

4th



STRATEGIC PLAN

(SP-IV)
2022-2027

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

MICHEL MAWAD
PRESIDENT

Guided by its mission, values, and vision, the Lebanese American University (LAU) has been historically committed to academic excellence, delivering transformative American-style education to the people of Lebanon, the MENA region, and beyond.

In simple terms, LAU is a leading force in preparing the next generation of citizens, with strong leadership skills and unshackled talents. It employs a focused and dedicated faculty body who strives to achieve academic excellence by building on LAU's momentum on all academic fronts. LAU has a remarkably reliable, dynamic, and committed staff with a strong sense of support. The University also provides one of the best healthcare services in the region, utilizing advanced technologies that are scarce elsewhere.



In view of the rising formidable challenges facing Lebanon and the world, accompanied by the rapid changes brought about by the fourth industrial revolution, it is imperative that LAU continue to ensure its relevance in addressing local, regional, and international demands and challenges.

As presented herein, SP-IV outlines the recommended path for LAU to navigate a future loaded with uncertainties due to COVID-19, and the setbacks of local and global economy, as well as a possible looming recession. In the likelihood that the future will not be a linear expansion of neither the past nor the present, SP-IV, which is intended to serve as LAU's roadmap to the year 2027, will set the university's future to be far more competitive, scholarly visible, impactful, and globalized institute of higher education. Simply put, SP-IV builds on the accomplishments of SP-III to impart an academic paradigm shift that eliminates borders and positions LAU on the global academic and healthcare services map.

This document outlines the achievements of SP-III despite the heavy toll of the October 17 uprising, the meltdown of the Lebanese economy, and the global COVID-19 crisis.

Within this context, SP-IV provides strategic directions through a set of defined goals vital to ensure LAU's future success. SP-IV is a dynamic, yet flexible plan that can accommodate to potential national, regional and global changes. The guiding principles of this plan are intended to provide guidance and aspirations to navigate in exciting new directions.



EVOLUTION

OF SP-IV

Preparations for the 2022-2027 strategic plan began at the BOT Strategy Committee meeting in 2021 where the challenges that faced LAU due to the economic, political, and educational sector crises were examined, and where a vision for the future of the University that would allow it to continue to fulfill its academic and social mission was developed.

Following intensive deliberations, the Strategy Committee recommended strategic objectives on engagement, learning and research that would establish the basis for the development of the new 2022 - 2027 strategic plan. SP-IV was subsequently transformed to actionable steps by President Mawad and Provost Nasr, with the formation of four major pillars SP-IV:

- Pillar I – Enhancement of Scholarly Footprint and Visibility;
- Pillar II - Education for Impact;
- Pillar III - Innovation to Inspire; and
- Pillar IV - Advancement and Education beyond Boundaries.

Over 30 members and facilitation chairs, including faculty, staff, deans, directors and senior administrators have substantially contributed to the development of SP-IV with a pivotal role played by the Council of Deans (CD) and the President's Cabinet (PC). Each pillar's team crafted an engagement strategy to ensure that views and concerns of stakeholders across the institution were well reflected in the strategic plan of the university. Between November 2021 and February 2022, all relevant stakeholders at LAU were invited to actively participate in a number of focus groups, surveys, and one-on-one discussions and consultations. The plan's initial draft, on a pillar by pillar basis, was presented and discussed by the CD, PC, and then surveyed for faculty feedback. It was finally shared with Pillar-chairs and SP-working groups to discuss and adopt proposed recommendations that included ironing out discrepancies and commonalities among the four pillars. In short, everyone at LAU has been working studiously to craft an innovative strategic plan that would ensure a healthy growth of the institution.

FROM THEN TO NOW:

SP-III MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

While SP-II had an academic focus, SP-III was intended to expand the horizon of LAU in order to attain a more sustainable position of local eminence, regional leadership, and a global footprint. Many of these initiatives were realized; yet others fell short of attainment mainly due to the local economic crisis, the October 17 uprising, and the global COVID pandemic. On the one hand, this confluence of calamities constituted a hindrance for internal and external initiatives. On the other hand, however, and despite these deterring factors, LAU has successfully reached a number of key landmarks summarized below.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Establishment of the Center for Innovative Learning (CIL) promoting excellence in teaching, learning and assessment through technologies and high-impact pedagogies.

Implementation of a new school-based evaluation systems with major improvements to course evaluation rubrics to emphasize the importance of teaching as part of LAU's core mission.

Introduction of team teaching, digital infrastructure & acquisition, and improvement of online education as part of adopting innovative pedagogical approaches.

Implementation of innovative pedagogical practices in numerous instances across schools such as online courses, high quality online degrees, adapting learning methods and educational technologies, and experiential learning through the use of better laboratories, virtual reality, improving capstone projects and partnerships, etc.

Implementation of adequate IT infrastructure and support for the online platforms.

Continuation of building awareness about academic integrity through ongoing campaigns highlighting Student Code of Conduct.

Improvement of faculty evaluation by adopting assessment technologies that evaluate the learning process and students' performances in internships across Lebanon and abroad.

Improvements in course evaluation process with emphasis on teaching effectiveness, which was used in the "Teaching Excellence Award" and in faculty annual evaluations and promotions.

