



VP of Finance and Chief Financial Officer Position & Candidate Specification

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OVERVIEW

The Lebanese American University ("LAU") is a nationally and internationally recognized not-for-profit, private American university established in 1924, chartered by the Board of Regents in New York, and licensed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Beirut. The University maintains an enrolment of 8,000+ students, 1,600+ faculty and staff, two distinct operating campuses in Beirut and Byblos, Lebanon, a branch campus in New York City, and an academic medical center, which includes two teaching hospitals. The University comprises seven schools serving undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral/professional practice students across more than 60 degree-granting programs.

What makes LAU unique and special is its mission. The Lebanese American University is committed to academic excellence, student centeredness, civic engagement, the advancement of scholarship, the education of the whole person, and the formation of leaders in a diverse world.

As a result, the University embodies the heart, soul, and history of the country and region. Its survival and success, despite periodic conflicts and economic challenges, have strengthened the resolve of the University's people and provided a beacon of hope for youth who seek to better themselves and their communities. Adhering to the highest standards of American higher education, LAU is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) and recognized by the New York State Education Department. This acknowledgment affirms the University's commitment to providing a rigorous academic experience that is both enriching and globally recognized. LAU employs the credit-based American system. The language of instruction is English except for courses in Arabic literature and foreign languages. The academic calendar is based on two semesters: fall (August through December) and spring (January through May). A module is also offered in the summer. Coursework is measured in credit hours. The undergraduate curriculum includes a common base of liberal arts courses for all students.

The University's mission is rooted in the principles of tolerance, diversity, and ethical leadership. LAU prepares students to contribute positively to both local and global communities. Through its dedication to student-centered learning and community service, LAU continues to uphold its tradition of nurturing leaders who are ready to face the challenges of an ever-changing world.

CAMPUSES

LAU has two campuses in Lebanon: Beirut and Byblos. Steeped in history, both cities still bear traces of their ancient origins yet are distinctly modern. Through their libraries, athletic facilities, residence halls, theatres, laboratories, computer centers, and academic support services, the two campuses provide state-of-the-art infrastructure and a wealth of services that enrich the experiences of students, faculty, and staff. The Beirut campus, the University's first, is located in the Ras Beirut neighbourhood within steps of the Mediterranean Sea, with 15 buildings ranging from traditional, Ottoman-style architecture to ultra-modern structures. The Beirut campus is a green gem inside a bustling city and is valued by the LAU community, and indeed the nation, for evoking Lebanon's heritage.

The Byblos campus, which began development in 1987, represents for many LAUers a combination of modernity, style, and cutting-edge learning. The campus, located near the ancient Phoenician port, has 20 buildings, all constructed with sustainability as well as aesthetics in mind. The campus is home to the health sciences schools as well as the School of Engineering and its high-tech laboratories.

In addition to the two campuses, LAU has expanded its facilities with a strategic presence in Manhattan, New York, with a 2,400-square-meter academic headquarters. Since 2014, this center has been offering courses in Arabic and holding cultural events. This center was recently licensed as a degree-granting campus.

KEY LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY FACTS

The University's significant impact is evident through its numbers: over 54,000 alumni across 78 nationalities and 90 countries, more than 9,000 students, and a vast array of extracurricular activities supported by 1,140 full-time faculty and staff.

LAU's commitment to accessibility and diversity has been demonstrated in the midst of Lebanon's financial crisis during which the University delivered a \$100M financial aid program, unprecedented in the nation's history, so that no eligible student would be turned away on the basis of need. 80% of LAU students benefit from one or more forms of financial aid. Through its endowments, LAU is able to rely on a safety net to address unforeseen issues and access additional resources to support vital areas of the University's development.

Today, the Lebanese American University comprises seven distinct schools:

- **School of Arts and Sciences** offers a diverse range of programs in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics.
- **School of Architecture and Design** focuses on innovative and creative design disciplines.
- **LAU Adnan Kassar School of Business** provides comprehensive business education, emphasizing ethical leadership and global business practices.
- **School of Engineering** offers engineering programs that blend technical skills with hands-on learning.
- **LAU Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine** provides medical education and training, emphasizing patient care and research.
- **LAU Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing** focuses on nursing education and practice, preparing students for healthcare professions.
- **School of Pharmacy** offers programs in pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences.

LAU MEDICAL CENTERS

- LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital

LAU's expansion into the field of medical education was buttressed by the acquisition of a majority shareholder position in the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital. This large medical campus in the heart of Beirut is designed to support LAU's schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy while providing clinical facilities and services to the community.

The hospital is an Academic Medical Center housing the students of three Schools at LAU, the Medical School, the Pharmacy School, and the Nursing School as well as the Nutrition program and the Psychology program covering: internships, trainings and residencies/fellowships programs.

