A Message from the President

Dear AUK Community:

Welcome to the 2008–2009 academic year! We all look forward to a new and exciting year. Seventeen new faculty members have joined the University for the Fall 2008 semester and participated in the HR Faculty Orientation (24–25 August) and the general Fall 2008 Faculty and Staff Orientation on the 11th of September.

New faculty and staff have been adapting to the unfamiliar circumstances of Kuwait as well as to Ramadan. Ramadan, an Islamic Holy Month, is observed by fasting from sunrise to sunset. It is a special time where many Muslims offer extra prayers and donate more food and money to charity. AUK invited all staff and faculty to partake in celebrating this month with a traditional Ramadan Ghabga at the Hilton Resort on the 20th of September. Ghabga is a late-night meal that comes after the futoor (breaking of the fast) and before the suhoor (early morning meal before daybreak) during Ramadan. This is a Kuwaiti custom, not always found in other Arab countries.

Classes began during Ramadan on 21st September, and so class schedules have been adjusted in order to accommodate our fasting students, staff, and faculty. The University will adjourn for futoor at 5:00 PM and will resume operation at 7:30 PM. Please refer to the AUK Registrar webpage (http://www.auk.edu.kw/registrar/default.jsp) for more details regarding the Ramadan course schedule. Ramadan-oriented activities will take place as students return, and on-campus futoors will be held at the Ramadan Tent next to the Liberal Arts building and the soccer field. Campus Services and Student Affairs have worked hard to provide students with the logistics to celebrate Ramadan, including the new, permanent Student Lounge, located near Gate 2 of the AUK campus. Regular class schedule and office work hours will be in effect starting on Sunday, October 5th.

New and continuing employees need to know both their AUK colleagues and senior administrators. The President reports to the Board of Trustees who meet in Kuwait twice a year. The Board’s Executive Committee is closely involved in supervising AUK operations and Master Planning. The President is supported in major decision- and policy-making by the President’s Cabinet, a group of senior executives whose official duties and special expertise make them key contributors to the challenging task of steering AUK towards its goals. The group currently includes (in alphabetical order):

- Ms. Shareefa Al-Adwani, Assistant to the President (PC Recorder)
- Ms. Amal Al-Binali, Director, Public Relations & Marketing, Government Relations
- Ms. Margaret Combs, Director, Intensive English Program
- Mr. Ernest Conklin, Executive Director of Finance and Administration
- Dr. Nizar Hamzeh, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences
STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT:
The general faculty and staff session on September 11 included my PowerPoint presentation which summarized the Strategic Planning work done during the late spring and summer and outlined the timelines for the complete five-year plan and for AY 2008-2009. The presentation has been posted to the shared-drive folder X:\Strategic Planning (see “Strategic Planning Presentation” file dated 11092008). The early part of the presentation, focused on the AUK Vision, Objectives, and Goals, is also published in the previous issue of the AUK Chronicle (No. 9 for June 2008, http://www.auk.edu.kw/student_affairs/important_dates_publications.jsp). This and other earlier issues of AUK publications can also be found on the MyAUK portal (under the Life@AUK tab).

Please feel free to review the plan highlights and proposed dates; if you have comments or suggestions, please email them to your unit supervisor or to Dr. Patricia Read-Hunter at phunter@auk.edu.kw. For our planning efforts, the major challenges are to integrate organizational planning with academic planning and to integrate both these processes with budget planning. Each unit will determine their approach to plan development; by Sunday, October 12th, all units are expected to identify their liaison to the President’s office (unit supervisors will inform Dr. Patricia Read-Hunter). For Fall 2008, the major planning activities include:

- Unit plan consolidation and reconciliation
- Integration of unit strategic plans with budget planning
- Timeline for 2008-2013 developed for all unit plans
- Performance Indicators identified for all areas

The AUK Master Plan regarding the new AUK campus in Ardhiya has been approved by the Council for Private Universities, our national accreditation body. We will be working with the architectural design contractor during the course of this academic year. The Master Plan sketches can be viewed on the General shared drive X:\President’s Office\Ardhiya Campus Master Plan.

TRANSITIONS:
AUK currently hosts Dr. James Smalley, a Registrar consultant from AACRAO, who is assisting us in assessing Student Banner and the Registrar’s Office’s operational needs. We also welcome Damian Medina, the new Director of Student Life. Damian received his Master’s Degree in Student Affairs Administration in Higher Education (SAAHE) at Texas A&M University and has held positions at Barnard College and the University of South Florida. Jeanne Al-Failakawi is the new Acting Assistant Director of the Center for Continuing Education. Jeanne comes to us from the Salimiya Bilingual School, where she served as the Principal in charge of instruction, personnel management and organizational development; fiscal, administrative, and facilities management; student management; and community relations. Several staff employees have been promoted or reassigned, and we hired a few of our own graduates. Dartmouth College is represented on AUK campus this Fall by Evan Greulich, an intern in Student Affairs who will also be assisting in IEP. Evan, originally from Northbrook, Illinois, is a major in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies with a minor in History. This is his second visit to the Middle East.

