

# GET OUT THE VOTE

## SGA Election Coverage on pages 3, 4 and 8

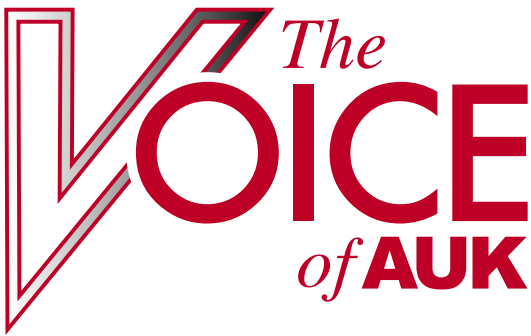
AUK Health Clinic

Open for minor medical attention

Located in the Admission Building  
next to the Library

Morning shift From 9.00 – 1.00

Night shift From 4.30 – 9.00



Volume 2, Issue 4

The Official Student Newspaper of the American University of Kuwait

April, 2006

## AUK Participates in Educare Expo

By Sara al-Farhan

The Education & Career Development Exhibition Educare Expo was hosted in Hall number 8 at the Mishref International Fair Grounds, March 13 – 16. On display were numerous institutions and organizations that are involved in educational development here in Kuwait, including representatives of foreign embassies and Kuwait's Ministry of Higher Education.

Out of the 64 participants at the exhibition, AUK constructed a prominent booth that was manned by student workers and faculty throughout the duration of the event. The student workers commented that a larger turnout was expected, and that



AUK Dean and acting president Marina Tolmacheva with Kuwait Minister of Education Adel al-Tabtabaei.

people had anticipated the presence of more universities and colleges. The local universities represented included AUK, the

Australian College of Kuwait and Kuwait University. The rest of the exhibitors were either training institutes or foreign

colleges. According to the manager of the exhibition, Mohammed Ahmed al-Gharaballi, the foreign countries represented

Photo by: Fama Khamis © 2006 AUK PR & Marketing Department

were the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, the United States, Canada, France, Cyprus and the United Kingdom.

In terms of competition, some institutes were attracting more attention than others. AUK's seemed to be one of the popular booths as people were mainly drawn to its victorious sports teams. Many, however, inquired whether AUK offered degrees in the sciences or engineering, also asking if the university had any plans on moving to a new campus any time soon.

In general, the interest shown towards AUK at the expo is an auspicious sign for this growing community, helping to spread recognition of what AUK has to offer for future students.

## AUK Honors Internship Partners

By Daniya Alam

In honor of the companies which sponsored AUK's Internship program last year, AUK held a luncheon on Sunday afternoon, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006, in the multipurpose room. Of many of the faculty and staff members, Dean Marina Tolmacheva, Dean Carol Ross-Black, Dr. Jeremy Cripps, and Joanne Hands—who organized the lunch—were present.

Sponsor companies included the Kuwait Times, the Daily Star, Global Investment, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, MTC and NBK.

continued on page 2

## I Pay; I Destroy: Vandalism at AUK

By Mona Kareem

Stealing mouses, burning cables, destroying keyboards, and breaking headphones: is this happening at AUK?

Vandalism at AUK should be considered as a serious issue. Students in the labs and classes destroy the technological tools and computers. The employees in the IT department could tell you very strange stories that you can't analyze, nor their causes. None of them believe that a student could destroy something by mistake; none of them have seen a student come to IT to apologize for destroying something by mistake.

All students pay each course for using the technological tools and computers, so they think they have the right to do whatever they want. The idea of money controls the students and pushes them to feel relief, even though they may have done something against public ethics. "It actually depends on the cultural background of each student" That's what the IT employees believe is the only explanation for this phenomenon.

Mr. Ahed Okasha, AUK's Director of IT, mentioned that AUK faces more than just vandalized computers. There are many cases of vandalism, some of which could involve harming

the server, stealing the memory or the cases. There have been cases of cutting the cables of projectors just to cancel the classes. In other cases, students apparently do these things because they get pleasure from it.



Virtually brand new computer headsets destroyed by vandals.

Also, Mr. Okasha feels happy because the new policy limits the situation. It makes the university open from 8 am to 8 pm, so that no one can turn the labs into Internet cafés at the end of day. He refuses to accept that students have the right to do whatever they want with the computers or other things simply because they are paying. That's such a false idea because students are paying for the use of computers, not for owning them.

Mr. Okasha told this writer about a situation that happened at AUK as an example. There were three students who were caught for vandalism, and IT blocked their accounts as a punishment. He said that he has the ability to punish students if they destroy things, and each punish-

ment depends on the situation. Student hackers, for example, deserve to be expelled from AUK. As this writer thought before making the interview with Mr. Okasha, he didn't give a specific answer about how much it costs to repair things. He thinks it depends on the situation.

On the other hand, Mr. Abdullah Al-Shanf, an employee in the IT department, has faced many situations with students. He finds that some of them destroy things just to waste time, so that the teacher won't be able to start the class. He believes that such students are really insensitive

because they don't respect the others, and in the end of course, they will just fail their courses. Vandalism, in his opinion, is against the rules because even though the students pay fees for using IT equipment, this doesn't mean they own them; they are just renting them.

Furthermore, Mr. Abdulrhman Yasin, a student worker in the IT department, denies that destroying the computers and tools could happen by mistake. He blames the families of students who let their children believe that when you pay for something, that gives you the right to use it in a harmful way.

What's the suitable strategy that could fix the careless students? That should be the main issue.

Photo by: Mona Kareem

## Persian Students' Club Celebrates Norooz

By Golazin Rahattalab

On Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, AUK's Persian Students' Club celebrated the Persian New Year by setting up a *Haft Sin* table in the lobby of the Arts & Sciences building.

The name of the new year holiday in Iran is *Norooz*. The word itself literally means "new day" in Farsi, and the festival marks the beginning of the solar year and New Year on the Iranian calendar.

*Norooz* traditionally celebrates the awakening of nature and even the triumph of good over the oppressive darkness of winter. It is a time to celebrate life at the time when life begins or is renewed for much of that which is on the earth. The New Year is marked at the instant the sun leaves the astrological sign of Pisces and enters that of Aries. This renewal of nature is the essence of this millennia-old tradition.

Originally held as a spring festival, it is believed to have been first acknowledged and named "Norooz" by the mythical Persian emperor Jamshid. Others credit the Achaemenid dynasty of the 12th century B.C. for institutionalizing the Norooz festival.

*Haft Sin* or 'seven symbols' is a tradition whereby objects representing a wish or a theme are placed upon a table. Seven of these objects must begin with the Farsi letter "S" (Sin). The

table is usually set a couple of weeks before *Norooz*, much the same way families of some Christian cultures put up a Christmas tree. Some items traditionally placed on the table are as follows:

**Sabzeh** - Wheat or lentils grown in a tray or dish prior to Norooz to represent rebirth.

**Samanu** - A sweet pudding made from wheat germ, symbolizing affluence.

**Senjed** - The dried fruit of the lotus tree which represents love.

**Sieer** - Garlic in Persian, and represents medicine.

**Seeb** - Apple in Persian, and represents beauty and health.

**Somaq** - Sumac berries, which represent the color of the sun rise.

**Serkeh** - Vinegar in Persian, and represents age and patience.

**Sonbol** - The hyacinth flower with its strong fragrance heralding the coming of spring.

**Sekkeh** - Coins representing prosperity and wealth.

At the time of *Sal Tahvil* (Beginning of the New Year) family members gather around the *Haft Sin* to

start the New Year together.

