

FAFS Dean's Office Updates

Issue no.8 | Dec. 2018 - Jan. 2019

FAFS Dean's Office Updates is the monthly newsletter that keeps FAFS faculty, students, staff, and friends informed of the latest activities, initiatives, and achievements of the FAFS family. Please share your department's news and your suggestions with fafs_com@aub.edu.lb

Table of Contents

In the Spotlight

- [WEFRAH Initiative: Call for Proposals and Workshop](#)
- [Board of Trustees approves revised BSc in Agriculture](#)
- [Welcome to the new addition, Assistant to the Dean](#)

FAFS Research & Outreach

- [FAFS at the Future Congress, Chile](#)
- [Dean Mohtar elected to IWRA Executive Board \(2019-2021\)](#)
- [ESDU's CLIMAT project kicks off with training on rug production in Arsal](#)
- [Bahrain Launch of Ajyal Salima Nutrition Education Program](#)
- [FAFS student Christelle Moussa \(FAFS-LDEM\) among winners in IFI Climate Change competition](#)
- [Agribusiness students attend Berytech workshops](#)
- [ESDU team expands in number of members and projects](#)

FAFS Events

- [CLIMAT project and REEF initiative: empowering Lebanon's rural communities and agriculture](#)
- [Science panel on Water-Energy-Food Nexus in the Levant, FAFS-AUB & DAAD-Lebanon](#)
- [Souk aal Souk Christmas-Farmer's Market in Hamra](#)
- [FAFS staff honored at the AUB Service Award Ceremony](#)

FAFS Faculty News

- [Dr. Maria Gabriella Trovato: invited Speaker at AILA International Festival](#)
- [FAFS Dean Emeritus Nuhad Dagher receives Golden Medal of Education Award](#)
- [Dr. Rami Zurayk co-authors landmark report on new planetary health diet](#)
- [Nayla Al-Akl, Associate Dean of Student Affairs](#)
- [Dr. Mohamad Farran: planting industrial and medical Cannabis](#)

FAFS Alumni News

- [FAFS Alumna Samer Harb, first Lebanese certified food scientist](#)

FAFS Faculty Research

- [Mapping evapotranspiration with energy balance models by Dr. Hadi Jaafar](#)
- [First national investigation of food insecurity among Lebanese households with children by Dr. Lamis Jomaa](#)
- [Cemeteries as holistic urban landscapes by Nayla Al-Akl](#)

FAFS Announcements

- [Launch of Kellogg in Costa Rica](#)

Lectures series and Seminars

In the spotlight

WEFRAH Initiative: Call for Proposals (Concept Notes due February 4) and Workshop

WEFRAH, a university-wide initiative led by FAFS and supported by all Faculties and Schools, the Provost and the President, emphasizes the need for integrative solutions to today's very complex global challenges. The AUB-AREC Taskforce (AAT) convened a faculty workshop (January 24) to encourage faculty interaction and identification of potential multidisciplinary research teams and clusters of research profiles under the WEFRAH framework. Teams will be invited to submit full proposals by February 15. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Board of Trustees approves revised BSc in Agriculture

The discipline of agriculture is changing: demanding increased awareness regarding healthy food, sustainable water use, and integrated approaches to environmental and landscape health that include climate-smart agriculture and precision farming. In response to these changes, the Department of Agriculture worked diligently to revise its BSc in Agriculture curriculum. New elements, such as experiential and service learning, technology, capstone and internship opportunities, and links to the private sector, have been incorporated into the revised curriculum. The new program capitalizes hands on experiences during a two semester (spring and summer) stay at AREC. It offers specialization in either of two tracks: 1) sustainable / organic / conservation agriculture, or 2) agriculture technology. The new program will undoubtedly offer increased impact and improved learning environment to the FAFS Department of Agriculture.

[Back to top](#)

Welcome to the new Assistant to the Dean

Mrs. Alhan Shamseddine has joined the FAFS Dean's Office as Assistant to the Dean. Alhan brings over 15 years of experience at AUBMC, where she worked in research, administration, and human resources management. Mrs. Shamseddine received the President's Service Excellence Award (2008) for exemplary performance, creativity, dedication to work, and going beyond the call of duty. Alhan holds a shield for successful project management and implementation of Human Capital Management system at HR Medical Center (2018).



