

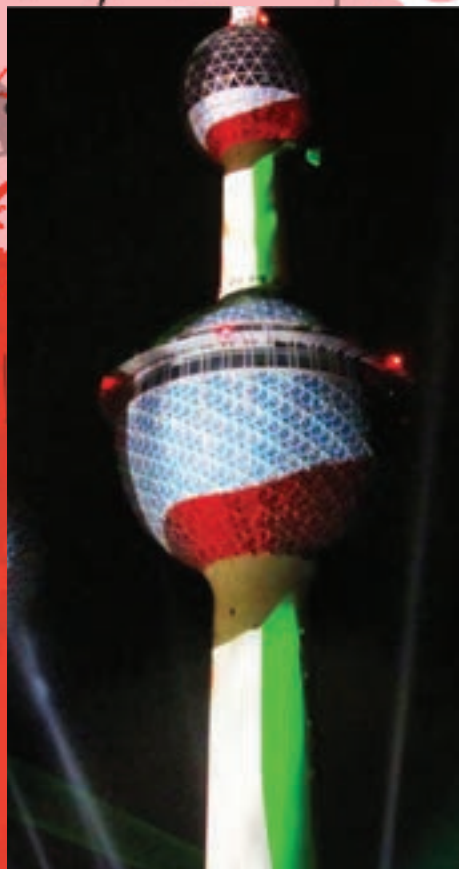
The Voice of AUK

THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF KUWAIT • February 2016 •



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Happy National & Liberation Day
عيدى يا كويت يا أطلى بلد

The Voice Members

Editor-in-Chief

Paola Schietekat

I'm Paola and I was born and raised in Mexico. Now I live in Kuwait and study International Relations. I attribute my misanthropy to politics and gender inequality, but I still enjoy political, philosophical and theological debate. I have a book published and hopefully more to come. I love literature and football. I also like Lego, dinosaurs, eggplant, videogames and series like Game of Thrones and Adventure Time.

Graphic Designer

Alaa' Dashti

I'm Ala'a Dashti, a 25 year-old graduate from Box Hill College, Kuwait with a diploma Graphic Design. I enrolled in AUK to continue and get my bachelors degree in Graphic Design. One of my initial projects for The Voice of AUK was the logo, which was successfully changed. I designed it to portray that all AUK'ers have the right to express their opinions freely.

General Reporter

Huda AlKotob

My name is Huda AlKotob. I'm a rather ordinary 19 year old Palestinian girl. Currently, I'm an Accounting major who anticipates graduating later this year. I like puddles, trampolines, learning, food, and furry animals. I often get that I resemble Zooey Deschanel and Jonah Hill.

General Reporter

Sara F. Ayesh

السلام عليكم. I'm a 19 year old sophmore majoring in Management. I enjoy being a fact debunker, and taking photographs; ironic occurances are my favorite subject, selfies are not allowed. I hope to be a writer in the near future إن شاء الله.

Reporter

Nathalie Matta

My name is Nathalie Matta. I'm 19 years old. I'm a sophomore majoring in Marketing and minoring in Graphic Design! I am obsessed with makeup and everything that has to do with fashion, thus I will be responsible for the fashion section in The Voice newspaper as a reporter. I truly hope this newspaper stands out.

Reporter

Abdullah A Al-Qouz

I'm Abdullah, a 21 years old junior student. Initially an English major with a hope to be an author/spokesman. I enjoy working in groups with saltiness, which is unaccepted quite often. I do it even when I'm working by my own and people think it's not funny. I won't stop because I think it is.

Reporter

Roua'a Diab

Hello. My name is Roua'a Diab, I am a computer engineer who surprisingly enjoys writing articles and sharing my views with the world. I am involved in several clubs, including the IEEE student branch in AUK and the Hummingbirds. I like to write, especially things that express my thoughts and opinions. Hopefully you'll enjoy my pieces!

Graphic Designer Advisor

Patrick A. Makhoul

Patrick Makhoul is a graphic designer in the PR & Marketing department at AUK and the design advisor for The Voice. He uses the experience he's gathered over the years designing publications and layouts to give advice and suggestions on ways to make The Voice a more pleasant experience for the reader.

General Advisor

Iqbal AlHaddad

I'm Iqbal AlHaddad, I've done all my schooling abroad starting from New York to Beirut, Islamabad and finally the undergraduate and post graduate studies in Switzerland. I only returned to Kuwait after I started working and had a formal job. This is my seventh year at AUK. I'm married with three children, a son and two daughters. I like to challenge myself to explore new things. I'm into scuba diving, painting, Zumba, reading, traveling, exercising, fishing and walking.

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Graduate Studies - More than Just a Means to an End

By: Farah Hamoudah

For those of you who are passionate, life-long learners whose thirst for knowledge, assertion and challenge is virtually unquenched, here is a list of some graduate programs at various universities around the globe that will enable all of you, future computer engineers and computer scientists to take flight in greater, farther and clearer horizons.

Texas A&M University at Qatar

This prestigious university offers both, a Master of Science degree in Computer Engineering as well as a Master of Engineering in Computer Engineering. The MS degree in computer engineering requires postgraduate students to complete 32 credit hours, while the ME degree program is composed of 30 credit hours.



American University of Beirut

Found in 1866 and having nurtured countless notable alumni, the American University of Beirut is sure to catch your eye! The university is a private, secular university in Lebanon. The university offers a Master of Science degree in Computer Science as well as a Master of Engineering degree in Computer Engineering. Prospective postgraduate students have the choice of either a thesis option of completing 21 credits or a project option which requires the completion of 27 credits.



Middle East Technical University

The public university whose story started in 1956 is located in the heart of Ankara, Turkey, and its department of Computer Engineering runs three exclusive programs for Master of Science (MS): MS in Computer Engineering, MS in Computer Engineering without thesis and MS in Software Engineering without thesis. The latter two programs are developed for prospective graduate students who are interested in furthering their academic and vocational objectives without doing thesis work.



Jordan University of Science and Technology

Jordan University of Science and Technology is the only university in Jordan that has been listed as one of the top fifty universities in the Islamic world by the QS worldwide university rankings. It is a public,

state-supported university that is located in the remote area of Irbid. The university offers a Master of Science degree in Computer Engineering.



University of Chicago

The University of Chicago offers two comprehensive, occupational-oriented Masters Programs in Computer Science (MPCS). One is 9 course MS in Computer Science and the other is a 12- course MS in Computer Science specialization program. These programs are perfect for prospective graduate students who are interested in careers in software engineering and data analytics. Full-time students can finish the program in 9 months and part-time students can finish it in only 15 months.



Why Students Should Stop Asking for a Curve

By: Sara F. Ayes

****** "Do you feel ready?" The boy standing in front of me in the elevator asked his classmate with worry evident on his face.
"I don't know, In sha'Allah." The girl unsu-
rely responded.
"Don't worry, I think he curves the finals' grades." He assured her.
"Alhamdulillah. I was worried, but I can get a 70." ******

As you are a student of AUK you have no doubt heard of the last resort students "sometimes" ask for near the end of each semester; the curve. Now, we can debate for hours on the importance of an education versus a degree. We can, but we shall not. Mostly because I'm sure that everyone has heard all the sides to this debate a million times and there is no point in reiterating. No, instead I will tell you a story;

Once upon a time, in 2015, Yemeni high school seniors sat for their final examinations, and after months of waiting, the results were released. Despite the political unrest, parents afraid to send children to school, and schools opening and closing depending on what they deemed safe enough for students, many scored in the 90's. Facebook exploded with congratulations. Students rejoiced! All was well, until people started noticing that an abundant amount of seniors seemed to score in the 90 percentile. Failing grades were basically nonexistent.

That made certain people wonder; did most students really score so high or were the grades amplified to help students pass an extremely difficult year for them academically and otherwise? Morality was brought up as well in those intense Facebook conversations; was it moral to have an average, or even below average student, get the same score as an A

student? What made such questions very difficult was the situation these students were in. If one is to talk about morality, was it right for these seniors to take their exams with less than adequate preparation? Were they in the right state of mind, or were they afraid of even attending said examinations? Does that not also affect their final score?

Here is what is believed to have happened; the faculty and administration did not wish to hold back these wronged individuals and passed them all. It is time like these when there really is no simple answer, and the right choice is unclear. On one hand, it is not right to equalize the grades of everyone who took the exams, regardless of their efforts. On the other, it is also hardly fair to fail students for not performing very well under the conditions they were under, and the little preparation they had.

So, why is this an issue?

In layman's terms; some of these fresh high school graduates will go to medical, and engineering schools. They will be the ones piloting aircrafts, and performing surgeries.

Now, being the devil's advocate you could argue that this was just a onetime thing; it does not necessarily mean that this is the way schools are going to be run from now on. I will respectfully ask you to turn on the TV for once. These Middle Eastern disputes are not going anywhere, and hundreds of other students will be tested this coming fall. What standards are the examiners going to hold them to; each other, or to someone who has had all the preparation they could possible have? Which standard is fair, and is this practice, boosting grades, going to be applied in Universities as well? These are the questions that must be answered very quickly, and with the utmost care to make sure no one is wronged.

Lovely story isn't it?

So, going back to my earlier point, you can understand my nonplus frustration to the phrase "Professor, can you do a curve please?"

The Yemeni case was different than AUK's because the former was put at a disadvantage, and the later was just lazy. Students should not ask for a curve because ultimately they merely harm themselves. If that is not enough reason for you, then here is a more important one; you are harming *everybody* else, something you have *no* right to do.

Since I have not defined what a curve is exactly, I shall proceed to do so; A curve is giving students more grades than they deserve earned just so they would not fail. It is a unanimous agreement between students and professors to lie about what a student learned, and how capable they are. A curve is not a helping hand, it is a lie. A lie that is going to be on your transcript for the rest of your career saying; "I learned all that I needed for this course and I am ready enough for any responsibility, or tasks that would require me to know things from it." It is the cradle for incompetent employees and unfair jobs assignments.

Like the Yemeni case, sometimes having a curve is accepted, or at least a slight help in the grades is allowed, but not every time, and certainly not in regards to critical matters, such as final medical school examinations. AUK finals and midterms do not fit into these categories. We have enough worries about how prepared underprivileged individuals are to take on worldly responsibilities to deal with people whom have had all possible opportunities getting curves on their grades.

