During the past academic year, I have continued to support the development and implementation of AUB’s academic plans and policies; monitor and authorize faculty personnel decisions; oversee the offering and creation of strong administrative services to support the University's academic activities. We have promoted academic leadership at all levels, encouraging newly-empowered academic units, and building towards a community that embraces scholarship on every front. In addition, have undertaken several initiatives in undergraduate education and graduate education. In the long term, we seek to foster interfaculty collaboration at the graduate level in the sciences, technology, medicine, social sciences, and humanities through the creation of a Graduate Center. We plan to develop a governance structure for graduate education that will facilitate crossing the boundaries of the faculties, which will help to consolidate resources, pool expertise, and increase AUB’s international profile and international research collaboration.

Over forty five new faculty members joined the university this fall of 2010-11 and completed a two-day orientation seminar. Two new Directors have been appointed as of this fall. Ms. Katherine Yngve was appointed Director of the Office of International programs and Dr. Amy Zenger was appointed Director of the Writing Center. Professor Fadl Moukalled was appointed as Acting Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture after Dean Ibrahim Hajj stepped down on September 1, 2010. In addition, Professor Ali El-hajj has been appointed as AUB’s Coordinator for Program Review, and will oversee the implementation of the University’s policy for the periodic review of academic programs, which was approved by the Senate in June 2010. Five departments from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences have been selected to undergo the program review starting this current year of 2010-11. Most recently, in July 2010, four undergraduate Engineering programs at AUB’s Faculty of Engineering and Architecture were accredited by ABET Inc. (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology). This adds to our already accredited programs in the Faculty of Health Sciences, the School of Business (OSB), and the School of Nursing (SoN).

During the past academic year, we were engaged in key academic and non-academic personnel search committees for the following positions: the Vice President for IT, the Director of the Office of International Programs (DOIP), the Dean of Engineering and Architecture, the Attiya Chair in Mathematical Sciences, and the Dean of Students (DoS). The DoS search is almost concluded awaiting final recommendation by the President. The search for the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture resulted in interviews and campus visits of six candidates out of twenty nine applicants, four of whom were ranked and shortlisted by the committee. Negotiations are taking place and the final outcome will be announced once the process is completed.

AUB has been awarded $2.6 Million USD by The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative on the project title *Tomorrow’s Leaders Scholarship Program II*. The project will provide scholarships to 16 international students from selected Middle Eastern countries.
This year our efforts have been focused in a number of areas. With the new Office of International Programs in place with a Director, AUB has begun to reach out to appropriate partner schools. Despite the current unease with the political situation in the country, we have received increasing interest from universities wishing to exchange students, send visiting faculty, and develop research collaborations. We participated in the development of a new proposal led by Lund University to foster institutional cooperation, to develop higher education teaching and learning capacity through study abroad opportunities and to build the management capacity of higher education initiatives in the third-Countries of Lot 4 for Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. This project is one of the nine original projects of the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window and its upcoming new phase now carries the name EMP JOSYLEEN; Erasmus Mundus Partnership JOrdan SYria LEbanon Europe Network. The project granted budget is 2.6 Million Euro covering student, staff, and faculty exchanges between 11 partner European institutions and institutions in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

The General Education (GE) program requirements, approved by the Senate in June 2008, are mandatory for students enrolling at AUB beginning in the academic year of 2009-10. During the past academic year of 2009-10 a clear process was developed for the designation of courses to qualify for the GE program, through the development of learning outcomes at the course and program levels. Course assessment plans were developed with the faculty teaching the courses, the department chairs, and the GE evaluators. Over 200 courses were approved and designated by October 2010. These included 11 courses in Communication Skills, 118 in Humanities, 36 in Social Sciences, 22 in Natural Sciences, and 13 in Quantitative thought. All AUB programs were evaluated for compliance with the GE requirements. In addition, a GE program assessment plan was prepared and revised by the Center of Teaching and Learning, (CTL) for implementation during the current academic year of 2010-11.

The General Education program requires two Writing Intensive (WI) courses, one of which should be a course selected in the major field of study. AUB received the grant award of $400,000 from the Mellon Foundation in January 2010 to support Writing Across the Curriculum at AUB. Twenty-seven faculty members from various disciplines joined pilot group to redesign their courses to reflect a writing-intensive focus. Eighteen courses the fields of physics, chemistry, education, mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, architecture and graphic design, nursing, and business will be redesigned. The new Director of the Writing Center, Amy Zenger, will continue to lead this project and to providing train to the faculty and student tutors.

