*, August 10-13, St. Louis, Missouri.

**Kononova, A.**, & Alhabash, S. (2011). Media multitasking among the youth in the Middle East: The case of Kuwait. Paper accepted for presentation at the *16th Annual Conference of Arab-U.S. Association of Communication Educators*, October 28-31, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon.









# **AUK** CHRONICLE

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