You asking for a curve means you give up your right to ever complain about employees not knowing how to do their jobs right, or not knowing what they are expected to know. How can you? They might have asked for a curve as well. I leave you with this to ponder on; would you trust a doctor to operate on you, knowing he or she once asked for a curve?

****Spoiler Alert****: This conversation did not actually happen, but was fabricated to make a point. In all honesty, if it was exams week I would be more concerned with revising my material then listening to elevator conversations.



"Do you grade on a curve?"

Cross-Listed Courses; To Whomever is Concerned

By: Abdullah A Al-Qouz

Many students are usually confused with the way courses are named. They would often ask "Why should I take a major course that is not listed under my major?" They wouldn't know that these course can actually contribute to their major requirements. This confusion arises from subjects being cross-listed.

Cross-listed courses are often written like this: COMM 110/GDES 110.

Cross-listed courses are listed next to each other in major sheets because they are taught exactly the same way, with the same required content. Here is a list of the cross-listed courses mentioned in the 2015-2016 AUK Catalog: Many students (especially new ones) often get confused with the subject naming, they would be asking so much about why would they take a major subject that is titled something else not in their major field or that are unaware of a subject could count towards something they want/need but they miss it because they are not aware that it actually represents itself and another subject at the same time.

The reason why these courses are called cross-listed is because they are taught exactly the same way. If the subject gets separated by name, it will only cause to have a whole new class to teach the same subject only to satisfy students' unawareness or whoever does not totally understand what a cross-listed class is. The different cross-listed courses in the current 2015/2016 catalog are mentioned below:

COMM 110/GDES 110 Introduction to Digital Media Design

COMM 208/GDES 208 Film Production I

COMM 350/MGMT 350 Organizational Communication & Leadership. Prerequisite: COMM 101 or MGMT 201.

COMM 375/ENGL 375 Rhetorics & Cultural Dissonance. Prerequisite: ENGL 102.

COMM 380/TRAN 380 Media Translation

COMM 430/HIST 430 Oral History. Prerequisite: COMM 101 or any HIST or AMST 100-200-level course.

PLSC 333/MGMT 333 Organizational Behavior. Prerequisite: MGMT 201.

PLSC 210/IR 210 Methods of Research in International Relations. Prerequisite: IR 101 or IR 202.

PLSC 322/PHIL 322 Western Political Philosophy

PHIL 310/ENVS 310 Environmental Ethics. Prerequisite: ENGL 101.

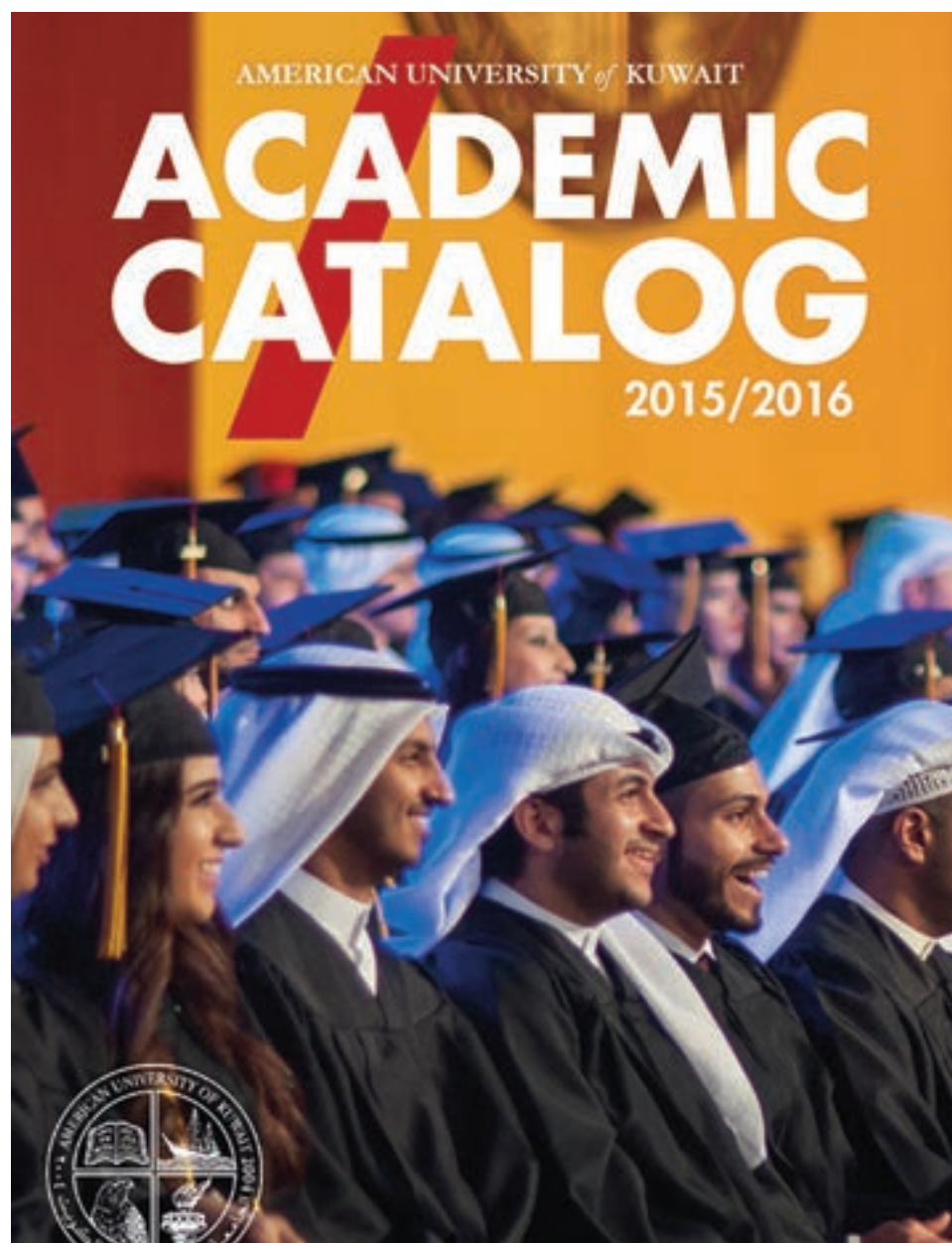
MUSC 370/SBSA 370 Music of the Arabian Peninsula

The benefit of a cross-listed course is that it consists of subject of two fields which gives students of a certain major an opportunity to have some experience in another major field. It is also very helpful for students confused between two majors/minors to try a cross-listed class to know which part of it suits them the best. If the names are separated as some argues, then the students would systematically be able to take the exact same subject twice. For example, Music of the Arabian Peninsula is a social science (anthropology) class and a music class because it tackles the style of music in the Arabian society and culture, students are allowed to research on influences and current trends of Arabic music in the course which makes sense why it is a cross-listed one.

Since this course in specific is both a music and an anthropology course so it can satisfy a social science elective, a humanity elective or even an Arabic culture requirement which is another benefit of having cross-listed courses in the catalog. The prerequisites for any of these courses are always related to the field it undertakes, so whether the student tries to register to the class through the title "COMM 350" or "MGMT 350" for example won't get in with different methods. These two are one class, they have two names only to enhance the students' experience and give them more variety of choices. If someone really hates seeing the class of his own choice not written exactly and only the way they want to see it, they could safely just imagine it is a one name course and apply to the same way they would because a double title is only an enrichment not a

handicap and it will not affect anyone negatively at all. As AUK is a liberal arts institution, having cross-listed courses is a great chance for students to get more familiarized with other study fields that would give them more experience in different areas for a more opened future.

These courses above are not entirely described as they are in the catalogue! They are just there to be arranged together so that students do not get lost looking them up in case they want to. So whoever is interested to know more about one of them or any other course, READ THE CATALOG! There are 11 cross-listed courses in AUK, 6 of them are COMM courses. I would definitely not miss my chance to do as many as possible once I declare my other major in Communication & Media.



Tips for the Wolf Pack!

By: Sara F. Ayesh

University is much different than high school, we all know that. We also know that it can be very difficult sometimes. Here are some things to help you out in your days at AUK.

Nutrition

A. Always try to have something before your first class. Hot drinks may wake you up momentarily, but will not give the energy you need for the day.

B. The lunch rush is at noon; so if you do not wish to eat in a busy Diner, make sure to grab your food before that.

C. Try asking for unexpected things in the Diner and Starbucks, they sometimes allow things off the menu.

• Ex: Plain hot milk from Starbucks, or green apples and peanut butter from the Diner.

D. The water coolers also provide hot water, so if you don't like the flavors of tea they provide in the Diner, bring your own!

E. Try bringing your own water bottle from home and fill it with fruit (ex: lemons, strawberries etc.) and just keep refilling it with water at University for a healthy alternative to caffeinated drinks.



Library

A. The libraries' rush hour is from 12-3 PM so plan your time accordingly.

B. If you are unable to find a place to print in the library, try the open lab in the Liberal Arts building or the Graphic Design labs.

C. There are a few Mac computers in the second floor of the library for Graphic Design students who want programs like Photoshop and Illustrator.



Textbooks and Essentials

A. Do not wait to get your Graphic Design or Art supplies till the last minute from the AUK Bookstore. They tend to run out of some essential supplies very quickly. (Ex: Mat Boards, large black paper).

B. Forget about printing your graphic design projects at Kwik Kopy the day it's due, everyone else has that exact same thought.

C. Always get your books after the first class, you do not always need a hard copy of your textbook, sometimes the library's reference copy is enough.