Members of our continuing faculty have accepted new positions within AUK: Dr. Craig Loomis is now the Division Head of Humanities & Arts, joining an experienced group at the Dean’s Council. Dr. Hesham Al-Awadhi has accepted the Gulf Studies Center Directorship; Dr. Marjorie Kelly will continue as Coordinator of the Gulf Studies Program. Maryam Hosseinia is staying on at AUK as Assistant Professor and Program Lead of Graphic Design. New Program Leads are Dr. Amir Zeid for Computer Science and Information Systems and Dr. Roman Kulchitsky for International Studies. Dr. Rawda Awwad in the English program will be coordinating a generous grant from the U.S. Embassy in support of a new course involving U.S. faculty consultants and class videoconferencing. The project will involve students and faculty from programs in English, Communication, and International Studies. The United States Ambassador to Kuwait Deborah Jones visited the University on the 10th of September to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between AUK and the American Embassy’s Public Affairs section to renew cooperation on the American Corner in our Library. American Corner has been an important venue for visiting American speakers who meet with our students and faculty for informal discussions of current issues. An account of the event is available on the AUK website under “Latest News.”

During the first week of November, Dean Nizar Hamzeh and I will travel to the US to interview faculty job candidates in Washington D.C., where we will be joined by Dr. Dale Eickelman of Dartmouth. Please feel free to invite your colleagues at US universities, both qualified staffers and faculty, as well as Ph.D. students in appropriate fields, to check out the job vacancy list posted on the AUK Employment site (http://www.auk.edu.kw/employment/default.jsp).
The Emir of Kuwait passed his hand along an antique view of the Dartmouth campus, engraved in 1851 by Christian Meadows in Windsor, VT. Outside the palace it was 115°Fahrenheit which was, according to Provost Barry Scherr, “a little unusual for this New Englander.” Scherr had carried the engraving to Kuwait wrapped in Dartmouth Green silk specially prepared by Baker Library’s preservation services staff.

It was a rare audience with Kuwait’s ruler, occasioned by the renewal, until 2013, of Dartmouth’s advisory agreement with the American University of Kuwait (AUK), the Persian Gulf nation’s first private liberal arts university. Scherr was in Kuwait to publicly sign the renewal agreement, attend a meeting of the university’s board of trustees, and address graduating seniors in AUK’s Class of 2008.

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Dartmouth and AUK began working together in 2003 under the terms of an agreement that allows Dartmouth to play an advisory role in helping to build the new university. In the past five years the two institutions have developed a flourishing relationship that involves faculty, students, and staff.

“Higher education in the Middle East and North Africa is one of my central academic interests,” he said. “So when the opportunity arose to participate in advising a new university in Kuwait—one that would have a special relationship to Dartmouth—I jumped at the chance.”

Kuwait is in the vanguard of Middle Eastern nations embarking on bold experiments in higher education. Its partnership with Dartmouth stands out as an unusual and distinctive model. Unlike universities establishing branch campuses in the region, AUK is an “indigenous” institution, founded by Kuwaitis and governed by a board of trustees comprised principally of Kuwaiti citizens.

“At Dartmouth, and at AUK, we recognize that higher education knows no national boundaries,” said Scherr at a press event where the signing of the agreement took place, “and we understand how important it is to prepare students to deal with the issues of a global society.”

“We admire Dartmouth’s commitment to the liberal arts and want to emulate that in our own country,” said Sheikha Dana Nasser Al-Sabah, chairwoman of the AUK Board of Trustees, “and we look forward to a deepening partnership with our friends in New Hampshire.”

Scherr paid special tribute to one of those friends, Dale Eickelman, The Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Human Relations at Dartmouth. Eickelman was instrumental in preparing the original agreement and serves as Relationship Coordinator for the two institutions. “Higher education in the Middle East and North Africa is one of my central academic interests,” he said. “So when the opportunity arose to participate in advising a new university in Kuwait—one that would have a special relationship to Dartmouth—I jumped at the chance.”

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“The Dartmouth-AUK Project has created opportunities for a significant number of students, faculty, and administrators to participate in this important international development,” said Eickelman, who also
oversees an internship program that sends Dartmouth students to AUK and brings AUK students to the U.S. John Fine ’09 became a part of the process during his spring internship at AUK, which coincided with parliamentary elections in Kuwait. “I got a fascinating look at the political behavior of Kuwaiti young people,” he said. “Even students who weren’t old enough to vote found ways to engage.” In at least two cases, AUK internships have put students on the path to advanced research. Hema Mohan and Jennifer Krimm, both ’06s, won Fulbright scholarships to pursue research in the Gulf based on work they had done at AUK.

A few days after his visit with the Emir, Scherr spoke to AUK’s graduating seniors, presiding over a ceremony not unlike the one taking place 6,000 miles away in Hanover.

“Just as spheres of knowledge are no longer self-contained, nations are no longer fully independent of each other,” Scherr told the graduates. Noting that the critical thinking skills they had gained in their four years at AUK would be key to their participation in a complex global society, Scherr added, “You occupy a special place in the history of this new university, and in years to come, will be honored for the legacy you will surely create.”

