

December 12, 2020

Dear AUB Students,

Following up on [President Khuri's message](#) regarding the exchange rate adjustment at which students will be making tuition payments to AUB as of January 1, 2021, and in an effort to alleviate potential hardship on students and their families that may arise, provisions have been made for a substantial increase in the amount of need-based financial aid through the [Office of Admissions and Financial Aid](#).

The **financial aid budget will increase by over 20 million USD** in the coming spring term compared to the current fall term. This is a necessity and a priority as the financial needs of our students, particularly those from Lebanon, have grown dramatically in light of the multiple crises the country has been facing. Through this increase, we expect to assist over 60% of our most-deserving undergraduate students, so that as many students as possible can be helped to complete their degrees. This budget increase also includes notable support for medical and master's students.

It is our intention to distribute the additional financial aid funds in as fair a manner as possible given the rapidly changing realities, and we are looking at ways to make the process of submitting applications as smooth as possible, while still being able to carefully evaluate true financial need. We realize that there are many questions, including those about **how to apply to financial aid**, the documentation required, and the deadlines. To that end, we have created a set of [frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#) that provide answers, updates, and contact information. The deadline to submit financial aid applications and appeals has been extended to January 15, 2021.

I would also like to update you on the **academic calendar and online teaching plans for the coming winter session and spring term**. As it stands, the trajectory of the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) as well as the uncertainty about the wide availability of a vaccine and about the health conditions in different countries where our students currently reside present challenges for our planning.

The winter session 2021 and spring term 2021 will begin, as [scheduled](#), on Monday, December 21, 2020, and Thursday, January 21, 2021, respectively. The approach to instruction will be similar to that in fall 2020, with the **vast majority of courses being delivered fully online, at least until the end of February 2021**. At the same time, we will continue to plan in the hope and expectation of holding as many in-person activities as possible on campus to make your experience more engaging. Since your health and safety remain our top priorities, we will also continue to accommodate students whose personal or family circumstances prevent them from coming to campus for in-person activities throughout the spring term, except when programs have required major courses that mandate presence on campus (such as clinical rotations, field work, studios, etc.).

Your faculty/school deans are committed to ensuring that your online learning experiences are as enriching as possible under the current circumstances, and the issues associated with this mode of delivery that can cause anxiety are minimized. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have not only been physical, but have taken a mental toll on all of us, and we recognize our responsibilities to account for this fact as we engage in world-class higher education. For any questions or concerns, please reach out to your academic advisors and department chairpersons.

Thanks to your determination and tireless efforts, the fall term has been largely successful in the face of adversity. I wish you all the best for your final exams, and a restful, healthy, and peaceful end of year in the company of your families and loved ones.

Sincerely,

Z. Dawy
Interim Provost