Today, the hospital comprises 181 beds (regular, critical care, one-day surgery and medicine, emergency and dialysis) with 731 employees, and a medical staff of 340 physicians (108 full-timers and 116 part-timers) and 250 Residents/Fellows.

- LAU Medical Center-Saint John's Hospital

Inaugurated in 2021, the LAU Medical Center-Saint John's Hospital in Jounieh (close to the Byblos area) adds an enormous value to medical practice in an important part of the country. Managed and operated by LAU, it is the only university medical center in that region.

The hospital has a capacity of 54 beds, covering regular care, critical care, and one-day surgery. Also, the hospital has a very busy Emergency Room with 10 cubicles. Currently, our services are supported by 281 employees with a prospect to be increased to 300 as its services expand. Our medical staff of 170

physicians consists of 80 full-time and 90 part-time doctors. Some of the full-time physicians provide medical services at both medical centers. Additionally, the hospital hosts 30 Residents and Fellows.

CULTURE

In both planning for its future as well as conducting its ongoing daily activities, LAU seeks to act in a manner that is guided by a deep-rooted sense of shared ethical values and aspirations. Built upon this foundation, Lebanese American University:

- Draws its fundamental inspiration from the devotion of its Presbyterian Founders to always seek the Truth, respect human dignity, promote gender equality, and be inclusive;
- Provides educational opportunities as one university with multiple campuses, each with distinctive gifts and attributes;
- Commits to academic and service excellence throughout the institution;
- Demonstrates dignity and respect for and from the Board, faculty, staff, and students in word and in deed;
- Celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of all members of the LAU community;
- Succeeds because its people take pride of ownership and are held accountable for their actions;
- Works together as an extended family community that reflects the highest ethical and moral standards;
- Enables individuals to find their own spiritual and personal fulfillment while ever sensitive to the changing global village in which they live; and
- Promotes social connectedness of the students to the country of Lebanon and encourages their commitment to social justice and democracy.

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



Dr. Chaouki T. Abdallah

Chaouki T. Abdallah became the tenth President of LAU on October 1, 2024. Most recently, he served as Executive Vice President for Research at The Georgia Institute of Technology ("Georgia Tech"), from September 2018 until September 2024.

Under Dr. Abdallah's leadership, research expenditures at Georgia Tech increased significantly from approximately \$850 million at the start of his term in 2018 to \$1.45 billion as of December 2023. Dr. Abdallah previously served as the 22nd President of the University of New Mexico. His efforts there contributed to an 8% increase in first-year student retention and a 125% increase in four-year graduation rates. A prominent expert in control theory and systems engineering, he has authored eight books, serving as co-editor for three of them and co-author for five. Additionally, he has contributed to more than 400 peer-reviewed articles. Dr. Abdallah is deeply committed to guiding students and has personally mentored 36 Master's degree and 16 Ph.D. candidates.

Dr. Abdallah studied at the Faculté d'ingénierie of the Université Saint-Joseph in Lebanon before continuing his studies in the United States at Youngstown State University in Ohio, where he obtained a Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.) degree in 1981. He earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech in 1982 and 1988, respectively.

The Vice President (VP) of Finance and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Lebanese American University will serve as a strategic partner and trusted adviser to the president, the provost, the senior leadership team, and the board of trustees. As the CFO of the University, s/he will provide guidance and leadership to ensure the efficient and effective stewardship of LAU's resources.

With multiple direct reports, the CFO is a highly visible leader managing all finance functions, including multi-year budget planning, forecasting, and reporting, as well as endowment investment oversight and treasury operations (including credit facilities and related rating agencies interactions). Additionally, the CFO will sit in the intersection across essential operational and administrative areas such as facilities management, human resources (HR), legal, IT, and LAU Medical Centers, ensuring alignment with both short- and long-term strategic objectives of the LAU.

As a key institutional leader and advocate for the LAU's mission, the CFO will inspire bold and creative thinking, provide wise counsel, make tough decisions, and demonstrate a strong commitment to the value of a higher education. The successful candidate should have the ability to engage empathetically and collaborate effectively with various internal and external stakeholders. A proactive and forward-thinking mindset for engaging with the market and fostering internal partnerships, while strictly adhering to governance and controls, is essential.