By: LAUREL STAVIS
(Executive Director of the Dartmouth-AUK Project)

Dartmouth Intern at AUK (Fall 2008):
Evan Greulich

Interviewed by: CHRISTINA MANASSA
(Intern, PR & Marketing Department-AUK)

AUK welcomes the 8th student intern from Dartmouth College, Evan Greulich. From Northbrook, Illinois, Evan has joined AUK holding a degree in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies with a minor in History studies. Remarkably, it is not Evans’ primary experience in the Middle East, as he has previously visited the Arab World with a keen interest in learning Arabic through the ‘Arabic Language Study Abroad Program’ in the summer of 2007.

Since the birth of AUK in 2003, Dartmouth has exchanged over seven students to model as interns with intentions of strengthening the mutual bond between the two institutions, allowing the diverse cultural channels to integrate and teach our students more about our fellow partners. As Evans’ passion for Arabic has flourished, we have learnt that during the winter term of 2008, he has taken the inventiveness of teaching it to beginner students at AUK. We have asked Evan a few questions about his stay with us at AUK:

Why did you choose to intern here at the American University of Kuwait?

I was initially interested in coming to AUK this fall because last winter I knew I wanted to work in the Middle East, but not take classes at any university. My friend and former Arabic TA Weston Sager, who was an intern here Fall 2007, really encouraged me to apply for this internship. His enthusiasm for AUK was obvious, and I became intrigued with this institution. After applying and luckily getting accepted, I became more excited about living in Kuwait. I believe AUK’s niche as a growing, developing liberal arts university places it in a quite unique situation in the Middle East. So far I have certainly found an energy and passion for learning here, and I look forward to contributing to AUK’s growth over the next ten weeks.

“I am attracted to the order and logic of the language [Arabic]. But I love how the structure is intertwined with creativity, and how the sounds and letters flow together.”
What attracts you most and keeps you motivated into learning the Arabic language? 

I am certainly not a language person, so many people ask me why I would ever choose to study Arabic—which is almost as hard as English to master. Initially I often wondered why I chose to continue studying it, but I guess you could say that now I have ‘fallen in love with it.’ I am attracted to the order and logic of the language. But I love how the structure is intertwined with creativity how the sounds and letters flow together. I also love communicating with many types of people, and knowing Arabic opens up many opportunities for me.

What would you tell your friends and professors back at Dartmouth about your experience so far?

I can't wait for the students to meet and interact with AUK students. Other than that, I am still getting adjusted to life in Kuwait and my work here at AUK, but I’ve enjoyed my time so far.

Now that you are working as an intern in the Office of Student Life, the Student Success Center, and the Intensive English Program, what would be your goals here?

In the Intensive English Program, I want to get to know my students well and really improve their English while stirring a passion for reading in them. At the Student Success Center I will primarily be working in Career Services, but I hope to provide effective and meaningful guidance for any AUK students I interact with there. I’m also looking forward to the Health Fair in early November. In the Office of Student Life, I hope to expand student organizations and students’ extracurricular involvements. I want more students to find their ‘niche’ in an organization on campus and feel truly involved in campus life at AUK. Throughout my time here, my goal is to have a significant impact on students’ education outside of the classroom.

Do you see yourself working in Kuwait or anywhere else in the Middle-East in the future? If so, could you tell me a bit about how you would see yourself?

I can definitely see myself working in Kuwait, the Gulf, or other places in the Middle East in the future—I will certainly have to do that if I want to become fluent in Arabic. In general, I do not like to look ahead more than a year or two in my life, so I won’t speculate about specific professions 5 or 10 years from now or my ‘career.’ However, I do see myself working in the Middle East to help make progressive and meaningful changes in the lives of people.
The president then introduced the Keynote Speaker, Dr. Barry Scherr, Provost of Dartmouth College. Provost Scherr extended his heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students, to their parents, to the professors and administrators at American University of Kuwait, and to the distinguished members of the University’s Board of Trustees, as the institution celebrates the first class to have completed a full four-year course of study at this still young university. “Dartmouth is proud” he said “to have assisted AUK since 2003 through advisory and consultative projects that help further an awareness of liberal arts education here in Kuwait and throughout the Arabian Peninsula.”

Student Keynote Speaker and Valedictorian, Razan Sharaf, rose to the podium to deliver her speech. Miss Sharaf completed the Bachelor’s of Business Administration in Management and earned the highest cumulative grade point average of this graduating class. Research, and participated in various athletic teams. She served her fellow students as a tutor and Peer Academic Leader, and served the community as translator and language instructor for children. Razan plans to pursue an MBA degree.

The end of the ceremony was marked by the traditional cutting of the Class of 2008 cake and professional photography was provided for all graduates, their families and friends.
U.S. Ambassador and AUK Sign the American Corner Memorandum of Understanding

On September 10th, the Embassy of the United States of America in Kuwait, represented by Ambassador Deborah K. Jones and the American University of Kuwait (AUK) represented by Dr. Marina Tolmacheva, signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the operation of an American Corner located in the library at AUK. To date, the American Embassy has established American Corners in Kuwait at the American University of Kuwait, Kuwait University, and the Gulf University of Science and Technology.

The American Corner offers opportunities to serve the public by providing information and speakers on a variety of topics. The American University of Kuwait now has Digital Video Conferencing (DVC) capability which enables AUK faculty and students to bring experts from the United States and all over the world into their own classrooms for live interactions and discussions on education, history and politics. Last spring, over eighty students participated in a DVC on primary election campaigns in the United States with an American academic expert.