The AUK Persian Student's Club was recently founded by Golazin Rahattalab, Ziba Ebrahimi, and Hoda Alavinejad. The club's advisors are Dr. Farzad Farsio and Mr. Abulghasem Alvinejad.



Members of AUK's Persian Students' Club Celebrating Norooz.

Photo by: Mona Kareem



## In Case of Emergency

By Daniya Alam  
& Dina El-Zohairy

If you've never paid a visit to the clinic before you probably want to know more about it and the services it offers for AUK students.

You will find the clinic inside the Admissions Building, to your left as soon as you enter through the glass door. Its gleaming white tiles give you an intense feeling of hygiene. Two smallish examination rooms are present, one for males and the other for females. A collection of brochures about different health issues are available too.

It is a division of the International Clinic, one of the premier providers of medical care in Kuwait, owned by Medical United Company. Ms. Yolanda De Joya is the working nurse there. She sees approximately eight stu-

dents each day and often prescribes over-the-counter medications such as pain relievers and muscle gels, in addition to treating minor injuries. Untreatable cases and emergencies, however, are immediately transferred to the International Clinic or any nearby hospital and all expenses are paid for by AUK. Faculty members use their health insurance instead. AUK students do not get any privileges when seeking consultation at the International Clinic, which is a private establishment.

If you take vitamin shots, want to check your weight on accurate scales, or need informal advice on the best diet regimen for you, the clinic is where you can go.

The clinic has recently



The friendly staff at AUK's Health Clinic.

Photo by: Mona Kareem

changed its timings, upon students' request, to receive sports injuries in the evenings. But until now, none have been reported to Ms. Yolanda.

As new students are enrolled in AUK and the demand for the clinic rises, more services should be offered in the near future.

Operating hours: 9-1 p.m. and 4:30-9 p.m.

In case of emergency contact: Mr. Mesbah (security)

Extension: 100/101

## Internship Partners Honored

continued from page 1

Many of the companies present complimented AUK on its wonderful diversity and great potential. "Students here at AUK seem

to have a lot of great potential to want to experience the world," said Jamie of Kuwait Times. I asked most of the companies

why they had decided to take part in AUK when AUK was just beginning to build itself up. They all replied that they saw a great future and potential in AUK and that if they had the chance to do it all over again, they would.

Students who participated in the internships said that they gained so much experience from working for the companies and they would love to do it again if given the opportunity.

In the end, AUK handed each of the companies a certificate of gratitude, thanking the companies for taking part in AUK, together with a paper weight from Crystal Gallery with AUK engraved in it.

Photo by Fatima Khamis. © 2006 AUK PR & Marketing



Dean Tolmacheva presents certificate of appreciation to internship partners.

## Ms. Andrea Brings Disability Awareness to AUK

By Dina El-Zohairy

At 2 p.m. on Tuesday March 21<sup>st</sup> in the multipurpose room, a spokesperson from Kuwait Handicapped Society lectured a group of students and staff about disabilities. He talked about the different causes of disabilities, the things that happen before, during, and after birth that cause disabilities in children, and those that result from car accidents. He also mentioned that there are very specific techniques that families need to be trained on, such as feeding and bathing procedures, in order to take good care of their severely disabled kids and respond well to their needs. The event took place as part of Disability Awareness Day.

When asked about the purpose of this event, AUK Student Counselor, Ms. Andrea al-Adwani replied that it was to raise awareness and spread compassion among everyone. It is frustrating and difficult for disabled individuals to maintain a normal life; having a disability requires tremendous work and energy. Unlike breaking your arm or spraining your ankle, which only lasts for a few weeks, a permanent disability does not go away. We ought to appreciate these individuals' remarkable ability to deal with their disability everyday and still be pleasant, nice, and not angry or depressed.

Disability Awareness Day is celebrated in many schools and colleges in the States, and Ms. Andrea thinks it would be a very good idea to make this day an annual event at AUK. Eight students

and four staff members volunteered to live with a disability for the whole day. Those included being blind, deaf, mute, or wheelchair-bound. Another ten students volunteered to be guiders or note-takers for the "disabled" students (so it didn't work as an excuse to miss class!). Mrs. Andrea hopes faculty participates next time too!

Ms. Andrea had cerebral palsy on that day, a condition that affects thousands of babies and children each year. It affects the brain and muscles, hampering their ability to control their muscles and perform simple daily activities. About her experience, she was a little frustrated at first, but since her office work is mostly typing and talking, she wasn't bothered that much.

Concerning the purpose of having this day, Ms. Andrea agrees that being disabled for a day is not like being disabled everyday, but it gives us a small taste to understand the frustration disabled individuals suffer and be a little more compassionate. It is important to realize that they are also not helpless; they can still work, marry, and live alone. Plus, less severe disabilities enable their sufferers to lead fairly normal lives. "They're still people," she commented.

On that day in the Arts and Sciences lobby, a video of the handicapped children who were visited by three AUK students as part of the last Scavenger Hunt was on display. Moreover, students were asked to sign up for voluntary work. Sixty students volunteered and the visit dates are yet to be arranged.

## Culture, Cuisine and Cinema à la française

By Mona Kareem

The Voice of AUK tracked down Professor Joseph Fannaca to find out what's going on in the most chic club on campus.

**What's the purpose of the French club? Is it offering an idea about cinema or about French culture?**

In the French club we have two types of activities; we have the French cinema which is offered to any members, students from AUK or faculty who don't have to speak French because the purpose is to show French movies with English subtitles. I want people to have an idea about French cinema, especially because French cinema has always been very strong.

And then we have the French café which is private for students or faculty who speak French and they want to practice their French outside the campus in a more typical French place. Kuwait has a lot of French cafés and restaurants with chefs who speak French. So sometimes we have interactions with chefs. But these activities are mainly for students with a good command of French.

**Have you found many students who care about sharing the activities of club?**

I think students would love to take a part in this club, but some of them are busy and others think they aren't able to talk French fluently.

**Each time you present a different kind of movie; is that intended to make an effect on the students?**

Yeah, it's just to show that the French cinema has various kinds of movies. So we could

derful way.

**What about other kinds of activities?**

Right now, I'm just involved with these two types of activities. My students in French culture will have a French region exhibition with typical foods and objects from France. And we hope people will come and visit this exhibition.

**Are you thinking of having coordinated activities with the student affairs, like doing a competition or an exhibition that is related to French culture?**

We will, also,

try to organize a French dinner or a French lunch to show how French people present the food.