D. If possible, try getting an electronic copy for your textbooks (Ctrl+F is a major time saver).

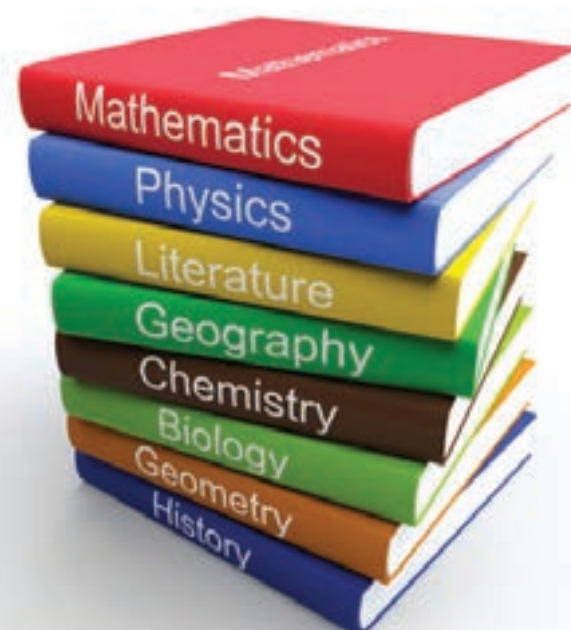
E. If you are unsure about buying all your textbooks, try finding someone who would lend you a copy for a semester.

F. When signing up for classes, make sure to sort out your priorities;

• Would you rather a later class, or a specific professor?

G. If you cannot get into a specific class, wait right after the Finance Office drops the students who have not paid yet and look for an available seat then.

H. Do not take classes after 3 o'clock unless absolutely necessary. You as well as the professors will be too tired to fully function.



Dr. Ahmad Rabaa'i

By: Abdullah A Al-Qouz

Dr. Ahmad Rabaa'i is a very recent Chair for the department of Computer Science & Information System. He is also a recent professor; he joined AUK in 2013 and was able to quickly start working on deep research in Kuwait, which included conducted surveys with students and youth in Kuwait about the use of tech-devices and social media. The CSIS department is currently in process of many developments and is also going through ABET accreditation. The Voice of AUK would like to congratulate Dr. Ahmad Rabaa'i for his new position.

Where are you from and what is your degree?

Originally from Jordan, I am appointed here as an Australian citizen. I have a double major: a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science (CS) and Bachelor's in Information Systems (IS). I also have a Masters degree as well, MBA in Technology Management, and then I have my Ph.D., in CSIS, 2012, Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

Were you elected to be the department chair of CSIS or it was intended?

It wasn't my intention honestly to be the department chair of the CSIS department especially now, I'm still young, I think I'm one of the youngest faculties here. My aim was to be promoted as an associate professor in information systems, but I got tasked a new requirement because our previous chair wanted to get back as associate professor of computer science after being the CSIS department chair for a long time.

Are there any new changes since you became the Chair of CSIS Department?

Yes, we have basically changed the IS curriculum. Our curriculum now is aligned with the Association of Information Systems (AIS) organization which is the main organization in our field. We are also going to review the computer science curriculum to make it aligned with the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). We have also secured two memberships with two leading IT industry companies (CISCO) and (SAP). We are going to use their curriculum in our network course. SAP university alliance program SAP UAP includes more than 1,800 universities worldwide. SAP UAP brings together over 17,000 Professors and hundreds of thousands of students from different member institutions to download resources, share their stories, engage with the wider SAP Community and find out about how to get involved. We also added a new CSIS lab to the students which will be functioning from September 2015. These are so far the changes and we are moreover working on accrediting our programmes to

get an international global accreditation from ABET accreditation and we have achieved the first phase, now we have two more phases we are currently working on.

How long have you been teaching?

To be honest, I started teaching computer applications since I was 14! I was officially a teacher in these centres that offer training courses. It was actually funny because my computer science teacher at school owned one of these centres so I did the computer science course with him and he was amazed of my computing skills. So he offered me a job when I was fourteen years old to teach Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access in the centre which is basically what we know as ICDL/ECDL. But for undergrad level I think it's been around 10 years.

Do you see differences between teaching in Kuwait and Australia?

Yes, in fact there so many differences. In terms of curriculums and teaching methods, for example, overseas, we focus a lot on hands-on tutorials and workshops. Here we focus more on theory. We are trying to do some of these changes in which we will incorporate some of them in next year's curriculum; we will increase the credit hour to incorporate some of the hands-on practical exercises from next year hopefully.

Have you ever seen a project in AUK that seemed to have a future behind it?

We will soon enshallah! Now we are in the process of preparing a capstone project for our students, I wrote 53 pages so far in a document giving instructions and guidelines from A to Z. I've suggested an idea that some will have two different tracks. We will have students who will do research while others may choose to develop a project. So for now I'm pursuing some suggested research, ideas, and some capstone project recommendations. Students will also have the option of choosing their advisors. I'm sure now even with the changes in the curriculum that we did, we are going to have better quality projects. We do have some I have to admit, we also had some, and will have even better.

Are there anymore plans to develop the CSIS department?

I honestly would like to keep this for myself but the only thing I would say is stay tuned and more good news is coming!

What potential do you see in CSIS students?

There is a great potential. Some of our students are really good. Some of the students really want to learn, they take their studies very seriously, some of them are studying these courses because they like them, they want to learn something out of it. Take our department for instance, we also have an

engineering department, the engineering students like to take some of our elective courses because they like to learn something a little bit away from the hardware, away from the machines. The engineering students want to learn something that is software focused. So they seek some guidance, they seek some advice of which courses should they take and what could they learn from them. We actually discovered that our students are taking really good courses.

Would you like to stay as a department chair?

I think it's a yearly appointment; it's not really a decision to make. I am here for a year and the dean might renew my appointment as a chair or the dean can choose someone else to be the chair.

So are you enjoying being the chair of the CSIS department?

To be honest, it's lots of work, hard work actually, and you are going to be in the face most of the time. I've been the chair for a month and a half only. It's so busy! So we will see how things will continue.

Dr. Rabaa'i agreed to answer the following questions as additional question:

What differences do you see between students from the basic courses in CSIS and the upper division courses?

I believe the more the students progress in their studies the more they take their studies seriously. The more they establish their identity in the university the more time they spend, and the more credit hours they achieve the more they take studies seriously.

Do you believe it is applied to all the 100 levels in the university or just the CSIS department?

Yes, I think it is applied to all departments. One last thing, I don't know if I'm to be asked if I want to thank anyone for the accomplishments I did, so far I have been here for two years only. I would like to thank first the most important person, my wife for being so patient and accepting the workaholic side of my personality. I would also like to thank our former chair who recommended me to be the new chair of CSIS, Dr. Shereef Abu Al-Maati. I would like to thank the Dean of CAS, Dr. Rawda Awwad, and Dr. Ali Charara the Associate Dean for their trust in my work and for appointing me for an honestly very tough position. The fact that we are also not just teaching, we are not just doing research, we are going through really massive accreditation efforts. For getting hired in this sensitive place, so I really thank them.

The Voice of AUK would also like to thank Dr. Ahmad Rabaa'i for his endless and continuous efforts in trying to evolve AUK into a better community with his accomplishments and also for his time to get into the this issue with a very creative interview.



Liberation Day

By: Shahad Al-Failakawi

On February 26th of 1991, a little country known as Kuwait gained its Liberation. Iraq's authority over Kuwait was abolished declaring the country as independent. Kuwaitis celebrate this achievement by holding festivities and events such as concerts, parades and beautiful fireworks that illuminate the night sky. Each year, we are surprised by the unique ways people show their happiness and appreciation towards this event. The whole month of February is filled with carnivals, cultural activities, events, seminars and competitions. Places such as Messila Beach, Green Island, Shaab Park and even Gulf Road are packed with people from different nationalities gathered as one to celebrate. Not only is the event celebrating the liberation from Iraq, it also holds commemoration to those we lost during the battle. This year, many expatriates and Kuwaitis are excited to be celebrating the 55th National Day and 25th Liberation Day. The National Anthem of Kuwait is also a big part of this celebration because it unites us all and incorporates nationalistic words. Part of the lyrics translated into English is as follows:

"Kuwait, my country may you be safe and glorious!

May you always enjoy good fortune!
You are the cradle of my ancestors
Who put down its memory."

The National Anthem is played in most of the Arabic TV stations as part of the celebration. The colors of the Kuwaiti flag- red, white, black and green are usually worn by people along with face paint, crazy costumes and accessories. If you decide to be even cooler- you might spray your hair with colors of the flag. The National Day is celebrated all around Kuwait including buildings and hotels that usually spread the Kuwaiti flag along their buildings and decorate their exterior with lights. Cars are usually parading across the Gulf Road honking with kids throwing water balloons or spraying water guns at each other. Some organizations usually hold competitions deciding on which house has the best decorations and Kuwaiti nationalistic vibe.

Although some people take the celebration to dangerous extents- if you are careful, you will eventually enjoy it. However, there are always negatives towards celebrations like these. The trash left by people on the street, which includes food wraps, empty cans, water bottles, and other garbage, can be harmful to both the environment

and workers. During these current years, student groups have put in great effort to help reduce the garbage. They usually set themselves out in groups and aid the workers by carrying out the trash. This is seen as a huge improvement to Kuwait and its environment because less trash means less pollution. The cheerfulness creates a bond of companionship and unites the people in peace and harmony throughout Kuwait.

Februaries in History

By: Sara F. Ayeshe

February 3, 1870: The 15th amendment was passed in the United States, stating the "right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

February 6, 1952: Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland became queen after her father King George VI of England passed away. Her actual coronation did not occur until June 2, 1953.

February 11, 1990: After serving 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela, the leader of the movement to abolish South African apartheid, is released. He was 71 at the time.

February 11 1872: The Japanese National Foundation Day-A public holiday celebrating the foundation of the Japanese Nation year, and the day of the accession of Japan's first emperor; Jimmu.

February 11, 2011: In Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak resigns after 18 days of mass protests from the Egyptian people. Mubarak has served for 30 years.

February 11, 1847: In America, Thomas Edison (1847-1931) was born in Milan, Ohio. Edison has 1,200 patents under his name and is most known for the incandescent bulb, phonograph, movie camera and saying "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

February 18, 1930: Pluto is discovered.

February 21, 1848: In London, Karl Marx, assisted by Friedrich Engels, publishes The Communist Manifesto pamphlet, laying the groundwork for communism.

