BREAST CANCER

Zainab Gharib

Life is a chain of challenges... you may face a lot of obstacles while you are passing from one station ... [Page 3]

Music and Stress

Frida Atallah

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UPP Trip to Saida Castle

Jaafar Hadi

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UPP Newsletter | Fall 2015–16

Vol 07. Fall Semester

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This newsletter was completed with the help and guidance of the founder of the editorial board, Ms. Sandra El Hadi.
UPP Trip to Saida Castle
Jaafar Hadi

As part of their semester activities, UPP students went on a cultural trip to Saida in the south of Lebanon. The instructors and administrators joined the students, which, according to most UPP students, enhanced and enriched the connection between the students and the faculty.

The students visited the Saida Sea Castle, a unique landmark that characterizes the city, to learn more about its historical origins.

The students also visited the old souks of Saida, which reflect the old Lebanese souks and heritage, and were able to imagine the older lifestyle in Lebanon. After a day of exploration, students had lunch along with the UPP instructors and administrators, where they got to chat about their fun trip.

MIDTERM EXAMS

The First Evaluation
Jaafar Hadi

After seven weeks of intensive UPP sessions, UPP students consider midterm exams the first evaluation of their improvement. Marc, who is a level 2 student at UPP, believes that his failure or success in the midterms won't accurately measure his progress. “I think that I don't need examinations to determine or decide whether I improved or not. I can clearly notice my progress through activities that I’m doing such as watching English movies, reading articles or listening to ordinary songs, and I think the other students should think about exams in the same way,” Marc confidently said.

On the other hand, Batoul considers the midterm exams the crucial factor that tells her if she has improved or not in English. “The exams are the best scale for my English development in all areas, and the most fundamental thing is that we need to be well-prepared. Let’s see how we’ll do,” Batoul anxiously said. The extensive reading instructor, Ms. Sara Hout, emphasized that while it's true that students can evaluate their own development, exams can measure academic performance better. In conclusion, students should combine everyday English activities with the academic and scientific parts of English in order to better engage with the American or AUB instructional system.
**Exam Stress**  
**Frida Atallah**

Days are turning into weeks and weeks are turning into months. Finally, the semester is nearly over.

The end is here (well, almost). I've survived my UPP semester in AUB and I can’t believe it’s almost over. I guess the semester isn’t really over yet...There is still a week of finals to go through, which means a lot of stress and tears.

No, don’t be depressed. Actually, after the exams you'll be free to have fun and enjoy life. A whole month without exams or stress. You’ll be celebrating with friends and family.

So think positively and go for it...Study hard, don’t stress out, and do your best because you deserve the best!

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**PROJECTS**

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**Breast Cancer**  
**Zainab Gharib**

Life is a chain of challenges... You may face a lot of obstacles while you are passing from one station to another. All of us will fall at some point, but not all of us will stand and then continue from where we stopped.

One of the difficulties that could attack us is disease. Not just any disease... but cancer. Nowadays, cancer is attacking us with neither pity nor sympathy. Every day millions of innocent people are killed because of this enemy. Cancer is not only stealing our pure souls, but it is also stealing the meaning of happiness and joy from those who love and care about us. However, it’s not impossible to overcome and destroy it. A strong will and persistence are required to fight it, in addition to support from our surrounding friends and family.

Our science teacher asked us to prepare a presentation about cancer. We, as a group of four, chose breast cancer. We worked hard on this important topic and wore pink T shirts to our presentation. In our presentation, we discussed the symptoms, risks, and treatments. We also distributed handmade brochures to raise breast cancer awareness. We ended the presentation with a debate about Angelina Jolie who had a mastectomy because she had discovered that she carries a mutation of the BRCA1 gene. This presentation taught us how we could help others even with a simple awareness presentation, and how we could enlighten others’ minds by shedding light on important issues. We learned how we can work hand in hand to give support to those who need it.
Level 3 Students Create a “Super” Trashcan
Hoda Ibrahim

As a project for their science class, the UPP Level 3 students Zoulfiqar Chmaysanni, Youssef Al-Homsi, Atef Yahfoufi and Hoda Ibrahim designed a trashcan that works on sensors (i.e. it can be opened from a distance). Also, the students made this a “special trashcan” because it has a cooling system that is battery operated. The main aim of this cooling system is to remove the nasty smell that comes out of the trashcan because of the garbage. The trashcan also has a thermometer that determines its temperature. This helps us determine when to turn off the cooling system so that garbage doesn’t freeze in the can.