Current AUB Centers, such as the Center of teaching and Learning, the Issam Fares Institute, the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service, the Center for Advanced Mathematical Sciences (CAMS), and Ibsar - Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures, were very active during the past academic year of 2010-11.

The president of the University has made a strategic decision to move to long-term contracts for the majority of professorial faculty above the rank of assistant professor. Long-term contracts are already being awarded to newly-appointed and promoted associate and full professors. In three or four years, such contracts will be the norm for associate and full professors who join AUB and for assistant and associate professors who advance in rank. During the current transitional period,
A re-appointment policy for full professors was voted by the Senate in April 2010. The reappointment policy for full professors at AUB as in previous years, following rigorous performance reviews, will be decided by the president following recommendations from the dean, the BOD, and the provost. During the reappointment process, full professors will be considered for seven-year contracts by the University’s academic deans, the provost and the president. The procedures for the reappointment of full professors to longer-term contracts invite their more active participation in articulating their own intellectual priorities and directions, giving direct voice to the senior faculty, who define the breadth and depth of AUB’s current research and future directions. It is believed that the assessment and improvement of educational excellence at AUB is best accomplished with the engaged commitment of its faculty.

A number of initiatives were begun specifically responding to the following strategic goals of the University: the diversity of student body, faculty excellence, and research and graduate education.

1. Enrollment Management and Services Initiative: An enrollment management and services task force (EMTF) was appointed in the spring of 2009 to study and recommend improvements in the admissions, registration, and financial aid processes; in course placement policies; and in advising and other student services. The members of the EMTF are: Hala Muhtasib (Chair of the Unified Admissions Committee and Professor of Biology, Salim Kanaan (Director of Admissions), Moueen Salameh (Director of Registrar), and Eleanor Johnson (Assistant to the Provost). The main recommendation of the committee included establishing an enrollment management unit at AUB in the longer term, and more immediately implementing several improvements in the undergraduate admissions, and registration processes, assessing undergraduate financial aid policies and procedures; creating a more student-centered environment at AUB by simplifying processes so as to improve the student experience at AUB, revising the English placement services, establishing a centralized classroom management system; and addressing institutional data integrity. The EMTF will continue its work in the coming academic year of 2010-11.

2. Graduate Education: A Graduate Task Force (GTF) chaired by the Provost Dallal was formulated with the membership of Prof. R. Talhouk (FAS), Prof. K. Kabalan (FEA), and Prof. N. Ghaddar (Associate Provost). The GTF is charged with revising and improving graduate academic policies and working towards the establishment of a centralized Graduate Council. The GTF revised a Unified Graduate Admissions policy which was approved by the Senate in June 2010. A committee will be formed, chaired by the VP IT with members from CNS, Admissions, and Provost Office, to oversee and implement the automation of graduate admissions from applications to final decision through the development of a software application interfaced with the AUB Student Information System. The GTE has also revised the University graduate academic rules and regulations soliciting input from Faculties and deans. The revised graduate academic policies proposal has been sent to the Board of Graduate Studies for their recommendation to the Senate. The GTF has also drafted a Graduate Financial Aid Policies manual on graduate assistantships, graduate research assistantships, graduate fellowships, and a work-study program. The proposed policies address process and criteria for resource allocation.
of the number of fulltime GA’s across academic units. It is also proposing a new graduate assistant compensation policy.

In addition, the GTF has prepared a proposal for the establishment of a Graduate Council. The council will be responsible for the oversight of admission policies and processes, and the consistent administration of graduate academic policies. It will also align the vision, standards, and practices of graduate studies in the different faculties’ strategic plans with AUB’s goals, and assess the best administrative structure to support sustainable and successful graduate studies at AUB.