February 25, 2016: Kuwait's 55th National Day

February 26, 2016: Kuwait's 25 Liberation Day

The Tie That Binds One, Binds Us All

By: Farah Hamoudah

Twenty-five years ago, on the evening of February 26 1991, my then 19-year-old mother sat silently by the window gazing at the twilight, wishing for the stale bread in the cupboards to wondrously turn into fresh vegetables, wishing she could purchase medicine for her 11-year-old sister with meningitis, Hala; wishing for a way out of the Gulf War. Miraculously, at the corner of her eye, she noticed the Allied Iraqi troops slowly retreating on the highway across from her window sill. Excited and struck with glee, my mom breaks out a little shriek and then rushes to the rooftop with her brother to watch the invaders flee shamelessly. I have heard this tale recited to me over and over again, and each time I listen, I feel myself learning something new, not about the past alone, but the future that is shaped by it as well.

The Liberation Day of Kuwait marks such a remarkable occasion, because it is celebrated not just by the patriotic Kuwaitis, but also by dedicated and loving residents and expatriates of Kuwait, and this union brings forth an extraordinary notion of solidarity and unanimity into our dear nation. To me, personally, liberation day is so much more than just silly strings and water gun fights. It is more than just family feasts, colorful, traditional clothing, neon lights, flamboyant fireworks and face paint. It is a commemoration of the valiant Kuwaiti heroes that traded their comfort, their conveniences, and their lives to gift us this freedom, this liberation, this joy-our Kuwait. On this day, kids in the backseat of cars jokingly play with their counterparts in neighboring vehicles; parents in parades hold the hands of their offspring as they give and receive smiles to other, fellow parents; and the wind's gentle breeze seems to always breathe life into the city as if to say, today is the day Kuwait was reborn. It was reborn to be stronger, firmer, finer, greater, and most of all, unified and unshaken.

The secrecy our smiles and gestures take on in such a momentous, victorious day is a tie that binds us all together, men, women, children, residents, and citizens alike. We all exist in this independent state to allow for its prosperity, protection and progress, and relive it from misunderstandings and misdemeanors. The swift and vigorous waving of the Kuwaiti flag from atop of buildings, from car windows, from the diligent hands of the members of our community makes my heart flutter every time

because even though I am not a Kuwaiti citizen and even though I have a difficult time understanding the Kuwaiti dialect, I still consider Kuwait to be my homeland. Years ago, my family has taken refuge and shelter in this hospitable land after the 1948 "Nakba" of the Palestinian people. Kuwait provided not only stability to my grandparents, parents, siblings and I but it has also given us endless love and compassion; a love I am gladly willing to give back for as long as I shall live.

Of course, to some, this day could also be interpreted as bitter-sweet, as it could remind them of the destruction and havoc that were left behind as the result of one man who succumbed to greed and arrogance. However, in some magical, indescribable way, the hardship and adversity is a shared experience by us all and it bonds us, as we are closely woven together by it. The ridiculously long lines our parents and grandparents had to stand in, in order to attain a loaf of bread; the

unsteady fluctuation in electricity and water; the doubt for the future. Yes, occupation times were indeed terrifying and alarming, but these painful memories aid us, the future generation, towards building a brighter, safer, and better future. In some ways, these memories are wonderful because they teach the hefty value of liberation, independence and cooperation.

Liberation Day not only reminds us of the brave, selfless souls that stood up for their land and their homes, but it also guides us and molds us into those very selfless, extraordinary individuals. In the words of F. Scott Fitzgerald, from his novel of "The Great Gatsby": "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." The quotation is insightful and explains the fact that no matter how far we delve into the future, we will always find the past tugging at us, embracing us gently from behind. Therefore, according to Fitzgerald, we must learn to accept the past, celebrate the present, and

prepare for the future. In these hopeful, blooming, triumphant days of February, I encourage you all to find bravery to not only sustain peace, harmony, love and friendship in our adored homeland of Kuwait, I also assert that you choose to inspire and foster that same peace in the neighboring countries that are currently being haunted by war, famine and insecurity.

In September 2014, the United Nations honored HH the Amir as Humanitarian Leader and Kuwait itself a Humanitarian center; this Liberation Day, let us not only celebrate with water balloons and foam sprays, but let us honor the kindred spirits of the founders of this sanctuary and let us spread reconciliation, understanding and serenity out into the troubled world that surrounds us. Let us follow in the footsteps of our beloved Humanitarian Leader and the many humanitarians that have come before us. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "Let freedom ring!"



5 Steps to a Flawless Foundation

By: Nathalie Matta

We all as ladies try our best to have the best, such as getting a flawless coverage of foundation on our faces. Now sometimes obtaining a flawless foundation isn't such an easy job. And as we know, the way your foundation looks is the most important thing since it's the base of the look. If the base isn't good, the whole look won't be perfected.

So, here are 5 steps that if followed correctly, you'll end up with a flawless look.

1. Moisturize: Moisturizing your skin is so important, more than you think it is. In order for your foundation to be flawless, while application, your skin needs to be well moisturized.

a. Dry skin: If you have dry skin, it is extra important for you to moisturize your whole face, because your foundation will create lines and look crack-y around the dry areas.

b. Combination skin: If you have a combination skin, in which some areas are dry and others are oily. Make sure

you moisturize the dry areas very well and slightly moisturize the oily areas.

c. Oily skin: If you have an oily skin, you probably get oilier when you move around, in the outside areas or when you wake up. So sometimes you don't need to moisturize it further or else you'll get too oily during the day. So here are two things you can do either.

• **Moisturize before you sleep:** Apply your moisturizer heavily before you sleep, your skin will suck in most of it and what's left will gently keep your face moisturized for the morning, so even after you was if your skin you be evenly moisturized and in good condition.

• **Use an oil-free moisturizer:** Another thing you can do is use an oil-free moisturizer or a moisturizer that is made especially for oily skin. Using that your skin will be nice and moisturized without looking all oily and shiny throughout the day.

2. Always prime: Using a primer that fits your skin type is a very important step, because it will prepare your skin to accept the foundation and it will keep your foundation in place for the whole day. But always remember to choose a primer that works with your

skin type. For example, never use an oil-based primer if your skin is already oily.

3. Choose your foundation wisely:

Choosing the right foundation is the most important step of them all, because if you apply the first two steps correctly and then use a Matt foundation on your dry skin, your foundation would look bad. Always remember to identify your skin type first and then match to it your foundation.

4. SET SET SET: Always set your foundation to make sure everything stays in place. You can find different setting powders that might work on your skin. Personally, I prefer a translucent setting powder because it doesn't add extra color, it only sets the foundation/concealer in place. But again, it might vary depending on your skin type.

5. Drink water: I'm sure you've heard this a million times before, but drinking water does affect the way your skin looks; we can moisturize our skin from the outside but only water can moisturize it from the inside. TIP: add cucumber slices to your water since cucumbers are very good for your skin. ;)

Something They Don't Tell You About Domestic Violence

By: Paola Schietekat

Domestic violence is like talking about famines in the Horn of Africa. We all start hearing about it in middle school when we realize the world is not that beautiful after all. But we treat domestic violence with the same indifference as if the distance between us and the Horn of Africa was the same as the distance between a comfortable life and a violent cycle of codependence.

So yes, I did learn what domestic violence was, I learned to condemn it, and I was taught that it was wrong. But I also learned that I was immune to it, that domestic violence only happened to dumb, insecure weak girls who came from impoverished, uneducated and wrecked households. And, naturally, I memorized the "If it happens once it's his mistake, if it happens twice it's your mistake" motto, somehow believing that when women stayed in abusive relationships, it was because they wanted to, because they had learned to love their chains.

Eventually, I fell victim of domestic abuse, despite the fact that I promised myself I would never be that dumb to fall into the trap. My mother had always told me that I was better than that, that getting trapped inside an abusive relationship was a choice, and that I would choose always better.

So here are some things about my context. I was a Caucasian, Christian girl, always received private education and I usually was the first in my class. In a Latin American country like mine, those characteristics make you immune to domestic violence, the type they teach at school, the type you watch on TV, the type your parents assume



FLAWLESS
FOUNDATION

you'll never have to face, the one of the 'lower classes.' I was not allowed to date until I was fifteen, and I got into my first "serious" relationship when I was sixteen. By serious I mean he met my parents and was invited to family reunions. It all started with scenes of jealousy that I thought of as perfectly normal; I even felt flattered because no one had ever "wanted me for himself." Progressively, it escalated to compulsive control, as I was then supposed to give a detailed account of my schedule, and my boyfriend had to approve of it. I had to ask for permission and he was entitled to punish or reward me. It made sense, since we were in a serious relationship: we had no secrets and, as he had said, trust was the most important element of a long lasting relationship. What could I say against that?

Then surveillance... and guilt. It is funny, because I always regarded lying as morally degrading, but, at some point, going out for coffee with a group of friends was something I needed to hide from my boyfriend, not because I thought I was doing something wrong, but because I did not want to confront him, get into a fight and, eventually, have to be the one who made concessions. More than once, he caught me.

He did not only catch me going out with friends, but he caught me lying, something that is universally wrong, so I felt guilty, I apologized, I begged for forgiveness and promised never to do anything behind his back again. Reluctantly, he would take me back. That was when my parents noticed I was changing. They tried to warn me, but, as usual, when someone is trapped in a vicious circle, instead of accepting they have a problem, they try to justify it.

So, I convinced myself that my relationship was normal, that my friends faced the same problems with their boyfriends; that a year and a half could not be thrown to waste just because of silly fights. If, by any

chance, the relationship ended, it would be my fault; I would have been the one who failed.

My parents knew he was not good for me, but always believed that they could not prevent me from falling down; they wanted to let me fall and see me stand up again on my own. They just did not know how deep I could fall. If my boyfriend yelled at me, belittled me, or made me feel worthless, it was all well-deserved punishment. If he demanded more and more time and money from me, it was the least I could do, as a terrible girlfriend. He was sweet at times, he would make me feel good, he would make me feel loved. No one would ever love me as much as he would and forgive all my many flaws.

My mother could not hide it, she disliked him because she could see how much I had changed, how insecure my steps turned. I started blaming her for standing between us, growing apart from all those who cared about me. It escalated gradually, until it became physical. He became violent when I no longer loved him. I needed him. A few times it got so bad that he apologized, not without first saying that he had to, that I had pushed him, that I had earned it. He said that, if we did things right, our relationship was going to work, and I believed it because it made so much sense.

