



**THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT**

**OFFICE OF THE PROVOST**

Strategic Planning Unit for Enrollment Management and Student Services  
(EMSS)<sup>1</sup> Draft Report

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## **Charge of the Enrollment Management and Student Services Strategic Planning Unit**

The AUB 2008 Self-Study report contained the following two main recommendations related to Student Admissions and Retention (Chapter 9) and to Student Support Services (Chapter 9):

- *Establish a formal and robust enrollment management unit to improve fulfillment of AUB's mission and strategic enrollment goals. In addition to assuming the current functions of the Unified Admissions Committee, the unit should be actively and systematically involved in the continuous assessment and improvement of the following: (i) admissions criteria and processes and their effectiveness in attracting and admitting qualified students; (ii) means to increase the pool of applicants; (iii) retention and graduation rates of enrolled students, particularly the freshman class; (iv) geographic and socio-economic diversity of the student population; and (v) financial aid programs and practices and their impact on the size of the pool of applicants, yield of accepted students and diversity of the student population.*
- *Explore means to promote an 'advising culture' and improve advising load distribution and the advising process, including advisor training and assessment. One possibility is to appoint advising officers at the faculty level. Standard Nine: Student Support Services*

The Enrollment Management and Student Services (EMSS) SPU shall create a comprehensive strategic programmatic enrollment management and student services plan that will fulfill AUB's broad institutional mission for our region and our times. The committee shall identify major initiatives and planning details that will enhance the effectiveness of the services, policies, and processes of admissions, registration, financial aid, course placement, and student support services. A guiding principle of the EMSS is to promote student-centered services at AUB so as to improve the campus experience life of the student outside the class room.

The EMSS SPU shall aim to

- Establish clear enrollment goals.
- Improve financial aid processes.
- Align financial and programmatic planning.
- Identify initiatives to improve student services.
- Promote student success (retention, graduation rate).
- Identify key performance indicators of each Department within SPU.
- Prepare final strategic planning report for the SPU in accordance with the common plan outline (see Table 1) and the Strategic Planning Schedule (See Table 2).

# **1. Mission**

## **1.1 Mission of Enrollment Management and Student Services**

Our mission is to reflect on the performance of segments of the University's administration which are directly involved with student enrollment and services and propose ways to optimize the University's capacity to recruit, retain, and graduate a highly qualified and diverse student body.

## **1.2 Mission of various EMSS offices**

The mission statements of the various EMSS offices appear in Appendix A

# **2. Major Accomplishments and Setbacks**

## **2.1 Office of Admissions**

The marketing and recruitment efforts of the Office of Admissions increased significantly over the last 5 years and from 68 schools and fairs visited in the various regions of Lebanon in 2007 to 99 schools and fairs visited in 2010-11. Similarly, more than 170 schools and fairs were visited this year in the Arab world in contrast to 146 in 2006.

These recruitment efforts were rewarded by a gradual increase in the number of applicants to AUB that grew from 3770 in 2006 to 4730 in 2010-11 (a 26% increase) in spite of the large number of established new universities in Lebanon and the region and their aggressive marketing and recruitment efforts including financial aid and scholarship packages. Thus, the acceptance rate improved from 67% in 2006 to 59% in 2010-11 but the yield remained around 60% on the average.

The communications with the schools, applicants and alumni tremendously improved and the queries and admission decisions are being responded to in a timely manner. Prospective applicants are updated on their application status (incomplete, receipt of new documents, decisions, etc.).

Communication and coordination with OIP, advisors and Registrar's office resulted in better serving of international students and making their admission and registration at AUB a pleasant experience.

The aggressive recruitment by the competitor universities remains a worry especially in light of the many agreements between them and some of the feeder schools to attract high academically ranked students through scholarships offerings. Similarly, the new increase in the tuition fees of the AUB accompanied by an economical uncertainty would have a negative impact on the applications and yield figures. Hence, the urgent need to increase our recruitment efforts (more staff members are needed) and improve on our space allocations.

## 2.2. Registrar

The accomplishments of the Registrar's Office include integration and implementation of technical scripts to improve many aspects of the registration process; implementation of control mechanisms whereas a continuous follow up is being implemented on risks and controls relevant to the registration process, clearance of leaving/graduating students, etc...; installation of a document management software (Laserfiche); full documentation of the processes related to the Registrar's Office; commercializing the Final Exam Schedule Software created in house as well as creation of a Central Classroom Software to centralize room scheduling in the university as a whole; providing consultation services to universities in the region such as Dhofar university, Ahfad University and Mohamad Al Mana College for Health Sciences (MACHS) as well as providing services to the public sector in Lebanon; and providing assistance to offices at AUB such as CEC in relation to record integration on Banner.

The setbacks of the Registrar's Office can be summarized in the unavailability of online payment for transcript and certificate issuance, in the level of accuracy of bio data entered by the Admissions Office on Banner and in the unavailability of enough sections/capacity in some service courses.

## 2.3. Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

In recent years, Office of Institutional Research & Assessment's (OIRA) activities and functions have expanded and the Office plays an important role in AUB's institutional renewal and improvement processes. OIRA has met AUB information needs, tried to keep with latest advances in IR and technology, and worked towards attaining excellence at AUB. OIRA worked on building a culture of inquiry and assessment at AUB through conducting and coordinating assessment and evaluation of university programs and services, supporting strategic planning and enrollment management, maintaining databases and acting as a repository for official institutional data, and finally, functioning as a national and international testing center.

Despite achievements made, several challenges need to be met and they include building uniform and standardized definitions for measures/criteria used at AUB, ensuring data security and integrity, further automation of processes and reporting to better meet AUB information needs, and enhancing communication with various stakeholders to ensure better cooperation and more support. In addition, need to keep up-to-date with advances and developments in institutional research and with technological advances in the field.

## 2.4. Office of International Programs

Created in August 2010, the Office of International Programs (OIP) has added two full-time staff persons and two half-time graduate assistants to the personnel available to address the recruitment, retention and advising of AUB students with global interests. Its main **achievements** in this brief period include: increased support and advising services for international students of all types (degree-seeking as well as visiting or exchange students), increased recruitment activities in North America and Europe, and the creation of advising resources for all AUB students about how to add a period of study outside of Lebanon to their AUB degree. The most time-consuming **setbacks** for OIP this year arose from issues common to

all students, which this SPU has been created to address; for international student yield and retention in particular are acutely sensitive to perceived inefficiencies in the areas of Housing, Admissions, Advising and Registration. A very significant **setback specific to OIP operations** is the inability of current AUB data systems to accurately track or be manipulated to provide analysis on: incoming foreign students and their immigration status, outgoing study abroad participants and their course equivalencies, or the fiscal balance aspects of exchanges. It should be noted that this data problem currently makes it functionally impossible to create or track KPI indicators for the OIP unit in any meaningful, professionally benchmarked way. Finally, **a major barrier** to the mission is the fact that the setbacks common to all units in this SPU have, in this first year of OIP operation, prevented the director from focusing on the revenue-generating possibilities which many International Programs offices are able to provide to their university's bottom line.

## 2.5. Office of Student Affairs

The different units of the Office of Student Affairs have enjoyed continuous progress and expansion in the last years. The **Career and Placement Services** has established four main aspects of its work: Career guidance, Job Search techniques, Workshops and the Job Fair. The **Student Housing** occupancy rate has exceeded 95% (in revenue terms). **Student Activities unit** implemented plans to eliminate major obstacles hindering the expansion and execution of student activities, particularly in terms of policies and procedures. The **Counseling Center** has provided psychological services for a large number of students and endeavored to meet growing demand as students become more comfortable with the setting. More students continued to benefit from the **Work Study Program** and efforts are underway in revising the application procedure to minimize waiting time for eligible students who are unsuccessful in the first round. More **Athletics** activities have been introduced over the last years and number of athletes participating in sports activities has increased. Also, more new members are enrolling each year in the membership program of the CHSC operations. An associate dean and an executive officer were appointed. As for the **Setbacks**, the political/security situation and economic uncertainty were the two major influencing factors on SAO activities as noted by virtually all directors and coordinators. The political/security situation for example impacts attendance to large-scale sports or musical events and more stringent security measures may serve as a nuisance to non-AUB members attending such events or conferences, job fairs and the like. The fewer jobs there are the more challenging it is to provide a more successful service. The physical infrastructure of some of the student residence halls remains a worry and requires urgent attention. Efforts to appoint a CHSC business manager were not successful. One major obstacle for this is the emolument given to the person who would occupy this position.

## 3. External Trends and Influences

The youth population in the various Arab countries is on the increase and the demands for University education by governments and families are increasing too. Accordingly, there is an enhanced general expansion of the higher education through the establishment of numerous local institutions as well as international institutions of higher learning in the region. This quantitative

growth led to the growth of many institutions for profit making and to a lot of quality deficits that is currently impacting the job market. Hence, various countries are trying to reorganize their higher education through the establishment of educational regulatory bodies and national accreditation boards.

The gender equality is moving forward in most of our surrounding countries and a university education is considered as a mean to reach this equality, a trend highly supported by the parents, hence the increasing demand on University education by female students. The rapid improvements observed in fields like media and communications is making them highly attractive to the growing youth hence the demand on such field from institutions of higher learning.

The global financial crisis and technological developments have brought about fundamental changes in which universities do business (class sizes, e-learning, proliferation of publishing venues and online journals) and to which we must adapt. The crisis has also strengthened, at least in relative terms, the position of AUB, affording a number of promising opportunities. Reduced funding of students at universities abroad affords AUB an opportunity to diversify its student body through the recruitment of foreign graduate and undergraduate students. The relative strength of the Lebanese banking industry has increased the availability of low-interest educational loans to our students. It is still too early to assess the impact of political events in the region in the last few months. This era of rapid communications is enhancing globalization and many institutions are seeking to render their campuses more international hence the aggressive marketing of international institutions in the Arab world to attract the Arab youths and the increased trend of study abroad programs.

The factors that attract students to AUB include academic rigor, opportunity to pursue graduate work in leading USA and European institutions, the broad spectrum of majors offered by AUB, competitive opportunity for employment, producing well-rounded individuals and life-long learners, and the quality of AUB Campus. Beirut and Lebanon are also factors, but the attractiveness of Beirut and Lebanon depends on the political situation and on security considerations.

On another note, the emergence and rapid expansion of technology integration in most businesses and the expansion of the private sector as compared to the public sector is impacting on the higher education in terms of curriculum to deliver up to date technological advancement that would impact on the job market.

#### **4. Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats**

SWOT analysis of the Office of Admissions, Registrar, OIP, Student Affairs and OIRA can be found in Appendix A.

##### **Strengths**

S1. Institution-wide commitment to strategic enrollment management planning

- S2. Established and respected regional leader in undergraduate education
- S3. Strong image in the region and beyond due to long history of academic excellence
- S4. Student admissions procedure is strict, equitable and standardized
- S5. Equal consideration for students from all feeder schools
- S6. High retention and graduation rates as compared to peer institutions<sup>2</sup>
- S7. Institution-wide commitment for strong recruitment efforts manifested by the rising applications for both local and international students over the last 10 years
- S8. EMSS staff responsive to changing needs of university and community

### **Weaknesses**

- W1. Lack of comprehensive enrollment management plan
- W2. Admissions criteria and enrollment management procedures not aligned with institutional mission
- W3. Unclear definition of student diversity
- W4. Lack of a student-centered approach in some areas of students services
- W5. Difficulty of freshman transfer to certain fields
- W6. Lack of strategic marketing plan for student recruitment
- W7. Lack of a uniform system across AUB faculties and programs to evaluate the grades of transfer applicants from other universities
- W8. Higher than desired attrition among the freshman class
- W9. Insufficient staffing levels and physical space in admissions office and student service units as compared to peer institutions
- W10. Poorly maintained websites of various EMSS-related offices
- W11. Lack of formal structures at AUB which facilitate inter-unit cooperation
- W12. Financial aid is not linked to Enrollment Management
- W13. Lack of policies, procedures and criteria for the admission of students who are mentally (dyslexic) and physically challenged (disabilities)

### **Opportunities**

- O1. Liberal arts image is a niche marketing opportunity for AUB
- O2. New state-of-the-art athletic/recreational facilities which are attractive to students
- O3. Increased interest by international students at the undergraduate and graduate levels

### **Threats**

- T1. Economic recession and deficits, as well as political instability
- T2. Increased competition from local and regional universities for students, funding, and programs

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<sup>2</sup> A list of peer institutions appears in appendix E

## **5. Vision of EMSS**

To optimize the quality and unique diversity of the student body and enhance the student experience, so to strengthen our institutional identity as the university of choice in the Middle East and beyond.