The Embassy’s Public Affairs Section and the American Corner provide a wealth of information through extensive databases, books, articles, speakers from the U.S. and the local American community, on a range of topics about American society, history and policies. The American University of Kuwait, founded in 2003, offers a learning environment based on the American model of higher education. It is dedicated to enhancing student’s knowledge, self-awareness, and personal growth experiences that can strengthen critical thinking, effective communication, and respect for diversity.

2008 Annual Dinner

Earlier this year, on Monday 5th of May 2008, the Annual Dinner for AUK took place at the Sheikha Salwa Ballroom organized by the Human Resources Department. The HR team presented awards for employees who completed five years of service to AUK.

The event commenced with musical selections by Mohammad Khayat followed by an introduction from the President, Dr. Marina Tolmacheva. Amer El-Assaad (Senior Coordinator for Publications & Design) then gave a brief but personal speech about the History of AUK on the opening of the university in 2003, with a line dedicated to each awardee. The speech also included a seven minute presentation of AUK in pictures of the birth of AUK. The Five Year Service Awardees included:

- Norma Badran: Assistant Director, HR Logistics
- Ashoor Moussa: HR Assistant
- Sarathy Varadharajan: Senior Accountant
- Amal Al-Binali: Director, PR & Marketing
- Noushig Momdjian: Registrar Coordinator
- Randa Ibrahim: Senior Accountant
- Farah Al-Nakib: Director of Admissions (Former)
- Nawaj Pradania: Office Facilitator
- Abdulrahim Aman Ullah: Office Facilitator
- Ahmed Baqheri: HR Assistant
- Misbah Jumma: Campus Security Guard
- Amer El-Assaad: Sr. Coord. for Publications & Design
- Dalia Hassaan: Faculty Support Coordinator
- Mazin Younes: Senior Coordinator, Campus Services
- Zavier Prem Kumar: Director, Finance

Entertainment at the dinner included various student musical performances which included the AUK Rock Band Club, Guitar Solo by Hadi Sarieddine and a piece from Beethoven by Musaad Al-Qashem. In addition, exciting raffle draws took place throughout the evening. Winners received gifts from the following vendors: Wataniya Telecom, Arabian Business Machines, Al-Babtain Group, AUK Human Resources Department, AUK Diner, Crowne Plaza Hotel and Kapico Travel Agency.
**Hamlet in New York**

Christopher Gottschalk, Assistant Professor of Humanities (Theatre & Drama) had the great fortune to play the title role in Gorilla Repertory Theater Company’s production of William Shakespeare’s Hamlet this summer, in New York City.

In keeping with Gorilla Rep’s long established production style, the play was staged ‘environmentally’ outdoors on the Cloister’s Lawn in Fort Tryon Park on the upper end of Manhattan. Eschewing conventional theater practice of acting on a static stage while the audience remains seated in chairs, the ‘environmental’ staging of Hamlet placed the various scenes of the play at different locations around the perimeter of the lawn while encouraging audience members to follow the action from scene to scene, running from place to place alongside the actors.

Hamlet ran for four weeks; opening August 7th and closing August 31st for a total of sixteen performances. Admission was free and by the final week not an empty spot could be found on the lawn given the large number of audience members that had made the trek uptown to see this unique production of Shakespeare’s classic. Excitement was added to the production as the text was presented entirely uncut and without intermission. Fast and furious, the average running time of the show each night was approximately two hours and forty minutes.

Professor Gottschalk’s performance received outstanding critical attention from various media sources, including the prestigious New York Times. Below are a few excerpts from several reviews:

> “Christopher Gottschalk deserves many kudos for undertaking the immense task of performing the unexpurgated Dane outside. And he succeeds on many levels... His Hamlet is a young energetic student who may just very well be a little crazy. It is always a pleasure to watch him.”  
> **NYTheatre.com**, August 9th, 2008

> “Christopher Gottschalk’s Hamlet is more clearly demarcated madman ‘north-northwest’ whose grief continually shares company with his anger, an interpretation that reminds the audience of the Prince’s relative youth despite theatrical tradition.”
> **EDGE Boston**, August 12th, 2008

> “...a simple, accessible, and easily enjoyed version of Hamlet, with the animated and likeable Christopher Gottschalk in the lead.”
> **Backstage**, August 28th, 2008

> “And what of Mr. Gottschalk’s Hamlet? He was a dynamic anchor, whose rapid delivery was initially disconcerting, the words sacrificed to emotion. But the approach proved to be shrewd, and soon enough the lines emerged. This prince was no sullen depressive; from the get-go he was feverish, almost desperate, inklings of madness ever at hand. His fire cut through the occasional distractions—passing car or plane—and kept the narrative pumping. Though Mr. Gottschalk’s performance towered above his co-stars’, he raised the bar for everyone.”

Professor Gottschalk returns this fall to AUK to resume teaching Drama courses offered under the Humanities Division within the College of Arts and Sciences. He is also currently developing an all-female adaptation of Euripides’ Trojan Women and hopes to direct it with AUK students during the latter half of the Fall 2008 Semester.