**What about getting suggestions from the students about making different activities?**

In the future, I would love more

students to join the French club and I think by the next semester they will be able to organize and make their own ideas about the activities of the French club. I won't organize things, so I will let the students be more involved.

**Is it helping the students to learn French?**

It definitely helps them to practice French in a very practical way. I wish it helps them because that's one of our goals.



The French Club partaking of French cuisine at La Nôtre.

## AUK's New Reference Librarian

By Daniya Alam  
& Dina El-Zohairy

Ms. Reham Al-Essa, the newest member in the AUK family, seems to have quickly adapted to the atmosphere, which she describes as fresh, welcoming, dynamic, and full of youth and energy. Before coming to AUK, Ms. Reham worked for five years in Marketing and PR at the National Bank of Kuwait. She then decided to continue her education and thus earned the MLIS degree (Master of Library and Information Science).

Her job title is "reference librarian" and her responsibility is to make sure that all AUK students are aware of the library's resources and access them effectively. To achieve this, she is planning to orient about the resources and to organize activities that will encourage them to use the library, such as poetry reading nights, book clubs, and scavenger hunts.

For students who have visited the library, you have probably noticed that many bookshelves are empty. But as explained by Mrs. Reham, this is expected of a fairly new institution, and each year the collection of books will hopefully grow. Otherwise, the databases to which AUK library has subscribed contain a wealth of information, well beyond the average students' research needs.

Ms. Reham admits that the library lacks a warm, inviting atmosphere, which may be why many students are reluctant to spend time there. That is

why some shelves will be rearranged and some couches will be placed by the entrance to attract more students to the library. Some students have also asked for study halls, in addition to the several study rooms already available. The expansion process is underway.

Library books are not ordered at random. Instead, faculty members recommend books that will be of use to students and consistent with curricula. Students cannot order books from abroad for their personal use through the library though. If, however, a student is conducting a research and needs a specific book or an article from a specific journal, an inter-library loan would be a great idea. This involves contacting Kuwait University or Gulf University of Science and Technology and borrowing items from their libraries which are not available at AUK, and vice versa. But this exchange program is still being developed for the future.

Dr. Harvey, the library director, is also new to AUK. Along with other AUK staff, he took part in the Mishref education exhibition booth and successful campaign. He confirmed that this is not a formal event but of being a citizen", not one of the library's personnel. This is because at AUK everyone works as a team so we should all be involved. Besides, doing this gives a better image of AUK.

Welcome to Dr. Harvey and Ms. Reham to AUK!



Ms. Reham al-Essa.

Photo by: Mona Kareem



Dr. Harvey Varnet.

Photo by: Mona Kareem



# Balancing the Books: A Chat with SGA Treasurer Osamah al-Sadi

By Daniya Alam  
& Dina El-Zohairy

SGA elections are coming up. Prospective representatives are busy preparing. AUK students are waiting for the next event. So, what is SGA all about? And what are the current members planning for? In order to get responses to these circulating questions, the Voice of AUK met up with SGA Treasurer Osamah al-Sadi.

**Q: As treasurer of SGA, what exactly are your duties?**

A: I'm basically in charge of finances. I manage the money to organize events, such as the bowling tournament and several dinners and barbecues we had before. But SGA does not have an account of its own; we share the available cash with Student Affairs.

**Q: In the last Town Hall Meeting, Tadd announced that 3000 KD had been set aside for SGA use. What do you plan to do with it?**

A: Actually they're down to 2000K.D. now. 700 KD have been deducted for Ramadan expenses and 300 KD was the cost of the Spring Barbecue. With 800 students and only 2000 KD it is not possible to fund many events. That's why we have decided to organize one big event instead; an event to remember. Moreover, it will represent a farewell and a thank you gift be-

cause a few SGA members are graduating in June. We are still deciding on the most interesting program of events.

**Q: Do you still want to charge every student an additional 5 KD and use the money for SGA activities?**

A: No, I don't think it is a sensible idea since AUK students already pay 50 KD under the name of 'Student Activity Fee.' We will only use what we have.

**Q: Have you set a budget plan yet?**

A: As I mentioned, 2000 KD is insufficient to fund a variety of events. However, we did create a detailed budget in summer '05, along with a long list of proposals. The costs totaled to 30,000 KD But this included demands such as a soccer field with artificial grass and a men's prayer room, which are paid for by AUK. So it was more like an AUK budget, not only SGA expenses. I would like to stress that the lack of money does not bother me because I can understand that AUK is still growing and major projects, such as the new building, which cost a lot of money, are more important at this stage. For the next four or five years, AUK's primary goal is to get accreditation so hopefully in the future SGA will have more to work with.

**Q: What is the latest news about the trip to Sharm El-**

**Sheikh?**

A: Administration announced that it has been cancelled for unspecified reasons. I can only speculate that AUK is not willing to be held responsible for any problems that may occur.

**Q: What has SGA accomplished since it was formed?**

A: We have contributed to changes in academic policies and enhanced social life. For instance, SGA had a role in the implementation of the course repeat policy and C- grade omission from AUK's grading system. We have also put forward a request demanding an increase in the maximum number of credit hours allowed per semester. We have also invited several known intellectuals to hold lectures at AUK, such as Dr. Mohammed al-Awady. But our most significant accomplishment was the formation of an elaborate constitution, inspired by other universities' constitutions, Dr. Nizar Hamza and Tadd Cruise, whom I would like to thank for their great help and support. This constitution will clarify the different duties of SGA members and will direct its operation in the future.

**Q: How can the money issue be solved?**

A: Well, we initially relied on contracting with major companies, such as NBK, to sponsor events. However, we were told



Photo by: Mona Kareem

SGA Treasurer Osamah al-Sadi.

that two AUK entities cannot be sponsored by the same organization and there were a limited number of companies to choose from. Moreover, it is a time-consuming and very bureaucratic procedure which has to be done through the marketing department, not SGA itself. Our major problem is lack of students' support, suggestions, and feedback, not lack of money. We cannot represent AUK students perfectly unless they cooperate with SGA to form an influencing student body.

**Q: Anything else you would like to add?**

A: Students, please feel free to talk to me or to other SGA members or e-mail us at sga@auk.edu.kw. We need to hear your suggestions! Misha'al and I will be graduating in June so we wish you the very best of luck and I hope the next SGA members will be even more successful at serving your needs. Thank you.

## AUK students visit U.S. Embassy for Black History Month

By Bader al-Shammaa

AUK students enrolled in the International Ethics class visited the U.S. Embassy on Feb. 21 to attend a lecture given by Dr. Thomas C. Battle on black history and culture as part of Black History Month.

Students and professors from Kuwait University as well as journalists from local newspapers were also invited to the embassy.

Communicating via satellite from Washington, Battle spoke at length on different aspects of black history in what was essentially a question and answer session. One guest proposed that there was an issue of separatism occurring within the black community in the U.S., as well as among other minorities. While agreeing, Battle explained that the reasonable solution was that both similarity and diversity among the different cultures in the U.S. were to be celebrated.