## **6. Strategic Goals and Objectives**

### **6.1. Goal 1: Define a university-wide governance structure that streamlines enrollment management activities at AUB**

6.1.1. Objective 1: Create a university-wide enrollment management unit that will set university-wide goals for optimizing retention, diversity, and graduation rates

#### *6.1.1. Strategies for objective 1:*

1. Develop clear goals to optimize retention and graduation rates of students in coordination with the academic units
2. Effectively coordinate enrollment management functions of all offices including academic units
3. Streamline communications for enrollment management among all academic and administrative offices
4. Create a process to coordinate the strategic planning of enrollment management issues with the Admissions, Registrar's, Student Affairs, OIRA, IT, Advancement, OIP, Financial Planning offices and the academic units
5. Improve mechanisms for the assessment and management of information related to student enrollment and retention
6. Improve mechanisms for the assessment and management of financial aid in relation to enrollment goals
7. Improve mechanisms for including international programs planning in enrollment management at AUB

6.1.2. Objective 2: Enhance admissions processes and policies to become more effective and more student-centered

### *6.1.2. Strategies for objective 2:*

1. Create a separate university-wide administrative unit to improve the admissions process of graduate students
2. Unify the policies and procedures across faculties for undergraduate transfers as well as graduate admissions in all faculties
3. Provide adequate staff and appropriate space for admissions
4. Assign a Committee to carry the following main tasks and make recommendations for approval by higher bodies before implementation:
  - Revisit and broaden admissions criteria to recognize factors such as talents and experiences of students, portfolios, program strength, among others
  - Set and adhere to admissions deadlines and response timelines to be consistent with institutional goals of student diversity and applicant quality; and responsive to differing target audiences
  - Involve the university community to be responsive to student issues regarding admissions

### 6.1.3. Objective 3: Develop a university-wide marketing and recruitment plan

#### *6.1.3. Strategies for objective 3:*

1. Create a mechanism for coordinated planning, review and assessment of recruitment efforts among all academic offices and administrative units<sup>3</sup>
2. Use scholarships/financial aid and other incentives more effectively as marketing tools to enhance the quality and diversity of students
3. Identify and effectively market AUB's strengths as a leader in higher education
4. Establish guidelines to engage the Alumni chapters to assist in recruitment efforts in selected target markets
5. Develop recruitment plans to better target high quality and diverse applicants

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<sup>3</sup> Offices of Admissions, Advancement, Communications, REP, Student Affairs, both OIP offices and the Faculties

6.1.4. Objective 4: Address recruitment, yield and retention/graduation issues specific to international students

*6.1.4. Strategies for objective 4:*

1. Ensure visa compliance and accurate emergency contact information among all international students<sup>4</sup>
2. Create information resources which make AUB processes more comprehensible to international stakeholders
3. Create effective policies and procedures for supporting visiting international applicants who wish to volunteer, do community service or have a professional /clinical placement experience at AUB
4. Create effective structures for supporting and marketing short-term customized study abroad & professional training opportunities to international students

6.1.5. Objective 5: Evaluate the possibility of creating programs to enhance diversity

*6.1.5. Strategies for objective 5:*

1. Improve course offerings to meet the needs of undergraduate and graduate international students
2. Expand and devote marketing resources to AUB's UPP

6.1.6. Objective 6: Evaluate the possibility of using various tuition structures and/or financial aid/scholarships as an admissions tool to enhance regional and socioeconomic diversity

*6.1.6. Strategies for objective 6:*

1. Include the applicant's country of origin and/or special talents in the tuition/financial aid decision

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<sup>4</sup> Any student who needs a visa to remain in Lebanon

2. Expand the current “merit scholarship” program to cover more students
3. Earmark financial aid/scholarships for regions and areas where students’ yield is low
4. Establish special financial aid and loan programs to attract high quality students from developing countries
5. Earmark scholarships for academic majors where students’ yield is low

## **6.2. Goal 2: Define a university-wide governance structure to improve academic advising**

Objective 1. Establish a central advising center to coordinate efforts with the faculties

Objective 2. Evaluate and improve all advising programs, in particular the freshman advising program

Objective 3. Coordinate efforts with the academic units and the Registrar to improve course capacity issues and credit transfer and approval for all AUB students

## **6.3. Goal 3: Improve student satisfaction with student services<sup>5</sup>**

Objective 1. Plan for renovation and expansion of on-campus student housing

Objective 2. Assist students in finding suitable off-campus housing

Objective 3. Ensure professional development and training of staff in the Student Affairs Office and of the RAs in the student residences

Objective 4. Improve student experiences in the dormitories (especially for freshman students)

Objective 5. Recommend improvements in internet services

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<sup>4</sup> Non-academic student services such as housing, food, internet, athletic services, etc...

## **6.4. Goal 4: Improve the curricular experience and overall learning environment of students**

### 6.4.1. Objective 1: improve the academic experience of students

#### *6.4.1. Strategies for objective 1:*

1. Request that department chairs review their programs to improve choice and flexibility in undergraduate majors to meet the needs of students in light of the emerging global challenges
2. Align study abroad or exchange partnership opportunities with student interests and the University strategic learning outcome goals
3. Reinforce student support programs, such as the Undergraduate Preparation Program, the Writing Center and Library Information Services, to enhance learning effectiveness
4. Improve student services in individual faculties
5. Consider the development of joint-degree programs with overseas partners or a study abroad requirement (for appropriate majors) to better attract high-achieving regional students who are considering degree study outside the region
6. Improve the academic experience of freshman students

### 6.4.2. Objective 2: enhance the academic experience of students with special needs

#### *6.4.2. Strategies for objective 2:*

1. Ensure flexibility in the academic requirements to support those students who have learning differences
2. Develop policies and procedures to allow flexibility in the academic program for students with mental health problems
3. Hire specialized additional staff to support students who have learning difficulties
4. Conduct workshops, raise awareness among the community and provide training for staff to support students with special needs

5. Establish a university-wide committee to address the accessibility of the AUB campus to students who are physically challenged, and to propose ways to encourage the independence of these students

## **6.5. Goal 5: Re-evaluate existing and establish new assessment tools for admissions, registration and student services**

## **7. SPU Strategic Initiatives**

### **7.1. Initiatives for objective 1 (Goal 1):**

#### **Governance of the Enrollment Management Unit**

In recommending that there should be a university-wide framework and processes for enrollment management at AUB, two models are suggested. The Director of Admissions, Dean of Students and Registrar objected to Model 1 and presented Model 2.

##### **7.1.1 Model 1:**

Enrollment management should be a function of the Provost's Office, with final responsibility for policies and procedures held by the Provost. It is recommended that a unit be established which will be responsible for optimizing the university-wide goals for recruitment, retention, and graduation. The enrollment management unit/committee/board would be chaired by an Associate Provost, and would include:

The Director of Admissions  
The Registrar  
The Director of International Programs  
Dean/ Associate/Assistant Dean from each of the Faculties  
Director of Financial Aid  
The University Statistician

The following members will be invited to the committee as the need arises:

The Dean of Student Affairs  
The Director of Financial Planning  
The Chair of the Graduate Council  
Chair of Unified Admissions Committee  
Chair of University Admissions Committee  
The Students Accounts Receivable Manager from Comptroller's office  
A representative from the IT office

It is recommended that there be someone at the Associate Provost level, whose brief includes enrollment management. This person's responsibilities would include strategic planning for enrollment management, and the coordination among all relevant administrative and academic offices for the successful implementation of AUB's enrollment management plan. He or she would be the first level of response for all issues of enrollment management, and review all issues before they are referred for the Provost's attention. He/she would be accountable for the successful functioning of the enrollment management process, with the advice and support of an advisory enrollment management unit.

The unit will coordinate with the admissions office to create enrollment management processes and policies that are more effective and more student-centered and to develop a university-wide marketing and recruitment plan. In addition, the unit will coordinate with the OIP to address recruitment, yield and retention/graduation issues specific to international student populations. It will closely coordinate with the financial aid office and the office of financial planning to set goals for using financial aid/scholarships as an admissions tool to attract the kind of student body AUB wants. In addition, the unit will work closely with the faculties to improve the academic experience of students and address other academic areas that affect enrollments. Other functions of the unit include:

- Work closely with OIRA to review existing data and assess the need to improve the collection of data related to student enrollment management at AUB
- Create a process of data management, data analysis and reporting to understand the overall issues relating to student enrollment management at AUB
- Ensure timely and accurate communication of relevant enrollment decisions taken at the BOD to the Directors of administrative units (Admissions, Registrar's, OIP, Student Affairs offices, Student Services Officers), as they relate to the functions of those offices; and vice-versa

The unit/committee/board would meet as needed to create a strategic working plan for enrollment management, and then on a regular quarterly basis. Regular reports would be generated to assess the enrollment/financial health of the enrollment management plan.

Those administrators with direct reporting lines to the Provost, would continue those lines of reporting. But all issues relating to enrollment management should first be referred to the Associate Provost so responsible.

#### 7.1.2 Model 2:

This model will encourage better data management and gathering, maximize the efficiency of the work flow, widen the sense of ownership in enrollment management at AUB and crucially also incorporate the broad range of factors that impact enrollment management strategy. It is our strong opinion, based on our experience of the challenges (mostly academic) and the operational nature of our work that centralizing enrollment management in the hands of one individual,

creating an additional layer, would be counterproductive. Other options for consideration include a VP for enrollment management but these would be financially costly and require major organizational restructuring. The proposal for Associate Provost and VP would both require additional budgets and office space requirements. In this context, our recommendation is that a far more effective way to lead enrollment management strategy would be the following:

Steering Committee:

To create an enrollment management steering committee chaired by the Provost that would hold one or two retreats a year. This committee, chaired by the Provost, would be comprised of the deans, VP Finance, VP Advancement, the Director of Admissions and the Registrar. This committee would bring together the relevant leadership to lay down the broad strategic direction for the University assessing student numbers, balance of its composition, marketing, and financial implications. The committee could also review practices from best implementation and should formulate its own bylaws. The follow up work would be carried out by an Enrollment Management Executive Committee.

Executive Committee: To enhance coordination by establishing an Executive Committee that meets frequently and would be comprised of representatives from Admissions, Registrar, Dean of Student Affairs, Budget Office (Drew Wickens), and from the Dean's Offices of each of the faculties. The latter is crucial particularly if they directly oversee advising, retention and graduation within the faculty. The role of this committee would be to maintain cooperation among all components of the University to ensure that the direction set out by the steering committee is being followed. This committee would report to the Provost on progress being made and difficulties encountered, if any. The Executive Committee could be chaired by a dean in rotation, the director of admissions or the Registrar – the appointment of chair is made by the Provost. The key here is that all units involved in implementing the strategy are directly taking part and coordinating as partners in the process under the strategic leadership of the steering committee.

Academic Component: There is a need to include advising and academic matters that would directly impact the retention and graduation components of enrollment management. This is a vital area for consideration that must be integrated into the EMSS scope of work to get a more balanced picture in understanding the impact on marketing, recruitment, retention and graduation. It is important to note that Faculty Student Services essentially refers to academic related matters affecting students such as transferring majors and/or credits, probations, appeals for withdrawals etc. When such problems arise, they are arguably the most negative experience a student can have at AUB and directly impact retention and graduation.

Systematic Data: While student satisfaction surveys are important, a recommendation would be for the steering committee to begin by commissioning an institutional survey directly looking to assess marketing, recruitment, enrollment and retention in terms of challenges and opportunities within Lebanon and region. This endeavor would require the input of faculties in terms of advising, registration, degree programs and requirements as well as academic support and student services.

Stake-holding: The establishment of the steering committee would create active stake-holders in the process to directly implement changes by involving all units in the process and thus discourage lobbying of individuals and create the impression of a top-down approach via a single individual.

## **7.2. Initiatives for objective 2 (Goal 1):**

### **Enhance admissions processes and policies to become more effective and more student-centered**

7.2.1 Create a separate university-wide administrative unit to improve the admissions process of graduate students

- Appoint the chair of the GR council as Director of this unit
- Appoint a secretary
- Appoint an assistant for processing (data entry, scanning) and follow up on graduate applications with the Faculties

7.2.2 Unify the policies and procedures across faculties for undergraduate transfers as well as graduate admissions in all faculties

Assign a Committee to carry the following main tasks and make recommendations for approval by higher bodies before implementation:

- Compile data from the various faculties and create a unified course equivalence table between AUB and other universities
- Compile data from the various faculties and create a unified GPA conversion table for applicants from different universities applying to AUB.
- Unify the criteria for graduate admissions across Faculties such as average of a given number of credits, priority of choice of major, etc...
- Unify the minimum average required for admission in the different categories (regular, probation)
- Set a weight for the required tests (GRE, GMAT) when applicable and include it in the decision making process.

