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Final Report | 2014



Institutional **SELF STUDY**

In preparation for reaccreditation by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges

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American Presbyterian missionary Sarah L. Smith establishes the first school for girls in the Ottoman Empire. This early effort set the stage for further development of girls' education, leading up to the American School for Girls (1904).

1835



The American Junior College for Women (AJCW) is founded, with a class of eight students.

1924



The cornerstone of LAU's oldest building, Sage Hall, is laid and the college is moved to its present location.

1933



The name of the college is changed to Beirut College for Women (BCW).

1948-1949



The Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York grants BCW a provisional charter, allowing it to offer the B.A., A.A. and A.S. degrees.



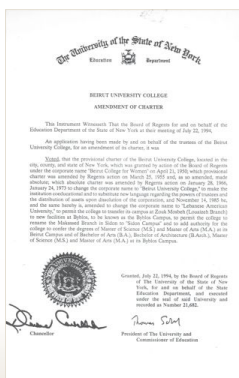
Successive buildings are completed and named in honor of early leaders: Frances Irwin, Winifred Shannon and James Nicol.

1950

LAU TIMELINE 1835 - 2014

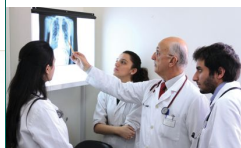
1996

The Lebanese government officially recognizes the new name and status.



1999

The Lebanese Government grants LAU a license to operate a medical school and a nursing school.



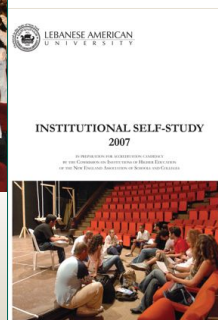
2002

The Doctor of Pharmacy program becomes the only one outside the United States to earn accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education.



2005

LAU embarks on a five-year strategic plan based on five pillars: excellence in academic and other facets of university life, student-centeredness, increased role of alumni, promotion of LAU as a major learning center in the region, and effective use of financial resources.



2009

LAU acquires majority holdings of Rizk Hospital, and begins developing the Lebanese American University Medical Center-Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH).



LAU is granted full accreditation by The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).



The Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine welcomes its first class of students.



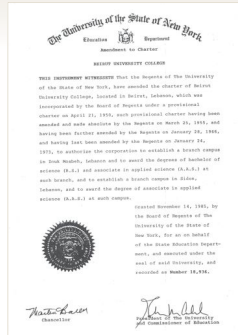


The Lebanese government recognizes BCW's bachelor's degrees as equivalent to the *License*.

1970



The college becomes co-educational and changes its name to Beirut University College (BUC).



The Board of Regents in New York amends the charter to transform the college into a multi-campus institution.

1985



The Board of Regents approves the university's new name of Lebanese American University. The charter is amended to include master's degrees. LAU has three schools: Arts & Sciences, Business, and Engineering & Architecture. The School of Pharmacy also opens this year.

1994



Courses begin at the Byblos campus.

1991



BCW is granted an absolute charter.

1955

2009-2010

School of Engineering's bachelor's degree programs receive ABET accreditation. School of Arts & Sciences' B.S. degree program in computer science receives ABET accreditation.



2010

The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing welcomes its first class.



2011

Frem Civic Center inaugurated on the Byblos campus.



LAU embarks on Strategic Plan 2011–2016, focused on taking LAU to the next level of academic excellence.

2012

Acquisition of El Jazairi Building: LAU acquires Gezairi Transport's former headquarters, composed of a main building with a three-floor penthouse, a large theater, a school and offices.



2013

LAU inaugurates the New York Headquarters and Academic Center in midtown Manhattan.



The university launches the LAU Executive Center@Solidere in downtown Beirut.



2014

The Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Center is inaugurated to host the schools of medicine, pharmacy and nursing.





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Preface: From the President



It is my pleasure and privilege as President of the Lebanese American University (LAU), to present to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), this self-study which is the crowning of a multi-year effort involving scores of individuals working as members and conveners of eleven university committees covering all eleven CIHE standards. For them, this was a passionate pursuit underscoring our unswerving commitment to building a culture of quality and continuous improvement.

A steering committee, chaired by the provost and composed of the conveners of all eleven standard committees, worked diligently on putting this self-study together based on the intensive effort of standard groups through serial meetings, in between meetings, individual and group initiatives to leave no stone unturned, and no aspect of university life unexamined as thoroughly as possible. Each standard committee convener worked with his/her group to make sure that the area assigned to them received a comprehensive review. This massive undertaking was approached with a spirit of openness, transparency and a strong sense of long-term sustainable capacity building. Weaknesses were identified, shortfalls highlighted, areas of strength recognized and future projections made with a view to meticulous implementation and strict accountability. Knowing full well that the pursuit of quality is always work-in-progress, we wanted to take stock of what has been achieved since we received initial NEASC accreditation and flag as many areas as possible where additional improvement is needed, as well as working out a roadmap for bringing about the needed improvement in time and on schedule.

