

American University of Beirut  
Office of the President



Dear AUB Community,

You have recently heard from Chairman Philip Khoury in regard to the general deliberations of the Board of Trustees during its meetings last week, and I would like to follow this up with a more specific message.

The last month has been a difficult time for all of us on campus, and I want to acknowledge the concerns of both faculty and students on a number of relevant issues. I believe the student voice in particular has been very effectively heard in these times of economic privation. The challenge for us in senior administration is to ensure a solution for next year's budget that will relieve the pressure on students and their families and yet still meets the necessary obligations our institution must meet, especially to our long-serving faculty and staff.

A joint commission of faculty and staff has worked diligently on alternative budget suggestions and submitted to me a series of recommendations that I intend to take into full consideration, and these will be joined by other proposals suggested by our finance team, other faculty members, the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees, and the Tuition Increase Committee of the USFC. The configuration of a university budget, with all of its moving parts, is not a task that can be completed overnight. We are working with several possible budget scenarios, which realistically must include a tuition increase, although the size of any increase is yet to be determined. We are taking very seriously our responsibility to analyze the impact of the various scenarios on all concerned. We will work hard between now and May, when the proposed budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees, to resolve these issues. The sooner we do so, the better.

I have called for a series of town hall meetings for the faculties to review in more detail the issues of concern discussed at the Board meeting, and I also plan to meet with students to address the matters they have raised with me as well. I am committed to an engaged form of University governance, with transparency and coordination with the different constituencies of AUB.

Much of the Board's retreat agenda centered on the unified academic strategic vision for AUB during the coming several years, which will encompass the university's next major fundraising campaign. This vision was well received by AUB's trustees, and I look forward to working closely with the Provost, the deans, and you to ensure its implementation in the years to come. With further input from the deans, the Provost will share this vision with the Senate and each of the faculties in turn to ensure broad understanding of the new directions laid out for AUB. Despite the ongoing turmoil and uncertainty in the region, I believe our University has a brilliant future and a vital role to play, in fulfillment of its historic legacy in Lebanon.

Peter Dorman  
President