7.2.3 Revisit and broaden admissions criteria to recognize factors such as talents and experiences of students, portfolios, program strength, among others

- Set a weight for portfolios, interviews, and other factors of importance (where applicable) in the composite score calculation for new undergraduate applicants
- Start the file reading process for freshman applicants
- Revisit the calculation of the composite score especially the standardization of the high school averages whereby the different tracks of the Baccalaureate and the strength of the programs (such as “Double Bacc”, IB, etc are to be taken into consideration.

7.2.4 Provide adequate staff and appropriate space for admissions

- Add two staff in the admissions office: an admission assistant for data entry and processing of undergraduate applications, and another recruitment officer for recruiting in order to still increase the number of school visits inside and outside Lebanon. This will also lead to a better follow up/communication with high school directors/counselors/students.
- Expand the admissions space for data privacy and confidentiality of records and for recruitment and student services.

7.2.5 Set and adhere to admissions deadlines and response timelines to be consistent with institutional goals of student diversity and applicant quality; and responsive to differing target audiences

- Amend notification deadline of sophomore applicants to mid-May for a more efficient data entry and control processes.
- Re-assess the existing graduate admissions deadlines
- Separate application procedures and deadlines for Visiting International Students from those for Special Students

7.2.6 Involve the university community to be responsive to student issues regarding admissions

- Create a corps of trained student workers in the admissions office who use social media and e-mail to support applicants from the inquiry stage through application, matriculation and orientation at AUB
- Engage the academic faculty in the admissions process to improve the yield
- Train and involve student ambassadors to communicate with applicants through the social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc...) and make sure to have them assigned on rotational basis to ensure continuous interaction and follow up.

### **7.3. Initiatives for objective 3 (Goal 1):**

#### **Develop a university-wide marketing and recruitment plan**

7.3.1 Create a mechanism for coordinated planning, review and assessment of recruitment efforts among all academic offices and administrative units<sup>6</sup>

- Assess the recruitment efforts of the relevant units
- Hold bi-annual meetings among representatives of the relevant units and as needed in order to share plans and concerns
- Develop a shared calendar for recruitment and publications

7.3.2 Use scholarships/financial aid and other incentives more effectively as marketing tools to enhance the quality and diversity of students

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<sup>6</sup> Offices of Admissions, Advancement, Communications, REP, Student Affairs, both OIP offices and the Faculties

- Designate scholarships by geographical areas in Lebanon and different countries to increase diversity
- Designate scholarships to specific faculties/majors (such as Nursing) to populate these majors
- Designate sports scholarships and scholarships related to outstanding talents/extracurricular activities

#### 7.3.3 Identify and effectively market AUB's strengths as a leader in higher education

- Highlight AUB's ability to safe guard its student population
- Create a mechanism to advertise the university through different campaigns in Lebanon and abroad
- Ensure close coordination between various entities and the Office of Communications in promoting AUB and its activities

#### 7.3.4 Establish guidelines to engage the Alumni chapters to assist in recruitment efforts in selected target markets

- Seek the help of Alumni chapters in the regional fairs and certain school fairs
- Train a group of Alumni to involve them in advising prospective applicants and receiving applications if the need arises

#### 7.3.5 Develop recruitment plans to better target high quality and diverse applicants

- Work with College Board and other college selection organizations to better target recruitment of high-quality applicants
- Coordinate with College Board, IBO and other international organizations to include information about AUB on their websites or publications
- Coordinate the works of the ranking committee with other enrollment management efforts
- Set up a process to establish SMART<sup>7</sup> targets for regional and global student diversity
- Expand recruitment efforts to include visits to Europe, Latin America and South Africa or other areas as per the recommendation of the Enrollment Management Unit
- Include information on AUB's study abroad opportunities in recruitment efforts aimed at Lebanese and regional high school students
- Amend the available admission Banners/posters/publications to include information on the study abroad opportunities
- Update the Admissions website to include information about the study abroad opportunities
- Update the admission presentation to emphasize study abroad programs
- Coordinate with admissions office and NY OIP to develop a recruitment plan for attracting government-sponsored students

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<sup>7</sup> SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC (OR resourced), AND TIME-TABLED

- Coordinate with Embassies in Lebanon to recruit outstanding government sponsored students
- Contact, with the help of different AUB entities, major companies in the Arab World (ARAMCO, TEXACO, ADNOC etc...) to send the AUB sponsored students to various majors.

#### **7.4. Initiatives for objective 4 (Goal 1):**

##### **Address recruitment, yield and retention/graduation issues specific to international students**

- 7.4.1. Purchase software to meet client relations, data analysis, and reporting needs for AUB audiences and outside agencies vis-à-vis international student populations.
- 7.4.2 Create a new position within OIP for a permanent staff member with electronic record-keeping, data analysis and Banner expertise.
- 7.4.3 Appoint OIP director as ex-officio to the Admissions Committee
- 7.4.4 Hire an international education social media consultant to enhance AUB's ability to create community for international students
- 7.4.5 Create web-resources for AUB faculty members on how to legally host a foreign graduate assistant, research assistant or intern.
- 7.4.6 Incorporate international student-specific information into Admissions Welcome packet and Orientation Planning/Communications

#### **7.5. Initiatives for objective 5 (Goal 1):**

This SPU recommends that AUB evaluate the possibility of creating various programs to enhance diversity by implementing the strategies mentioned on p. 12 (6.1.5).

#### **7.6. Initiatives for objective 6 (Goal 1):**

##### **Consider various tuition structures and use financial aid/scholarships as an admissions tool to enhance regional and socioeconomic diversity**

- Designate scholarships by geographical areas in Lebanon and different countries to increase diversity

- Designate scholarships to specific faculties/majors (such as Nursing) to populate these majors
- Designate sports scholarships and scholarships related to outstanding talents /extracurricular activities
- Use the multi-tuition tier to attract students from different geographical areas and different countries to increase diversity

## **7.7. Initiatives for Goal 2:**

### **Define a university-wide governance structure to improve academic advising**

#### **7.7.1 Improve academic advising**

In recommending that there should be an effort for improving academic advising for AUB students, we are proposing to implement a shared advising model comprised of a central unit and faculty advisors in the various faculties. The central unit, namely the advising center, coordinates and supports advising related activities across faculties and administrative offices (admissions, registrar, counseling, housing, international programs...) to establish a culture of advising at AUB.

The center will aim to improve the quality of advising to properly address the developmental needs of AUB students, the efficiency of the processes related to advising, and the appropriate allocation and use of university resources to support student needs. The center will in particular play a crucial role in supporting freshman students, students planning to transfer across faculties, at risk students (e.g. students placed on probation) and special needs students.

The center will work closely with the academic units, the Registrar and OIP to improve registration and credit transfer and approval for all AUB students.

The center would have a full time director and two staff members. The director of the center would report directly to the provost. The center will have affiliated with it 7 advising coordinators, representing each of the faculties and the school of nursing.

The **main goals and objectives of the advising center** are to:

1. Establish effective advising procedures for undergraduate students
2. Provide incentives and effective training resources to faculty advisors
3. Evaluate and improve the freshman advising program as follows:
  - Assign more faculty members, possibly even full-time instructors and lecturers, in order to reduce the number of advisees assigned to each advisor.
  - Re-appoint only faculty members to Freshman advising duties who are proven effective as advisors.

- Carry out student evaluations of Freshman advisors in order to help determine their effectiveness and commitment.
- Appoint one full-time staff member in the Registrar's Office to address the concerns of freshmen students and freshmen advisors during registration and advising periods. The person will be accountable for all decisions made.
- Draw up FAQs for freshmen admission into specific programs (e.g., Graphic Design, Nutrition, etc.) as a resource for advisors (especially helpful to new advisors).

### 7.7.2 Resolve course capacity issues

The attempts to solve the course-sections capacity problems have reduced the size of the problem, but some of our students are still exerting some efforts to get what they require that leaves a certain level of frustration. Therefore the issue was not solved completely. These attempts included the creation of course-section waitlists, and forecasting the expected enrollment in course-sections.

There are systems existing in the market that generate optimal course offering and time schedule based on preference schedules entered by students and faculty. The course-offering and time schedule will be developed to best meet the requirements of the stakeholders. The below are specific initiatives for improving the registration process:

- Purchase software to enhance course scheduling and online registration
- Purchase software which facilitates advising and determination of course equivalencies for AUB degree-seekers wishing to study abroad
- Make course schedule for any given semester publicly available in sufficient time to allow for adding additional sections of high-demand courses to be opened as needed
- Establish mechanisms for tracking demand for specific courses and aligning course capacity and instructional hiring to student needs
- Enhance existing study abroad and exchange opportunities for AUB students; and streamlining credit transfer and approval processes for study abroad

## **7.8. Initiatives for Goal 3:**

### **Improve student satisfaction with student services**

While AUB campus residences offer many advantageous services such as greater security, community atmosphere and special events the physical infrastructure of some of the buildings remains a worry. Therefore there is an urgent need to improve the physical infra structure of the residence halls. As for food services the area around campus offers highly competitive food services. Therefore there is a need to increase student satisfaction rate in food services based on surveys results and benchmarking surveys.

## **7.9. Initiatives for objective 1 (Goal 4):**

### **Evaluate and improve the curricular experience of students**

#### 7.9.1 Improve the academic experience of students

Efforts should be undertaken to assess the needs of students who must now seek jobs in an interconnected global market. This could be achieved by addressing ways in which AUB can offer programs which allow students a competitive edge in the current job market, and encouraging department chairs to assess the value of current programs, as appropriate, in light of the future needs and issues of a global society. In addition, there is a need to support interdisciplinarity in academic offerings where possible and reinforce student support programs, such as the Undergraduate Preparation Program, the Writing Center and Library Information Services, to enhance learning effectiveness.

Efforts should also be undertaken to improve the academic experience of freshman students by:

- Request department chairs to increase the variety of courses available to freshmen and reduce Freshmen class sizes to twenty, and less if at all possible
- Allow freshmen students more flexibility in the assessment of their performance during their first year, by including in the average only those grades needed for their chosen major. Each Faculty will determine which freshman courses should be pre-requisite for the major.  
OIRA and the Registrar's Office will provide data which will allow the Faculties to evaluate student records for appropriate placement in the majors.
- Arrange for quotas for admission from the freshmen class to majors in all Faculties
- Advocate the creation of courses to support the needs of freshman students with different academic backgrounds

#### 7.9.2. Reinforce student support programs (UPP, Writing Center, Library Information Services)

##### 7.9.2.1 Initiatives specific to UPP (This should be a FAS initiative):

###### 1. LCD TV and Documentary DVDs:

Videos are forms of multimedia that are highly recommended for use in the ESL classroom. Research has shown that the use of Videos in the classroom enhances students' motivation and engagement. The use of Videos also enables teachers to turn teacher-centered lessons into student-centered ones. In addition, they are easily adaptable to all learning styles.

2. A series of leveled classical novels for extensive reading. A considerable number of studies has demonstrated the effectiveness of Extensive Reading in the ESL/EFL classroom. Those studies convincingly demonstrate that learners engaging in ER will enhance students' reading comprehension and vocabulary development, learn reading strategies and improve reading rate. It will also change students' attitude towards reading in English by becoming eager readers.

#### 7.9.2.2 Initiatives specific to the Writing Center (This is an ASU initiative):

The most critical job the Writing Center currently faces is finding ways to recruit and adequately train writing tutors. This initiative enhances student experiences at AUB in at least two important ways: as student writers, students can benefit from free, individual, intensive attention to their writing projects; as student tutors, they learn a great deal about writing and teaching, experience that is extremely useful for them as they go forward.

The second initiative relates to publicizing the work of the center in various ways. Both of these initiatives are included in the Academic Support Unit strategic plan.