See, the thing is that, when you are a victim of physical, psychological and sexual abuse for too long, all what you once were is destroyed, is shattered. Asking questions like "Why do you stay? Why are you allowing this?" is pointless. He destroyed every single piece of me, just to rearrange those pieces to his liking, pierced holes through them and tied strings to those holes. That was when I understood the meaning of manipulation; he treated me like garbage so many times, for so long, so intensely, that, in the end, I became nothing but garbage. How could I ask for help? How could I even realize the misery of my condition? It's paradoxical: you can't ask for the help you don't even know you need.

It went on... for about a year. He would take my car when he pleased, asked me for money, asked me to bring him food, to buy him groceries. He was not working: I was his source of income, his source of service, his source of everything. He had to know every single detail about me, while I was not allowed to ask any questions about his life, his friends, not even his family.

I felt hate, I felt an intense hate piercing my chest. I hated him, I hated that he never bothered to acknowledge my sacrifices, I hated that we could not make it work, that he never understood me. I hated my mistakes, I hated myself. How can one possibly love if all that there is towards oneself is hatred? I did not love him, I needed his approval, I lived for him, but I did not love him. I think the day that we broke up I was already too tired to fight back. He called me and told me that I was not the right one for him, he apologized and hung up the phone. I cried my heart out, in silence, but I did not try to call back. During the few days that followed, I felt I was imploding: a tremendous inner pressure compressing me.

Next week, the burden was off my shoulders. I got out of bed and called up my friends. They cared, they were there, maybe I was not so bad. I realized that when people said "oh, you're funny." they were not being sarcastic... I decided to believe it. I was funny, I was smart, I was also capable and resilient. I could pick myself up... it took a truck-load of effort, but I could. About four months later he called and asked if we could start over. I said no... I tried to keep my temper, but, in all honesty, I lost it. I yelled at him at the top of my lungs. I needed it. He talked back, but nothing could touch me. I saw his real size, his true self... the hatred disappeared and was replaced with pity and disgust.

I decided never to let my parents know about the abuse. In part, because of shame, because they could blame me and use the phrase I would have used had I not been through what I went

through, "How could you allow it?" I did not want any fingers to be pointed at me. I was not only afraid of their disappointment; I did not want to hurt them. I do not know how strong family bonds are towards a child, but I could fathom the impotence they would feel if they knew what was done to their little girl.

The healing process was something I had to do myself. As time went by, I understood I had nothing to feel guilty about. My childish innocence led me to put my trust on someone who abused it. My choices had been poor, that was it. I could not be blamed for anything beyond that. I forgave myself and got rid of the guilt. I became an adult in the process. No, I have not entirely recovered. I still don't know if one ever does. I still get anxious in large groups, I still have to remind myself to look at people I just met in the eye when we are speaking. I am still tough on myself and think twice or thrice before engaging in a social situation, but it is something I am dealing with and solving every day.

I guess that now I feel proud to be a survivor, because there are women (and men) around the world that never had the privilege, many of whom have had fatal endings. I am grateful for having broken away from such a detrimental dynamic of codependence and self-destruction and wish everyone finds the inner will to do the same. If you or, someone you know has lived through something similar, it is important to know that domestic violence is not a choice; it is a set of conditions that, before you know it, have you immersed in an ocean of internal doubts, uncertainties and insecurities. It may look chaotic from the outside, but the internal storm is much more devastating, it is the cause of our stagnation, it is why we stay there for so long. This we don't hear about at school... we only see the outside on TV, but domestic violence is much more than that, it is more intricate, it is more consuming and it can happen to anyone.



10 Ways to Get Rid of Scars Naturally

By: Sara F. Ayesh

Scars can be a source of discomfort for many people, especially those who feel less self-confident because of them. Now, unless you got a scar from saving kids from a wild animal, stopped an armed robbery, or have a good story from something stupid you did as a child, you probably don't like people to ask you about any lasting blemishes on your skin.

Fortunately, here are ways you can lessen and, in time, get rid of scars.

1. Coconut Oil

2. Extra Virgin Olive Oil

3. Tea Tree Essential Oil:

This essential oil is very concentrated so make sure to dilute first with another carrier oil like Olive Oil or Coconut oil to avoid irritation).

4. Lavender Essential Oil: Make sure to dilute as well.

5. Vitamin E Oil: You can get this in pharmacies and supplement stores.

6. Aloe Vera Gel: Either scrape the gel from the inside an Aloe Vera plant leaf, or get it from pharmacies.

8. Lemon Juice

9. Apple Cider Vinegar

10. Shea or Cocoa Butter:

- Make sure it is the raw kind. Products that "contain" Shea or Cocoa Butter often don't have them in enough quantities to be effective. Remember "orange flavored" medicine?

- In its raw form cocoa butter is very hard. Melt it in the microwave and whip it with a carrier oil to make into a cream for everyday use. Do not wash off.

- Apply any of the mentioned ingredients on the affected area. Massage gently for a few minutes and allow it to dry/ sink in. Rinse off with warm water or wipe away with a wet cloth.

Things to Keep in Mind:

1. As these are natural remedies, results will be slower than chemical medicines. Be patient and do not expect scars to disappear in a few days.

2. Do not apply on irritated or inflamed skin. These remedies are useful after scars have healed completely. Lemon Juice and Apple Cider Vinegar can especial further irritate open wounds.

3. If any irritation or stinging occurs, stop using the ingredient and consult a doctor.

What is in Ciga-rats?

By: Sara F. Ayesh

To each his own. That is my opinion on cigarettes. It is unfortunate when people overstep their boundaries and ask others to change their lives to fit their own. It's almost like they've never heard of the phrase "don't judge." Such a shame really. Smokers should be left alone to do what they do best in peace; inhale rat poisoning, Granted. They must also do their part in return and pay for the medical expenses of all those who are their secondhand smokers, formalities really. Since the cigarette seems to be a dear and honorable friend to the Wolf Pack,

I think it should be given it's own exclusivity. Despite cigarettes being in abundance all around AUK, from faculty and administration to students, not many people, if any, actually know what cigarettes are made of. When asked what ingredients are in cigarettes, most faculty and students replied with "nicotine," "tobacco," "caffeine," and "tar." Professors Hala Al Najjar, Patrick O'Brien, and Arby Siraki also said that there might be "chlorine," "arsenic," and "formaldehyde" respectively. The good news is that all those ingredients are indeed in cigarettes, the bad news proves that all that answered the survey basically have no clue as to what our dear and honorable friends are made of. The world would be a much better place if those were the only ingredients in cigarettes and in turn cigarette smoke.

So what do cigarettes contain exactly? That answer is much more complicated than what a business major can explain to cigarette enthusiasts in an 800 word limit. Besides, the ingredient list is over 4,000 items long. Instead, I shall name some of the more commonly known chemicals. There is Carbon Monoxide, a deadly, poisonous gas, which caused 5,149 unintentional deaths in the United States from 1999-2010. Acetone is a flammable antiseptic that is the main active ingredient in nail polish remover and is used in medical sterilization. I suppose smokers must feel very clean afterwards then. Ammonia is a very useful chemical as well; it is used in cleaning carpets, toilet cleaners and animal repellents. Very useful stuff Indeed. studies have also shown that ammonia helps you

"absorb more nicotine, keeping you hooked" at least you know you are getting your KD's worth, personally I would feel cheated if I could only get a little of the nicotine I was promised in those helpful cigarette ads. Lastly, formaldehyde is "used to preserve dead animals," hydrazine is a great rocket fuel, cyanide the deadly poison and arsenic which was formally used in rat poison.

For fairness' sake, we must also remember the good and helpful ingredients in cigarettes: vanilla, orange, and lemon extracts. Extracts many essential oils are also present, and they are very good for you: myrrh, nutmeg geranium rose, basil, bay, and peppermint oil for that mini after taste. Chocolate, coffee, beeswax, and fig juice are found as well. Apples are also very prominent in cigarettes, they use their juice and/or extract as well as their skin, so in reality by smoking a cigarette, you fulfill one of your major food group requirements.

Many have wondered why some smokers break their fast smoking a cigarette, or take a smoke break instead of a lunch break, now you know why; with the amount of ingredients it has, when one inhales a cigarette, they are enjoying an entire, wholesome meal! Enjoy!

Sources: org/smoking/essation.org/tobaccofacts/Cigarette-Ingredients.html. tudy.com/academy/lesson/what-is-acetone-structure-uses-formula.html <http://www.rd.com/home/home-and-garden-uses-for-ammonia/3/http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2617833/Fancy-cigarette-From-rat-poison-nail-polish-remover-list-ingredients-make-think-twice-lighting-up.html>



The Bamboo Stalk Discussion With Saud Al Sanousi

By: Paola Schietekat

The award winning author, Saud Al Sanousi was invited to AUK by the First Year Experience Program (FYE) in order for faculty, staff and students to get an insight on his writing process and perceptions on Kuwaiti society. The event took place on November 18th at the auditorium, where UNIV 100 students who had previously read the book as part of their coursework could ask questions and discuss the content directly with the author.

The Bamboo Stalk, a title that refers to the adaptable plant that can grow without rooting in any piece of ground, tells the story of the child of a secret marriage between Josephine, Filipino domestic worker, and Rashid, a high class Kuwaiti citizen. The story of Jose/Eissa begins when he is 18 years old and leaves an impoverished life in the Philippines with high hopes of finding a bright future in Kuwait, his father's homeland. Instead, he faces the hardships of racial and class discrimination, even within his own Kuwaiti relatives. Jose/Eissa's sense of belonging is put into question while he negotiates a new identity that reconciles two drastically different backgrounds.

Al Sanousi's novel holds a mirror to Kuwaiti society, not only addressing stigmatized subjects, but drawing readers so close to them that these issues have become part of a more realistic and human outlook of Kuwait. During the event, the author talked about his creative process, the nature of his characters' essence and the experiences that led him to explore different social realities. The Voice recommends this novel to all students of AUK since it has fostered critical evaluation of identity and society in students who have read it before.