The experience gained five years ago in preparing our first self-study was put to excellent use this time around. In the interim, we have come a long way in fully integrating our two main campuses in Beirut and Byblos, creating more synergy where we work together as teams, discover new possibilities for moving forward and keep exploring the brave old new world in striking appropriate balances between several dualities critical to our life as an institution: professional education vs liberal arts, teaching vs research, academic freedom vs. assessment, and being at once caring and critical in the internal dynamics binding our multiple constituencies.

LAU provost, Dr. George K. Najjar, assisted by Dr. Elie Badr, and Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs, Dr. Mona Majdalani, played a pivotal role in the preparation of the self-study and proved invaluable at each stage in its unfolding. They, along others, will be important resources to tap during the team visit.

Speaking for the entire LAU family, I would like to register our deep gratitude to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges for their guidance and the opportunity to join the community of accredited institutions. In equal measure, I am grateful to the LAU family for the spirit of unity, transparency, and commitment to the truth that permeated all our work on the self-study. I hope and trust that the result is a document, of which we can all be proud.

Joseph G. Jabbra
President



Introduction: From the Provost



Introduction

An institution steeped deep in the past with a very futuristic outlook. This is how the Lebanese American University (LAU) views itself and is viewed by its multiple constituencies. Ours is an institution of higher learning that knows how to put a rich yesterday at the service of a promising tomorrow. Such is the near-century old vibrant institution that is LAU. From its beginnings as a school for girls founded by Presbyterian missionaries in 1824, through its official birth date as an American Junior College in 1924, to its current status as a leading university locally and regionally with increasing global visibility. What is now LAU in its various transitions and manifestations kept a deep commitment to excellence and a strong spirit of service. The year 1950 has watershed significance for the institution as it marks its turning from a two-year post-secondary college into a four-year all-girls institution under the name of Beirut College for Women. In 1955, the College was chartered by the Board of Regents of the State University of New York. In 1970, the Lebanese Higher Education authorities recognized our bachelor's degree. Four years later, the College became co-educational and assumed a new name: Beirut University College which it kept until it took its current name: Lebanese American University in 1995.

The protracted Lebanese war faced the institution with serious challenges threatening its continued existence with a drop in enrollment in the order of 80%. The institution managed to rise to the occasion and faced these challenges guided by the spirit of its founders, and galvanized by the rallying of all its constituencies and stakeholders.

In a country ravaged by war what was then BUC continued to function as a beacon of hope and offer quality education under conditions of extreme adversity. Off-campus programs were started in various parts of the country to cater to students who were not able to reach the main campus. By the early nineties, the university had two campuses in Beirut and in Byblos. In 2009, a teaching hospital was acquired and a New York Academic Center (NYAC) was added in 2013.

Up to the early nineties, program offerings were limited to majors in the Schools of Arts and Sciences and Business. Engineering and Architecture, and Pharmacy were added to the liberal arts and business offerings. Medicine and Nursing came at a later date.

Due to its historic roots, LAU was for a long time, considered the "university of choice" for women's education in Lebanon and the region. Its shift to a co-educational institution transformed its reputation to that of an institution that is student centered, and the percentage of non-Lebanese students relative to total enrollment increased substantially during the eighties.

Whereas Lebanese nationals were under 45% in the mid-seventies, they now stand at about 80%. Regional enrollment now counts for about 10%, and the remaining 10% come from other parts of the world, though a substantial number of these students are bi-national Lebanese whose families left the country during the war.

Lebanese students belong to the mosaic of 17 different religious denominations that comprise the country. Most students come from middle class families and from private secondary schools that provide the quality education needed to join LAU. An important financial aid program is in place to provide opportunities to deserving students that cannot afford the tuition. Substantial resources are continuously being added to this program that benefits one in every three to four students.

In August of 2004, Dr. Joseph Jabbra was called to serve as the new president of the institution. Shortly after his installation President Jabbra committed himself to creating a university-wide strategic planning process that was intentional, thought provoking, and focused on the sustainability of the institution at even greater levels of excellence. In order to accomplish these ambitious objectives, President Jabbra decided to create an inclusive and open process, led and conducted by a committee of designated faculty and staff of the university that would provide opportunities for input and participation from virtually all members of the university community. Strategic Plan 2005-2010 and the Board's decision to go ahead with plans to open a School of Medicine in fall 2009 has had a major impact on the institution over the past few years.