[Back to top](#)

FAFS Research & Outreach

FAFS at the Future Congress, Chile

Dean Rabi Mohtar was an invited speaker at the Congreso Futuro in Santiago, Chile, January 15-17. Congreso Futuro is an annual event, held in Chile since 2010. Individuals recognized as experts in science and humanitarian studies introduce the challenges that face or will face society in the future. The Congress is organized by the Commission Challenges of the Future of the Senate of Chile, the Chilean Academy of Sciences and the Government of Chile. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Dean Mohtar elected to IWRA Executive Board (2019-2021)

In further recognition of his wide experience and knowledge in the sustainable use and management of the world's water resources, Dean Rabi Mohtar was elected to the Executive Board of the International Water Resources Association (IWRA) for the 2019-2021 term and will Chair the IWRA Awards Committee. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

ESDU's CLIMAT project kicks off with training on rug production in Aarsal

The Climate-Smart Livelihoods Initiatives and Market Access Tailoring (CLIMAT) project celebrated its kick-off in December with rug production training sessions lead by Cooperation Without Borders. A local trainer with more than 10 years of extensive experience in rug production coached thirty Lebanese and Syrian women at Aarsal Coop. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Bahrain Launch of Ajyal Salima Nutrition Education Program

The Ajyal Salima nutrition education program to enable healthier lives for children was implemented in a Train the Trainers workshop in Bahrain. The program was designed and delivered by a team of experts under the supervision of Dr. Carla Habib Mourad at the Nutrition department, FAFS, to equip nearly 30 teachers and health educators to successfully implement the program for 4th and 5th grade classes. [READ MORE](#)

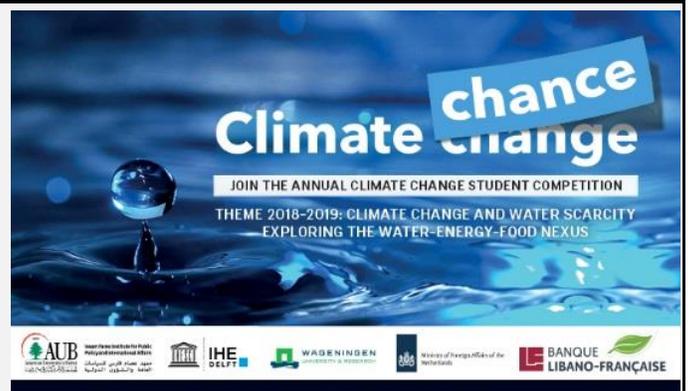


[Back to top](#)

FAFS student Christelle Moussa (FAFS-LDEM) among winners in IFI Climate Change competition

Christelle Moussa was among the winners of IFI's second annual student competition on climate change for work based on her thesis proposal: *Vegetation as a UHI (Urban Heat Island) mitigation measure in arid contexts: The case of Dubai.*

[READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Agribusiness students attend Berytech workshops

FAFS students enrolled in the 'New Trends in Agricultural and Food Systems' (AGBU 236) course, led by Ms. Rachel Bahn, attended workshops ran by Agrytech, a Berytech program, working to guide students and professors on different entrepreneurial opportunities found in the agri-food sector.

[READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

ESDU team expands in number of members and projects

The FAFS Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) welcomed six new members on December 5 and introduced them to the Unit's agenda for the coming year. The team will lead activities on sustainable agriculture and livelihoods, training and food safety under the Climate-Smart Livelihoods Initiatives and Market Access Tailoring (CLIMAT) Project. ESDU continues to support the Lebanese rural areas, helping to develop vulnerable Lebanese communities and Syrian refugees through capacity building and securing livelihoods.

[Back to top](#)

FAFS Events

CLIMAT project and REEF initiative: empowering Lebanon's rural communities and agriculture

ESDU at FAFS, AUB launched the Climate-Smart Livelihoods Initiatives and Market Access Tailoring (CLIMAT) project sustainably to improve the skills, capacities, and livelihood opportunities of vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees in Northeast Baalbeck and West Beqaa. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Science panel on Water-Energy-Food Nexus in the Levant, FAFS-AUB & DAAD-Lebanon

In collaboration with DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), FAFS and the Food Security Program (FSP) hosted the Science Panel on Water-Energy-Food Nexus in the Levant (December 6).

The event at the Charles Hostler Student Center Auditorium featured welcome addresses by H.E. Dr. Georg Birgelen, German Embassy Beirut, Dr. Mohammad Harajli, AUB Provost, and Ms. Bahar Sayyas, IC Beirut Director, DAAD-Lebanon.

[READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



Souk aal Souk Christmas-Farmer's Market in Hamra

ESDU, in collaboration with the AUB Neighborhood Initiative and the Food Heritage Foundation, organized a Christmas Souk aal Souk-Farmer's Market, December 18 in Jeanne D'Arc Street, Hamra. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



FAFS staff honored at the AUB Service Award Ceremony

Each year, several AUB staff and administrative officers are recognized for their service to AUB and presented with Service Award pins that carry the official University seal. In this year's award ceremony (December 18), four FAFS members received Service Award pins: Nisrine Nakib, FAFS Dean's Office, 20 years of service; Ali Hajj Hassan, AREC Physical Plan, 25 years of service; Walid Hamieh, AREC Production, 25 years of service; and Abbas Mousawi, AREC Production, 25 years of service. FAFS is proud and grateful of their hard work and dedication!