He pointed out that there were two facts about the history of blacks in the U.S. that needed to be understood before moving on to other subjects. Historically, Battle explained, there were blacks that were brought to the U.S. while enslaved, and then there were those immigrated to the U.S. later on free from the

bonds of slavery. Terminology differences, such as the use of the words black and African-American were also touched upon by Battle, who said that blacks from different parts of the world will use different terms to describe themselves accordingly.

An idea put forth by one AUK student, that left Battle at a loss for words causing much laughter in the room, was that there is now a race between blacks and women in the U.S. to become President. Stating that he believed a woman will probably become President before a black man, Battle mentioned his surprise at how the previous and current Secretaries of State in the U.S., Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice, are both black. He noted that this was proof that black Americans have come a long way since the days of slavery.

According to the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait, Battle is a frequent lecturer at workshops and seminars, and received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from George Washington University. He has also served on the Underground Railroad Advisory Committee appointed by the Secretary of the Interior.

## THE COMMUNITY PAGE

### Eating Disorders

By Joanne Hands, MS, LPC

Eating disorders are illnesses with a biological basis modified and influenced by emotional and cultural factors. They can arise from a variety of potential causes. Once started, however, they can create a self-perpetuating cycle of physical and emotional destruction.

Anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and compulsive overeating/binge eating disorder are 3 serious eating disorders which frequently affect college students. Early recognition and referral for treatment will improve chances for full recovery.

While eating disorders may begin with pre-occupations with food and weight, they are most often about much more than food. There are many factors that can contribute to eating disorders:

#### Psychological Factors:

- Low self-esteem
- Feelings of inadequacy or lack of control in life
- Depression, anxiety, anger, or loneliness

#### Interpersonal Factors:

- Troubled family and personal relationships
- Difficulty expressing emotions and feelings
- History of being teased or ridiculed based on size or weight

- History of physical or sexual abuse

#### Social Factors:

- Cultural pressures that glorify "thinness" and place value on obtaining the "perfect body"

- Narrow definitions of beauty that include only women and men of specific body weights and shapes

- Cultural norms that value people on the basis of physical appearance and not inner qualities and strengths

#### Other Factors:

- Scientists are still researching possible biochemical or biological causes of eating disorders. In some individuals with eating disorders, certain chemicals in the brain that control hunger, appetite, and digestion have been found to be imbalanced. The exact meaning and implications of these imbalances remains under investigation.

All eating disorders require professional help. If you think that you or a friend of yours might be struggling with an eating disorder, come and talk to a counselor from the Student Success Center in Room 106 for additional help.

#### Remember...

Recovery is difficult, but then again, so is living with an eating disorder.

### Dean Carol's Corner

By Dr. Carol Ross-Black

It is springtime in the Dean's Corner. Welcome back! Today's hot topic is VOTING! Not what I *reeeally* want to talk about but you need to hear the message. Student Government Association elections are on the horizon. VOTE-April 25! Cannot get any easier than that. The election is not a popularity contest. Your brother cannot fix the election so that you can win! If your friend wants to be a Student Government officer and you know in your heart they will not work, do not VOTE for them! Encourage them not to run! Student Government is a serious organization. The representatives are your voice for a variety of issues. You want leaders who are honest, intelligent, hard workers, articulate, know how to plan, are realistic, have common sense, a sense of fair play, are creative, and *use wasta appropriately!* (Of course, I had to throw that in there!) Student Government represents you. Make wise choices. Pay attention to who wants to lead you.

Understand their motives. Listen to the debates. And get off your duffle bags and VOTE! To the women of AUK, run to the polls and exercise your right to VOTE like you would run to a Jimmy Choo, Prada, Mui Mui, Fendi, Gucci, Von Dutch, and Louis Vitton 75% off sale. I should not even have to explain why! VOTE for the best candidate on April 25<sup>th</sup>!

*Now for what I want to talk about...* Last night (March 12, 2006) our women's volleyball and men's soccer teams really came with it to the second leg of the private universities sports tournament at ACK. I was and am so proud of your skills, team spirit and sportsmanship. You looked fabulous! Even though the fashion police may want to issue tickets for the guys' shorts, you still looked fabulous! *We rocked the house and swept the tourney.* The cheerleaders were amazing. We were only missing our mascot, the wildcat! O, yea, we have a mascot! Our University colors are garnet and gold in case you didn't know that either. Naturally, the best host site is

saved for last. AUK will host the final leg of the tournament on April 30<sup>th</sup>. This is our opportunity to highlight why AUK is NUMBER 1! Garnet, also known as maroon, will be the color of the day. We will set it out that evening...*and yes, you must get up the next day and be functional in class!* Hey, come to think of it, all the energy and excitement that was exuded last night and that you will no doubt show on the April 30, apply to your studies. You will be amazed at your success! (Oooh... I just had to go and ruin the rah-rah didn't I?) All said with love. Anyone wanting to help plan the last leg of the tournament come by the Student Affairs office and let us know. Your help is always welcome. Huge thanks to the coaches for all their hard work and dedication! GO AUK!

Don't forget to send your topic ideas for debate, discussion or gossip! *Backing out of the Dean's corner until next time!* dcar

### Advisor's Corner

By Bibi al-Ghanim

1. Never self advise!
2. Always see your advisor if you are in need of guidance, academic support, and obviously advising!
3. You should meet with advisors during your freshman year to develop a general educational plan.
4. Once you have decided upon a major, meet with your assigned Faculty Advisor to complete the major plan based upon your goals.
5. Check in regularly with the SSC or with your Faculty Advisors.

6. Don't wait until it is time to register for the next semester to see your advisor!
7. If your advisor is very busy, make an appointment!
8. Friends & family are great, but they're not trained Academic Advisors!
9. **READ THE AUK CATALOG.** It has all the needed course descriptions and degree programs in detail.
10. Stay on track and use your **Degree Audit Evaluation** in your Self Service account to view your degree checklist.



# What Do You Think of The SGA?

By: *Noufa Al Sabah*  
Photographer: *Monira Al Sabah*

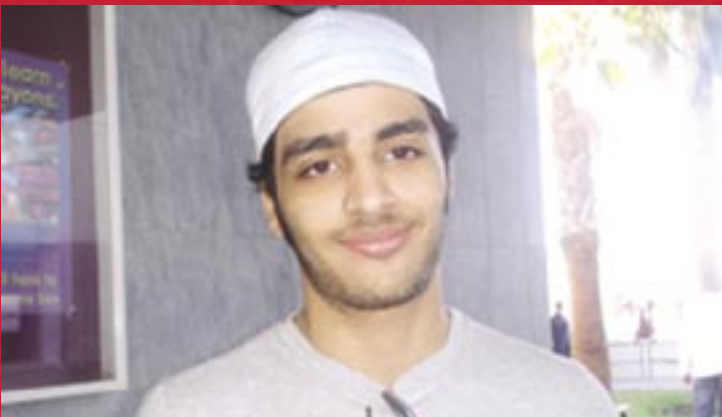
As the Voice of AUK reporters ventured around the campus and interviewed people, we made a survey to measure the student body's reactions towards the SGA. Thirty people were asked if they knew what the SGA was, and in their opinion was it doing a good job. Unfortunately, 12 out of the 30 people we asked did not

know what the SGA was, while the remaining 18 were in the know. Only 5 people believed the SGA was doing a good job, while 12 people disagreed strongly and believed the SGA were not doing anything at all. Sadly, 13 people were clueless and didn't even know what the SGA's role was supposed to be. This compiled infor-

mation is very disturbing, there definitely seems to be a sense of unawareness about the Student Government Association, and sad to say many people seem to be unhappy with it. We hope the future SGA would take note of this disturbing trend, and work on appeasing the student body, which frankly seems unimpressed.



