

### **III. STANDARDS**

#### **1. Mission**

*Mission Standard 1: The program or institution has a written statement of its mission and goals, which guides activities, policies, and allocation of resources. This statement is communicated to faculty, students, and staff, as well as to prospective students, student sponsors, and the public, and is evaluated periodically.*

Section A Description of current operations to show how the standard is met.

The IEP Mission Statement as stated in AUK website, updated in the Fall 2007 semester, is as follows:

#### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the American University of Kuwait (AUK) Intensive English Program (IEP) is to prepare students seeking admission to enter the academic degree programs of AUK, by enabling them to gain sufficient mastery of the English Language and successfully apply the critical thinking skills they need to excel as students both during and after their formal studies. IEP will achieve its mission by training non-native English speakers in specific uses of English for academic purposes, by providing quality English language instruction to all who have chosen English as their medium of communication for academic pursuits and by promoting international, intercultural and self-understanding.

The mission statement is shared with all IEP faculty and staff at the commencement of each academic year during the first program meeting with the Director of the IEP, Margaret Combs. The IEP Mission Statement constitutes an essential component during new faculty and staff orientation (see orientation notes and minutes of meetings). The IEP Mission Statement appears in the following locations:

1. Introduction of the Operations Manual made available to all faculty and staff on the M:Drive (M-1-1);
2. IEP syllabi state both the AUK Mission Statement and the IEP Mission Statement;
3. On the AUK Website under Academics/Special Programs/Intensive English Program.
4. Published in IEP brochures and the AUK Catalog 2008-2009.

#### **History of the Mission Statement**

The IEP mission is historically bound by two interrelated academic realities:

1. The Mission Statement of the University;
2. The mission and vision of the IEP as a distinct program from the University's undergraduate program.

The IEP mission has and will always extend the University's mission in the overall learning outcomes of the students. Any revisions of the University's mission by default result in an adjustment of the IEP mission. The following narrative, therefore, includes the development of the University's mission in conjunction with the consequent revisions in the IEP mission.

Prior to the formal opening of AUK in Fall 2004, during the period from February 2003 to August 2004, the start-up team, which included the Director, assisted in articulating the overall vision of the Executive Board into the University mission (see insert). The initial AUK Mission Statement was thus drafted and accepted as a work in progress by the Executive Board in April 2004. Subsequently, the Director of IEP, with the participation of

senior start-up administrators, drafted the IEP Mission Statement. The draft was approved by the Executive Board of AUK in July 2004.

Below is the IEP Mission Statement from 2004-2005: (M-1-2)

The mission of the Intensive English Program is to prepare students to gain sufficient mastery of the English language in order to enter the degree programs of the University and to excel as students. The purpose of the Intensive English Program is to train non-native speakers in specific uses of English for academic purposes as well as provide quality English language instruction to all individuals who have chosen English as their medium of communication for academic pursuits and to promote international and intercultural understanding.

### **Revision of IEP Mission Statement**

In Spring 2006, the newly appointed President of AUK, Dr. Marina Tolmacheva, with the support of the Executive Board of Trustees, revisited the AUK Mission Statement and re-drafted the AUK mission in light of the emerging realities of a start-up operation. In collaboration with all of the University's stakeholders, a revised Mission Statement was drafted and approved by the Executive Board of Trustees (M-1-3). Consequently, the IEP mission was revisited, and re-considered the purpose, nature, and value of the IEP in supporting and extending the learning outcomes that are articulated in the AUK mission. The intellectual and practical focus of the revision of the IEP Mission Statement was based on it resonating with all the stakeholders, and reflecting the fluid changes in the charge of IEP, the revised curriculum, and the decision to seek accreditation.

In partnership with all of the IEP faculty and staff, the IEP Mission Statement was re-drafted. The final revision proposed by Stephen Jacques, CEA Accreditation Self-Study Coordinator, and evaluated by the Accreditation Steering Committee, was approved by the President's Cabinet in November 2007.

The aforementioned Mission Statement at the beginning of this document is the current mission of IEP.

The IEP Mission Statement provides the criteria for decisions regarding budget, academic program development and emphasis, new faculty hiring, and extracurricular offerings.