Students Respond To The Bamboo Stalk

By: Paola Schietekat

UNIV 110 students were required to read The Bamboo Stalk as part of their curriculum. Many were not avid readers and saw it as a burden in the beginning. However, there was no student from Dr. Hala Al Najjar's class who did not have something to share from the book. Some had their perspective challenged, some found reassurance in what they already knew and some opened their minds to new perspectives they had never considered before.

Q) Was there anything that you were not aware of about Kuwaiti society before reading the book?



Abdullah Al Enezi:

"The extreme misjudgment of foreigners and how they are often treated as slaves."



Fatima Al Suleiman:

"I knew about discrimination, but I never thought it would get to the extent of yelling at someone in public at the airport the way Essa was yelled at."



Khalifa Al Otaibi:

"Kuwaiti society is hypocritical, especially because the Al Tarouf family was religious but did not accept Josephine because she was Filipino"



Nawaf Yousef:

"I'm an immigrant; I am from Bahrain. I never thought that Kuwait would be more radical than Bahrain. A lot of Bahrainis are more open minded and accepting of foreigners."



Iman Al Khalaf:

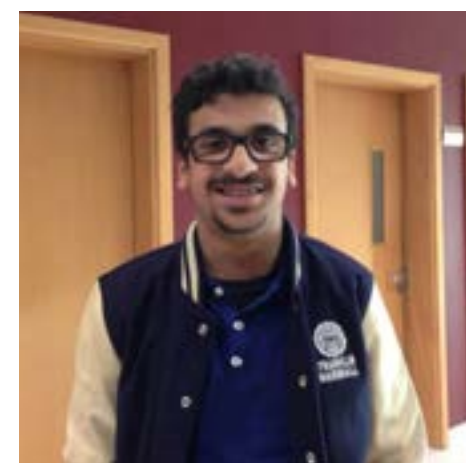
"The way they treated migrant workers. I was shocked that Essa was yelled at in public. The book made me see Kuwait from Essa's perspective."



Basma Al Shami:

"I wasn't aware that some Kuwaitis would get married and have kids secretly. I also didn't know prostitution existed in Kuwait, so the book made me see Kuwait in a whole new way."

Q) After reading the book, how did your idea of Kuwaiti identity change?



Muhammad Al Ali:

"The author changed it; I already knew about the problems Kuwait had, but he shed more light on those problems."



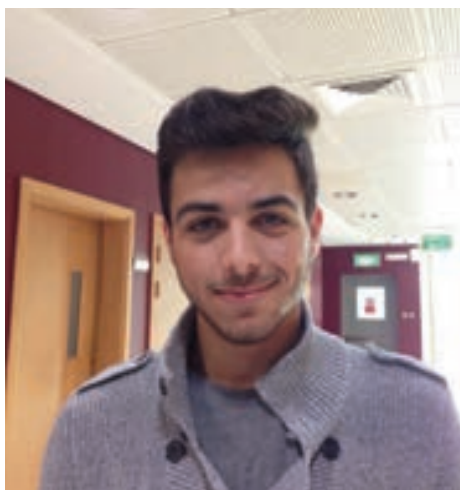
Omar Majdi:

"It didn't change a lot, but he told us more about how people suffer in this country."



Muhammad Al Bloushi:

"It shed light on the hidden part of Kuwait that I was not aware of. His book was a very bold statement."



Younes Sabri

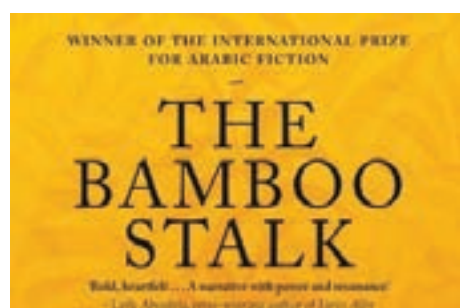
"Before, I saw Kuwaitis as discriminatory, but after reading the book I saw Kuwaitis in a whole new level, more open minded. I realized they had nothing against foreigners."

Muhammad Al Kulaib:

"It changed. I thought we should be proud wherever we went because we were Kuwaiti, but now I know Kuwait has many negative aspects."

Ahmad Al Ibrahim:

"I got a sense that we can always improve and help people who come to our community to live a better life and put ourselves in their shoes."



Interview with Dr. Hala Al Najjar

By: Abdullah Al Qouz

Dr. Hala is the Chair of the First Year Experience (FYE) Program. She holds a M.Ed, Education degree from Fitchburg State College, Massachusetts, USA. On Fall 2015, AUK curriculum added UNIV 110 as part of the General Education requirements, substituting ENG-108, Public Speaking. The interview below will highlight the importance of the FYE curriculum and how students can benefit from it.

1) How do University100 classes benefit students?

Our course goes far beyond the traditional textbook learning! University100 is an experience and has so many benefits for incoming students. First and foremost, it helps students with the often difficult transition from high school to university; anything from how the human brain processes, retains and recalls information to the importance of being active and how to get involved in extracurricular activities on campus. The course equips students with essential skills and learning habits needed for success in a liberal arts classroom. Allowing students to explore and reinforce what thinking, working and social dispositions are needed for success at university and beyond; covering such skills such as higher-level thinking skills, communication skills and personal characteristics are needed to be a productive global citizen.

2) Does every student need them?

Yes! Every student needs to take a course like this to ensure success at university and beyond.

3) Is it possible to learn them without taking the class?

A lot of students believe that they already know the content our course covers. Ironically, that is one of the main objectives of the course; to teach students that they are here to learn and challenge their thinking.

We teach our students how to have an open mind and a willingness to learn or extend their knowledge. We also encourage our students to go beyond the classroom and use their knowledge to make a positive impact on their community. So, in my opinion, no, students need to take this course to reach their full potential.

4) What is the new subject UNIV110?

Univ110 is an exciting new course which will reinforce deeper concepts being taught in the UNIV100 by using a common reader. For example; students really enjoy learning about logical fallacies or love to discuss culture and diversity. The UNIV110 course will give students the opportunity to spend more time exploring and discussing these concepts while using common reading material as a springboard.

5) What makes University 110 different than the Public Speaking course (ENGL 108)?

Since almost everything is different from ENGL108 it would be easier to explain what will be the same; only the public speaking components. Students will have more opportunities to learn and reinforce communication skills that were being taught in the ENGL108.

6) What accomplishments do you see after students finish the UNIV 110 course?

Our faculties' favorite part of teaching this course is watching students evolve into mature, thoughtful and mindful students at the end of just four months. After completing the UNIV100 and UNIV110 classes, students gain a great deal of insight into themselves as learners and human beings. We see a sense of self accomplishment which makes them confident and independent students. One of the greatest accomplishments we see is when students realize that they have control over their success. Students also realize that they have the power to use their knowledge and skills to make our community better.

7) What are some common obstacles students go through (as freshmen) during their UNIV 100 classes?

There are many obstacles students may face and this could be an article in and of itself! However, it is very individual and differs from student to student. One of the most important obstacles students go through is taking responsibility for their actions in and out of the classroom. For example, many students have a lot of excuses and cannot see that they are responsible at the end of the day. If you have taken this course you will know that I am referring to internal locus of control vs. external locus of control. We see a lot of students who struggle with this, but by the end of the course they show great improvements!



Liberal Arts in the Words of a Student

By: Palwasha Shaikh

As a first year student, I found the idea of taking subjects that were not directly related to my major astonishing. After all, we all graduated from high-school thinking that we would only need to take subjects that lead us directly to our future occupation. Even our relatives and parents are often puzzled and ask, "Why are you taking Public Speaking? How is Public Speaking going to help you with Computer Engineering? It is just a waste of time and money." It is actually a very common misconception that general education courses are time-wasters. Instead, the liberal arts curriculum has many benefits and one should begin by understanding the meaning and objectives of the curriculum.

Curricula inspired by liberal arts aim at equipping us with a broad base of knowledge in multiple subject areas. It allows us to benefit from the collective wisdom of intellectuals in various fields. Developing critical thinking skills enables us to deeply and critically evaluate ideas throughout our personal, academic and professional lives, as these skills are both transferable and durable. Hence, liberal arts education encourages us to be independent thinkers who question and resist authority and manipulation by simply asking "Why?" It defines what truly means to be a

well-educated person. In order to be a well-rounded person and lead a successful life, one must have a basic knowledge of various global issues that are taught by the wide range of liberal arts subjects. We, as students, could be considered like lost explorers in a forest full of career choices. We might panic or procrastinate due to the misconception that majors are directly related to future careers. Liberal arts benefits such lost explorers by granting them freedom of choice. The choices allow us to explore our interests, values and abilities or skills. This process of making a choice first requires a deeper understanding of the "self."