**Sarah Taha:** They're good, but they're all talk and no action.



**Bacer:** They're a very organized group who get things done and listen to the community.



**Ahmad Diab:** No activities, nothing.



**Shaikha al-Salem:** They're not doing their job.



**Dua'a Hussain and Faye Al Homoud:** They're not doing anything for us, just talking.



**Khaled al-Sammach:** They're doing a good job.



**Abdullah al-Mulaifi:** I think they are the Voice of the students and they do what we want.



**Khaled Waleed:** They promised to do a lot of things, but they didn't deliver yet.



**Mary and Sarah:** They do some activities but not enough.



**Dr. Nizar Hamzeh:** I'm the faculty advisor, they have a lot of good ideas and intentions to do good work but need energy to build up on the schedule and if that happens they will be good.

**Dr. Charara :** They need to be more accurate and active in representing issues.



**Abdullah Abdulrahman:** I know they exist but I don't know what they do.

**Abdulwahab al-Khaldi:** What SGA?



# The Key to Achieving Your Dreams: Wasta!

By Dina El-Zohairy

Only a few people achieve their goals in life, no matter how hard they try. The goals we set for ourselves may be related to our career, personal life, or academia. Of the many goals we want to achieve, one usually outweighs the others.

Looking back, since I was seven I enjoyed what doctors did (my father is a surgeon), and I was never afraid of needles. I wanted to become a pediatrician to stab young children (no, I wasn't that evil!). As I matured, I had more noble dreams to achieve by being a doctor. And just over a year ago, when my granddad died of cancer, I sincerely hoped that one day I would contribute to finding a cure for it, especially childhood cancer.

My passion for understanding more about diseases and how the human body remarkably works made it

clear that medical school was the right place for me. My family argued that seven years in medical school would require many sacrifices from me, which would steal my youth and possibly my role as a wife and mother. But my decision was final.

In August 2005 my results were out and my heart was jumping with joy. I had passed with success so nothing would prevent me from entering medicine. I applied for public medical school in my mother country, Egypt; unfortunately my score could only take me as far as pharmacy. Medical school demanded exceptionally high scores. However, there was an alternative: Kuwait University. I had faith in God, in myself, and in a fair system of accepting applicants. My scores were high enough to qualify me for medicine at least, but being a non-Kuwaiti presented a hurdle.

I applied for one of the 50 scholarships the

Ministry of Higher Education awards each academic year. I mistakenly thought that choosing the scholarship winners was based solely on academic performance, but having important relations—or 'wasta', as we call it—came first. I was heart-broken, but quickly put myself together and decided to try again the following semester. My father promised to find me a 'wasta', the thought of which I hated. Why did I need a wasta when my grades were more than required to enter medicine? I was mad at this man-made concept of 'wasta', which is a worldwide epidemic. Personal goals could not be sought without a wasta, even if you were Albert Einstein 2.

I entered AUK, convinced that I would be climbing the seven-year ladder soon. I had high hopes and my Dad did finally find a 'wasta'. Unfortunately, when the Emir passed away, the

'wasta' could not meet the Minister because the government had resigned. As the spring semester approached, I never lost faith. I prayed a million times that I would get accepted in medicine; it was the dream I desperately wanted to fulfill. I believe that everyone is born for a purpose, and I was born to be a doctor.

Today, I have started the Spring Semester at AUK because I could not stay at home and do nothing. Even though the path to medicine is dim, deep inside me a speck of hope remains, and part of me envisions myself in the white coat, the symbol of goodness and purity. However, the real question still remains; have people changed so much that human efforts and simple dreams have become worthless? Unfortunately, yes.

\*A special thanks to Dr. Ali Charara for believing in me.

## A Student Who Hates to Put People into Categories

By Mona Kareem

Several months ago, I did an interview with Hussein Nooreldine, an AUK student and a student worker in the IT department. There were many reasons to choose him as an interviewee and as the person that I'm writing this article about. I heard a lot of things about the personality of Hussein not because he wears nice clothes, but because everybody is familiar with him. My interview focused on Hussein as a "super student" who works and gets high marks at the same time.

Why do I find this guy is a good and an important student for the community of AUK?

First of all, because he's the kind of person that always tells others how deeply he hates communicating with people according to their nationalities, religions, faces, families etc. because he finds that against the

sense of humanity. Why should students act like that even though we are pursuing an American education that avoids this kind of behavior? Hussein wondered.

This point is really a big issue



Hussein (middle) and friends Saud (left) and Jabran (right).

Photo by: Mona Kareem

all. Furthermore, you could figure out that this situation won't let the AUK students achieve complete and perfect communication between one another. Isn't perfecting communication and establishing a

diverse community one of AUK's purposes? I'm suggesting to make people like Hussein as role models at AUK, so that when someone enters AUK, he will give him the same advice he gave me: "Don't judge people by

the cover. Don't even arrange them into categories like nationalities or religions; just choose your friends according to the goodness of them and according to their personalities. Any one can get the love of people by being friendly and helpful, not by blocking them".

Last but not least, Hussein enjoys hanging out with his Pakistani friends more than the others. Could we just delete the family names and confirm the name of respecting humans? I wondered.

on our campus, because anyone who enters AUK could face this problem, especially with the Kuwaiti students. I don't want to make the Kuwaiti readers upset with me, but that's how things are going on. I myself have faced it, and my Iranian friends have faced it too. It's a kind of a complicated situation that you just can't analyze easily.

I know that Hussein complains about that obviously because he wants to send a message to

## I LOVE YOU!

By Rama Sabano

I love you Yassmin, for doing my homework."

"I love you Fatima for getting me a Twix."

"Thanks Khalid for parking my car, I love you."

"God I love him, he's so cute."

What is love? What does it really mean when you tell someone you love them? Is such an affectionate term really meant when uttered? Is it just me, or is the phrase "I love you" being worn out? I feel that the word love is used in the wrong situations, while abused in the right ones.

Moving on! For instance, how is it that one can find it easy to say "I love you" to someone who they do not love, yet find it so difficult to say it to someone they do? There are people out there who find it so simple to blurt out "I love you", but others who may find it extremely complicated to do so. Do you think the ones who do not say "I love you" as much, are most sincere, or is it the other way around? Come to think of it, which is better, a lie that draws a smile? Or truth, that draws a tear?