So, this was the first step these students took to find solutions for the nasty smell. Who knows what other students will be able to do next?

ARTS & CULTURE

“Where words fail, music speaks”
Hans Christian Anderson

Music and Stress
Frida Atallah

Exams and UPP in general are pretty much always stressful. However, there are certain activities that can help decrease this stress. Listening to music can have a tremendously relaxing effect on our minds and bodies, especially slow, classical music. It heals the soul and takes you to another world where everything is different and all your dreams come true.

*Artwork by Frida Atallah*
The solution lies in pursuing a life of peace, security and education. Campaigns and seminars promoting citizenship and civic engagement should be organized. In order to have a peaceful and secure Lebanon, we should end sectarianism. In fact, our motto should be: “Creating the nineteenth sect that paves the path for one united Lebanon.”

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SECTARIANISM
Sultan Al Awar

Within Lebanon’s 10,352 km², there are eighteen sects distributed across the country’s regions, each with its own creeds, beliefs and allegiances. Sectarianism dominates Lebanese society, but there are solutions that, if adopted, can help to “uproot the demon”.

Sectarianism is rooted in our mentality for several reasons. First, the Lebanese government provides its citizens with freedom which crystallizes democracy. However, political bigotry interferes and leads to many social conflicts. Second, individuals adopt a specific sect to secure their necessities and safeguard their future. This has led to many other effects such as disputes that occur between neighbors and discrimination among people. Today, youth are employed based on their sect, regardless of their qualifications and previous work experience. This leads to violence, abuse, and riots. Thus, political divisions are created and patriotism is affected.

The solution lies in pursuing a life of peace, security and education. Campaigns and seminars promoting citizenship and civic engagement should be organized. In order to have a peaceful and secure Lebanon, we should end sectarianism. In fact, our motto should be: “Creating the nineteenth sect that paves the path for one united Lebanon.”

Lebanon, Between a Dream and a Nightmare
Zahraa Hourany

There in a sacred region of the earth, there between the glory of the sea and majesty of the cedars, there lies God’s marvelous masterpiece: there lies Lebanon. In a very small region of this crowded world, maybe invisible for others, this country has suffered a lot, has died a lot, has wailed a lot, has lost a lot, has smiled again, has lived again, has fought again, has won again. My Lebanon is the strong one, the lively one, the one where a cedar branch grows with every drop of blood on its soil.

In my Lebanon, we all declare our loyalty for the red, the white and the green. We all declare that as God is one, Lebanon is one. In every corner of my Lebanon, there is this flickering candle, no, not for the spirit of a martyr, not for the child who woke up an orphan, but for Christmas, or for the Prophet’s birthday. In my Lebanon, justice, peace, joy, happiness, equality, they’re all the standards. But names, religions, belongings, politics, they’re the edges, the margins. The only sad thing about my Lebanon, is that it’s just a dream I had yesterday when my grandmother told me about how Lebanon was. It is just a normal heartburn.

Then, the dream faded away. I woke up, realized that all that we have is a sunset, a night maybe followed by dawn and maybe not. I realized that peaceful music is forbidden in real life, and only lamentations are allowed. I realized that we kindle lots of candles but not for birthdays, nor for Christmas, but for martyrs, for victims, for shocking deaths. I woke up, fortunately, I’m still alive today. The real Lebanon is still alive, and at the end of the day, the only thing I want to do is to light a candle for the spirit of Beirut and for the spirit of Lebanon...

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UPP STUDENTS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

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يا وردة مخملية

أحمر لونها...
متكئة على سياج الانتظار
في حديقة منسية...

ليأتي عاشق من أرض بعيدة
لا ليقطعها.. بل ليرويها...

ليرويها لخفة الانتظار
عبارات رومنسية...
فتخجل، و تلحظ حياماً
من حب جاء يرويها...