[Back to top](#)

FAFS Faculty News

Dr. Maria Gabriella Trovato: invited Speaker at AILA International Festival

Dr. Maria Gabriella Trovato, assistant professor, LDEM, FAFS, was an invited speaker at the [Australian Institute of Landscape Architects \(AILA\) International Festival](#), the largest Australian festival/conference on landscape architecture, in October 2018. The conference, The Expanding Field, surveyed the edges of the landscape architecture profession, identifying prominent questions for the future, new territory for design, and innovative practices. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



FAFS Dean Emeritus Nuhad Dagher receives Golden Medal of Education Award

FAFS Dean Emeritus Nuhad Dagher received the Golden Medal of Education from President Michel Aoun, represented by caretaker Culture Minister Ghattas Khoury, in recognition and appreciation of Dr. Dagher's contributions to the agricultural sphere in Lebanon. The ceremony held on December 26 at the Grand Serail was in the presence of Secretary General of the National Council of Scientific Research Mouin Hamzeh, Secretary General of the Council of Ministers Fouad Fleifel, Dean of AUB's Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences Rabi Mohtar, family members, and other dignitaries. [READ MORE](#)

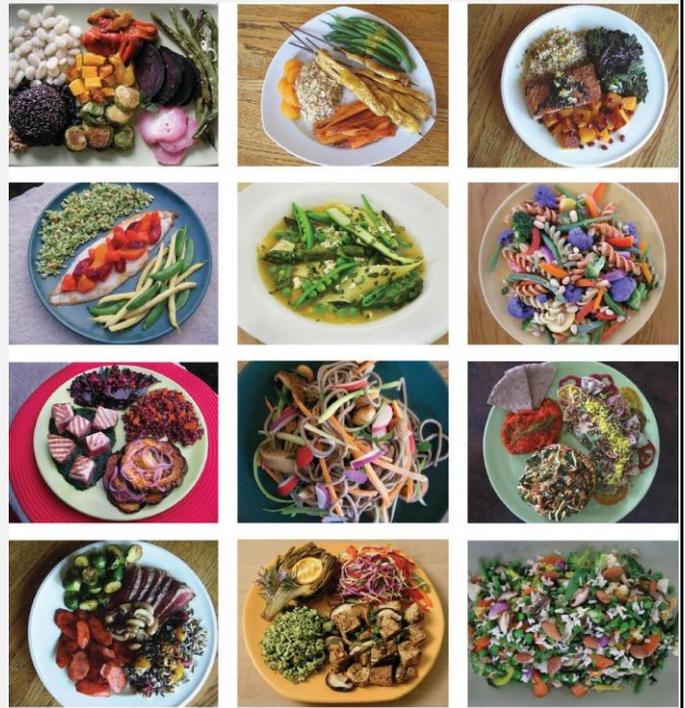


[Back to top](#)

Dr. Rami Zurayk co-authors landmark report on new planetary health diet

Dr. Rami Zurayk, Chairperson, LDEM, FAFS, co-authors research in the [EAT-Lancet Commission](#), a 3-year long project involving 37 experts from 16 countries, and including expertise in health, nutrition, environmental sustainability, food systems, economics and political governance. Feeding a growing population of 10 billion people by 2050 with a healthy and sustainable diet will be impossible without transforming eating habits, improving food production, and reducing food waste.

This stark reality is laid out in an EAT-Lancet Commission report, published by British medical journal The Lancet. The report provides the first scientific targets for a healthy diet from a sustainable food production system that operates within planetary boundaries. [READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Nayla Akl, Associate Dean of Student Affairs

FAFS professor Nayla Al-Akl appointed Associate Dean of Student Affairs, effective January 15, 2019. The appointment aligns with the strategic goals of the Office of Student Affairs for a holistic, coherent response to the student campus experience that ensures a sense of belonging and enhances access to the best of what AUB offers and represents to all students. FAFS congratulates Al-Akl for this great achievement.