If you do know how sacred the word love is and how to use it then, how are you to know when to use it? How does one know when they are truly in love? How many times have we heard things like "Mahmoud, you are too young to be in love," "Khalid, you have only known her for one month, how could you possibly be in love with her?", "there is no such thing as love, he's only lying to you to get what he wants?" I think the real question should be how I will know when it is true love. How can I be certain if and when it hits me? I do not believe that an age limit can be put to love, because isn't love supposed to transcend race, gender or religion?

"Maher, I love you, and you love me, let us get married, right here, right now!" For you serious ones out there, I hate to break it to you but marriage needs more than just love to survive. According to David G. Myers, love does not last. Companionship, on the other hand, does. We should not only hope for an enduring bond, but also for a mate who is a caregiver, intimate friend, warm and responsive.

Next question is, does our love for a partner remain the same

as time passes? I believe in the theory which states that there are two types of love, passionate love, and a more enduring companionate love. Inevitably, the passion of romantic love tends to subside. The giddy "floating on a cloud" feeling fades. That is when love matures, and should transform to a steadier companionate love. "If the inevitable odds against eternal passionate love in a relationship were better understood, more people might choose to be satisfied with the quieter feelings of satisfaction and contentment" – Ellen Berschied (Social Psychologist).

But I guess love is and always will be a gamble of the heart. More of an emotional risk really, that we get to choose whether to take or not. All I can say is, choose wisely who you hand your heart too, because if you do get hurt, you subconsciously tend to create a wall around your heart. Not only would that heart protect you from not being hurt again, but it would also prevent happiness from getting to it.

"There are 2 tragedies in life. One is to lose your heart's desire; the other is to gain it" - George Bernard Shaw

## Racism in Kuwait: Another Reply

By Shardul Oza

In his editorial, Fahad al-Tukhaim wrote that he was "insulted" at my comment that Kuwait was an extremely racist society. Al-Tukhaim then attempts to account for what could possibly lead to me to such a faulty conclusion about the nature of Kuwaiti society. Lastly, he points out that it is unfair to label an entire country as racist because of a single incidence of racism. Not only is al-Tukhaim's argument completely unfounded, but it is also reflective of a general attitude of denial that is prevalent in Kuwait society.

Firstly, I would argue that while most societies are racist, some are much more racist than others. Kuwaiti society is unique in that racism is institutionalized. In other words, migrant workers and expatriates from countries such as Bangladesh, the Philippines, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon are not guaranteed the same rights as Kuwaiti citizens under the law. These workers are brought into the country by large companies who constantly lord the threat of visa cancellation and deportation over their foreign employees. These employees are often forced to work long shifts without proper breaks amongst other abuses. Secondly, the informal socio-political institution of *wasta*

illustrates the almost absolute power of Kuwaiti citizens in civil and criminal matters. Most foreign workers from these countries do not have *wasta*. They, therefore, do not have the same rights that someone with *wasta* has. As an American in Kuwait, I definitely had rights that would not have been guaranteed to me had I been from one of these other countries. Furthermore, Kuwait is notorious for its ill treatment of these foreign workers. If you recall, just in April of 2005 the Bangladeshi embassy was stormed by 700 workers who claimed they had not been paid in five months. These workers were afraid of complaining to their employers because they thought they might have their employment terminated.

Furthermore, al-Tukhaim's statement that foreign workers are in Kuwait because of Kuwait hospitality is simply ludicrous. Even a novice student of economics would tell you foreign workers come to Kuwait because their countries are economically depressed and the relative wage is much higher in Kuwait (due its enormous oil wealth). According to BBC News, "Bangladesh is a country where the United Nations estimates around half of the 130 million population earns about a dollar a day [that is about 300 fils]." The extreme poverty in these countries forces workers

to seek employment abroad. It is barely a choice for those workers who decide come to the Gulf. I would like to ask al-Tukhaim: Is Kuwait hospitable to the Egyptian and Indian construction workers who are forced to work in midday during the summer months with almost no breaks? Is Kuwait hospitable to the Filipina maids who are beaten and abused but forced to keep quiet because they have no rights as non-Kuwaitis? Nor are these isolated incidents. They are reflective of deeper divisions and tensions within Kuwaiti society. If you simply look around you will see how badly workers are treated. One need only look at how many Kuwaiti students speak to Egyptian security guards and housekeeping staff at AUK. Working at AUK, I saw how people were not even acknowledged as human beings because of their nationality. I would invite al-Tukhaim and anybody else who doubts the presence of racism to actually talk to these foreign workers and see what they think about Kuwaiti society.

Lastly, I was insulted that by the insinuation that I somehow allowed a group of non-Kuwaiti friends to influence my observations about Kuwaiti society. Working in the Division of Student Affairs, I regularly interacted with many Kuwaitis on a day-to-day basis. I also made Kuwaiti friends

outside of the university during my stay in the country. I found many Kuwaitis to be generous, hospitable, and all-around amazing people. I find Kuwaiti culture to be extremely rich and steeped in tradition. However, that does not mean that Kuwaiti society itself does not have institutions and attitudes which can be classified as racist. The fact is that racism has to be identified even if it makes people uncomfortable about their national identity. For example, I agree with al-Tukhaim in that there is even more racism in the United States following the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. Many Americans will acknowledge that American society is racist as well. As a citizen of the U.S. I consider it my duty to recognize problems such as racism in my country. The problem is I do not think that kind of consciousness is present amongst the privileged population of Kuwait. As citizens of Kuwait, all Kuwaitis should take a critical look around them and come to terms with the reality of racism in their society. Only when they choose to acknowledge that reality, can they do something about changing the present state of things. To change the world, you have to see it how it really is.



# AUK Champions: Girls' Volleyball...

By Dua'a Husain

On March 12<sup>th</sup> a tournament was held at the Australian College of Kuwait, where the AUK girls volleyball team participated after two weeks of intense practice. The first game was AUK vs. ACK it was a nerve-racking game, because the scores were very close but that did not stop the AUK girls from scoring the match point. After that game the AUK girls were filled with confidence and team spirit and entered the next game with their heads held up

high. They played against Gulf University of Science and Technology and were so good that the scores were incomparable. The game ended with victory on AUK's side. As soon as the game finished, the AUK girls were so happy that they were jumping up and down with joy, singing, dancing and chanting with other AUK students. After that game was the closing ceremony where each member of the team received a First Place medal and the captain of the team Fav al-Homoud received the Most Valuable Player award and one of the players Michelle Venter received the award for Best Defensive Player.

The AUK girls volleyball team became the champions of this season, with the help of their coaches Dr. Ann Scholl, Professor Shareefa al-Adhwani, and Suheil. Without their time and effort the volleyball team would not have made it this far. Last but not least, the girls would not have made it through the games without the support and cheers of the AUK "cheerleaders".