و تنثر عبق البوخ
بأسرار مخفية...

عن كل مسار سبيل
حاول جاهداً قطعها...

ليستمتع بالشكل الخارجي
جاهلاً جمال الخاطئة...

ليرويها شهوته لمدة
و يعود..و يرميها...

عبد الرحمن القادري
Dear me,
Abd El Rahman El Kaderi

I’ve been thinking about the abilities that you have but aren’t using. I want to discuss some issues that have been on your mind, and give you some advice and motivation in order to free your thoughts of distressing ideas and disturbing things. I know that you were hoping to be an architect or a doctor, but unfortunately the only chance you had was to major in computer science. Actually, this is not bad, since you can be creative in this major – as you love to be. Moreover, with your talents and hard work, you will be able to graduate with a high GPA. In these four coming years, nothing will stand in your way, and you will overcome all kinds of barriers and problems in order to reach your target, so don’t give up no matter what.

You know that after you finished high school you enrolled in AUB, a university full of people from different cultures and societies. I am sure that you will be awesome in building friendships and great in social activities, because you have been like that since your childhood. Furthermore, you have started many activities in the university such as swimming, sports, and going to the gym. I also appreciate that you have lost three kilograms in one week after starting a healthy diet. In fact you should continue to do these activities during your leisure time, but make sure they don’t distract you from your studies. Also, living alone, away from your family, is a new and interesting experience that increases your responsibilities.

Finally, you should always be as you’ve always been: self-confident, courageous and unstoppable. Try to love what you are doing and do your best to love it. Think positively, believe in yourself, and never lose hope. Whenever you feel stuck, just look in the mirror and say: “I CAN DO IT!”
This Has Made All the Difference
Frida Atallah

I never expected this.
I never planned for this.
I never thought that one day I'll be here,
in this major, in this university, with these people.
However, it has happened...
Now...
I have a new life, new people, and a new me.
All has changed!
This has made all the difference.
Destiny has bravely played its role.
It has expelled Yesterday
and welcomed Today:
a new beginning with new dreams.
It’s time to start something new,
It’s time to try something new,
and to trust the magic of beginnings.
It’s not by chance that I’m now here.

Actually, I don’t believe in chance!
Life is a series of challenges,
And I have accepted the challenge.
Life is a series of changes,
And I have made the change.
No finality or certainty.
My future is already beautifully
designed for me,
a wonderful plan is already made for me.
I just have to discover it
and know how to live it wisely.
I just have to grab my designed future
and make it more and more prosperous.
I'll dare to dream and dare to make changes.
I will just show the world
who I am, how great I am,
and how powerful I can be.
سمع يا قلبي

اكبت فيك رداء..نسج القلب فيه بكلاء
لقد كان بحثي أصعب بلاء..فتراك أخطر داء
قلبي أحد له دواء..نسج لي الحزن كرياء
أطلبي من ربي رجاء..أن تكون عفوفاً في السماء
نعم! إن قلبي قد مات..感ملات الكأس بالدموع
أقبل على شمس الاستياسات..وأشرفت
على ظلمة النجات
معتدة أخيرت بوفاتها..ما نطقت بكلمات..وقييت صامداً أخشى تلك اللحظات
فأتليها ليا لなぁ آنات!! وأمطرت عيناي تسترحذ تلك الذكريات
ما لي أسمعَ سوِي شهيق الافرات؟
كالجرياء أنا بوائك..لا حياة ولا أضواء سوى على بعض الواحات
ذيلت كما تخلذ الأذهار..ووقت الفسق
فكان النور ترحي وتأتي الأفكار..وتجعلني أخشى
الاذكار
يا حبيبي في قلبي جدار..تهدهم اليوم
تراكا دمار...
فعمق ألمي كعمق البحاراه..أه..مر على قلبي الكسر