#### 7.9.2.3 Initiatives specific to the Library Information Services (This is an ASU initiative):

Provide library instruction sessions on citation styles, plagiarism, information retrieval, and resource evaluation. This initiative will help improve the quality of students' writing and research skills and enhance their critical thinking. To provide such sessions, however, the University Libraries will be in need of hiring an additional instruction/reference librarian (\$36,000 annually, salary and benefits). [ASU11UL03]

Upgrade computing equipment in the University Libraries' computer labs and electronic classrooms with state-of-the-art networked PCs, scanners and printers. Old computing equipment are a hindrance to effective and efficient teaching and cause a lot of frustration among students and instructors. Currently, the PCs in the University Libraries' electronic classroom are seven years old and are in urgent need of replacement with new ones to provide the kind of education that is necessary for twenty-first century learners. While University Libraries' computer labs can be upgraded using the operating budget, its e-classrooms require, need, or can only be upgraded using capital funding (\$50,000). [ASU11UL02]

Develop and carry out surveys to provide better library sources and services to all academic programs. While not new, this initiative will use a revised and expanded questionnaire to identify those areas that the University Libraries need to focus on to provide better library programs, collections, and services at AUB. [EMS1110]

#### 7.9.3 Improve academic student services in individual faculties

- Convene a regular forum of student officers to discuss common issues and policies
- Improve the process of handling student petitions

#### 7.9.4 Enhance the academic experience of students with special needs

The aim is to provide students who suffer from psychological difficulties, mental health problems and learning disabilities with the help and support needed mainly for their own well-being and also for their relation to the faculty and administration of the university, helping them achieve their optimal potential. Also, AUB does not cater for physically challenged students.

## 8. Initiative Planning Details

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1101

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.1.1 Create a university wide enrollment management unit								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Appoint Associate Provost for EMSS <sup>1</sup>		S		1	1	1	1
02	Appoint Associate Provost for EMSS		OE		0	0	0	0
03a	Hire staff		S		1	1	1	1
03b	Hire staff (salary and benefit)		OE		\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
04	Office Equipment (computers, printers, office furniture)		CF		\$10,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
05	Professional Development (training)		OE		\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
06	Travel and accommodation		OE		\$8,000	\$8,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								
Associate Provost is a position that does not change the reporting line between the directors of administrative offices and the Provost								

<sup>1</sup> Associate Provost is a position that does not change the reporting line between the directors of administrative offices and the Provost

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1102

<b>Description of initiative:</b>  7.1.1 Review existing data and create process of data management								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Request IT to analyze existing data and recommend process of data management	IT	OE	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1103

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.3.1 Create a mechanism for coordinated planning, review and assessment of recruitment efforts among all academic offices and administrative units <sup>1</sup>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the recruitment efforts of the relevant units</li> <li>• Hold bi-annual meetings among representatives of the relevant units and as needed in order to share plans and concerns</li> <li>• Develop a shared calendar for recruitment and publications</li> </ul>								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Appoint grad student intern (Recruitment Inventory Project)		OE		\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
02	Create marketing committee and monthly meeting schedule							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

<sup>1</sup> Offices of Admissions, Advancement, Communications, REP, Student Affairs, both OIP offices and the Faculties

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1104

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.3.4 Establish guidelines to engage the Alumni chapters to assist in recruitment efforts in selected target markets								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek the help of Alumni chapters in the regional fairs and certain school fairs</li> <li>• Train a group of Alumni to involve them in advising prospective applicants and receiving applications if the need arises</li> </ul>								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Define practices of regional chapter which already performs these functions & identify two pilot chapters for expansion of model				0	0	0	0
02	Bring 2 chapter heads to Beirut for training per year	VP Advancement	OE		\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								
<p>\$2000 each for airfare; \$1000 each for lodging and per diem            If funding unavailable, training can be conducted via electronic meeting or when alums are in Beirut for reunions. However, EMSS believes this is worth investing in simply as an alumni relations measure in itself.</p>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1105

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.3.5 Develop recruitment plans to better target high quality and diverse applicants								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Devise marketing sequence of electronic or print recruitment mailings for target applicants		OE		\$5,000		\$5,000	
02	Purchase College Board targeted mailing lists & send recruitment letters		OE		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	
03	Convene regular meetings of new Enrollment Management Unit with (existing) ranking committee & (new) diversity definition committee							
04	Plan and execute one new regional recruitment tour per year	Admissions	OE		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
05	Make the Admissions website user-friendly and attractive to students				0	0	0	0
06	Convene meetings under umbrella of new Enrollment Management Unit							
07	Revise admissions publications							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.4.1 Purchase software to meet client relations, data analysis, and reporting needs for AUB audiences and outside agencies vis-à-vis international student populations.								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Purchase & install the appropriate software	IT	CE		\$4,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
02	Hire Grad Asst with technical skills to assist w/Installation of software (1 semester)		OE		\$1,500			
03	Send OIP staff member to annual software training conference in US		OE		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
04A	Hire new staff within OIP to address electronic record-keeping, data analysis and the need for Banner expertise		S		1	1	1	1
04B	Salary and benefits of staff		OE		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
05	Hire consultant in social media for international education recruitment		OE		\$8,000	0	0	0
06	Incorporate consultant suggestions into admissions website, AUB Facebook site, OIP site and Faculty-specific sites.							
07	Assign current staff to create web resources for AUB faculty members on how to legally host a foreign graduate assistant, research assistant or international student							
09	Assign current staff member or committee to incorporate international student-specific information into Admissions Welcome packet and Orientation Planning/Communications							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMSS1107

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.7.1 Establish an institution-wide academic advising unit for all AUB students								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Hire a director for the advising center		F		1	1	1	1
02	Hire an officer and an assistant officer for the advising center		S		2	2	2	2
03	Salary and Benefits of the director and the support Staff		OE		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
04	Computers and office equipment for the team		CE		\$20,000	0	0	0
05	Develop within Banner or otherwise an information system to serve and support advising purposes	VP IT						
06	Faculty (part-timers) to cover for course release (6 schools and on average one course release per school)		F		2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
07	Salary of faculty for course release (on average \$6,000 x2x6)		OE		\$72,000	\$72,000	\$72,000	\$72,000
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								
Implement a shared advising model where the central unit coordinates and supports advising across faculties (faculty advising coordinators) and administrative offices (counseling, admission, registrar, athletics, housing, international programs office etc...).								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMSS1108

**Description of initiative:**

7.7.2 Purchase software to enhance course scheduling and online registration.

#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Acquire Software	IT	CE		\$200,000	-	-	-
02	Annual Maintenance of Software	IT	OE			\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
03	Implementation Fees	IT	OE		\$20,000			

**Notes/Comments/Explanations:**

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1109

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.8 Improve student satisfaction with student services.								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Renovation of Residence Halls	FPDU	CE		0	0	0	0
02	Reduce response time for maintenance requests in Residence Halls	PPD						
03	Create a welcoming living environment that supports student learning and development				\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
04	Work on routine student satisfaction surveys and benchmarking surveys regarding food services on campus	OIRA						
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1110

Description of initiative:  
 7.9.2.3 Develop and carry out surveys to provide better library sources and services to all academic programs. Surveys will assess the quality of, for example, the University Libraries' research collections, information literacy programs, document delivery services, reference services, efficiency and effectiveness of other library services, computing equipment/facilities, and learning and studying environment

#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Develop surveys using open source applications (in collaboration /coordination with OIRA)							
02	Administer surveys annually (in collaboration/coordination with OIRA)							
03	Analyze survey results (in collaboration/coordination with OIRA)							
04	Share findings with concerned units							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1111

Description of initiative:								
7.9.4 Enhance the academic experience of students with special needs								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Discuss and approve the mental health policy that was drafted in 2008. Accordingly launch an information campaign on campus to inform the whole AUB community about it							
02	Make campus and buildings accessible to physically disabled students	FPDU			0	0	0	0
03	Provide the appropriate support for each of the special needs							
04	Improve coordination between the residence halls and other AUB departments (counseling center, infirmary) to help with adjustment and prevention of the physical and psychological difficulties.							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1112

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
6.4.1.2 Align study abroad or exchange partnership opportunities with student interests and the University strategic learning outcome goals for students.								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Review AUB strategic learning objectives							
02	Survey Students re Study Abroad interests	OIRA						
03	Work with Advisory Committee on Int'l Programs to create approved study abroad list from data collected							
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1113

<b>Description of initiative</b>								
7.2.3 Revisit and broaden admissions criteria to recognize factors such as talents and experiences of students								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Bring a specialist on file reading to train staff and faculty members		OE	-	\$5,000	-	-	-
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1114

<b>Description of initiative</b>								
7.2.4 Provide adequate staff and appropriate space for admissions								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Hire 2 new staff with Office of Admissions for recruitment and data entry		S		2	2	2	2
02	Salary and benefits for staff		OE		\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
03	Proper Office Space	FPDU						
04	Computers and office equipment		CE		\$15,000	0	0	0
05	Expand proper space for the Office of Admissions	FPDU						
06	Equipment needed		CE		\$15,000	0	0	0
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1115

<b>Description of initiative</b>								
7.2.6 Involve the university community to be responsive to student issues regarding admissions								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Train and involve students to communicate with applicants (around 15 on a yearly basis)		OE		\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								
May need to give these students incentives (10% faid) to involve them in communicating with the applicants.								

Strategic Planning Unit: EMSS

Initiative Serial # (ISN): EMS1116

<b>Description of initiative:</b>								
7.6.1 Use financial aid/scholarships as an admissions tool to enhance regional and socioeconomic diversity								
#	Key Implementation Steps	Collaborating Work Unit	Code <sup>(1)</sup>	Values Incremental to Base Year (2010-2011)				
				2011-12 <sup>(2)</sup>	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
01	Allocate to the top 25 students from schools in the 5 regions of Lebanon 50% merit based aid		OE		\$250,000	\$500,000	\$750,000	\$850,000
02	Allocate to the top of the visited schools in the Arab world 50% merit aid (around 50 scholarships)		OE		\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,800,000
03	Allocate 5 merit based aids (50%) to each of the Nursing, Agriculture, Environmental Health, and 4 other less demanded FAS majors. A total of 35 students		OE		\$350,000	\$700,000	\$1,050,000	\$1,150,000
04	Allocate a discount of 25% of their tuition fees to those best 25 with outstanding talents provided they exert their talents representing AUB		OE		\$125,000	\$250,000	\$375,000	\$450,000
<b>Notes/Comments/Explanations:</b>								

## 9. Five year estimates of staffing and resources

## 10. EMSS Key Performance Indicators

Goal	Performance Indicator
Create a university-wide enrollment management (EM) responsible for defining a university-wide framework and processes for enrollment management at AUB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishment of the unit</li> </ul>
Create admissions processes (application and selection criteria) that are more effective and more student-centered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage increase in the applications of new students</li> <li>- Percentage increase in the yield of new students</li> <li>- Percentage of students admitted based on file reading process</li> <li>- Performance of students admitted based on file reading process</li> <li>- Percentage of UG students who submit online applications</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with the admissions process</li> </ul>
Increase effectiveness and reach of marketing and recruitment efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage increase in the size of the applicant pool</li> <li>- \$ spent per student recruited</li> <li>- No. of UG students admitted to AUB from private vs public schools in Lebanon</li> <li>- No. of entering UG students from the region</li> </ul>
Address recruitment, yield and retention barriers that are specific to international student populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. of incoming students on exchange programs</li> <li>- The percentage of visiting international students</li> <li>- The yield of visiting international students</li> <li>- No. of student countries represented in international students aggregates</li> <li>- Student satisfaction with the services of the international office</li> <li>- No. of degree seeking international students</li> </ul>

Goal	Performance Indicator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. of incoming students who join AUB to study abroad and stay for degree</li> </ul>
Use financial aid as an admissions tool to attract the kind of student body AUB wants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of students receiving scholarships</li> <li>- Percentage of students receiving financial aid</li> <li>- Percentage of UG tuition covered by financial aid (discount rate)</li> </ul>
Improve the academic advising and registration processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Student satisfaction with the advising process (student satisfaction survey)</li> <li>- Faculty satisfaction with the advising process</li> <li>- Average no. of students per advisor</li> <li>- No. of students per advisor in each faculty</li> <li>- Student satisfaction with counseling</li> <li>- Student satisfaction with study abroad</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with the registration process</li> <li>- Percentage of students that could register their pre-planned schedule</li> <li>- No. of courses with closed capacity</li> <li>- Number of students registered in wait list</li> </ul>
Improve student satisfaction with student services (especially housing allocation and quality of food services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dormitory Satisfaction Survey-Percent of favorable responses on Student satisfaction with dormitories and its services</li> <li>- Percentage of FR, SO, and International students satisfied with the orientation process</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with food services</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with student government</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with counseling services</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with medical services</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with internet services</li> <li>- Percentage of students satisfied with the quality of life on campus</li> </ul>
Evaluate and improve the curricular experience and overall learning environment of students in light of increasing needs for interdisciplinary study and the new demands of the global market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. of active interdisciplinary programs</li> <li>- No. of UG students who graduated with an additional UG degree</li> <li>- No. of minor concentrations completed by graduating UG students</li> <li>- No. of UG students graduating with a minor</li> <li>- No. of UG and Graduate AUB students who</li> </ul>

Goal	Performance Indicator
	study abroad and who in enroll in exchange programs
Address the needs of students who have learning difficulties, mental health problems or who are physically challenged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. of workshops conducted to raise awareness among the community regarding this category of students</li> <li>- No. of staff who are specialized and trained to deal with this category of students</li> <li>- Percentage of buildings equipped for physically challenged students</li> <li>- Satisfaction of students with special needs with AUB's infrastructure</li> </ul>

### **11. Mechanisms and Activities to Secure Faculty/Staff Input in Planning Process**

### **12. Schedule of Strategic Performance Reviews**

### **13. Other Considerations**

## **Appendix A. Mission Statements of various EMSS offices**

### **Office of Admissions**

The Office of Admissions at AUB identifies, recruits and enrolls academically qualified individuals irrespective of nationality, religion, ethnicity and gender in compliance with the university's mission statement and vision.