[READ MORE](#)



[Back to top](#)

Dr. Mohamad Farran's presentation on planting industrial and medical Cannabis

Dr. Mohamad Farran, Professor, Agri, was invited to deliver on January 23 a detailed presentation to the Lebanese parliamentary committee considering the legalization of cannabis for medical and industrial (fiber) purposes, as a substitute to the narcotic plant. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



FAFS Faculty Research

Mapping evapotranspiration with energy balance models by Dr. Hadi Jaafar

Groundwater levels in some regions of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, the primary agricultural production area in the country, have dropped with population growth in the area. Dr. Hadi Jaafar, Assistant Professor in Irrigation and Water Management at FAFS, addresses agriculture water management issues and related challenges through his work on applications of remote sensing and geographic information system (GIS). Jaafar's research focuses on mapping evapotranspiration (ET), the assessment of water uptake by the plant at the field scale using remote sensing imagery, specifically thermal imagery. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



First national investigation of food insecurity among Lebanese households with children by Dr. Lamis Jomaa

Food insecurity is a major public health challenge in Lebanon, which has the highest global per capita refugee concentration and its accompanying prolonged political and economic challenges. These problems are aggravated by the lack of national studies or strategies focused on assessment and monitoring of food insecurity and the limited focus on the Lebanese host communities in the post- Syrian refugee crisis. Dr. Lamis Jomaa, a member of the FAFS Food Security Program, is an assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences (NFSC) and Co-Director of the Refugee Health Program, part of the Global Health Institute (GHI). Jomaa's research focuses on community nutrition to help address this burden. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



Cemeteries as holistic urban landscapes by Nayla Al-Akl

Cemeteries provide cultural and spiritual landscapes and are some of the few remaining open and green spaces in Beirut. Generally hidden behind high walls, they are often forgotten urban spaces: erased from the memory of the city. Nayla M. Al-Akl, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at FAFS, AUB, has research interest in cultural landscapes and the relationship between people and their environment. She focuses on the potential of cemeteries as holistic urban green spaces that can promote both human wellbeing and ecological health. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



FAFS Alumni News

FAFS Alumnus Samer Harb, first Lebanese certified food scientist

FAFS alumnus Samer Harb, B.Sc. in Nutrition & Dietetics (1995) and MS in Food Technology (1997), after successfully completing the exam offered by the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) becomes one of five Arabs and the only Lebanese to hold the title of Certified Food Scientist (CFS).

[READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)



FAFS Announcements

SAVE THE DATE

Launch of Kellogg in Costa Rica

Workshop: Transforming Higher Education in Agriculture: The Experience of EARTH University and Best Practices Across GCHERA's Global Network

The launch of the W.K. Kellogg financed project Transforming Higher Education is led by FAFS-AUB, in partnership with the Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA) and in collaboration with EARTH University. The goal of the workshop is to share and learn from the innovative experiences of EARTH University and across the GCHERA network as a means of stimulating university transformation processes.

Date: February 4-6, 2019

Location: EARTH University, Costa Rica

Stay Tuned!

[Back to top](#)

Lectures series and Seminars

January 16 – **The Cross-Talk Between Diet and Brain | FAFS** – Dr. Lina Begdache, Assistant Professor, Health and Wellness Studies, Binghamton University, New York. [READ MORE](#)

January 9 – **Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy: A multi-pronged approach for tackling the growing burden of obesity and chronic disease | FAFS** – Dr. Alfred Aziz, Chief, Nutrition Regulations and Standards Division, Food Directorate, Health Canada As of January 2019: Director General, Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion, Health Canada. [READ MORE](#)

December 12 – **Agronomy in Advancing Research for Enabling Communities in Lebanon | FAFS** – Dr. Marie Therese Abi Saab, Researcher in Agronomy and Head of the Climate and Water Unit at the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI). [READ MORE](#)

December 11 – **Insights in alternative management of insect pests in Lebanon amid climate change and globalization | FAFS** – Dr. Nabil Nemer, Associate Dean & Associate Professor, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK). [READ MORE](#)

December 6-8 – **The Water-Energy-Food Nexus in the Levant – Challenges and Opportunities | FAFS** – Rami Zurayk, Chairperson, LDEM Department, FAFS: "The Social Dimension of Water for Food Security: What impact does it have on farmers and consumers?" panel. Hadi Jaafar, assistant professor, Department of Agriculture, FAFS: "Modelling the Future in the Levant: Water Availability, Land-use Change and Threat of Climate Change" panel. Yaser Abunasr, associate professor, LDEM Department, FAFS: Urbanization panel. [READ MORE](#)

[Back to top](#)

To learn more about FAFS events, please visit our website [Calendar](#)

To advertise your upcoming events, please send the event details (*title, location, date, brief description, picture, and contact name & email*) to fafs_com@aub.edu.lb

If you missed the last issue of the FAFS Dean’s Updates, [click here](#).



T: +961-1-343002 | F: +961-1-744460

E: fafs@aub.edu.lb | W: www.aub.edu.lb/fafs | Fb: www.facebook.com/aub.fafs | T: www.twitter.com/aub_fafs