**Interview: Dr. Hesham Al-Awadi**

**Interviewed by: CHRISTINA MANASSA (Intern, PR & Marketing Department-AUK)**

AUK would like to welcome Dr. Hesham Al-Awadi, Assistant Professor of History and International Studies at AUK, as the new Director of the Gulf Studies Center. The Center aims to promote dialogue and understanding between Gulf countries and the West. Dr. Hesham has kindly given us some time to answer a few questions about the Gulf
Studies Center, its future plans and activities it aims to provide for the students and the local community of AUK.

To begin with could you tell us a little bit about yourself; where you studied and your motivation for being at the American University of Kuwait?

I was born in Kuwait and educated in the United Kingdom. I completed my BA at Guildhall University, MA at Kent University, MPhil at Cambridge University and PhD at Exeter University in the field of Middle Eastern Politics and History. I taught BA and MA Middle East studies at Exeter University 2001-2003. I joined AUK in 2005.

Motivation:
Although I spent most of my education period at the UK, there was a point where I had to go back to my home country, Kuwait. However, I was eager not to lose the educational and work experience I accumulated during my stay abroad. When AUK was inaugurated, I thought this was the only learning institution in Kuwait I could join, and still feel I could build on my experience. Also, I wanted to utilize whatever I have learned and pass on to the students in Kuwait.

Now that you are Director of the Gulf Studies Center, what are your plans for the Center?

I believe that there are great opportunities for the Gulf Studies Center at AUK. After the gulf war in 1991, and more so after 9/11 there has been an increased international interest in the Gulf region; its politics, geopolitics, economics and culture. The region itself, and the people who live in it are going through important changes. I strongly believe that these new international and regional contexts, a center like this has great potential to play a significant role in the coming period.

My plans, which are too early to articulate in details at this stage, are basically inspired and informed by this general awareness. I would like to see the center facilitate greater encounters of dialogue and mutual understanding between the East and the West, Americans and people and elites of the region. And this I believe could be achieved in so many ways.

Could there be any setback or negative aspects in any of the forthcoming plans?

I do not immediate negative aspects in general plans to facilitate dialogue and understanding, except perhaps the normal challenges that these plans encounter at the beginning.

You need to remember that the Center is new, and there is a long way ahead of it to establish itself regionally and internationally. Issues like funding, resources and support from within and outside university will play a vital factor in determining how the success of these plans.

What will the new Center provide for our students and for the community? And in what ways will it be beneficial for local and international students?

AUK Students:
I would like the Gulf Studies Center to be an active and attractive center for the students, through its activities including public lectures and academic teaching programs. I would like to contribute to the students’ awareness of their unique position in the region, and the role they could play in contributing to the mission of the center.

I had one student asking me if he could volunteer in the activities of the Center. I was so glad that he thought he could put his time and effort in the Center. I hope that the Center inspire in students at AUK such an enthusiasm.

I have the desire to contribute to the growth of the center in this new age of major world and regional developments, and to make relevant and attuned to these changes.

Community:
The Center hopes to engage the wider community through various activities, most importantly are the public lectures. These lectures will be academic in nature but at the same time address political and social issues in Kuwait or the Gulf. This is one way to get the media’s attention and guarantee full coverage of our events, and thus wider exposure to the community.

International Students:
As I mentioned earlier, there is a growing international interest in the Kuwait and the Gulf region in general. The Gulf Studies Center could be a vital learning and cultural institution in this context. Most importantly, it could support Fulbright students working on the region with research material, and facilitate cultural understanding.

Also, since there has been an expansion to the courses offered at AUK on Kuwait and the Gulf, I am hoping this will encourage international students (particularly from the United States), to study these and other courses.
What is your drive and purpose now that you have become Director of the Gulf Studies Center? *(Students, Educational and Cultural Diversity)*

As I said, I have a desire to contribute to the growth of the Center in this new age of major world and regional developments, and to make relevant and attuned to these changes.

Two new courses have this year been introduced HIST211 (Survey of the Gulf) and a core course HIST101 History and Politics of Kuwait. Although these are new courses, they have proven to be extremely popular with students who want to learn about their country and the region.

I have also contributed to expanding the library collection of literature on the Gulf, both in English and in Arabic. I am hoping that the various resources will be a great asset for researchers, and for our students at large.

One of the potential ideas to facilitate an awareness of cultural diversity in the region is to organize an exhibition on the various cultural expressions of the different Gulf countries (food, dress, lifestyles etc.), and organize field and tourist trips (for students and faculty) to the Gulf countries.

Dr. Mohsen Baghned, Professor of the Business and Economics at the American University of Kuwait participated in the World Islam Forum which was held at Bayan Palace late spring of 2008. During the summer month of July, Professor Baghned presented a seminar on the Kuwaiti Economy – ‘Present and Future’ to the Kuwait National Guard at their headquarters in Kuwait City. Professor Baghned was also interviewed on a new Kuwait Television Station, on new marketing practices in Kuwait, and their ethical implications. Professor Baghned also developed twenty new executive training programs for the Center of Continuing Education at the American University of Kuwait.