### **Registrar**

The Registrar's Office aims to support the instructional mission of the University through managing the student records data base, facilitating course registration, scheduling of classes, issuing of final examinations schedule, issuing transcripts and certificates , auditing degrees, administering catalogue production, and maintaining the integrity, accuracy, and privacy of all academic student records.

We make every effort to provide services in a professional, accessible, and courteous manner to our constituents, including students, faculty, administration, parents, and alumni. We accomplish our mission by striving toward service excellence in everything we do, challenging ourselves to be as efficient and effective as possible in our work, and seeking out new and better ways of doing business for ourselves and the community we serve

### **Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA)**

The OIRA aims to: 1) act as a resource and repository for official institutional statistics, information, and policies, 2) coordinate assessment and evaluation of university programs and processes to support planning, decision-making, and improvement, 3) formulate and implement data-gathering activities such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups for a wide variety of internal and external uses, 4) develop, administer, and report assessments required by the University for admission, placement, and other educational purposes, and 5) serve as a testing center for various international administrations and organizations and administer instructor and course evaluations, and provide feedback to faculty members to improve teaching.

### **Office of International Programs**

The mission of the Office of International Programs (OIP) is to augment the advancement of knowledge in the following two ways: a) by helping the faculty in expanding institutional and research collaboration across national boundaries, and b) by providing opportunities for incoming and outgoing student mobility, which are selected to contribute to the development of critical thinking, tolerance, respect for diversity, civic responsibility and cross-cultural leadership.

### **Office of Student Affairs**

The Office of Student Affairs provides opportunities that enrich and broaden the educational experience of students by promoting their personal development and psychological well-being through social, physical, cultural, professional and intellectual activities that complement their academic life. This holistic approach aims at enabling the students to live, learn and practice the values of tolerance, civic and moral responsibility, and excellence in learning and leadership, values that best represent the mission of AUB.

## **Appendix B. Major Accomplishments and Setbacks since the last report**

### **1. Enrollment Management and Student Services**

To determine the accomplishments and setbacks of enrollment management and student services, reference was made to the following previous documents:

- A. Enrollment Management Committee Report, July 13, 2005
- B. Accreditation Status Report, 2007
- C. Report of the MSCHE Evaluation Team, 2009
- D. Strategic Plan Overview, 2009
- E. Enrollment Management Task Force

#### **A. Enrollment Management Committee Report, July 13, 2005**

##### 1. Diversity at AUB

Lack of diversity at AUB in several areas:

- regional and local diversity: most AUB current students and alumni come from or live in Lebanon, are admitted from a limited number of private feeder schools locally and regionally, and live the Greater Beirut area in Lebanon.
- approximately 60% come from upper socio-economic strata of the population.

Areas of improvement in terms of diversity:

- The current student body includes almost equal numbers of females and males, even though males still outnumber females in the FEA and the FM.
- increases in the percentages of students coming from outside Lebanon
- increases in number of feeder schools
- increase in the percentage of students who come from public schools ( though still very low)

Recommendations to increase diversity:

- Increase the freshman class to 500
- Target IB and A-Level students (international sophomore)
- Establish innovative programs
- Establish special financial aid and loan programs
- Expand the UPP

##### 2. Financial implications for diversity in enrollment:

- The dependence of the university budget on tuition
- decrease in the external scholarship funds (USAID in the 70's and the Hariri Foundation Funds in the 90's)

- increase in tuition that has varied from 12% in 1997 to 2.5 % in 2004 (Table 14)
- lack of scholarship money may have resulted in the decrease in the number of students joining AUB from less developed Arab countries such as Yemen and Sudan whose students had previously benefited from USAID funds.
- note, however, that a variety of external factors may have contributed to these trends, such as the Lebanese civil war and the increased number of competing educational institutions in both Lebanon and the region.

### 3. Admissions

The UAC had just been instituted (2005-2006), in an attempt to centralize undergraduate admissions decisions.

Admission of students based on the “composite score: combination of SATI and school grades

Recommendations:

- Interviews should be conducted for students with “marginal scholastic performance but having special talents in some areas”.
- Merit scholarships
- Increase the UPP
- Financial aid should be used as an enrollment management tool (in 2005, based on need almost exclusively)
- Composite score: should be raised to 500 to improve academic quality (will this work against diversity?)
- Could slow growth of student body (cap it?), and be more selective
- Re-assess correlation between SATI and school grades (composite elements) and performance of students in various faculties
- Review process of standardizing school grades (unfair, as schools differ)
- Borderline applicants should be considered individually

### 4. Distribution of Students (majors) by Faculty (% of 5511 undergrads)--2005

FAFS	9%
FAS	41%
FEA	22%
FHS	4%
Nursing	3%
OSB	20%

- Needed: a concerted effort to balance enrollment between faculties
  - Attract and recruit more to FAS majors (talents in arts, music, sports)
  - Target certain areas (such as nursing) with special financial aid
- Problem of students transferring (to OSB, FEA, etc.) after acceptance, or from other universities. This needs to be addressed.
- Admission to various AUB faculties should be uniform in terms of the

“composite scores” cut-offs. Otherwise interfaculty transfer of students (admitted with lower composite scores to less competitive faculties) should be highly restricted.

Recommendation:

Improve academic quality by increasing the number and improving quality of students at the same time. In this scenario, growth in number is halted for the next two years followed by growing at the rate of 2 to 3 % rate when construction of new buildings is completed (Such as the new SOSB building). This scenario also assumes that the current increasing trend in the number of regular applicants continues, the acceptance rates are maintained, and the yield progresses as anticipated.

Current (2010-2011) breakdown of all students: 6424 undergrads and 1227 graduates

FAFS	7.5%
FAS	39.5%
FEA	27%
FHS	5%
SON	4.5%
OSB	14%
MED	4.5%

**B. Accreditation Status Report 2007 (on Admissions and Student Services)**

- Recent changes at the Office of Student Admissions include the employment of an additional student recruiting officer and attendance at a greater number of open fairs to widen the enrolment pool and attract potential graduate students from abroad.
- The structure of the Office of Student Affairs will be substantially affected by the opening of the Charles Hostler Student Center, as well as the appointment of an Associate Dean of Athletics.

**C. Report of the MSCHE Evaluation Team, 2009**

1. Admissions, Retention, and Support Services

Commends:

- Clear admission goals, criteria, new graduate catalog
- Effort to increase diversity: school visits 46-237; merit scholarship for best in Lebanon; tracking of families’ economic incomes.
- UAC

Still problems:

- Security in Lebanon (against diversity)—difficult to manage enrollment
- Lack of uniform policies among faculties for transfer of students—address loopholes
- Student dissatisfaction with financial aid policies/transparency

- Low of Freshman graduation rate: need to provide better support for Freshmen, and investigate reasons for low rate.
- Need to address student advising: faculty lack time and knowledge to advise well.

Recommended:

- Strengthen UPP to attract strong students who lack English skills
- Identify factors for low graduation rate (65%) of freshmen and grad students (50%)
- Investigate student dissatisfaction with financial aid program, take corrective action.
- Establish independent school of graduate studies
- Offer off-campus program outside of Lebanon, and have exchange programs with international partners
- Provide professional student advising or have formal training for faculty on advising.

2. Student Support Services

To include: admissions, advisement, financial aid, food services, housing, athletic facilities, student grievance procedures, personal counseling, campus housing, and career placement services.

Commends:

- Completion of the Hostler Center
- Commitment to diversity; efforts to sustain high female enrollment; creation of WEB-CAPP course registration system, and related student internet-based services (SIS)

Suggestions:

- Publication of student grievance procedure; operational jurisdiction with Dean of Students, with faculty representation. Schedule for dispute resolution.
- Post student handbook on the web. Simplify # of authorizations for forming clubs, on-campus gatherings.
- Broader student representation in governing organizations, including on the BOT, with responsible reporting to the Student Government Association.
- Student representation on faculty committees

**D. Strategic Plan Overview 2009**

Goal 1: Strengthening Liberal Education

Strategies:

- Reinforce student support units, such as the University Preparatory Program, Writing Center and Library Information Services.
- Control undergraduate enrollment to ensure close student-faculty interaction

Goal 2: A Diverse Student Body

Strategies: implementation of a cohesive, institution-wide diversification plan:

- Revise student selection criteria to broaden the pool of applicants to AUB while maintaining academic quality

- Strengthen remedial programs, such as the UPP, as a step to enhancing diversity
- Increase the financial assistance provided to needy students
- Accept more students seeking advanced degrees in disciplines that are not directly related to their undergraduate training
- Establish parallel professional programs that appeal to regional students not aiming for Lebanese syndicate memberships
- Expand meaningful student-exchange agreements to attract international and regional students

#### Outreach initiatives

- Expand summer programs to introduce AUB and its campus to students from high schools and universities outside of Lebanon

### **E. Enrollment Management Task Force 2010-2011**

#### Goals/Objectives:

- Address issues of enrollment management and student services: major problem areas
- Assess the functions of admissions and registration (policies, procedures)
- Recommend practical solutions (short-term)

#### EMTF identified these key issues:

- Admissions: Freshmen and Sophomores (diversity)
- Freshman program (Committee): admission, retention, majors
- Registration: WL to relieve problems of course capacity; course equivalences (IB, GCE, LB); classroom space; July/September: two full registration/orientation periods
- Orientation of new students
- ELPR and English placement (Committee)
- UPP
- Data integrity, OIRA
- Advising (needs more work—faculty committee)

#### Other areas to be addressed:

- Students services: housing, other
- Student Advising
- Financial aid
- International students (OIP initiatives)
- Students with special needs (faculty community)

## **2. Office of Admissions**

### **A. Accomplishments**

#### **1. Recruitment/Marketing**

##### **Inside Lebanon:**

- Participating in more school fairs, and Universities' regional fairs.
- Hosting individual schools on campus.
- Carrying out more individual visits to schools especially after having added a new recruitment officer to help in visiting high schools inside Lebanon.

##### **Organizing the AUB School Fair:**

- Preparing for, contacting, scheduling, and receiving students from schools all over Lebanon.

##### **Outside Lebanon:**

- Participating in more school visits and fairs especially after having added a new recruitment officer to help in visiting high schools outside Lebanon.
- Incorporation of Microsoft Exchange and shared calendars for better coordinating school visits among recruitment officers.

#### **2. Update Publications**

- Yearly update of Banners/posters/DVD/ applications/brochures/welcome packages/presentations
- **Change in the application for special /visiting students :**
  - The application for special/visiting/ exchange has been changed providing clearer information about the different categories.
- **Change in the undergraduate application :**
  - The undergraduate application has been changed to include more information which is crucial to the new 'reading' of the freshman applications. We aspire to have a more interactive application year after year.
- **More user friendly website:**
  - Added more and clearer information on the admission website for easier access and more user friendliness. Regular update of the website information (admission requirements, lists of admission, applications, test dates, tuition fees, FAQ, etc...)

#### **3. Communications**

##### **Improvement on electronic communications with stakeholders:**

- After acquiring the new 'mail flow' system, e-mails are better monitored to make sure that all are answered in a timely manner.