Chief among these effects is the establishment of a Faculty Senate to enhance the participation of faculty in the governance of the institution. A Senate was elected in spring 2005, and is currently engaged on several fronts as a major partner in the shared governance process. The strategic plan also called for improved student and staff participative governance.

A Staff Advisory Council was elected in December 2006, and work is progressing on the bylaws for a Student Council.

Building on the experience of the first strategic plan, the university embarked on its second for period 2011–2016. A number of task teams were formed for the purpose with each corresponding to one of the six pillars of the plan and led by a pillar chair. Pillar chairs form a steering committee headed by the Provost. The strategic plan is academically focused and has through a very broad-based participatory process produced a plan that reflects a balance of bottom-up and top-down approaches. Graduate education, research, improved assessment, academic innovation and enhanced positioning are the main headers of the plan which is now undergoing implementation.

The School of Medicine is now part and parcel of the university although work continues in earnest towards better integration within the university on several counts including faculty promotion criteria, teaching loads, research support requirements, financial aid, and the like.

The Faculty Senate established in 2005 is now a full participant in the shared governance process. Its most recent contribution was contributing to the development of the school-based promotion criteria assigning a higher premium to scholarly research across the board without straight-jacketing any of the schools into a one-size-fits-all syndrome.

Self-study: the process

This self-study being our second, we had the experience of the first study to draw on and the benefit of a learning curve that has benefited substantially from the earlier exercise. We had a base-line to start from, methodologies we were already familiar with, and a specialized language was already part of our vocabulary.

In keeping with previous practice, committees and subcommittees were set up and conveners appointed for the purpose. We had a total of thirteen committees. Eight of those were limited to one standard and one with two standards. The sub-committee dealing with standard four was by far the largest, but it was split into four groups each addressing one substandard. Membership and work plan is shown under Exhibit 0.1. This division of labor proved critical for keeping deadlines and ensuring smooth flow of work. The committee met monthly on a Friday to exchange information, receive reports from the chairs of the sub-committees, and more generally ensure that the self-study was cohesive and comprehensive.

The self-study was compiled progressively as each of the description, appraisal, and projection phases was completed. By mid spring 2014, a complete rough draft of the self-study was finished. Projections included in this draft were incomplete and were defined very loosely and in general terms. Sub-committees recommended “what” needs to be done, but did not address “how” or “when” the projected actions would be implemented, and “who” would implement them. Clarifications were provided that enabled rectification of the projection section and a final draft document was produced by early July 2014.

In May 2014, LAU was happy to receive Father Michael Garanzini for few days. He met with the president, the provost, the NEASC Steering Committee, subcommittee chairs, Council of Deans, Senate Executives, University Council Chairs, BOT members, student leaders and a number of other constituents relevant to the process. It was an invaluable experience for us to ask questions, seek clarifications and share experiences. The visit had excellent pay-off in terms of the quality of the self-study.

The self-study process crowned by Father Garanzini’s visit offered us a great opportunity to know each other better, think and act as team members, work towards developing even more positive group dynamics, and learn how to recognize problems, acknowledge shortfalls and support each other’s roles.

It was obvious that a good deal of that depended on having a transparent, open process in place.

The self-study considers the academic year 2012-2013 as a base year for all descriptive material and data used in the report. The fast pace at which the university is evolving is sometimes reflected through updated figures and/or specific comments describing major changes that are taking place. This has not always been an easy task; it is hoped that the self-study is more of a “video” than a “snapshot” and that it reflects the fast pace of changes taking place at LAU and the accelerating momentum behind them.

What Have We Learned

As stated earlier, the very experience of going through the grand exercise of preparing a self-study was a great learning opportunity on account of both process and content. Beyond this, several valuable specific lessons were also learned, namely:

- Team building, multi-channel communication, diversity within unity are absolutely essential for running a modern university and ensuring that horizontal and vertical division of labor works best when there are integration mechanisms in place.
- The thought processes linked with moving from description to appraisal and projection strongly overlap with and reinforce strategic planning and help all concerned in balancing realism with ambition, accuracy with prediction, and futurism with strict accountability.
- No matter how successful substantive implementation seems, it is even more important to build into the system safeguards for individual and systemic integrity linked to our core values and our enduring pledge on the part of all concerned to the highest ethical standards.
- It was particularly encouraging to see with total certainty through the process that we are as an LAU community well beyond the fragmented view of accreditation as a pass/fail exercise, and very much into understanding accreditation as a culture of continuous improvement.
- CIHE and NEASC have transformed LAU irreversibly away from a mere “quality assurance” paradigm into a “collaborative assessment” paradigm where quality is not seen as a static end state but rather a dynamic accumulation of experiences, practices, methodologies, heightened expectations, as well as an anticipatory approach to challenges based on proactive projections based on precise appraisal.
- Alignment is of the essence where all that we do will have to stand the test of mission-criticality and strategy-focus.