Later in August, Professor Baghned had two joint publications with faculty members from Hofstra University in New York on Entrepreneurship and Family Business in Kuwait. These were: “First-Generation and Subsequent-Generation Family Business in Kuwait: An ANOVA Study”, and “The Use of Non-Family-Member Managers in Family Business and Management Activities, Styles and Characteristics: An Empirical Kuwait Study. These two papers were accepted for presentation, and publication in the proceedings at the Annual Eastern Conference of the US Small Business Institute.

Dr. Jeremy Cripps, Division Head of Business & Economics at the American University of Kuwait has been in New Orleans successfully training to become an ACBSP accreditor. Professor Cripps also made a presentation to the 2008 Annual Conference of the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs, entitled “Growth and Regrowth: AUK 2004 - 2008,” which was well received. Professor Cripps also spent time with Live text and Interwrite, Learning PRS computer systems learning about classroom technology which AUK plans to test in 2008.

Cripps has also expressed his joy for the interns from AUK of 2008, who have continued their global expansion, resulting in an increase in the number of students working abroad as international interns.

Students worked at banks in Bahrain, Social services in Dubai, Mercedes Benz in Stuttgart, and financial institutions in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. AUK interns in Kuwait have continued to make inroads into the private sector and demonstrate their extraordinary potential to contribute to the commercial enterprises that very generously provided these practical experiences for them. The interns have written weekly journals which expressed their gratitude and emphasized the importance of learning the theoretical work in class as it makes a significant impact, once faced with the working world. This year our AUK interns continue to be excellent ambassadors for the university. Without exception, the contributions they have made to the businesses where they worked at, received compliments and respect. Many have already been hired, whilst others have a position waiting for them for when they graduate. The internship faculty is exceptionally proud of this year’s student interns and congratulates them on the honor they have brought to the university.

In addition, Professor Ahmad presented a paper on April 12th, 2008 at a symposium about Language and Society (SALSA-XVI) held at the University of Texas at Austin. The paper is titled “Complex Indexicality of Urdu in India”

Dr. Simon O’Meara, Assistant Professor of the History of Art has been awarded “honorable mention” in the annual academic book prize awarded by The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies (BRISMES) for his book, Space and Muslim Urban Life: At the Limits of the Labyrinth of Fez (London: Routledge, 2007). The judges said: “In this short but packed book Simon O’ Meara brings, in the words of the reviewer, ‘a new depth and sophistication’ to the literature on the Islamic city. In an examination showing intimate on-the-spot knowledge, he homes in on space rather than monuments to interpret pre-modern Fez not as a UNESCO World Heritage site but as a machine for living. He assembles an impressive body of legal data to explain the purpose of the many walls that subdivide Fez, with far-reaching implications for the study of other Islamic cities.”

Information About The Prize:
BRISMES administers the British-Kuwait Friendship Society Prize in Middle Eastern Studies. This was founded thanks to an endowment of the Abdullah Mubarak Charitable Foundation. The prize is awarded for the best scholarly work on the Middle East each year.

AUK Participates in the Saudi Janadriya Festival

Dr. Lisa Urkevich, Assistant Professor of Music, and five AUK students were invited as distinguished guests of the Saudi government to participate in cultural research during the women’s days of the Saudi Janadriya Festival (March 17th-20th). The students, who are part of a class that studies Arabian culture, excel academically and are noted for their dedication to Arabian Heritage; they were chosen from hundreds to receive this special grant.

The annual Janadriya Heritage Festival is a two week cultural event featuring artisans, food, costumes, wedding rituals, and traditional music and dance of the Kingdom. The last few days of the festival are dedicated exclusively to women. During this time, the AUK students were taken behind the scenes to interview the craftspeople and artists and get a glimpse of traditional customs rarely seen. Remote regions of Saudi Arabia, including the isolated mountains of Hijaz, were especially intriguing. As Journalism major Shomoukh Al-Mesaid recalled, “I was fascinated by so much rich tradition that I had never seen before.”

Students were especially pleased to meet many different people from such a large country. Junior at AUK, Dalal Al Sabah described her experience:

“I not only had a chance to experience the different cultures of Saudi Arabia, I also made a lot of friends from the various regions who added so many perspectives and personalized the culture we were viewing.”

Although before departing Kuwait, the students had extensively studied Saudi culture, the experience of being with the Saudi women and sharing their heritage was invaluable.

Shahed Al-Tammar noted that “attending the Janadriya festival was truly a remarkable experience. It has revived and strengthened my cultural heritage and ethnic background. I was honored to be among the chosen ones, for this trip was a magnificent learning experience about the profound culture of our neighboring country, Saudi Arabia.”
“Janadriya was an enriching cultural exchange extravaganza” added AUK senior Noufa Al-Sabah.

Accounting major, Nada Al Yahia called it “a memorable experience that took us back into exploring the wonders of ancient Saudi Arabia.”

Dr. Urkevich was delighted by the success of the trip:

“I am thrilled with all that our students learned during this Study Abroad class. We are fortunate to have such good friends in the Saudi Embassy and Ambassador Abdul Aziz Alfayz and Dr. Saleh Al Sagri, who worked so hard to facilitate this visit. This Saudi-Kuwaiti union is a great success, and I am proud of our students and the way they represented AUK and Kuwait.”