- Although this was not possible 100% in peak periods (when recruitment officers are busy in school visits and travel), however, a good improvement has been realized.
- Currently, three staff members are handling e-mail inquiries with one administrator.
- A view access to certain admission screens was given to various departments (OIP) and faculties.
- A view access on an admission screen (application status) was given to prospective applicants indicating the status of their applications (incomplete, accepted, rejected)
- Sending email notifications (as soon as decision lists are out) to accepted applicants informing them about their application status (incomplete, admission decisions, enrollment & fee, etc...).

Strong effort this year to overcome the tuition increases:

- A new presentation was geared to explain the increase in tuition fees along with increase in financial aid budget and percentage given out to applicants.
- Those efforts resulted in a less than expected depletion in the number of applications submitted
- 

**Improved internal communication:**

- Incorporation of Microsoft Exchange and shared calendars for a better coordination among staff members.
- In addition, accessing e-mails and calendars remotely is now easier.

**Improved communication with Alumni:**

Better coordination with Alumni chapters outside Lebanon especially in scheduling high school visits.

**4. Undergraduate application processing:**

- Prompt data entry of SATI scores which helped in a faster reporting of incomplete applications and communicating with the applicants.
- Trials of the Freshman reading procedure whereby a given number of applications were read and results processed by admission staff

**On-line Graduate application:**

- Launching of the on-line graduate application in preparation to the unified ‘on-line graduate admission procedure’ that the university is planning to launch in 2012-2013
- Assigning the processing of graduate applications to a separate admission staff (recruitment officer)

**Improvement on the special/visiting application processing procedure:**

- Upon agreement with OIP, Departments, UAC, and Admissions Office, the whole procedure of receiving applications, processing them, and updating applicants on the status of their applications became smoother and enabled early registration.

### **Scanned application processing:**

- Graduate, transfer, second degree and UPP applications are scanned and sent, through shared files, to the Faculty students' officers.
- This helped speed the process and decrease the errors in files misplacement at the level of faculties when they were photocopied and send by hand in the past.

### **Deadlines:**

- The deadlines were well respected this year and making sure that no applications, received after the deadlines were processed.

### **5. Control system:**

- Initiated new ways to decrease the margin of error in data entry such as the verification sheets, sending lists of processed applications to the various faculties, follow up on processed/unprocessed applications.
- Improved statistical reporting

### **For internal use:**

- Created more reports for controlling discrepancies (paid enrolment fee without submitting enrolment card; entering enrolment confirmation for an unaccepted major, etc...) and facilitating application processing. Different reports are produced by staff members based on their needs (queries)

### **For external use:**

- Depending on academic faculties/administrative departments/High Schools needs, different reports/data are produced by the office
- Additional statistical reports/analysis/applications/queries

### **6. Consultancies**

- Director doing consultancy work at universities outside Lebanon based on REP request
- In addition to the Assistant Director doing some consultancy and training work from the office based on the Director's request for other universities.

Membership in Associations

In Lebanon:

- Director is part of the Universities Association of Admission Officers

Outside Lebanon:

- Membership in AACRAO, ECIS, NACAC.

### **B. Setbacks**

#### **1. Communication with Faculties**

- Inappropriate communication between Faculties/offices/departments with the Admissions office
- In addition, BOD decisions regarding deadlines and new policies are not properly communicated to the concerned committees/ staff in the faculties by the deans and this is creating some delay in issuing decisions by 'some' committees

## 2. Application processing

- **Mistakes in application receipts:**
  - Which are being filled out in a speedy manner without thoroughly checking documents received (sometimes grades 9 and 10 are received and 11 is missing, but the receipt shows that we received grades 10 and 11) due to overcrowdings at the receiving area.
- **Delay in applying cutoffs:**
  - Due to delay in upgrading school averages and data entry of late received documents from students, CMS lists are prepared hastily.
  - The office of admissions still depends on student employment resulting in some misplacement of documents or delay in filing or data entry.
- **Delays in UPP, Transfer Junior from outside AUB, graduate admission decisions:**
  - Due to having those decisions decentralized in the different faculties with no control on the time limit for processing such decisions by the Office of Admissions.
  - Lack of unified admission requirements and average calculations across faculties for applicants from outside AUB. This is creating more inquiries with the inability of admission officers to reply with all transparency.

## Complaints

- Various complaints are received at the office for issues related to calculations of composite scores, and criteria for the basis of admission, and for other non admission related issues

## **C. Areas to improve**

### Use of social media

- Lack of use of social media tools: Face book, Twitter, YouTube... and mobile applications (sms).
- Website to make it more interactive

## **3. Registrar**

### **Accomplishments**

#### **2007**

1. Ahfad University for Women was visited in January 2007 to assess the Registrar's Office operations.
2. The Registrar's Office assisted in the structuring of the "AUB Student Commuting & Residential Survey" and carried statistical analysis on collected data.

3. Due to the continuous increase in the page count of the academic catalogue, the Registrar's Office divided the 2007-2008 catalogue into two separate catalogues; one for undergraduate programs, and the other for graduate programs.
4. A dedicated script was generated with the help of CNS to control the online registration in English courses as related to the placement test results of students.
5. Online Clearance Application: The process of integrating financial aid with the Online Clearance Application was performed

## **2008**

1. **Continuing Education Center (CEC) Records Integration:** The Registrar's Office integrated the CEC records into Banner for the purpose of initiating on line registration, statistical reporting, and data maintenance.
2. **Risks and Controls:** A continuous follow up is being implemented on risks and controls relevant to the registration process, clearance of leaving/graduating students, issuance of degree authentication – including preparing degree certificates and securing required signatures, issuance of transcripts (and other statements), including students' records and related filing, Banner system, data maintenance, and grade changes. Banner access is being continuously monitored and updated as deemed necessary.
3. **Process Improvement:** The Registrar's Office solved the prerequisite problem technically for courses offered in a term that have prerequisites in the immediate preceding term. Previously on line registration was blocked for such courses. Starting December 2007 students could register for courses in this category without facing any problem.
4. **Balance Scorecard:** The Registrar's Office has updated its Balance Scorecard to include new KPI's that reflect the actual performance.
5. **University Accreditation:** Two members of the Registrar's Office participated in the Accreditation Work Group IV (Student Services), and one member in Work Group VI (Educational Offerings).
6. **Processes Documentation:** The documentation of the processes related to the Registrar's Office was completed. Ms. Hala Abou Arraj has worked with the CNS on organizing all processes related to the Registrar's Office tasks. Processes related to Dean's Honor List, registration of current, old returning students, course catalogue, class schedules were covered. The aim is to compile all activities related to the Registrar's Office in a single report for future reference. The documentation provides a simple mapping between use cases (processes) and potential domain objects (entities) by identifying glossary entries found in the description and steps of each use case. The documentation is broken into two sections: 1) use cases, where the domain objects for each use case are shown, and 2) domain objects, where the use cases that reference each domain object are shown. In this way, one can easily identify use case

responsibilities and the lifecycle of domain objects. This documentation is useful later in the development process as well, for example to quickly find which use cases need retesting when a particular aspect of your application changes.

7. **Commercializing the Exam Scheduling Software:** A software license agreement was signed on February 20, 2008 between AUB and White Mountain Technologies (s.a.l.).

## **2009-2010**

1. **Document Management Software:** The Registrar's Office has installed document management software (Laserfiche) for the purpose of converting paper documents to electronic images. This resulted in a solid improvement over the old system of managing records with paper and custom software applications.
2. **Assistance to Universities in the Region in their Registration Functions (REP Projects):**  
Mr. Mohamad Nassif, Assistant Registrar for Registration visited Mohamad Al Mana College for Health Sciences (MACHS), Khobar, KSA during the periods January 25-31, March 15-25 and April 24-29, 2010. System assessment was done along with a series of workshops and Q&A sessions. He also headed the taskforce team whose major function was data consolidation, integration, and coding in preparations for migrating of New Students Information System. Mrs. Huda Nakad, Assistant Registrar for Computer Affairs visited Dohfar University in Salalah, Oman during the period February 10-19, 2010. Her consultancy covered the areas of registration, graduation, probation, admissions, and change in the plan of study. Dr. Salameh visited Ahfad University for Women in Sudan during the periods May 7 – 11, and July 16-19, 2010. The purpose of the visit was to assess the progress of the work done on Admission and Registration in preparation for SIS implementation.
3. **Revised Grade Conversion Chart:** The step function in the current grade conversion chart was revised to be replaced by the following continuous quadratic fit that generates the equivalent GPA from the cumulative average (CAV).
5. **Central Classrooms Scheduling:** One of the short-term goals of the Office of the Registrar is to optimize classroom scheduling. The main objectives are: (a) to make better use of space over time; (b) to meet the facility requirements of departments and faculty members; and (c) to provide an easy campus-wide reservation system (which every administrator involved with space reservation should be able to use). For this purpose, the central classrooms scheduling software developed by M. Salameh is currently under restructuring by a joint team from FEA and CNS to become a web application linked to Banner. Optimization is based on minimizing the total classroom penalties where a classroom penalty is defined as the difference between the room capacity and class size. This process will automate the reservation of rooms for all AUB offered courses. Users will be given the permission to login to the room reservation website and run the process of reservation through a web interface. The application will be developed and tested on FEA servers, web and database. Upon deployment, the application will be hosted on Registrar servers managed and supervised by CNS.

5. **Course-Section Waiting Lists:** The Registrar's Office in cooperation with the Enrollment Management Task Force and CNS has implemented the waitlist registration scheme that deals directly with the course capacity issue in an attempt to offer students the course-sections they will need to register according to their selected programs.
6. **Services in the Public Sector:** Dr. Salameh is currently representing the University as a member in the following committees: Ministry of Higher Education (MHE) Technical Committee, Higher Education Equivalence Committee, and Education equivalence Committee.

### **Setbacks**

1. Course-section capacities: This is caused by improper forecast at the Faculties' level due to unavailable resources in Faculties, and could be improved by making use of potential available software applications to have better estimates of expected enrollment in courses.
2. Unavailability of on line payment for transcript and certificate issuance and this could only be accomplished by introducing a process of payment by credit card.
3. There is a need to enhance accuracy of data entry done at the office of admissions since student permanent addresses are sometimes not accurate.

## **4. Office of Institutional Research and Assessment**

### **Accomplishments**

In recent years, OIRA activities and functions have expanded and the Office plays an important role in AUB's institutional renewal and improvement processes. OIRA has met AUB information needs, tried to keep with latest advances in IR and technology, and worked towards attaining excellence at AUB. A culture of inquiry and assessment is being formed but the progress made was not easy because of prevalent assessment illiteracy. Major achievements to enhance institutional and teaching effectiveness include:

1. **Data co-ordination, disclosure and reporting.** OIRA acts as a resource and repository for official institutional statistics and information. It discloses information to AUB community and to the public through its published reports and on its website.
2. **Support Services.** Provided support for various planning and assessment services like enrollment management, strategic planning, accreditation, and development of unit assessment plans.
3. **Assessment & Research.** Coordinated assessment and evaluation of university programs and processes through formulating and implementing data-gathering activities such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups for a wide variety of purposes. In addition, collected information on student learning outcomes assessment.

4. **Data management and technical support.** Maintained databases for student, faculty and institutional effectiveness information ensuring secure, reliable, timely, and user-friendly data extraction and use.
5. **Functioned as a national and international testing center.**

### **Setbacks**

Despite progress made, several issues and challenges need to be addressed:

1. Build uniform and standardized lexica (definitions) for measures/criteria used at AUB. It is important for comparability purposes to adopt same definitions of common indicators like persistence, yield, graduation rates, full-time and part time faculty loads, etc. Developing standard definitions would enhance common understandings and would facilitate the building of an assessment culture.
2. Ensure data and system security and comparability. Data security and integrity are serious challenges as they affect the reliability of information provided and accordingly its use.
3. Better serve AUB needs for information through automation and producing needed reports efficiently and in simple format. Timely reporting and in language understood by users is necessary for use of results for improvement.
4. Ensure dissemination of reports and making use of information for planning and improvement.
5. Enhance communication with faculty, staff and students to ensure smoother and more representative survey/assessment administration and higher response rates. ICE administration in some faculties is still not as desired, faculty object to administering surveys during class time, students lack motivation while filling out surveys or assessments (COS, CAAP, RS), and staff/faculty also provide low response rates.
6. Keep up-to-date with advances and developments in the field of institutional research and technological advances.
7. Rehabilitate and modernize Room 500 Nicely and OIRA Offices to enhance efficiency and productivity.

