

# AUB Nature Conservation Center (NCC)

## Director

Saliba Aoun, Najat, PhD Professor, Chemistry (FAS)

## AUB Faculty with Membership in the AUB-Nature Conservation Center

Abiad, Mohammad, PhD	Associate Professor, Agribusiness (FAFS)
Abou Najm, Majdi, PhD	Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering (SFEA)
Afiouni, Fida, PhD	Associate Professor, Olayan School of Business (OSB)
Al-Sayyed, Amany	Instructor, English (FAS)
Alameddine, Mohammad, PhD	Associate Professor, Health Management and Policy (FHS)
Amin, Tamer, PhD	Associate Professor, SMEC Director, Education (FAS)
Bouhadir, Kamal, PhD	Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
Bou Nassar, Makram, PhD	Lecturer, Economics (FAS)
Chaaban, Jad, PhD	Associate Professor, Agriculture (FAS)
Chalak, Ali, PhD	Associate Professor, Agriculture (FAFS)
Choueiri, Lina, PhD	Professor, English (FAS)
Darwiche, Nadine, PhD	Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics (FM)
Dimechkie, Riad	Senior Lecturer, Olayan School of Business (OSB)
El-Jurdi Hounaida	Assistant Professor, Olayan School of Business (OSB)
El-Sabban, Marwan, PhD	Professor, Physiology (FM)
Ghaddar, Tarek, PhD	Chairperson & Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
Ghattas, Hala, PhD	Assistant Research Professor Professor and Associate Director, Center for Research on Population and Health (CRPH), Epidemiology and Population Health (FHS)
Habib, Rima, PhD	Chairperson & Professor, Environmental Health (FAFS)
Harb, Charles, PhD	Chairperson and Professor, Psychology (FAS)
Homaidan, Fadia, PhD	Director of the Office of Grants & Contracts
Kobeissy, Firas, PhD	Assistant Research Professor, Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics, Psychiatry (FM)
Massoud, May, PhD	Associate Professor, Environmental Health (FHS)
McGreevy, Patrick, PhD	Professor, History and Archeology (FAS)
Muhtasib, Hala, PhD	Interim Associate Provost & Professor, Biology (FAS)
Naja, Farah, PhD	Assistant Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS)

Nasr, Waddah, PhD	Associate Professor, Philosophy (FAS)
Olabi, Ammar, PhD	Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS) Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS)
Osman El-Hage, Mona, PhD	Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS) Instructor of Clinical Specialty, Family Medicine (FM)
Prattis, Susan, PhD	Assistant Professor, Animal and Veterinary ScienceAgriculture, (FAFS)
Romani, Maya, MD	Instructor of Clinical Specialty, Family Medicine (FM)
Rubeiz, Nelly, MD	Professor of Clinical Specialty, Dermatology (FM)
Saad, Walid, PhD	Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering Program (SFEA)
Salha, Neville	Assistant Professor, Fine Arts and Art History (FAS)
Saliba Aoun, Najat, PhD	Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
Srouf, Issam, PhD	Assistant Associate Professor, Engineering Management Program (SFEA)
Talhok, Rabih, PhD	Professor, Biology (FAS)
Talhok, Salma, PhD	Professor, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Department (FAFS)
Tannir, Lina, PhD	Lecturer, Olayan School of Business (OSB)
Zurayk, Rami, PhD	Chairperson & Professor, Landscape Design & Ecosystem Management (FAFS)

## Advisory Board Members

Emir Abillama, Samir	President of Al Amir Holding
Alami, Yusuf	Board and Executive Committee Member, The National Investor and Advance Cure, UAE
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Jammal, Anwar	Chairman/CEO at Jammal Trust Bank S.A.L
Khoury, Nadim PhD	Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission
Makhzoumi, Jala, PhD	Associate to the Faculty, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management (FAFS)
Rayess, Fadi	Partner and CEO of Levant Retail SAL
Vuorela, Heikki, PhD	Professor, Pharmaceutical Biology, University of Helsinki, Finland

### Executive Committee Members

Abu Najm, Majdi PhD	Assistant Professor, Civil Engineering (SFEA)
Homeidan, Fadia, PhD	Director of the Office of Grants & Contracts
Naja, Farah, PhD	Assistant Associate Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences (FAFS)
Osman El Hage, Mona, MD	Instructor of Clinical Specialty, Family Medicine (FM)
Saad, Walid, PhD	Assistant Professor, Chemical Engineering Program (SFEA)
Saliba Aoun, Najat, PhD	Professor, Chemistry (FAS)
Talhok, Salma, PhD	Professor, Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Department (FAFS)
Vuorela, Heikki, PhD	Professor, Pharmaceutical Biology, University of Helsinki, Finland

## Introduction

Established in 2002 as a hub for nature conservation efforts and awareness on campus, The Nature Conservation Center (NCC) is an interfaculty research center with the mission of promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and helping reinvent individuals' relationship with it through the use of research, education, community outreach, and knowledge dissemination.

While almost every university in the West has its own biodiversity center, the AUB Nature Conservation Center is unique in the region as it is the only academic center that collects, identifies, and catalogues species, creates databases, and cultivates and researches the nutritional, medicinal, and traditional applications of endemic species in the region.

The Center's objectives are to link a maximum of disciplines to generate new knowledge and create an open innovative and collaborative platform. Ultimately, the center aims to raise awareness about nature-related issues and to become a recognized reference for the study and sustainable use of dry land biodiversity. Through many running programs, research projects, outreach events, consultations on several large-scale environmental initiatives, and awards, the Center has reached out to a demographic including everyone from laypeople to highly specialized scholars.

The center conducts research on medicinal plants to identify and extract medicinally-potent molecules, especially those with anti-cancerous properties. It also applies/administers Citizen Science which involves activities that engage members of the community in its conservation efforts and research. It also offers awards to environmentally sound ideas in the form of IBDA and "Samir & Claude Abillama Eco-Entrepreneurship Award". Recently, and in the wake of the waste crisis, NCC developed a new waste management program to assess environmental damages and stimulate public action in the development and harmonization of sustainable municipal Integrated Waste Management (IWM) plans and practices. Moreover, NCC in

collaboration with the AUB Health and Wellness Program initiated a new Integrative Health program aiming to bridge between Research, Clinical, Educational, and Policy in Integrative Health in AUB and the Middle East and North Africa.

The center welcomes new members from AUB faculty every year, as well as interns and volunteers.

## Membership and Governance

The AUB Nature Conservation Center consists of volunteers committed to collaborative learning and discovery. Membership includes AUB faculty and staff members and other scholars whose interests focus on biodiversity and nature-related issues.

The Center is a platform for scholars and activists at all stages in their careers and from all parts of the world to exchange ideas and information. Its participants take part in seminars and activities, as well as provide assistance to researchers and students and are categorized as Members, Associates, Assistants, Volunteers, Interns, or Friends of the Center. NCC frequently collaborates with the business community, governments, and NGOs at the national, regional, and international levels. It is managed by a Director and one Executive and Research Committee of elected AUB faculty members, which is responsible for coordinating its work. As for the international Advisory Board, it is responsible for advising the Center on its strategic vision and future directions and for promoting NCC to the general community to public and private Institutions, and to potential funders.