Dr. Christopher Ohan, Assistant Professor of History at the American University of Kuwait is one of twelve participants working on an aspect related to Franciscan Studies. The specific research Professor Ohan will be responsible for a comparative examination of Franciscan and Sufi Spirituality in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In fact, it is being run by a national Endowment for Humanities (US) Summer Seminar Grant called “St. Francis of Assisi and the Thirteenth Century”

Over the course of six weeks, the researchers will be working in several major Franciscan archives and libraries in Rome, where Professor Ohan is currently staying for the course of this project. To be exact, Professor Ohan is lodging at a monastery which holds the largest collection of works related to the Franciscans: Biblioteca Centrale Cappuccini. The team will also travel to Siena and work in the Archivio di Sato, Florence to work in the Kunsthistorisches Institute and then finally to Assisi where the Franciscan Order maintains its archive at the Sacro Convento. In addition to studying the written text, the evolution of religious iconography related to the Franciscans in the thirteenth century will be examined in depth.

On a historical note, St. Francis of Assisi did have contacts with Sufis. In 1219-20 he met Melek Al-Kamil (the nephew of Saladin and a Sufi) in Damietta, Egypt. Despite the fact that many Franciscans who traveled to Muslim held lands were killed when they tried to preach, Melek spent several days in discussion with Francis before Francis was allowed to return to Italy. Professor Cripps told us his opinion: “My contention is that the tolerant and spiritual nature of Sufism characterized Melek’s treatment of Francis”. Because of this contact between Franciscans and Muslims, most of the archives and libraries Professor Christopher intends on visiting have documents relating to the Sufi movement during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Professor Ohans’ specific field is the actual ‘Franciscan History’ and more specifically the movement’s influence on late thirteenth and fourteenth century Italian art. This religious comparison will be a new direction for Ohan and a very provocative one.

Greetings from the Monastery in Rome: “Pax et Bonum” translated as “Peace and Goodwill”!

New Professionals Institute 2008, New Orleans

Fatema Hayat, Coordinator of Student Activities (Student Life), was one of a few to receive a scholarship and represent AUK at the 2008 New Professionals Institute at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. This prestigious honor came because of a nomination by Dr. Carol Ross to the NASPA Region III Team. The New Professionals Institute (NPI) is geared toward professionals who have been in the field for less than five years and graduate students getting ready for their first full-time position. NPI offers the opportunity to meet other new professionals, interact with veteran professionals, and gain knowledge about the field of student affairs.

Fatema Hayat had the great privilege to be amongst 51 participants selected from various universities of the southern states of America to attend NPI. Other
attendees to NPI were 6 distinguished Vice Presidents for Student Affairs (VPSAs) whose roles as faculty members and mentors facilitated more than five informative workshop sessions and mentored smaller discussion groups.

During the 5 day conference, the faculty members instructed all participants in areas such as life/work balance, leadership, and supervision, budget and career paths. Other than developing knowledge in several important areas of the profession, the sessions were also filled with life lessons, exercises, activities and laughs. Every evening, all groups would meet with their mentor for discussions on the day’s activities and be able to talk about personal and professional concerns or ask for advice.

Dr. Gage Paine, VPSA at the University of Texas at San Antonio and Director of NPI, Dr. Brit Katz VPSA and Dean of Students at Millsaps College, Dawn Watkins VPSA and Dean of Students at Washington & Lee University, Dr. Kevin Rome VPSA at Morehouse College, Dr. Mark J. Warner Senior VPSA at James Madison and Dr. Gene Zdziarski, II VPSA at University of Florida were the 7 incredible faculty members and mentors that enriched the professional and personal life of Fatema Hayat and all attendees. Their positive spirit, sense of humor and unselfishness made each session a unique experience for learning.

NPI was a great experience where Fatema Hayat was able to learn more about the field of Student Affairs from an amazing group of seasoned professionals and from new professionals like herself. It was a journey of learning that will not be forgotten and the knowledge gain is one Fatema Hayat will bring back and use to further progress Student Affairs at AUK.
MEET THE I.T. STAFF:

The IT department is headed by Ms. Maha Khlat (ext. 266) is divided into the following specialized units:

1) IT Technical Support Unit:

Headed by Ms. Zeina Itani, IT Support Unit Administrator (ext. 132), the unit handles end-user support, H/W and S/W troubleshooting, software deployment, supervision and follow-up on helpdesk requests and follow-up with suppliers regarding repairs and maintenance issues.

The IT technical support team consists of:
- Mr. Mohammed Mahussai (ext. 125)
- Mr. Ali Asghar Kutbuddin (ext. 110)
- Mr. Ali Akbar Bedawala (ext. 126)

2) IT Systems Unit:

Mr. Jean Barakat, System Administrator (ext. 225), has recently joined AUK in July 2008. Jean handles the configuration, implementation, and maintenance of the IT systems infrastructure, servers and services such as the email service, data storage, and data backup.

Mr. Hossam Omar, Senior IT Technical Support (ext. 120), who follows-up on systems-related end-user issues in addition to handling network-related problems.

3) IT Database Unit:

Mr. Hussein Diab, Database Administrator (ext. 122) – handles databases maintenance, monitors and optimizes their performance and ensures their integrity and quality.

Ms. Fatma Abou Talaf, System Information Analyst (ext. 128) - assists the database administrator in addition to working with the users to identify possible enhancements to the system and developing customized modules, reports and applications. Fatma also handles the AUK Portal System Administration.