AUK girls' volleyball coaching staff: Suheil Taye'a, Dr. Tracy Ann Scholl and Professor Shareefa al-Adhwani.



AUK boys' football team being honored for their victory in the MTC Inter-University Tournament.



AUK girls' volleyball team celebrate their victory with a group hug.

# ...And Boys' Football!

By Ala'a Ali-Redha

The AUK men's soccer team managed to rank first place in the 32-team MTC Inter-University tournament. It was a 3-day knockout tournament that took place in Qadsiya Sporting Club from Wednesday March 1<sup>st</sup> till Friday March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The universities that participated in the tournament were Kuwait University, Gulf University and the Australian College. The guys played a total of five games in which they all ended with a victory over the opposing team; and as shocking as it may seem, the opposing teams only managed to score one goal throughout the whole tournament. The only big risks that the team faced in the tournament were the two penalty shoot-outs. However, with the magnificent goal keep-

ing of Najeeb al-Awadhi, they managed to overcome that risk by winning both penalty shoot-outs. The guys came to university the next day ecstatic. They were all wearing their jerseys and were walking around campus with smiles on their faces with a great sense of pride. Even the students who didn't know about their victory managed to find out the next day through the team players' overjoyed mood they were in the whole week. They had accomplished their goal in winning their first tournament as the first official AUK team. But all this victory surely didn't come easily; the guys went through rigorous training for almost 3 months in order to guarantee their success in their first tournament. They had also played 19 matches prior to the

tournament in which they managed to win 18 and tie one of the matches. The team had worked very hard from both sides (coach and players) to reach as far as they have. "We've come a long way but still got a lot of work to do!" says their coach Anthony. He mentions that the only thing the team has to worry about is that there is no 'I' in team; they would have never been able to reach this far without the amazing support all of their team members—whether any one of them had played for just five minutes or an hour. When talking to Coach Anthony, he believed so much in the team that he motivated the guys to eliminate their doubts of winning. "I always believed we would win from the beginning and they thought I was nuts... But we proved them wrong!"

## A few words from the players

*I would like to thank Anthony and Tadd for the effort they put in the team and I would also like to thank my parents for all their prayers.*  
**Khalil al-Wafai**  
*I would like to thank the entire team, I feel that now they are like brothers to me. I also would like to thank Anthony and Tadd.*  
**Bashir Ibrahim**  
*I loved the tournament and I loved the way we proved ourselves champions.*  
**Jasim al-Hassawi**

**Ahmad al-Salamin**  
*I believe Anthony should start getting paid for his effort and achievements and that the university should show more interest in taking good care of us.*  
**Sherif Mohamed**  
*In the beginning the university didn't show any interest in the soccer team but after we proved ourselves champions, we also proved that we are a team that forces our university for their care and respect.*  
**Fahad al-Maktoum**

*coaches Anthony and Tadd who printed their spot in the team.*  
**Sami Maan**  
*I dedicate this win to any team member and even the ones who couldn't participate in the tournament. This championship is a proof from us to the universities that we are a team to be taken seriously.*  
**Abdulla al- Sabah**  
*I loved the way our team's sportsmanship was and how we had fun the whole time.*  
**Najeeb al-Awadhi**

*I would like to thank God for blessing me with the most important two people in my life, my sweet parents who always prayed for my success.*

**AUK Health Clinic**

Open for minor medical attention

Located in the Admission Building  
next to the Library

Morning shift From 9.00 – 1.00

Night shift From 4.30 – 9.00



Triumphant AUK boys' football team proudly display their cup (and coach Anthony smiles).



# AUK Students Take the e-biz Challenge

By Tasnim Saleh

Dr. George Kostopoulos, AUK's own Computer Science and Information Systems instructor, was given the award for Top Advisor in the Zayed University e-biz challenge IV.

Under the supervision of Dr. Kostopoulos, four teams of three students from AUK joined hundreds of other students from around the Gulf region in submitting business plans to the

e-business challenge by Zayed University. A team from the e-biz challenge visited AUK during the Fall 2005 semester to encourage AUK students to participate in this extraordinary opportunity. The winners of the e-biz challenge will be awarded handsomely and will receive recognition and the possibility of implementing their business plan into action. Team members had to come up with creative e-ideas and build business plans

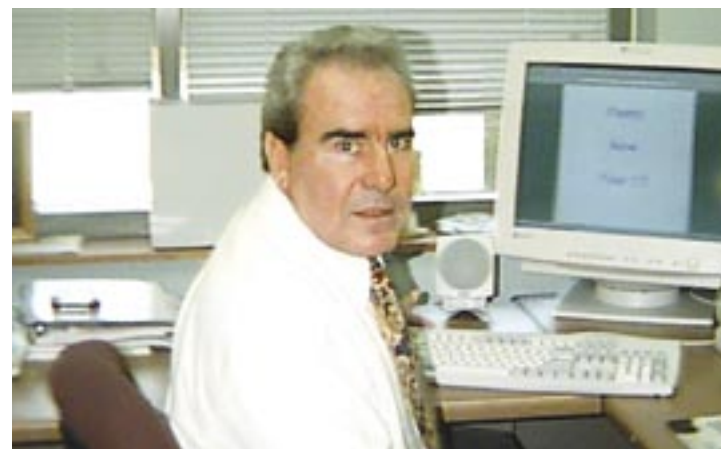
around them. This is the first time that AUK students participate in the annual e-business challenge. All participants are invited to attend the Gala dinner in Dubai on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March.

The first e-biz challenge was held in 2001 by student initiative run by the e-biz team in the Institute for Technological Innovation (ITI) at Zayed University. The idea is based on the successful student e-business competitions run by leading in-

ternational universities, such as Stanford University, Cambridge University, and MIT.

AUK students will get another chance next year to join this annual event. For more information, go to the e-biz challenge website.

<http://www.ebizchallenge.com/>



Professor George Kostopoulos.

Photo by: Tasnim Saleh

## Have You Met HAL?

By Tasnim Saleh

Ever thought memory sticks were the smallest flash memory would get? If so, then you haven't met HAL. HAL was created in 1992 at the HAL computer plant in Illinois, and it was a marvel, then had some minor "issues" during a 2001 space mission. Subsequently HAL's memory units were removed for later examination. Technology wasn't quite as refined back then but these slim USB thumb drives can hold 1 Giga-

byte of files and interface using USB 2.0, an engineering miracle at the time. Now HAL functions well and is expected to replace "larger" memory sticks.



## Master Your Learning Style with a Mouse Click!

By Tasnim Saleh

Every person comes with different methods of learning. Knowing one's learning style helps the student identify the best way to handle classes and might reveal why some classes are more difficult than others (although at the bottom line, some classes are just hard). There are a million useful tests online; the following list provides a few free but good learning style tests.

<http://www.vark-learn.com/english/page.asp?p=questionnaire>

[http://www.ldpride.net/learning\\_style.html](http://www.ldpride.net/learning_style.html)

[http://www.crc4mse.org/ILS/self\\_test.html](http://www.crc4mse.org/ILS/self_test.html)

<http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>

<http://www.queendom.com/cgi-bin/tests/transfer.cgi>

[http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/market/style\\_pref.html](http://www.onlinewbc.gov/docs/market/style_pref.html)

## Useful Freeware

By Tasnim Saleh

very useful tools.