A fully educated person acquires self-knowledge that assists them in progressing towards personal growth and fulfillment. The self's key dimensions are intellectual, emotional, social, ethical, physical, spiritual, vocational and personal that are interdependent. In order to take advantage of the college environment we need to complement academic learning with experiential learning. For example, besides reading from a book about leadership strategies, one should participate in leading a group or run for Student Council to truly apply and develop those skills. Liberal arts help individuals to step beyond themselves and connect with the wider world by adopting a synoptic perspective. They begin to see things from both the perspective of place (social-spatial perspective) and time (chronological perspective). It enables

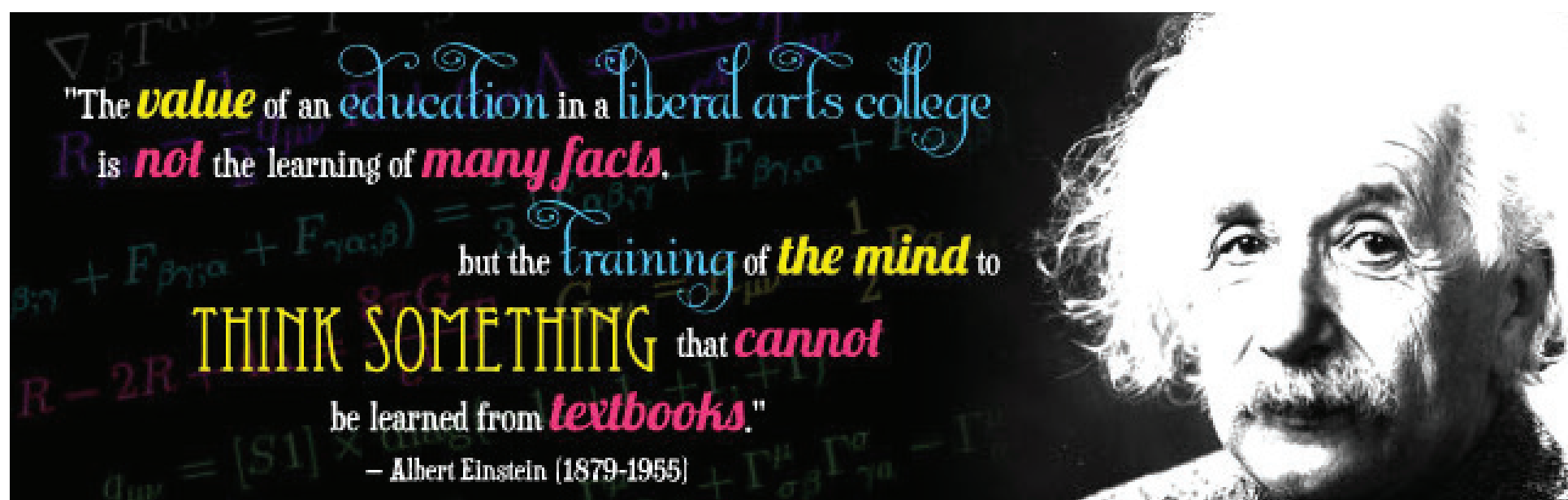
individuals to see themselves as part of a bigger picture, thus reducing feelings of isolation and promoting feelings of belongingness. The most important facet of liberal arts is preparing individuals to face real life by equipping them with life long learning skills. The ability of an individual to continue pursuing knowledge throughout life aids them in better adapting to the rapidly changing world. They are even able to effectively play different life roles. These lifelong learners with higher-level thinking skills that have graduated from American universities have a huge demand in the global marketplace.

Multi-national companies are actively seeking out potential employees most likely with a U.S. degree, as they want to take full advantage of the abilities they have developed through the liberal arts curriculum. Graduates from American institutions are considered "portable" because they can fit and adapt to their environment. These graduates do not only have factual knowledge of their field, but also have the skills to integrate knowledge in real life to solve complex problems. Liberal arts equip these future employees with communication, information-literacy, computation and higher-level thinking skills that are essential for the real professional world.

However, on a psychological level, companies might be attracted to U.S. degrees due to the positive ideas or images associated with the US and its culture. America is looked up to for

making influential political decisions that have a huge impact on the world. Additionally, American technology is highly coveted worldwide and the US is known for setting standards not only in technological fields but also in education and medical fields. Besides employers, students are also attracted to American Universities but for other reasons.

Media has played a pivotal role in portraying the US and its universities as an opportunity to create a better and happier life. Through movies and T.V. shows, American universities are depicted as liberal and fun in terms of the wide variety of co-curricular experiences or events and clubs it has to offer. Students envision themselves as having a great and memorable college experiences before they start working professionally. This desire of studying in American styled institutions or universities and the appreciation of American culture led people to demand such institutions, especially those who could not afford to travel abroad. A liberal arts education is highly recommended for people who want to be fully prepared to step into the real world. People often do not realize that the general courses act as a tool that shapes both their minds and personality. A liberal arts based curriculum is able to create a strong foundation before any academic major could be built upon it. Otherwise, one would not be able to cope with the pressures of higher education, and would emotionally and mentally relent.



By: Huda Alkotob & Farah Hamoudah

This month, for Humans of AUK, we present to you two unique individuals whom you may or may not have had the pleasure of meeting (yet). You might have seen them at Starbucks or in class. However, you most probably just passed by them in the hallway or parking and never really noticed. This piece is for those who sometimes zone out and stare at strangers and wonder what their story might be. (It's not creepy unless you're a creep).



Yaser Khaja

The very first time I interacted with this individual, I was just mean. It was finals week and I think he asked me for a pen or he was telling me about Huawei (the Chinese company that makes your Internet routers), either way, I gave him a good old-fashioned burst of mean. Unfortunately, it turns out he's a nice person and that made me feel bad. So here's to you, Yaser Khaja.

Yaser Khaja, age 25, is currently a Communications major here at AUK. His favorite color lies somewhere in the shades of blue to green. His interests include art, interior and graphic design, and Pokémon. His favorite Pokémon is Eevee (as of January 27 2016, because apparently this changes from time to time). Like any true 90's kid, he grew up loving Transformers and Powerpuff Girls. The most interesting place Yaser has been to is Russia. He explained to

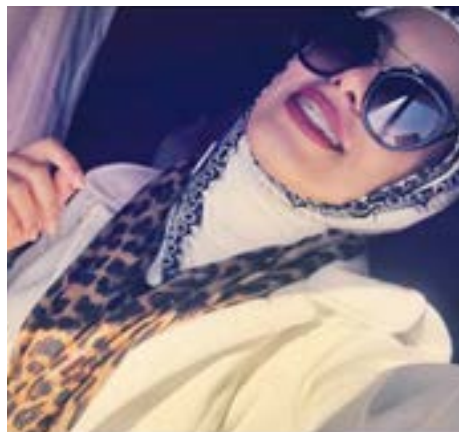
me that he loves the culture, and that it was so unexpected: the people are friendly, helpful, and kind, as opposed to the stereotypes that plague its people (you know which I'm talking about). After spending about 6-7 months over a period of 5 years in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, and near Finland, Yaser can now read Russian (although he admits he sometimes doesn't know the meaning of some of the words).

He was born in Washington during the Gulf War, and was raised in Kuwait. Yaser spoke to me about his family: it's huge and dates back to Jesus' era (no joke). He attended a government school, too. I asked him to tell me a random story from school and this is what he said: "Once, when I was in middle school, I wanted a new look. So I wore a black shirt on one side of my body and a white shirt on the other and tied them in the back. The look didn't last long because the school made me change back into the uniform." Personally, I think this is hilarious because it's probably the worst makeover I've ever heard of.

Some kids grow up having attended many schools. Yaser, on the other hand, has attended many higher education institutions, some of which to name: Kuwait University, Colorado State University, Aims Community College, Front Range Community College, and now (and previously for a couple semesters) the American University of Kuwait. He spent most of his time in the latter two if you were curious.

I asked him to share with me an item off his life bucket list, and he said to travel everywhere that's possible. He wants to talk to all the locals and know what their lives are like and how they think. This made me ask, if he could make his mark in the world, what would he do? Yaser would like to make a machine, which we've appropriately named 'The-Ability-To-Put-Yourself-In-Someone-Else's-Shoes-Machine.'

Yaser believes his biggest weakness is that he's "too nice," and his strength is most definitely that he's too humble. I've asked him to send a message to the rest of AUK, so I shall pass unto you his kind words and wisdom: "Love each other. Talk to each other. Don't be strangers. We're all in this together."



Maryam Ramadhan

I first encountered Maryam in the most essential class that anyone in AUK could take- University 100- and although first impressions aren't always very accurate, my first impression of her (a very positive one) was spot on! I remember thinking "Wow, she's got mad fashion skills!" Whether it was on or off campus, Maryam exuded a combination of poise, cheerfulness, balance and a refreshing sense of optimism. After later finding out that she is a graphic design, it all made perfect sense to me. Maryam's personality and her academic goals seem to me to be quite the compatible pair!

Growing up, Maryam had always tinkered around and fiddled with all sorts of computational devices available in the household. Her curious nature back then could only be satisfied by pressing buttons, gazing at screens and typing on a keyboard. As a child, Maryam absolutely adored Barney [don't we all, though?] Her favorite childhood show is, without a doubt, "The Power Rangers," which I can relate to on a spiritual level, and she constantly reminisces over the "good old" days when she used to spend hours playing board and card games with her family members, all

huddled around in a circle like a quaint mini-gathering ritual.

As for vocational and academic goals, Maryam aspires and desires to complete her Bachelor's degree in Graphic Design here at AUK with a perfect G.P.A and then she would like to further expand her intellect and ability by pursuing a Masters degree. When I asked her what her one wish would be, she simply answered: "I would wish for a happy life." She also explained to me that her greatest influence and her epitome of motivation and encouragement is her beloved father, as he has always guided and launched her confidently in the direction of her glittering dreams.

Even though Maryam has big and exciting plans for her future, she is still easily the mellowest and most laid-back person I know! There is joy in the mundane, after all. Her interests include watching TV series that feature heroic, timeless vigilantes like "Arrow" and "The Flash," as well as crime-fighting series with too cool for school detectives like "Hawaii Five-O." Her favorite book of all time is "Looking for Alaska," by John Green. Maryam also enjoys the funky tunes of R&B music, travelling and exploration, as well as the snug familial bonds in Ramadan breakfasts at dusk. She considers herself to be very fond of all kinds of sports, and is a particular fan of Apple products as well as Steve Jobs himself.

I am glad to have met such a person as Maryam during my first semester at AUK. I have learned a lot and gained a ton of support and enthusiasm. So, the next time you see her rushing through the halls or studying at the Library or eating at The Diner, be sure to say "Hi" and earn yourself a new valuable friend.

If you've liked this version of Humans of AUK or have someone you'd like to nominate for the next issue, please let us know by emailing voice@auk.edu.kw.

The Oil Issue!

By: Nazish S. Quraishi

Not far back, in the news we have constantly heard “What would happen if we run out of oil?” But none of us thought if the opposite something would take place, which did, right now! Oil prices are falling drastically and they are predicted to fall further in our immediate future.

Why is oil given so much importance you may ask? Oil is a primary raw material in building plastic. You may not know but oil is the main ingredient of fertilizer as well. So, the food we eat relies directly on oil. Whether you are moving in a car, having a sandwich or being warm in a cold evening; in short, it is everywhere. Our society is entirely dependent on oil, hence it is sometimes called the essential commodity of our modern economic system.

Did You Know?