Mission as guide to decisions:

- curriculum development
- program development

Mission as guide to developing policies:

- attendance policies and classroom behavior policies
- student code of conduct
- faculty policies
- exit exams as measurements

Mission as guide to activities:

- extra-curricular activities: student government/student clubs/student newspaper
- curricular activities: faculty student showcases (table)
- students: community service/boot sale documentation

Section B 1) documents in the report

Introduction IEP Mission Statement and Goals (Operations	M-1-1
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Manual Introduction p. 3)	
IEP Annual Report 2004-2005 IEP Mission Statement p. 4	M-1-2
Catalog 2008-2009 copy page 25 AUK Mission Statement	M-1-3
IEP Mission Statement 2008-2009	www.auk.edu.kw/ Academic/ Special Programs/ Intensive English Program

2) documents on site

Catalog 2008-2009 p. 263	Director's Office
Interviews with students, faculty, staff and administrators	

Section C Performance self-appraisal

Currently, the IEP is confident that the revised Mission Statement reflects the actions of IEP in all administrative, academic, and extra-curricular areas. Our unique position as a start-up institution requires the IEP to be cognizant of potential shifts in the academic abilities and non-academic skills of our target students and the University's goal to cater to a constituent that is undergirded by its own set of cultural, academic, and social norms. As such, the IEP's Mission Statement might require revision in light of changing circumstances. Developing guidelines for revision of the mission will be the next step toward systematizing an ongoing process.

The Mission Statement is readily available to all of the University's stakeholders, and is communicated clearly in our catalog, syllabi, calendar, Web-pages and brochures. Furthermore, during the IEP faculty interview process, questions related to the potential employees' teaching style and compatibility of the IEP Mission Statement are broached; the Mission Statement is addressed during new faculty orientation and at the initial meeting of the IEP at the commencement of each academic year. The IEP mission is the intellectual articulation of what we attempt to achieve in the IEP program. The continuous reciprocity between the IEP Mission Statement and the IEP program invariably results in the need to continuously develop the Mission Statement as a result of the shifting realities on the ground which affects what and how we need to shape our program. At the same time, the IEP mission also serves as a stable guiding post in terms of what the realistic desired outcomes should be as we prepare our students for the undergraduate programs.

The evidence that the mission is being achieved through programs and services is multi-faceted in terms of academic, non-academic, and extra-curricular outcomes in regards to students learning outcomes, and in terms of measureable assessment outcomes in regards to professional achievement, and teaching success in regards to faculty and staff respectively. In addition, the most significant evidence that measures the effectiveness of the IEP mission is the IEP student retention rates in the University's undergraduate program up until matriculation in any of the respective programs. The retention rates as of May 2008 are 76% of IEP students who have matriculated from respective undergraduate programs. The overall GPA of matriculating students who were not former IEP students was 2.76. The overall GPA of matriculating students who were former IEP students was 2.83.

IEP is distinct from the University's undergraduate program in terms of its particular mission in servicing English language learners. Nevertheless, the IEP and the undergraduate program enjoy a close cooperative relationship in organizational and administrative terms and as a means for academic monitoring the performance of IEP students in the undergraduate program. This cooperation is evidenced in the joint IEP/undergraduate faculty meetings, specifically undergraduate English faculty. The dialogue between the IEP and the

undergraduate faculty is systematized and legitimized through the efforts of the Director of the IEP, and the Writing Coordinator of the undergraduate program.

Furthermore, the IEP's decisions, policies and activities are subjected to continuous review through a variety of methods that so far have been successful, which include "norming meetings;" continuous solicitation for faculty feedback on circulating policies; and new assignments that determine, for example, the effectiveness of the process of grading. The IEP's decisions, policies and activities are shared with the President's Cabinet as a final process for determining the appropriateness of the above in light of the overall mission of the University. Case in point: as a member of the President's Cabinet, the Director, therefore, receives first-hand feedback on the materials that have been placed on the agenda one week prior to each weekly Cabinet meeting. The feedback is shared by the Director of the IEP to her reporting managers who then review any given decision, policy and/or activities accordingly. The value and effectiveness of this process resides in the meetings that are scheduled on a biweekly basis throughout the academic year, including the summer months, and the feedback that is distributed through minutes and elaborate documentation.

During the self-study process, we decided a systematic review of the Mission Statement needed to be developed. The CEA Accreditation Self-Study Coordinator created a set of guidelines for systematic review and revision of the Mission Statement which were added to the Operations Manual during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Section D      Recommendations, plan of action, timetable, persons responsible

There are no plans for any changes in this area.