

Dear AUB Students,

I want to acknowledge your many emails, social media messages, and activism this week. As I have already mentioned, AUB's draft budget for the next fiscal year remains a work in progress with projected figures only, and no final decisions on the tuition increase have been made. The Board of Trustees will not approve a final budget until the end of May. In the meantime, I am committed to keeping lines of communication open to ensure that the process of evaluating our options remains inclusive and transparent. I am optimistic that we will find a solution that is both fiscally responsible and does not put an overwhelming financial burden on our students and their families.

Having met with the student leadership of the Tuition Increase Committee, I am open to continued conversation with that group and have called for a meeting next week with the full USFC leadership to extend the conversation.

As promised, I am moving quickly to appoint the two working groups I mentioned in my last correspondence. Student representation on both bodies is essential. There will be:

- A short-term commission convened to look specifically at scenarios and alternatives to the projected six percent tuition increase for the upcoming academic year.
- A longer-term commission to identify areas of savings and efficiencies, to suggest alternate sources of revenue for the University, and to propose a sustainable plan for financial prudence in our budgets going forward.

The short-term commission appointments to date include:

- Acting Dean Chahine, OSB (Chair)
- Chief Financial Officer Drew Wickens
- Human Resources Interim Director Samar Diab
- Dean Patrick McGreevy, FAS
- Dean Nahla Hwalla, FAFS
- Dr. Imad El-Hajj, FEA
- Dr. Rabih Talhouk, FAS
- Dr. Mohamed Harajli, FEA

Dean Chahine is charged with convening this group in intensive meetings over the next ten days to look at the targeted budget issues for 2014-15 and to evaluate various scenarios that will decrease the projected tuition fee increase. I will ask for alternate scenarios to be in my hands by March 17, prior to the Board of Trustees meeting on March 21. I strongly encourage student body participation in the work of the commission and remain open to the inclusion of student members as nominated by the USFC.

In the coming weeks, I will also appoint campus representatives to the Commission on Institutional Sustainability. These appointments will require a commitment to support long-range strategies beyond the current academic year, and again I will be seeking appropriate nominations from the

USFC to develop a plan for cultivating and protecting the fiscal health and the interests of the university community going forward.

Your activism and attention to the complex budget issues our community is confronting is welcome and commendable. With that said, we need to find a way to move forward together. A unified approach is our best and only solution for resolution.

Sincerely,

Peter Dorman