LAU’s self-study benefited immeasurably from the intimate involvement of President Jabbra who set the bar very high for all of us on every count: integrity, hard work, commitment to learning, and humility in serving our students and community.

George K. Najjar

Provost

Chair of the Steering Committee



Standard 1: Mission and Purposes



Description

[Mission]

Lebanese American University's (LAU's) mission statement reflects the development of the institution over time. LAU serves both men and women in Lebanon and the region and is committed to a liberal arts education and the vision and values of its founders, Presbyterian missionaries, who came to the "Beyroot", part of the Ottoman Empire, in 1834 and established a girls' school in 1835.

This girls' school grew from a two year American Junior College for Women (AJCW, 1924), to a four year college, Beirut College for Women (BCW, in 1950) that was chartered by the Board of Regents of the State University of New York (1955). It then became the co-educational Beirut University College (BUC, 1975), offering BA/BS degrees recognized by the Lebanese Government. Finally, the institution became Lebanese American University, with two campuses in 1995. The institution faced many challenges during the 1975-1990 civil war, but was able to sustain itself through benefactors and alumni. Today LAU is comprised of seven schools over two campuses in Lebanon, a university hospital, and an academic center in New York City [Exhibit 1.1].

In 2004, with the new president, Dr. Joseph G. Jabbara, the first university-wide strategic plan [Exhibit 1.2] was put in place and implemented by all university units under the direction of the Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC). The university, through work on Strategic Plan (SP), received candidacy and membership with the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (CIHE) of NEASC in 2007. Work at both the institutional and school levels helped further develop LAU. The university received notice in May 2010 that the institution was fully accredited as of November 2009 [Exhibits 1.3 & 1.4]. The second strategic plan [Exhibit 1.5] has put the university on a path to further development on many fronts.

Based on recommendations of the last NEASC visiting team report, LAU revised its mission statement since it was found that citizenship-building was not emphasized sufficiently. In 2011, the steering committee for SP 2011-16 recommended the following amended mission statement:

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 (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission>).

The revised mission was approved by the Council of Deans (CD) and the President's Cabinet (PC) [Exhibits 1.6 & 1.7] and was formally adopted by the BOT [Exhibit 1.3].

[Values]

Drawing on the institution's founders and their statement of purpose, and reflected in LAU's mission, LAU seeks to promote human dignity, gender equality, educational opportunities, social justice and democracy (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission>).

[Vision]

LAU's vision is to provide students with a diverse background (see chapter 6), an excellent education (see chapter 4) with highly qualified faculty who have distinguished research and teaching profiles (see chapter 5), and with efficient support facilities (chapter 7 & chapter 8), and highly qualified staff dedicated to excellence. Also, LAU strives to develop and sustain an intellectual and multi-cultural community (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission>).

[Purposes (Goals)]

"The overarching goal of Lebanese American University is to function as 'one university' with two campuses in an effective, efficient and nimble manner." More specifically, the institution seeks to be internationally competitive, achieve target enrollments, provide an environment conducive to intellectual and professional growth, be an employer of choice, provide state-of-the-art facilities, be financially efficient, and have strong relationships with the outside community [Exhibit 1.8]. SP 2011-16 was linked to the newly revised mission statement, and these values, vision and goals, and identifies means to achieve the strategic plan [Exhibits 1.2 & 1.5].

The mission statement is the overarching guide to the academic and non-academic aspects of the institution [Exhibit 1.9].

Academic Excellence: Demonstrated through program reviews, faculty research and scholarship, promoting excellence with rewards and awards for student achievement.

Student Centeredness: Demonstrated by student representation on university and school councils, classroom teaching methods, writing centers, Harvard World Model United Nations (MUN) participation, societies, and clubs. In addition, students are accepted irrespective of race, creed, or religion.

Scholarship: Demonstrated by the work of the University Research Council (URC), school research councils, faculty publications, and faculty professional development funds.

Civic Engagement: Demonstrated by the activities of the Outreach and Civic Engagement office (OCE), Global Classrooms, and faculty, staff, and student work with NGO's [Exhibit 1.10], and many outreach activities by the institutes (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/academics/centers-institutes/>).

