Dear AUB Community,

It gives me great pleasure to announce the appointment of Dr. Nadia El Cheikh as the new Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) at the American University of Beirut effective September 1, 2016. It is a proud moment for FAS, and for this University as a whole, to witness a distinguished and dedicated woman faculty member taking charge of AUB’s oldest, largest, and perhaps its most illustrious faculty for the first time in its, and our, 150-year history.

Dr. El Cheikh is an eminent scholar of the Abbasid Caliphate and Byzantium, with women and gender at the focal point of her research, as well as being an experienced and talented administrator. She earned her BA in History and Archaeology with distinction from AUB in 1985 and her PhD from Harvard University in 1992. That same year she came back to join the AUB Faculty and was promoted to the rank of Professor in 2006. She has served as Director of the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (2000-04 and 2006-09) and was named Chair of the Department of History and Archaeology in 2013. She has published three history books and co-edited three edited volumes, including this year *AUB One Hundred and Fifty*, our main sesquicentennial academic publication, as well as delivering more than 100 published articles, reviews, invitational lectures and conference/workshop papers.

Dr. El Cheikh moved to the Office of the Provost in 2015, where she has worked very effectively as Interim Associate Provost in the first year of my administration. She has been a key figure in planning and implementing the 150th anniversary celebrations and presidential inauguration, with the undoubted highlight being her organization of the three superb presidential symposia held on January 25-26, 2016 on AUB’s Defining Moments, Cancer in the Molecular Era and Higher Education in the MENA Region.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. El Cheikh for her appointment, which followed a painstaking and exhaustive search process through a highly competitive field of candidates, and in wishing her every success in the role. She is poised to be an
outstanding Dean for our core Faculty. Dr. El Cheikh deserves and will receive our complete support to carry out her impressive transformational agenda.

Before Dr. El Cheikh takes over FAS, I am happy to announce that Professor Ramzi Baalbaki has accepted the role of Acting Dean effective from June 1, as FAS Dean Patrick McGreevy starts his one-year sabbatical leave. We thank Dean McGreevy for his service and look forward to his return as a contributing faculty member.

Professor Baalbaki is a world renowned scholar of the Arabic language and an experienced and capable leader. He joined AUB in 1978 and assumed the role of Associate Dean of FAS from 1997-2004. He was Chair of the Arabic Department from 1990-93 and 1996-2011 and served as Acting Dean of FAS several times. He is the Margaret Weyerhaeuser Jewett Professor of Arabic and is the recipient of many awards and honors, including being named Head of the Academic Council of the Doha Historical Dictionary of the Arabic Language in 2013.

I am confident that you will also join me in extending the warmest wishes and in thanking Professor Baalbaki for, yet another time, accepting to serve the University in this role.

Best regards,

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President