3. Our ability to achieve the strategic goals of the University pertaining to faculty excellence, research and graduate education, and community and environment depends on the proper functioning of academic departments and programs within the shared governance principles. We began an initiative and are adopting measures for the empowerment of departments, and supporting academic leadership. The following tasks were accomplished under this initiative:

- The Provost’s Office developed a manual for department chairs which was revised by the BOD and distributed to the chairs for their feedback. The manual documents the expectations, responsibilities and processes that will guide the chair in carrying out responsibilities to the faculty, students, and the University. The manual is considered a work in progress and will be updated as needed. The development of the chair’s manual is a first step in addressing one of the recommendations of AUB’s 2008 self-study: “Clarify and enhance the responsibilities of department chairs and offer faculty members inducements (accelerated paid research leaves, supplementary leave compensation) to serve as chairs in order to encourage rotation and maintain the scholarly level of chairs.”
- The BOD approved a new and clear policy on recruitment, compensation, and performance evaluation of academic department/tracks chairs/conveners. The policy was implemented as of October 1, 2010 and offers, besides a reduced teaching load, an administrative allowance/supplement distributed over 12 months. The administrative supplement amount is a function of the size of the department and its summer course offerings. The new compensation scheme for chairs of academic departments was allocated an annual budget of about $250,000 for the academic year 2010-11.
- A new Faculty Development Policy was introduced as of October 1, 2010 that empowers faculties/Schools to administer travel grants. The faculty development funds are now allocated to each Faculty/School based on the number of eligible faculty members. A new Faculty Travel Fund, independent of the development grants, has also been introduced to support faculty travel. The allocated annual budget for faculty development and faculty travel annual budget under the new scheme is $530,000 compared to $360,000 budget of 2008-09.
- The URB Senate Committee mission, composition and function, and URB funding guidelines were revised. Guidelines for the funding of research proposals valued at maximum amount of $10,000/grant, and the revised URB policies were approved by the AUB senate at its February 2010 meeting. Seed funding was eliminated from URB research funding and start-up funds are now in place as negotiated with the dean at the
time of faculty appointment. The total URB internal funding for research has increased by 15% reaching up to $950,000 for the academic year 2010-11.

- Recommendations and signature matrices on all academic appointments/contracts have been developed and approved by the BOD. The matrix reflects shared governance at the University, ensuring department, faculty and academic administration involvement in personnel appointment’ decisions.

4. We began an initiative to reform and enhance institutional integrity policies. Institutional Integrity has been addressed by two appointed committees: The first is the Harassment, Discrimination and Grievances Committee, which is charged with revising AUB’s ethical principles and procedures for addressing harassment, discrimination, and grievances based on feedback received from lawyers. The second committee is the Procedures and Policies on Risk Reduction and Management Committee, charged with reviewing and developing policies and procedures related to the Human Research Protection program and including for the first time the development of research integrity and research misconduct policies. Both committees are in various stages of completion of their final draft policies and are working on the consideration of educational training methods to raise university community awareness on these issues. An AUB Ombuds Office will be established during the coming academic year 2010-11, and will operate as an independent, informal, neutral and confidential resource to assist faculty, staff, and students in exploring alternative dispute resolution options in cases of harassment and discrimination.

5. Improved and effective communication with faculty, staff, and students is critical to the success of the campus initiatives, and for a better informed community. We have been exploring new ways to improve communication across campus with the help of the Communications Office, and we are in the final stages of launching the Provost’s Office’s new website.

6. We will be working to facilitate collaborations across Faculty/School boundaries, as more interdisciplinary graduate programs and research foci are emerging at AUB. The aspiration for expanding research and graduate education beyond traditional faculty or departmental boundaries is universal, and requires putting in place new policies and resources to promote and support interfaculty collaborations. We are exploring the means for establishing a Strategic Graduate Center and Research Clusters Program to make available highly needed new space to house interdisciplinary programs, and to facilitate interdisciplinary graduate programs and research coordination. The Center will provide support for innovative and creative activities, improve the multidisciplinary research environment, and promote the research clusters/centers in the region and internationally. This initiative will enhance AUB’s research profile, engage faculty, enhance collaborative research, integrate resources for higher research feasibility and visibility, and attract public and private regional and international partnerships. Graduate education in the region has taken strategic steps in creating centers of excellence in niche areas relevant to the region. We have identified areas that will become core interdisciplinary graduate programs which include environmental studies, energy, Arabic and Islamic studies, international studies, computational science/mechanics, and biomedical sciences and biomedical engineering. The governance structure and graduate policies for offering interdisciplinary programs are under development.