Expansion of research output by providing support to faculty members through the creation of a full-time statistician line.

Launch of agreements with professional providers of scientific and academic editing services.

Establishment of a strategic research award to financially and periodically reward impactful research published in high quality outlets.

Recruitment of research-active postdoctoral fellows and well-established research faculty in strategically important fields that enhance internal and international research collaborations.

Improvement in quality of graduate education following the implementation of the Graduate Program Scholarship (GPS), which is aimed at attracting outstanding students into research active Master's programs thereby engaging a larger number of faculty members in research supervision.

Establishment of a competitive student research award in five broad research fields that encompass all schools at LAU.

Development of two online graduate programs: The Global MBA in Business Administration and the Master's in Computer Sciences as part of establishing external degree and non-degree programs and branch campuses outside Lebanon.
o Establishment of partnerships with reputable local universities such as the University of the Holy Spirit (USEK), and Notre Dame University (NDU).

Creation of opportunities for corporate training at LAU through AKSOB faculty along with LAU consult and CEP.

Establishment of faculty reward system for those who demonstrate alignment with university entrepreneurship and innovation strategy.



CHARTING THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR 2022 - 2027

Over the next five years, the Lebanese American University is committed to the following four Strategic priorities

Enhance the Scholarly Footprint and Visibility

Pillar I - Driven by its pursuit of research excellence, LAU shall embark on a journey to lift the impact of its research and scholarly activities. In this pillar, LAU shall consider focusing and sharpening its research areas, enhancing the university reputation and visibility, promoting strategic interdisciplinary research, and improving university and subject rankings.

Educate for Impact

Pillar II - Guided by the urgency to prepare our students for the rapid global transformations resulting from the fourth industrial revolution and numerous political issues as presented by the UN SDGs, LAU shall continuously assess and improve its programs starting with the LAU Insignia up to all the existing programs while proposing new ones (undergrad, grad, in-person, hybrid, and online)

Innovate to Inspire

Pillar III - Driven by the continuous change in the way our students learn and the implications for teaching, LAU shall build a culture that promotes innovative approaches to education; incentivizes educators to embrace disruptive thinking; and inspires students to become future leaders of innovation.

Advance & Educate Beyond Boundaries

Pillar IV - Driven by the current crisis and the fact that LAU is becoming a large institution relative to our shrinking local economy, the University shall establish a meaningful and sustainable presence beyond the Lebanese borders through offering distance education options, creating branch campuses, and cooperating with partner institutions in host countries. LAU will also seek to solidify its external relationships in particular with large local and regional businesses through the LAU Industrial Hub and a business to business approach that will improve student recruitment and job placement as well as enhance the University's continuing education arm.



LAU POST 2022 - 2027

STRATEGIC PLAN

The above four strategic pillars of the plan can best be viewed as main bifurcations converging into one mainstream: namely the positioning of LAU by the end of this strategic plan as a leading institution of higher education with local, regional, and global footprint. This in turn will be realized by the increased magnitude and impact of its research and scholarly activities, preparedness of students for the rapid global transformations ensuing from the fourth industrial revolution, embracement of disruptive thinking that promotes innovative approaches to education, and the expansion of its academic and professional footprint into the region and beyond.

The future for which SP-IV will prepare LAU is bounded to grow into a powerhouse by advancing research for global impact, developing new enterprises, and mushrooming into multiple higher education landscapes. By 2027 LAU will emerge as a global powerhouse institution envisaged for an era of rapid change.

LAU community has come together to envision LAU for the 2027 and beyond.

This is a plan that will pave the way for our institution to continue to thrive and attend to all arising challenges of tomorrow that we foresee today.

Today, we set goals to achieve and actions to undertake and foremost, we challenge ourselves to bring those notions to fruition while staying focused, committed, and accountable to one another.

This plan is the catalyst for the fulfillment of our vision and aspirations. It builds on our legacy of being ambitious, taking risk, and embracing change. With our unwavering perseverance, this plan is bounded to unlock knowledge and innovation which in turn will shape the future of LAU, the region and beyond. This is our fourth strategic plan that is set to realize our dreams and imaginations for a better tomorrow.

APPENDIX A

Strategic Planning Committees

Pillar 1

Samer **Saab**
Haidar **Harmanani**
Mirvat **El Sibaii**
Guy **Assaker**
John **Khoury**
Andre **Megharbane**
Hagop **Yacoubian**

Pillar 2

Cathia **Jenainati**
Elise **Salem**
Caesar **Abi Shdid**
Rula **Diab**
Salpie **Djoundorian**
Roy **Kanbar**
Rony **Khnaizer**
Melissa **Plourde Khoury**

Pillar 3

Sola **Bahous**
Barbar **Akle**
Rima **Bahous**
Moustapha **Harb**
Farid **Jreidini**
Jordan **Srou**
Robin **Taleb**

Pillar 4

Elie **Badr**
Lina **Karam**
Tony **Zreik**
Roy **Majdalani**
Michel **Khoury**
Wassim **Shahin**
Costantine **Daher**
Sima **Tokajian**
Barbar **Akle**
Charbel **Azar**
Charles **Abou Rjeily**

University Bodies

President's Cabinet

Council of Deans

Finance Office

Department of Institutional Research and Assessment