This position is based in Lebanon.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Reports to Dr. Chaouki T. Abdallah, President of Lebanese American University

Direct reports Chief Investment Officer
Assistant VP for Finance — Operations
Assistant VP for Finance — Corporate Affairs
Executive Director of Budget
Executive Director of Finance (Business Development and Health)

Other key relationships Provost and Provost's Office
Chief of Staff and General Counsel
Board of Trustees
VP for Business Development and Global Affairs
EVP for Health Affairs and Hospitals' CEOs
VP for Administration
Senior academic and administrative leaders
External auditors,
Investment managers, bankers, and rating agencies

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Financial Planning and Strategy:**
 - In partnership with the President, develop and implement comprehensive financial plans aligned with the LAU's mission, vision, and long-term goals.
 - Anticipate financial challenges and opportunities and develop plans to support the institution in addressing both.
- **Budgeting and Resource Allocation:**
 - Lead and facilitate the annual budgeting process, working collaboratively with LAU leadership to allocate resources effectively.
 - Monitor and manage the LAU's budget, ensuring fiscal discipline and adherence to financial targets.
- **Financial Reporting and Analysis:**
 - Prepare and present accurate financial reports, statements, and analysis to the President, Board of Trustees, and other stakeholders.
 - Communicate financial insights to guide decision-making and inform strategic planning.
- **Risk Management and Compliance:**
 - Implement robust internal controls and risk management procedures to safeguard the LAU's financial assets.
 - Ensure compliance with Lebanese and the US financial regulations.
- **Treasury and Cash Management:**
 - Oversee cash flow management, investment strategies, and banking relationships in Lebanon and the US. Optimize cash reserves and short-term investments to meet the school's operational needs.
- **Financial Audit and Tax Filings:**
 - Coordinate financial audits with external auditors in Lebanon and the US and manage the timely submission of required tax filings and financial reports.
- **Grants and Funding Management:**
 - Monitor grants, donations, and other funding sources to maximize revenue opportunities. Collaborate with development teams to pursue new funding opportunities and ensure proper allocation of restricted funds.
- **Financial Forecasting:**
 - Develop and maintain financial forecasting models to assess the school's financial health and predict future financial needs.
- **Team Development:**
 - Provide operational leadership, build and develop strong teams, including best-in-class professional development opportunities for staff.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Diversify and grow LAU's revenue base to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Establish a robust multi-year budget framework aligned with LAU's strategic priorities for LAU and all its affiliates including the university medical centers.
- Build and empower a high-performing finance team to elevate institutional capability.
- Deliver transparent, accessible financial information to support informed decision-making across LAU.
- Foster a culture of collaboration and shared accountability across academic and administrative functions.

The ideal candidate will be an accomplished finance leader with notable executive experience. They will have had positive, sustained impact where collaboration, influence management, and change management were critical to success. In addition, they will have a track record that includes:

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Finance Experience

15+ years of experience in financial leadership roles in a complex environments, with exposure to a broad range of financial, operational, and risk management principles and practices and different legal jurisdictions.

Relevant Sector Experience

Proven leadership experience in higher education, the non-profit, philanthropic sectors is preferred; however, candidates from other sectors will be considered if they bring relevant financial and operational expertise, along with a demonstrated commitment to understanding the distinct nature of university governance, culture, and decision-making.

Technical and Analytical Acumen

Strong analytical skills, technical capabilities, and in-depth knowledge of a broad range of financial systems, risk management principles and practices, including enterprise-wide systems.

Academic Qualifications

Strong academic credentials required, including a preference for an M.B.A. or a related graduate degree(s) or CPA.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Driving Results

- Is a metrics-driven leader focused on efficiency, effectiveness, and continuous improvement, always in support of LAU's mission, encouraging innovation, and intentional about long-term sustainability.
- Works to overcome obstacles and/or plans for contingencies.
- Checks own and others' work against required quality standards and recalibrates as needed.
- Reviews performance and progress on a regular basis through metrics and KPIs to ensure the team is achieving required results.

Collaborating and Influencing

- Engages a broad range of stakeholders in discussions around the financial objectives and challenges of the organization, conveying a strong sense of both financial and mission-oriented goals.
- Coalition-builder; interacts, communicates, collaborates, and builds consensus.
- Translates complex financial concepts and goals to individuals at all levels including finance and non-finance managers.
- Committed to the LAU culture, which values the primacy of its Presbyterian Founders to always seek the Truth, respect human dignity, promote gender equality, and be inclusive.

OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- **Strong Intellect:** A highly intelligent individual with the capacity to integrate analytical reasoning, creativity, and sound judgment. Quickly comprehends complex issues and manages multiple initiatives concurrently with ease.
- **Culturally Attuned:** Utilizes effective communication strategies that resonate with the diverse cultural landscape of Lebanon, championing organizational objectives and engaging stakeholders meaningfully.
- **Impeccable Integrity:** Exemplifies the highest ethical standards and fosters an environment of trust by acting fairly and consistently, honouring commitments, and providing clear reasoning behind decisions.

APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

Lebanese American University is eager to receive input that will help it build a pool of talented individuals. To that end, the Search Committee welcomes your comments, inquiries, applications, and nominations, which may be submitted via the confidential search mailbox: LAU-VPFinance@spencerstuart.com.