Alch Icon Suite  
<http://alch.info>

This program allows for creating your own icons very simply with the use of existing images.

Iconiod  
[www.sillysot.com/download.htm](http://www.sillysot.com/download.htm)

This freeware allows for manipulating icons, changing the associated font color and much more.

Paint .Net  
<http://www.eecs.wsu.edu/paint.net/>

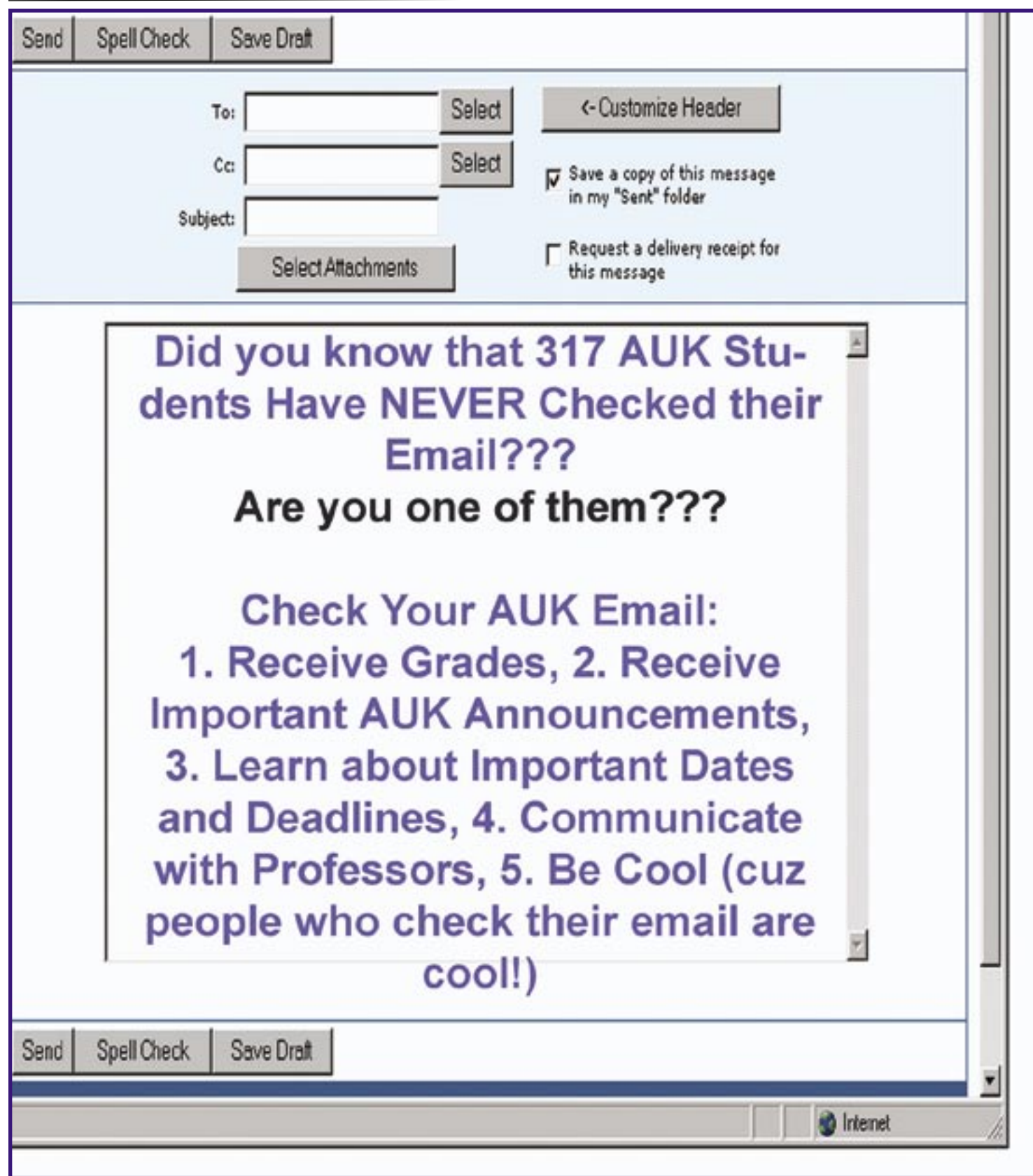
This program is a serious competitor for commercial photo editors. It's not as complex as Photoshop but offers similar

Crap Cleaner  
[www.ccleaner.com](http://www.ccleaner.com)

This program cleans your computer from all the clutter created by internet temporary files and the registry without compromising your files. Excellent tool to free space on your computer.

SplitCamera  
<http://splitcamera.com>

It is well known that web cameras can only be used with one software at a time. This software allows for the multiple use of the same camera with more than one software simultaneously.



## Online Shopping @ its Best

By Tasnim Saleh

Shopping and shipping was never easier than this. There are many services provided in Kuwait now to allow for a complete shopping experience online! Aramex Company offers the Shop and Ship account, an account that provides the user with an address in the United States of America and in the United Kingdom. Sound fishy? While you cannot export fish through your Shop and Ship account, you can definitely get so much more stuff and track it as it leaves your mailbox all the way

to Kuwait, and the best thing about it is that you only pay per package, so if you do not receive a package for months, you retain your account without paying a dime.

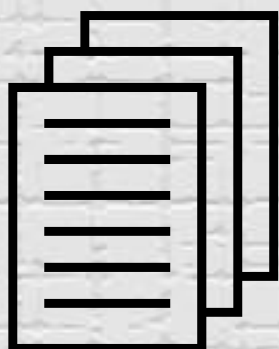
Banks and other companies also now provide safe methods of paying online. CashU is a growing company in providing prepaid Mastercards, and banks such as the National Bank of Kuwait provide Internet-only credit cards to protect customers from the ramifications of fraud. It's never been easier, or safer, to shop online than it is now.



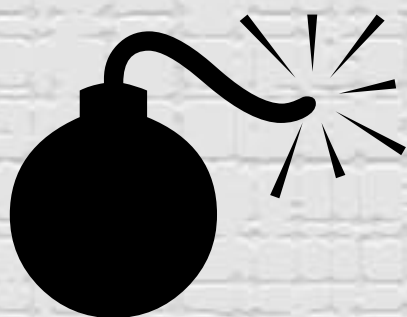


# DEMOCRACY ONLY WORKS IF YOU VOTE

Interested in joining the SGA? Check out these important dates!



**Candidate Applications**  
**Available:** March 25th



**Deadline to submit**  
**Applications:** April 3rd



**Campaigning:**  
April 4th – 24th



**Candidate Debates:** April 24th  
2 – 4 pm Multipurpose Room

**Don't forget to vote on SGA**  
**Elections Day!**  
**Tuesday April 25th**