

For Immediate Release



AUB 2012 Student Elections: Changes to election process and new independent groups

Beirut, Lebanon- 13/11/2012 - Sunshine and serenity marked the 2012 AUB Election Day, following a few days of heavy campaigning and dramatic rainstorms.

Some 380 students ran for spots on the 109-member Student Representative Council (SRC), with students campaigning for one of two main coalitions--the red-and-white "Students at Work" against a coalition of the blue "A United Ballot" (with AUB as acronym) and the fluorescent yellow "Order of Engineer." What marked this year's election was the emergence of a number of self-proclaimed independent groups including the veteran black-with-red-star "No Frontiers" along with newer groups such as the purple "Just Think ," the yellow "Active AUBites," and the white-and-black "Campus Choice."

Some 14 seats were won by acclamation this year.

From 10 am to 5 pm, some 7860 students voted in their respective faculties, in a calm yet competitive manner. This year Student Affairs Dean Talal Nizameddin introduced some changes to the electoral process. Traditionally, newly-elected SRC representatives would vote in the week after Election Day for the 17 student representatives on the 24-member University Student-Faculty Council (USFC). But this year, students were invited to elect their SRC and USFC representatives in the same election, in an attempt to include more students in the selection of USFC members. Moreover, ballot counting for the Faculties of Engineering and Architecture and Medicine was held on site, whereas ballot counting for other faculties took place as usual in West Hall.

Newly-elected SRC representatives are scheduled to vote for SRC cabinets on November 20, while the 24-member USFC is expected to vote for its vice-president, secretary, and treasurer on December 4.

Dean Nizameddin described the election process as "extremely smooth marked by an exemplary spirit of friendly competition."

He added: "It is so important for AUB students to know that there is an annual tradition of electing representatives and that they have a voice in the character of their student body and their own beloved AUB. The result in many ways is insignificant when compared to the experience of taking part."

For the third year in a row, results were tweeted within a few minutes of their being released, and they were also published on AUB's official Facebook and Google+ pages. AUB

has more than 10,000 followers on Twitter as well as 16,500 fans on Facebook and nearly 1500 fans on Google+. For the first time, AUB also posted election news on its LinkedIn page with its nearly 3,500 fans. The University also posted photos from Election Day on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Google+, and LinkedIn.

Just like last year, observers from the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections oversaw Election Day on campus with about 15 observers weaving in and out of faculties and ballot counting areas. LADE Coordinator at AUB Tamim BouKarroum lauded AUB's organization process, describing it as "stellar, as usual." He added that the general mood on campus this year was "very calm."

As usual, access to campus was confined to students and staff with valid AUB IDs, in addition to the drove of print, radio, and TV reporters covering the event.

The Office of Student Affairs, which oversees elections every year, enforced voting rules in the strictest fashion. Moreover, Dean Nizameddin banned all political flags, posters, flyers, and photos on campus.

To help enforce these rules, the Office of Student Affairs relied on four closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, installed four years ago around West Hall, to record and subsequently punish, if needed, any violators of the University Code of Conduct.

By 5:30 pm, shortly after voting had ended, two large computer-linked screens were set up on West Hall's colonnaded porch. The screens beamed election results to spirited students over a three-hour period, while serving to keep the two main camps meters apart. Nevertheless that did not stop each camp from taunting the other with boos and chants. Results are expected to be out before 9 pm, and the Office of Communications will disseminate them to news media outlets.

Student elections at AUB have a long history that dates back to 1949, when the first general elections took place. This annual event was interrupted in 1982 at the height of the 1975-1990 Lebanese war, only to resume in 1994.

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Maha Al-Azar, Associate Director for Media Relations, ma110@aub.edu.lb, 01-353 228

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full service 420-bed hospital.

Stay up to date on AUB news and events. Follow us on:

Website: www.aub.edu.lb

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/aub.edu.lb>

Twitter: http://twitter.com/AUB_Lebanon