### **5. Office of International Programs**

The Office of International Programs, or OIP, was created specifically to help address certain enrollment management concerns mentioned in earlier sections of this document. As cited above, concerns specific to the OIP mission (some of them with specific suggested but as-yet unimplemented initiatives) were raised in the Enrollment Management Committee Report of July 2005; the Accreditation Status Report of 2007, the AUB self-study report of 2008 (Chapter 9), and the Report of the MSCHE Evaluation Team, 2009.

## Accomplishments

In its first year of operation, the Office of International Programs has carried forward and expanded successful initiatives from within the Dean of Students' Office, such as the **Ambassadors program, pre-arrival support services, and on-line resources** for incoming and outgoing students. It has **built alliances** both inside and outside the University and begun, with the help of allied EMSS strategic planning unit directors, to implement systems which will better support all international students; these include: revisions to the **application materials** for both visiting international students and undergraduate degree-seekers, implementation of a **log-in and tracking** system for application materials arriving at the New York office, development of a **pre-registration process** for visiting international students, and the addition of two new **faculty advisors** with specific responsibilities for visiting non-degree students (incoming study abroad). On the recruitment and marketing front, OIP staff members have exhibited on behalf of AUB at the annual conferences of **NAFSA: Association of International Educators** (attendance 9,000), the **Forum on Education Abroad** (attendance 1,200), and the **Middle Eastern Studies Association** (attendance not available), attended two **high school fairs** (in New York and Michigan) and one **study abroad fair**, and made **campus visits** to three additional US universities and an IB high school in Canada. OIP staff members jointly created a new website and marketing materials for the above three conferences, including a "**Study at AUB**" **brochure** aimed specifically at the North American study abroad market. Since last August, OIP has brokered the signing of **five new international agreements**, and overseen the renewal and **expansion of agreements** with three elite strategic peer university partners; and has submitted, along with 10 European university partners, a **successful funding proposal** to the European Union which will support student and faculty exchange to and from Europe.

## Setbacks

Most successful International Programs offices, at least in Europe, North America and Egypt, work on retention-related issues: creating international partnerships which give students and faculty the chance to engage, physically and intellectually, with the outside world; thus enhancing the institution's academic quality of life. The biggest setback for OIP in this inaugural year has been the inability to effectively address the retention aspect of its mission because of setbacks noted elsewhere in this document by OIP peer units. This setback derives in large part from systemic problems in related offices; e.g. staffing, data, and branding.

The **number one barrier to success** for increased student diversity is the issue of admissions response time: AUB is 3-4 months behind peer institutions' degree-seeker decisions, and takes at least 3 times longer in issuing decisions for visiting students. If OIP could wish for only one thing to help it address setbacks to its mission, it would be for an increase in resources to staff, space and IT support for Admissions.

The **second-biggest barrier** has been the inability to efficiently report required data about our incoming international student body to government bodies such as the European granting agencies and Lebanon's Surete Generale, due to deficiencies in data collection, data entry and data sharing about international students. The **third-biggest barrier** to diversity and increased

regional enrollment at AUB has been the a reluctance by AUB, as a united entity, to view the perception of political instability not as an EMSS *threat* but as an *opportunity* to inform the world that AUB is a regional leader in emergency and crisis response.

Additional setbacks to the OIP mission and vision have been the following:

- Tightening of government regulations as regards student visas and residency permits
- No formalized shared understanding of what constitutes a “foreign student” and no standardized method for capturing this information and getting it into or out of Banner.
- No successful method yet found for OIP staff to regularly and easily access student records.
- Inability to accurately track financial aspects of exchange agreements and grants.
- Lack of on-line application process for foreign degree seekers as well as visiting international students; particularly as these are the students whom we most desire to attract more of, and who have the most difficulty with our current paper-based systems of application and payment.
- Lack of on-line application process for AUB students wishing to study abroad or do research abroad; which puts a huge burden on faculty member’s limited office hours.
- Lack of a support for a social media approach to attracting and supporting international applicants.

## **6. Office of Student Affairs**

### **Accomplishments**

The Office of Student Affairs has enjoyed continuous progress and expansion in the last years in terms of physical infrastructure and personnel development and growth. Financially, there has been a more disciplined approach to the operational budget despite taking on more programs and tasks.

In all areas within the Office of Student Affairs there were noteworthy accomplishments during the previous years.

**Career and Placement Services** was completely disassociated from the psychological counseling center and academic counseling. CPS has established four main aspects of its work: Career guidance, Job Search techniques, Workshops and the Job Fair. Most of the money generated from the job fair is used to support students through scholarships and work study schemes.

The **Student Housing** has focused on improving the physical infrastructure of the dorms and devising clear policies and programs that enhance residence living. In the optimization of guest accommodation resulted in an occupancy rate exceeding 95% (in revenue terms) despite fierce market competition.

**Student Activities unit** implemented plans to eliminate major obstacles hindering the expansion and execution of student activities, particularly in terms of policies and procedures. West Hall

remains open until 10pm thanks to staff recruitment in response to the flourishing of activities. Equally important is the establishment and continuation of fair and transparent rules pertaining to student elections applied by the Office of Student Affairs. There are more requests for forming new clubs with new objectives and ideas whereby their target is to help AUB students develop their leadership skills. Coordination is taking place with the Civic Engagement center so that the Office of Student Affairs will play a role in encouraging clubs and encourage students to volunteer for worthy causes.

The **Counseling Center** has provided psychological services for a big number of students. The center has acquired a reputation for confidentiality and discretion, which are valuable qualities for encouraging students to make use of its services. The Center has endeavored to meet growing demand as students become more comfortable with the setting. There has been more effort in handling faculty matters impacting special needs students, particularly in terms of learning difficulties and those with emotional difficulties.

**Work Study Program** More students continued to benefit from the Work Study Program as new opportunities arose in departments at AUB. New policies and procedures to make the program fairer seem to be working well and the Board of Deans agreed to support flexibility for department where justification can be provided to extend the work period beyond two semesters. Efforts are underway in revising the application procedure to minimize waiting time for eligible students who are unsuccessful in the first round.

More **Athletics** activities have been introduced over the last years. Several varsity teams including more than 400 AUB athletes participated in many local and international tournaments, universities leagues, and championships events, achieving first or Second places in many endeavors. The number of athletes participating in sports activities has increased. AUB athletes have become the most successful among their regional competitors. As for the CHSC operations, more and more new members are enrolled in the membership program, and in the many instructional fitness classes which are offered to the Community at large.

**Appointments:** The appointment of an associate dean, who joined the office on the first of April, 2011. Also, an executive officer was selected and would join the office on the first of June, 2011.

### **Setbacks**

Although this year AUB was not directly affected by the political/security situation in Lebanon and the region, over the last years, however, the political/security situation and economic uncertainty were the two major influencing factors on SAO activities as noted by virtually all directors and coordinators. The political/security situation for example impacts attendance to large-scale sports or musical events and more stringent security measures may serve as a nuisance to non-AUB members attending such events or conferences, job fairs and the like.

**Athletics:** Perhaps more than any other area the local political situation threatens the nature and quality of activities. In an atmosphere of regional violence and political confrontation it becomes more difficult to offer artistic or cultural entertainment as it could be interpreted as insensitivity. Usually, a cycle of sit-ins and politically motivated activities ensue without much imagination, offering limited educational or cultural value. The general culture in Lebanon does not place value on leadership, civic participation and creative activities in universities focusing instead on academic results.

**Career and Placement Services:** Obviously the economic situation has the biggest impact in this domain. The fewer jobs there are the more challenging it is to provide a more successful service. To some extent the responsibility of Career and Placement Services is to help students become more employable in terms of offering them guidance in areas such as interview skills and job search techniques rather than to arrange ready-made jobs for each graduate. Nonetheless, the participation of companies in workshops and job fairs is undermined when they have no short-term or medium-term plans to recruit and much of the effectiveness of CPS is reliant upon input from the current market and its requirements.

**Student Housing:** The housing market in Beirut is currently highly competitive. Furnished apartments are cheap and offer services such as cable TV, private bathrooms and kitchens or kitchenettes. While AUB campus residences offer many advantageous services such as greater security, community atmosphere and special events the physical infrastructure of some of the buildings remains a worry. Penrose and Kerr, the men's dorms, require more immediate action if AUB is to compete with the trend towards cheaper quality apartments in the country.

**Appointments:** The appointment of a business manager for the CHSC was not successful despite two rounds of searches for this position. One major obstacle for this appointment is the emolument given to the person who would occupy this position

## **Appendix C. SWOT of Individual EMSS Units**

### **A.1 Office of Admissions**

#### **I. Recruitment**

##### **Strengths**

- Prompt and courteous responsiveness to applicants and their families with individualized attention
- Comprehensive and interactive presentations in schools and other locales
- Qualified recruitment staff with in-depth knowledge of the university (all are AUB alumni)
- Diverse student body from different nationalities, academic and socio-economic backgrounds
- Accurate information (on ---?) provided to high school officials
- Strong financial aid programs to support economically disadvantaged students
- Good work-study programs available for students
- Strong and continuous collaboration with alumni
- User friendly and up to date marketing materials and websites

##### **Weaknesses**

- Inconsistent marketing strategy to enhance the image of AUB, locally and internationally
- Lack of up-to-date majors that attend to the new market demand and trends (media, interior design, journalism, pharmacy, dentistry)
- Insufficient budget for recruitment programs:
  - Overloaded recruitment team
  - Insufficient office space
  - Limited financial aid packages and scholarships (Academic, artistic, athletic, siblings discount, meal plans, lodging)
  - Lack of admission memorabilia
- Insufficient support from some international alumni chapters
- Relatively expensive tuition fees

##### **Opportunities**

- International, regional and local student recruitment fairs
- Social media tools (YouTube, facebook, twitter)
- Recruitment module on banner
- Loyal population of volunteers for recruitment (alumni, faculty members, staff members and AUB students)
- New countries and public schools that have not been addressed yet

##### **Threats**

- Political instability in Lebanon

- Increasing number of local universities with attractive academic programs and strong academic scholarships
- An increasing number of local universities with flexible and easy admission requirements
- Increasing number of local universities that signed agreements with schools to accept top students (sur dossier) with immediate tuition discounts.
- Low GDP per household
- Local and regional international universities offering attractive academic programs coupled with strong scholarships and attractive admission packages.

### **Initiatives**

- Amend the financial aid packages and scholarships (full and partial academic scholarships, athletic and artistic scholarships, sibling discounts, meal plans, lodging)
- Use better means of communications with all stakeholders (students, parents, alumni, schools)
- Increase training sessions and professional development opportunities for recruitment staff
- Target Ministries of Higher Education in the Arab countries to have AUB on the list of Universities for Scholarship students

## **II. Admission process**

### **Strengths**

- Good customer service to applicants and their families with individualized attention
- Effective reply to prospective students' requests, phone calls and emails
- Partial On-line application process
- Transparent admission process
- Selective admission process (admit best qualified applicants)?
- Partly automated admission process (undergraduate/graduate)
- Accurate statistical data and reports with trend analysis
- Effective communication with concerned administrative and academic units
- Adequate control processes

### **Weaknesses**

- Delay in answering requests and emails
- Delays in admission decisions
- Multitasking staff and understaffing
- Inability of admission staff to issue immediate decisions for obvious cases
- Lack of unified admission requirements across academic programs
- Overlapping deadlines
- Extension of deadlines
- Socio-cultural misunderstanding of admission procedure

- Inadequate office space and locale
- Increased volume of work due to increased recruitment efforts.?
- Internal and external lack of communication as well as with other AUB units?
- Loopholes throughout the application process (receiving, verification, decision, letters, mailing, pre-registration)
- Defects in the mailing system

### **Opportunities**

- Tools available in Banner
- Social media tools (facebook, YouTube, twitter) and mobile applications (SMS)

### **Threats**

- Delays in receiving needed data from faculties/departments
- Wrong information provided by faculties/departments
- Local universities with more flexible admission procedures
- Local universities with easier admission criteria

### **Initiatives**

- Amend the admission criteria to include recommendation letters, programs strength, letter of intent and extra-curricular activities
- Change office location
- Increase training sessions and professional development opportunities for admission staff
- Implement earlier spring deadlines (undergraduate/graduate)
- Full automation of admissions procedures (use of online application at all levels)
- Use of communication module on banner (letters generation)
- Recruit new and qualified staff members

## **A.2. Registrar**

### **Strengths**

- Good customer service to students and individualized attention to all students.
- Transcripts and certificates processed within two days from the submission of request. Moreover, pouch deliveries are processed within the same day or within 24 hours.
- Academic information such as grades, transcript of records, degree evaluation is available online to students and advisors.
- Academic and Administrative resources such as University Calendar, University Catalogues, as well as Registration Guides and degree requirement checklists are available on the web to all the AUB community.
- Forms that are used by students are downloadable from the web.
- Grades are available to students via web as soon as the professor makes the entry via AUBsis.
- Students can register and withdraw courses online without the need to come to the Registrar's Office to do the task.
- Use of CAPP (Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning) has helped identify potential graduating students in a certain semester as well as speeded up the process of

going back to faculties to check for graduating students then report back to the Registrar's Office.