أحمد عزالدين
فَحَذَّرُوا في وقت كُلْفَم فيهم محطم كقلب (مات زوجك، ماتت زوجتك)، كذللك صديقك القديم، فقدت أموالك، ما الذي حصل؟ لقد مضت الأيام، وإن نجحت في النقاط تعلق جديد أو تمكن من إيجاد شخص آخر أو شيء آخر يجعلكه، بما الذي يحصل للتعلق الجديد؟ لم تكونوا بحاجة إليه حقًا ليكونوا سعداء... السعادة هي حالة من اللهو، من النحل بين الهمم؛ الخطوة الثانية هي التعلق عن التسنيمات. إن تخلت عن عناك، فستعرف، شيء مماثل يحدث هنا. إن تخلت عن نسبتكم، فستعرف ما الذي أعبأكم بالتسنيمات؟ عندما تكون "انا ناجح"، فهذا كون، فلنشدو ليس جزءًا من الأنا. النجاح هو شيء يأتي ويذهب، والأمر ذاته يتعلق على فولك: "انا فاشل، محروم، رجل أعمال". تخلت عن التعلق بالتسنيمات وسكونه السعادة.

الخطوة الثالثة هي أن تعي أن العالم على غير ما برعم، إن كنت تعاني من التعلق فهذا يعني أني نادراً لهذا يتيجب علي أن تستعين، وهناك سحرة مهارة أن الواقع ليس إشكاليًا، والآن أسألك: "لقد أتمت سعداء؟" فتبديوني: "ولم لا تكون سعداء؟ لا تنظرنا إلى مكانكم، بل انظرنا إلى حيث أنتم موجودون! والغرق شائع! مارا زيبي

ومهم التعلق

حتى أخشى أن أخبر ثروتي أخشى أن أفقد وأدلي. يتوجب على العمل على أن أظل جدًا لأنني أكون على الحقول على الشخص الآخر هذا. ومن قال لنا إن سعادتنا تحتاج إلى هذا؟ ومن قال إن السعادة متطلبة؟ لن تكون بحاجة إلى هذا كلمة لنكون سعداء. أليس كذلك؟ كان يُجدِرُنا أن نتعلم، إلا أننا لا نتعلم مطلقًا. والآن أما نعتقد أن الوقت كان للنضال على برمجتنا للخروج من سجناً نحتاج إلى أن نكون على أنتم بالواقع فقط وما هو الواقع؟ الطريق الوحيد للتغيير هو تغيير فهمنا.

فهناك الخطوة الأولى التي يجذبني من الخروج إلى الواقع هي المواجهة الدائمة. وهذا الأمر لا يمكن لأحد أن يساعدني عليه. المواجهة الدائمة هي أن نتلقب بفيلة، فما الذي يعني ذلك؟ يعني ذلك أن نتلقب كل شيء فينا ومن حولنا بأنه ما يمكن.
VOLUNTEER WORK

UPP Students’ Views on Volunteering
Jaafar Hadi

UPP students’ views on volunteer work vary between two streams. The first stream believes that volunteer work is an important activity that helps the student develop. Marc, who is a UPP student, considers volunteer work as part of his courses, a mandatory course. “I think that every student here in UPP must value the atmosphere that AUB provides for volunteers,” Mark shared. He explained that volunteer work is important because it allows us to look at the world differently. He argues that it’s highly significant for UPP students to offer something to the world and to gain deeper understanding of its reality.

In contrast, Haitham believes that the important thing for UPP students is to focus on their classwork. “I don’t think that volunteering will provide something additional to the UPP students. It might distract them from their academic work, which is more important,” Haitham confidently said.

While there are opposing views on the importance of UPP student participation in volunteer work, both sides agree that AUB provides a magnificent atmosphere for such activities, and both recognize the importance of volunteering.
UPP Students Volunteer in Beirut Marathon
Hoda Ibrahim

On November 8, UPP students woke up at 5:00 am to volunteer in the Beirut marathon. Some of them were volunteering at the water station, so they arrived early to Ain El-Mrayseh to prepare the tables. Then, they stood on both sides of the road waiting for runners to pass by in order to give them water or Gatorade. Other students volunteered at the entertainment station where they ran in the marathon. At the end, they danced and sang with a music band. The students really enjoyed this experience and hope to repeat it next year.
The Saida Castle
Abd El Rahman El Kaderi

When talking about the Lebanese heritage and its sites, the Saida Sea Castle comes to mind first. This castle has been floating on water for centuries. The picture above shows a long pathway that you can cross to reach the castle. It has a metaphorical meaning: in order to reach your target and your dream, you have to cross a long path without being affected by the surroundings. When entering the castle, you can see the brilliant architectural design and the perfect harmony between its stones. You can feel the footsteps of your ancestors on each step of the stairs. You can sense the breeze of hope coming from its windows and gates, mixed with the smell of the sea. The best view is from the top of the castle, where you can see the whole city of Saida and the calm Mediterranean Sea. From above, you can free your mind from stress, and your soul from disappointment. It is really a place like no other. Saida’s Castle is a combination of the historical and the spiritual.