About 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide each year. Factors that influence oil prices: supply and demand are two basic factors that influence oil prices. But if we dig in deeper we find other forces that indulge in deciding the oil prices. First, the growing importance of oil in our economy. Second, emergence of monopoly positions. When capitalism is in full action, multinational companies, merchants and even individual investors can obtain positions in various parts of the production which allows them to set a price for their part of process and thus impact the overall price. Third, the collection of geo-political games. For instance, nationalization of oil companies in a country allowing it to control production and supply which again impacts the price. Recently we have seen birth of fourth force that is burning oil, the cause of global warming.

Why has the price of oil been dropping? The time when major oil consumer (U.S.) discovered they could produce their own oil which led to a decrease in demand of OPEC’S oil supply in U.S.’s market and forced OPEC members to suddenly compete for Asian markets in order to find a new home for their oil, which in turn forced producers to lower their oil prices. Simultaneously, Canadian and Iraqi oil production and exports are rising year after year. In addition, irrespective of internal economic problems Russia is facing, it manages to keep producing.

However, there are signs that production is falling in the United States and some other oil producers because of the drop in exploration investments. But the pace with which oil production is being cut down is not fast enough, especially when Mexico and Canada are continuing to build new projects. If we look on the demand side, the economies of Europe and developing countries are weak leading to reduction in demand for fuel. Moreover, recent concern about global warming is making it difficult for oil industry to sustain since consumption of oil is not considered to be environmentally clean.

What is the say of OPEC on this issue? Members are divided into two on the basis of their strategy to solve this issue. Countries like Iran, Venezuela, Ecuador and Algeria are trying to persuade other members to cut down on production so that a desirable situation is retained while countries like Saudi Arabia, U.A.E, Kuwait and other allies are refusing to do so. The mentality of the latter countries is that if they cut down on production, prices will rise eventually benefitting their competitors and loss of their share in market. Besides this, Iraq is producing more and soon Iran is going to share the same stage with other exporter as it is predicted to become major exporter, which can lead to more competition.

Actions that Kuwait should take to counteract this issue: Kuwait is considered to be a periphery state as it relies on oil revenues to form 93% of its income which is not an attribute of a developed country. In order for Kuwait to become a well-developed country

that enjoys a stable economy, it should get rid of its obstinate attitude and instead cut down on its production, as Kuwait is losing revenues on a daily basis and is facing huge budget deficit of more than 8 billion KWD.

Although there has been an initiated cost cutting process, KPC has to change its culture, introduce or bring on new companies and adopt new ideas for cost savings. It must follow the best practices of international oil companies in this regard. In addition, Kuwait should focus on its upcoming project “Kuwait 2030: Solar City” as it promotes clean energy production which is likely to get popular in near future.



Sparks of Creativity is a space where students, faculty and staff can share anything their thoughts lead them to: a poem, a story, a sketch, or an experience that deserves a passive-aggressive rant about life and how much it hates you. English and Arabic entries are welcome.

The Anonymous Pessimist

I'm the black paradox existing within my soul
The contradictions of my words,,
and the pure disappointment sculptured into being
I'm the shallow surface of a sea,
and the clashing waves on its shore.
I'm the broken seashell lying on the colossal sandy fragments.
I'm everything I can never be, all the shards of a fractured persona.
I'm all the things to be mocked on, merely an enjoyable sight to be ridiculed.
I'm the nothingness munching on innocence,
and the selfishness overcoming every other sense.
I'm the destructive insecurity of confidence, and the mind-numbing reality
I'm everything I never was, never complete.
I'm the flaw of the system, and the evident imperfection of the tree.
I'm the stuck-out branch, recklessly shoved around in senseless manner.
I'm the living flower, who's stomped on with no clemency whatsoever.
I'm my shattered heart, and the liar molded from the society's wordings.
I'm everything I claimed not to be.
I'm the melodramatic nuisance, and the constant

disappointment.
I'm the missing piece of life, the torn jigsaw puzzle. I'm the mess of humanity, and the absurdity of living.
I resemble everything unclear, where fogginess overcomes everything else.
I'm the unstitched clothing lying on a haphazard bed.
I'm the held-off wing of a soaring bird, and it's ultimate path to failure.
I'm the constant of hesitancy and the master of insecurities.
I'm everything I wished to never be, the replica of hatred and disgust.
I'm the sister-in law of the monster residing in the deepest chambers.
I'm the stale coffee, with residues of crusty bread.
I am everything I never wished to be,
I am the deadly poison slithering its way to the most functional yet rustic organ, but I am also the essence of oxygen pumping through the aortic vein.
I'm the undefeated heart beat of life.
I've grown to be everything I never wished to be, but never have I been the tattered heart that stopped its rhythm.
And for that, I shall stand hefty and mighty, against all the odds of being.
But in the end, I am nothing ruthless I claim to be.

Love

By: Reem Jaber,
Level 2, IEP

Love is a red garnet diamond.
It smells like garden of roses that just start to bloom.
It sounds like the conch shell noise when you put it near to your ears.
It feels like butterflies in your stomach.
It tastes like red velvet with strawberry filling melting in your mouth.

Barefoot Running

By: Abdullah M. Al Shammari, Level 2, IEP.

Barefoot Running
Strolling barefoot down rough dirt ways.
Kicking up dust storms with every stride.
Testing the depth of it.
I discovered solace in the torment of every sharp stone
Knowing the following wouldn't hurt as awful.
Your skin needs to grow tough.

Love

By :Fatima mir Ahmadi ,
Level 2, IEP

Love
Love is a sweet taste that melts softly in your mouth.
It is the sun rise in the middle of the sea.
It feels like there a strong storm of happiness inside of your heart.
It sounds as a wonderful melody play's all the time..
It smells as unknown
Flowers.
grownup
by two lovers..

Peace

By: Ahmed Zein, Level 2, IEP

I remember the days when I used to smell flowers in my country,
Listen to the Children's voices while they play and laugh,
Feel the love between all the people
I used to touch the sky and come back down from my joy
But now, all I see is blood...

Marriage

By: Sara Abdullah Alhasawi,level 2,IEB

Marriage is a dream to build.
A life to share
One day we will sit side by side we will think
Back over the years. Taking your hands, your heart, and Your everything it will be my forever.
Marriage is a dream to build.
A life to share
No matter what happened, no matter what's thrown our way
We will be together at every moment in our life, breath together
Our hearts beat together.
Every day won't be a dream but we are
In this together because our spirit is one.
Marriage is a dream to build.
A life to share
Is a ring. as you place this wedding ring onto my finger
You become my lover, my soul mate, my companion
My love for you is like this wedding ring has a start
Has middle, but definitely has no end. As it tells the World that I choose you.

Money

By: Loulwah Almutairi,
level 2, IEP

Money comes now, and then,
No one is sure exactly when.
But, I have a question.
Does everyone who has money feel like heaven?
It is completely wrong.
Many rich people die.
No one knows why.
Bored!
Sad!
How much ever money they have.
Money isn't everything.

Hope

By: Farah Ali Edhbayah,
Level 2, IEP

It looks like a poor child smiling because of a small piece of bread.
It feels like sitting on the top of the soft clouds.
It tastes like a piece of cotton candy melting in your mouth.
It sounds like a child's laugh.
It smells like grass after rain.

Happiness

By: Nourah Al-Ibrahim,
Level 2, IEP

It tastes like eating a delicious food.
It looks like a white room.
It feels like having another chance to live.
It sounds like listening to good news.
It smells like a perfume.

Life

By: Ghala, Level 2, IEP

Open your eyes and see the beauty around you
Open your heart to everyone
Open your mind to the whole word to the future
Open your hand to help others
Open your mouth to tell the truth

Discrimination

By: Mohammad Al Osaimi,
Level 2, IEP.

Discrimination is a sly fox
it moves very slowly to catch the vulnerable animals
it lives in the wilderness the wearisome animals think that they are safe they are not.

Monthly Dose of New Series

By: Rouaa Diab

The Mentalist

Not a very new show, but surely one worth the recommendation. If you are into smart and thought-provoking investigation shows, this is definitely the one for you! This show does not waste a minute, by the first minute of the first episode, this show would have you hooked.



Arrow

You will often see a superhero series on this list. This is mainly because superhero series are the shows that grab the attention of several diverse groups of people, of different ages, interests, gender etc. This is most certainly one of the top on the list of superhero series. It contains all kinds of humor, heart-breaking drama and heart-warming romance. You are in for an emotional ride with this superhero show!



Sherlock

The name itself should make you want to watch this show. This show is obviously about the greatest "detective" of all time, Sherlock Holmes. No, it is not a mistake that I put quotation marks around the word "detective," if you watch the show, you will know why I did so. This is a classic tale told in a more modern style, definitely a must-watch whether you are not into timeless characters or not.



Why do we Celebrate Valentine's Day?

By: Rouaa Diab

Let's talk about one of the most anticipated celebratory days of the year, Valentine's Day. Flowers, chocolate, cute notes, or anything that is too cheesy to be given on regular days. But, why do we celebrate this day? Other than it being an excuse to spoil our loved ones and tap into our inner romantics. Truth is, Valentine's Day was created in order to honor Saint Valentine, hence the name, St. Valentine's Day. Legend has it, that a priest who serves in Rome during the third century, when Emperor Claudius II reigned, believed that men who were single were better soldiers than men with wives and families, and decided to legalize marriage for soldiers. Valentine thought of this as an unjust act, therefore he would marry young lovers in secret. Once Valentine's actions were discovered, he was sentenced to death, and Valentine's Day was created to honor him.

But just like many other celebratory days, there are many legends circulating around about how Valentine's Day came to be. I chose to write about this one because the idea that it is unjust to allow lovers to get married for the sake of war makes for a good reason for us as individuals to spread and show off our love for our loved ones in any way we want.

Here are a few fun facts related to Valentine's Day:

- Valentine's Day is the second largest card sending time of the year, after Christmas.
- Physicians of the 1800s recommended to their patients to eat chocolate in order to ease the pain of the loss of a loved one.
- 73% of people who buy flowers on Valentine's Day are men.

Movie recommendations:

- Valentine's Day.
- Love Actually.
- He's Just Not That Into You.
- A Walk to Remember.
- The Notebook.
- Pride and Prejudice.



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