- Graduating students can fill an online clearance form without the need to navigate between departments and offices in the university.
- The Registrar's Office webpage is accessible from the AUB main homepage. This page provides information regarding rules, regulations, registration, ...
- Use of external software tools to complement the existing processes such as the automated generation of calendar, scheduling of final exams where conflicts are eliminated and back-to-back minimized, graduation with distinction and high distinction, common free slots.
- For data quality assurance, the Registrar's Office implements special control functions to detect inconsistencies in data.
- One of the control functions that was initiated by the Registrar's Office is the automated e-mail sent to the instructor of the course as well as to the Registrar whenever a change of grade is carried out on the system.
- Documenting processes for all core functions existing in the Registrar's Office.
- Developing a staff backup and succession plan for each of the core functions.
- Minimizing the use of paper in services and operation through the use of a document management software (Laserfiche) to convert paper forms to electronic documents. All transcripts of records are electronically archived; moreover, all the commencement books (hardcopies) have been converted to Laserfiche (softcopies).
- Printing of diplomas in-house

### **Weaknesses**

- Web registration timeslots. This is due to the fact the system is unable to handle the load of all students registering at the same time.
- Requests/payments for transcripts and certificates cannot be carried on line.
- Unifying some existing forms such as reactivation form, transfer letter forms.
- Lack of clear rules regarding paper retention other than student files.

### **Opportunities**

- Promotion of CAPP and What-IF analysis and relevant training to students and advisors.
- Increase training sessions for staff at the Registrar's Office (both technical and customer service).
- Increase opportunities for professional development of senior staff members at the Registrar's Office.
- Use of centralized software for allocation of classes, and timetabling of events. This software is in progress and will be ready in the upcoming semester.
- Improve functions related to AUB SIS for better system performance.

### **Threats**

- Office space: as enrolment increases, the volume of work increases incrementally. Our current office space does not allow the recruitment of additional staff members.
- Reluctance of some faculty members and students to use Web CAPP.

- Difficulty in communicating with students. Registrar’s Office sends e-mails to students throughout the semester regarding registration abnormalities, academic issues, and graduation fulfillment. Some students claim that they did not receive the e-mail.
- Student permanent addresses are some time not accurate due to data entry. As a result, some letters addressed to parents return. A process should be introduced from the Admissions Office to overcome this problem.

### **A.3. Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA)**

#### **Strengths Weaknesses**

- S1: Strong administrative support
- W1: Absence of a proper reward system
  
- S2: Pioneers in the region
- W2: Insufficient resources: Human, financial, and equipment
  
- S3: Professionalism of OIRA staff members
- W3: Inadequate space allocation
  
- S4: Good reputation as provider of reliable and accurate information
- W4: Insufficient automation of processes
  
- S5: Established Data base
- W5: Weak internal communication
  
- S6: Good communication channels with various stakeholders
- W6: Incomplete departmental manual
  
- S7: Documented work processes
- W7: Reporting weaknesses

#### **Opportunities Threats**

- O1: Better serve AUB needs for information through automation and producing needed reports efficiently and in simple format
- T1: Unsupportive climate for assessment
  
- O2: Keep up-to-date with technological advances
- T2: Quick advances in technology and/or institutional research
- O3: Keep up-to-date with advances and new ideas in the field of institutional research
- T3: Inadequate level of assessment literacy in community.
  
- O4: Continue to be a leader in institutional research in the region
- T4: System and data security

- O5: Expand OIRA research activities through publications
- O6: Help build a culture of assessment at AUB and outside
- O7: Continuous upgrading of staff capabilities through specialized workshops and conferences.
- O8: Build a uniform and standardized lexic for measures/criteria used at AUB.

#### **A.4. Office of International Programs**

##### **Strengths**

- S1: AUB has good name recognition around the world
- S2: AUB's urban location and physical campus are more attractive to international students than some other regional competitors
- S3: Cost advantage compared to other private US universities
- S4: Good inter-office connections and communications between personnel in OIP & other EMSS units
- S5: There is strong support within other EMSS units for the mission of OIP
- S6: Within AUB student body, OIP has a reputation for excellence in providing student services.
- S7: OIP staff members are experienced and well-known in their professional affiliation organizations outside Lebanon (e.g. NAFSA); a plus for diversifying recruitment.

##### **Weaknesses**

- W1: Lack of data coordination/integration between EMSS units (improving, but still a weakness).
- W2: Lack of formal structures at AUB which facilitate inter-unit cooperation.
- W3: Insufficient staff or technology support to effectively provide student-centered approach; this is endemic among all component units of EMSS, complicating our joint mission.
- W4: Despite its record as a regional leader on health, safety and crisis response, AUB is not presenting an effective, unified message to audiences beyond the MENA region that it addresses these issues effectively.
- W5: Lack of coordinated marketing, communications and recruitment strategies at institutional level.
- W6: Insufficient recruitment attention to US high school markets (and perhaps others); particularly given growth of Arabic language study in US secondary schools in last decade.
- W7: Insufficiently defined strategic objectives make it hard to prioritize efforts between competing demands of the EMSS agenda.
- W8: OIP has little visibility on campus other than to fellow EMSS units & selected FAS departments and its mission is not well understood outside this arena.

## Opportunities

- O1: Beirut currently has good word of mouth & is seen by some as more culturally similar to Europe than other regional destinations
- O2: Huge growth in Arabic language study in US and elsewhere over last decade
- O3: Huge growth in interest in “globalizing” education in Europe, US, Asia over last decade
- O4: Huge US interest in study abroad programs (particularly of short duration) for engineering, nursing, business, technology and other sciences
- O5: Increased European funding for educational partnerships in Mediterranean region
- O6: Engaged AUB alumni in locations around the world are eager to send their offspring to AUB, to help with recruiting efforts or to encourage their alma mater to build a relationship with AUB.
- O7: Universities in the US & UK are actively looking for programs that combine Journalism, Public Policy, Youth Studies, and Business with Arabic Language instruction; and often think of AUB first.
- O8: Students from many countries are actively looking for chances to volunteer and do post-graduate internships or research in areas of AUB strength: e.g. Global Health, Arab Youth Policy, Conservation and Environmental Studies, Urban Planning, etc.
- O9: Creation of OIP as a separate office brings new perspectives to the EMSS team, and a stronger advocacy for attention to international perspectives on issues that affect all student populations.

## Threats

- T1: Overseas stakeholders at all levels (students, parents, faculty advisors, study abroad officers) are repeatedly expressing frustration with the response timing, and what they see as the lack of transparency and coordination among EMSS units with regard to AUB admissions and pre-arrival processes.
- T2: Key competitor or peer institutions in the region have made greater improvements in the area of support services for international students over the last decade than has AUB.
- T3: Perception by North American and European potential students, parents or advisors that Lebanon is more politically unstable than other MENA destinations and therefore less unsafe for their students.
  - ***NOTE: There is a multiplier effect of the above 3 items taken together which is particularly detrimental to EMSS efforts among applicants with no family ties to the region!***
- T4: Expansion of higher education & study abroad opportunities in the Gulf & MENA regions in last decade
- T5: Serious students of Arabic language have a tendency to see Lebanon’s multi-lingual milieu as a barrier to effective language acquisition.
- T6: To the extent that AUB relies on outside funding sources (such as Erasmus and US State Dept) to achieve student diversity (or other EMSS goals) it may also leave itself bereft if world events or policy shifts cause re-direction of their funding initiatives.
- T7: A significant number of competitor universities or study abroad programs in the region have been quicker to capitalize on the curricular opportunities listed above, by

offering things such as Business Arabic, intensive Arabic instruction during the academic year, internships or directed research, short-term study abroad for engineering or nursing students, etc.

## **A.5. Office of Student Affairs**

### **Strengths Weaknesses**

- S1 Reputation for free expression, student representation and debate. Examples are USFC and Outlook.
- W1 West Hall space limitation for both administrative needs and for growing number of student organizations.
  
- S2 AUB offers for students excellent facilities, history and atmosphere. West Hall and Hostler Center are examples.
- W2 Shortage of back up or support staff in some areas, particularly career services and student activities.
  
- S3 Large team of qualified personnel/staff with solid experience in student life.
- W3 Vague university policies when confronted with student rights issues. Examples such as public displays of affection or SRC role.
  
- S4 Free psychological services and counseling for all students
- W4 AUB bureaucracy in some areas slows down some operations.
  
- S5 Consistency in policy application regarding student issues.
- W5 Insufficient communication and coordination between AUB departments.
  
- S6 Wide range of activities for students (over 30 clubs and a range of sports sessions).
- W6 A sense that autonomy and initiative are discouraged at some levels.
  
- S7 AUB as leader in regional sports competitions.
- W7 Absence of financial aid for high sports achievers.
  
- S8 Large team of athletics coaching staff with notable sporting backgrounds.
- W8 Shortage of qualified sports professionals and managers.
  
- S9 Unique orientation and ambassador program for international students.
- W9 Lacking infrastructure and resources for large community service program.
  
- S10 Large regional university job fair/exhibition.
- W10 Inadequate professional development to create greater team-work mentality and respect for hierarchy.
  
- S11 Regular seminars, workshops to prepare students for job market.

- W11 Lack of faculty awareness about student affairs office and its work.
- S12 Large database of information on local and regional firms based on long-standing inter-institutional connections.
- W12 Residence Hall infrastructure in urgent need of major upgrading soon.
- S13 Promotion of community service and civic awareness and participation.
- W13 AUB policies in some cases restrictive – Purchasing office, bids
- S14 Commitment to continuous development of staff.
- S15 One of few residential campuses in the region set in beautiful location. Security and convenience for on-campus residents.
- S16 Events encouraging community atmosphere in student residence halls.
- S17 Emphasis on student safety and security.

#### **Opportunities Threats**

- O1 Hostler Center promises a major upgrading of facilities and services for sports and other student activities.
- T1 Unstable political situation
- O2 Material and financial contributions from donors enabling investments in student related services and programs.
- T2 Resistance to change in wider culture.
- O3 Large student body that is easily accessible.
- T3 New Universities in Gulf offering ultra-modern facilities.
- O4 Current regional leadership of AUB creating international interest in increasing links and attracting exchanges.
- T4 Economic uncertainty.
- O5 Relatively liberal political and social setting.
- T5 School-level students with individualistic mindset who do not value community or social participation.
- O6 Prospective students in the region who desire secure on-campus residence.
- T6 Growing perception that university is a place only for acquiring a degree that enhances career goals.

## **Appendix D. Vision Statement of Individual EMSS offices**

### **B.1 Admissions office**

The vision of the Office of Admissions is to reach and recruit the highest population of individuals that are qualified to form a student body that can advance AUB as an outstanding institution of liberal higher learning and that caters for students of diverse social and ethnic backgrounds in the region.

### **B.2 Registrar**

To utilize technology for enhancing our strategic management plan that includes comprehensive services to our students, faculty, administration, parents, and alumni in a professional, accessible, and courteous manner that supports our institutional identity as the educator of choice for Lebanon and the region.

### **B.3 Office of Institutional Research and Assessment**

OIRA is a regional leader in Institutional Research and Assessment that serves AUB community information needs with the most up-to-date technology and IR advances in order to support AUB's strive for excellence in learning and service to the community.

### **B.4 Office of International Programs**

To assist the University in its calling to serve the peoples of the region and beyond, in a globally interconnected, 21st century context.

### **B.5 Office of Student Affairs**

The Office of Student Affairs at AUB manages high quality services and programs in the region that promote student participation in civic, cultural, athletic and social activities, creating productive citizens for the future.

## **Appendix E. List of peer institutions**

1. American University of Cairo, New York, Egypt
2. American University of Sharjah, Sharjah UAE
3. Villanova University, Villanova, Pennsylvania
4. Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey
5. American University, Washington District of Columbia
6. St. Louis University, St Louis, Missouri
7. George Washington University, Washington District of Columbia
8. Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio
9. University of Rochester, Rochester, New York
10. Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts
11. Georgetown University, Washington District of Columbia