Mr. Nabegh Al Thalji, IT Application Developer (ext. 133) - performs a variety of programming and data processing requirements. Nabegh develops, maintains and modifies programs, scripts and queries as per the requirements of the various departments.

4) IT Multimedia Unit:

Mr. Nezam Hamzeh, Multimedia Applications Expert (ext. 464) – handles the management of all multimedia resources (H/W & S/W), provides assistance as required to faculty members and staff in developing professional presentations utilizing multimedia tools.

Mr. Munawwar Al Mullaji, Multimedia Equipment Technician (ext. 467) – who has also joined AUK in July 2008. Munawwar maintains multimedia equipment and troubleshoots any related issues.

The multimedia unit also provides support to events on campus with regards to monitoring the functioning of audio and video systems.

Office management and administrative assistance are provided Ms. Carla Saliba (ext. 129)
HUMAN RESOURCES NEWS

NEW STAFF & FACULTY

**JUNE 2008**

Magdalene Al-Neaman, Administrative Assistant, Division of Sciences & Engineering

Hania Mahassen, Assistant Professor of Math, Division of Sciences and Engineering

**JULY 2008**

Munawar Mullaji, Multimedia Equip. Technician, IT Dept.

Mohammed Hanas Cader, Assistant Professor of Economics, Division of Business and Economics

**AUGUST 2008**

James Smalley, Registrar Consultant, Office of the Registrar

Jean Barakat, IT Systems Administrator, IT Dept.

Saad Al-Omari, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies, Division of Sciences and Engineering.

**SEPTEMBER 2008**

Suzan Ghattas, Registrar Coordinator (Transcript Evaluator), Office of the Registrar

Andrew Johnson, Instructor, Intensive English Program

Yvonne Johnson, Instructor, Intensive English Program

Mohammed Da’na, Registrar Coordinator (Student Reg. Services), Office of the Registrar

Andrei Zavaliy, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Division of Humanities and Arts

**NEW STAFF & FACULTY**

Hala Al-Abdulrazzaq, Academic Advisor, Student Success Center

Alidad Affrassiabi, Teaching Assistant, Division of Sciences

Robert J. Ritchie, Visiting Associate Professor of Business Law & Finance, Division of Business and Economics

Angie Ibrahim, HR Specialist (Recruitment & Training), Human Resources Dept.

Malini Mittal, Adjunct Instructor, Division of Social Sciences

Hadeer Mathews, Administrative Assistant, Division of Humanities & Arts

Naser Al-Khaliedi, Assistant Professor of Accounting, Division of Business and Economics

**NEW STAFF & FACULTY**

Ahlam Mohammed Alaki, Assistant Professor English, Division of Humanities and Arts

Marisa Tessier, Instructor, Intensive English Program

Gholamreza Vatandoust, Visiting Association Professor of History, Division of Social Sciences

Naser Al-Khaliedi, Assistant Professor of Accounting, Division of Business and Economics

Malini Mittal, Adjunct Instructor, Division of Social Sciences

Hadeer Mathews, Administrative Assistant, Division of Humanities & Arts
PROMOTIONS

JUNE 2008
Amer Al-Assaad, Senior Publications Planning & Design, PR & Marketing Dept.

Eman Kamel, Senior Admissions Counselor, Office of Admissions

INTERNAL TRANSFERS

JULY 2008
Mishaal Hamdo (HR Residential Services & Design, Human Resources Dept.

AUGUST 2008
Dalal Al Hubail, Customer Service Representative, Center for Continuing Education

SEPTEMBER 2008
Waheeda Mohamed, Counselor (Full Time), Student Success Center

NEW APPOINTMENTS

JUNE 2008
James McDougall, Program Coordinator, The Writing Center

Craig Loomis, Division Head, Division of Humanities and Arts,

AUGUST 2008
Maryam Hossienia, Assistant Professor Graphic Design, Division of Humanities and Arts

TITLE CHANGE

JUNE 2008
Ashoor Moussa, Senior HR Assistant, Human Resources Dept.

Pareen Tajani, Operations and Services Coordinator, Center for Continuing Education

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER 2008
1-4 W-Sa Eid Al-Fitr starts. University closed
5 Su Class Resume

NOVEMBER 2008
12 W Last day of 1st Block
13 Th Midterm grades for Fall semester courses due via AUK Self Service by 11:59 PM
16 Su Midterm grades for Fall semester courses a vailable to students via AUK Self-Service effective 12:01 PM
16 Su 2nd Block courses begins
17 M 1st Block final grades due via AUK Self Service by 11:59 PM
20 Th 1st Block final grades available to students via AUK Self-Service effective 12:00 PM
2nd Block Drop/Add deadline

EDITOR’S Notes...

Dear colleagues,

Please email all future submissions for subsequent issues of the AUKChronicle to fkhamis@auk.edu.kw.

An archive of past issues of the AUKChronicle is available on the university website (http://www.auk.edu.kw/about_auk/uni_publications) and the MyAUK (university portal).

While every effort was made to ensure that all content is accurate and up-to-date, some information may have changed between the content submissions and the publishing of this issue.
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