Friends, Food, and Fun
Raghida Amhaz

The trip to Saida made me realize how much I love my friends and teachers, and how much they mean to me. We went to many amazing places in Saida, but the most beautiful place was the old souks. The souks have been recently refurbished, but they still keep their old charm with the original architecture and tiny stall designs. You’ll find clothing, hardware, homemade soap, wood working, shoes, furniture, falafel, and even lingerie. You can easily spend a whole day in the souks searching for a unique souvenir. There, you see old roads, dirty walls and broken doors and windows, but these only emphasize the greatness of Saida. The most interesting thing is the locals’ personalities. They are kind, simple and generous. They knew that we were strange to the city, so they started asking us if we needed any help. They reflected the true hospitality and friendliness of Lebanese people.
I Read, Therefore, I Think
Hoda Ibrahim

On October 28, as part of their Listening and Speaking class, the UPP level 3 students gave presentations about famous writers and their work. They talked about Nizar Qabbani, Gibran Khalil Gibran, Oriah Mountain Dreamer, Jean De La Fontaine, Ernest Hemingway, William Henley and Helen Keller.

While speaking about “the women’s poet”, Ahmad Orabi and Dina Al-Zein showed the class a video of Kazem El-Saher singing one of Nizar’s best poems, titled “Increase Your Passion for Me”. Marcel Chamseddine and Zoulfiqar Chmayssani encouraged their friends to visit Gibran’s museum in Bcharreh as it contains many of his awesome writings and books. After reciting Oriah Mountain Dreamer’s incredible poem “The Invitation”, Ahmad Ezzeddine and Frida Atallah said that she changed her name to Oriah when she was 30 years old because when she was sick, she dreamt that this name was part of the healing process. Atef Yahfoufi and Remie El-Helou told the famous story of Jean De La Fontaine, “La Fourmi et La Cigale”. This story is considered a lesson because it shows the importance of hard work. Zainab Gharieb, Youssef Al-Homsi, and Mohammad Alloul spoke about Hemingway’s novel “A Farewell to Arms” which is about a man who falls in love with a woman, gets with her and then loses her. Patrick Damacet and Souhaib Al-Jundi spoke about Henley’s disease when he was 12, and they explained “Invictus”, the poem he wrote after he was healed in the infirmary. Lastly, Hoda Ibrahim and Sultan Al-Awar spoke about Helen Keller, who, despite being deaf and blind, became an unforgettable hero and was the first blind and deaf person to enter a high learning institution.

For the occasion, since all students were talking about writers and books, Hoda and Sultan distributed bookmarks with “I Read Therefore I Think” on them, to encourage their friends to read more, because by reading we go to another world, to a world full of imagination, where we can imagine what we want and travel to wherever we want.
Final Presentations
Hoda Ibrahim

After spending more than two weeks preparing for their presentations, December 7th finally came around, and UPP level 3 students had to reveal everything they learned throughout the semester in a 7-10 minute long presentation. In the beginning, everyone was feeling a bit nervous so the students tried to alleviate their anxiety by singing, taking some selfies, and motivating each other. On December 8th, the students of level 2 had to present as well, and resorted to similar activities to feel less nervous. Though their presentations were shorter (3-5 minutes), their topics were just as interesting. UPP students’ presentations covered diverse and interesting topics such as the power of words, the existence of extraterrestrial life, intuition, astrology, leadership, and more. Students applied the skills they learned in their listening and speaking classes, and benefitted from the feedback they had been receiving after all their class presentations. This was clear in the high level of presentations delivered, where students confidently expressed themselves and impressed the audience.
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