Education of the Whole Person: Along with community service and liberal arts education program (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/academics/common/lac.php> and chapter 4) students are provided with opportunities to become part of the wider community—locally, regionally and internationally.

Formation of Leaders in a Diverse World: Demonstrated by student service on university councils, class presentations, Harvard World MUN, Global Classrooms, community service, and clubs.

[School and Academic Program Missions]

The mission of the institution provides direction to other academic entities at the institution in curricula, activities, and student learning. Since 2007 the schools have identified their own missions and objectives, and have also created missions and learning outcomes for each school program that highlight what students are expected to have achieved by the end of their studies. These are all in line with the revised institution's mission, values and vision [Exhibit 1.11].

Appraisal

[Mission]

LAU's mission has provided a solid basis on which to develop the institution. There is a diverse student body (chapter 6) that is taught by many qualified faculty members (chapter 5). LAU is working to encourage active learning and student centeredness (SP-2011-16). Schools have developed programs that reflect the mission, and schools and faculty have become more active in research and more successful in obtaining grants (chapter 5). The Civic Engagement and Outreach Office plans a broad range of activities with the community—a central part of the mission. Work continues in serving the region academically, and many aspects of LAU engage the wider community through partnerships, consultations, and research.

The mission statement appears in several institutional publications, but in a student focus group [Exhibit 1.12] it was clear that the mission needs to be made more clear to students by various means other than publications. Placing it on rotating signs in key areas in the university was recommended by some students. Also, it was mentioned that as research is an important part of scholarship, it should be added to the mission statement.

A questionnaire on mission awareness and understanding was also prepared and administered to faculty, staff, and students. Results revealed that there is stronger awareness of the mission among faculty than among staff and students [Exhibit 1.13]. Also, the results of the survey indicate that LAU has done well in raising awareness as compared with the results of previous self-studies. As for faculty and staff, more than 80% indicated that the LAU mission is properly communicated.

However, regarding understanding the mission statement and its elements, it is worth noting that 23% of student's conveyed that they did not understand (or disagreed with) the meaning of "Student-centeredness" while 71% confirmed (agreed or strongly agreed) that they do understand the meaning of the same statement. Also, from the comments received, it was noted that Research should be an element in the mission statement. Accordingly, this reflects that "Scholarship" is not clearly understood despite the positive results of the survey. Other elements also need to be more clearly understood.

[Vision, Values and Purpose]

Bringing the two campuses together to communicate and integrate into common committees across campuses has been implemented by heads of departments, offices, faculty and staff, despite challenges that have usually been addressed through

technology. Efforts have been positive in meeting the objective of offering an education to students no matter what background they have and helping the community. Civic engagement has been enhanced significantly [Exhibit 1.14]. Significant effort has been devoted to reviewing and assessing programs, as well as to seeking re-accreditation for the university as a whole and for the professional schools (chapters 2 & 4).

The Board of Trustees has adopted the mission statement as the guide for the university's business. The members understand the mission statement which guides their work in an efficient manner.

[School and Academic Program Missions]

School and academic program missions are aligned to those of the university. In the past two years there has been greater emphasis on fine-tuning missions at the various levels which has greatly helped in curriculum assessment and review cycles.

Projection

[Mission]

The strategic plan should include action steps by the Council of Deans to review the university's mission statement over the next two academic years and consider revising "advancement of scholarship" so as not to be misunderstood as financial aid. This is needed as LAU is emphasizing scholarly work and research as reflected by the recent creation of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research in 2013 and the strides made to raise the research bar and set up more graduate programs [Exhibit 1.5]. Individual schools and departments will more clearly explain the elements in the mission statement so far as they relate to them and their students.

[Vision, Values and Purposes]

SP 2011-16, Action 2.2.1 recommends having new and more effective orientation programs to better answer the needs of students, schools, faculty, and staff. The annual Orientation Day for students, held by the Dean of Students, should remain the key place where students are introduced to the LAU mission statement and its key elements. Such communication can also be done by each school in workshops orienting faculty and staff to the purposes, vision, values and the mission of the university and the schools at the beginning of each academic year. In the next two years, the Provost's Office should ensure that the vision, values, purposes and mission of the university are displayed on the home page of the LAU web site as well as on electronic boards around the university.

Institutional Effectiveness

The university, schools and/or departments will review the university mission statement and school and department missions in light of the goals of the university and the changes that are taking place as LAU expands its academic programs and institutionalizes more research and outreach activities. The Provost's Office should place revising the university mission statement as an action item in the next strategic plan and monitor it through the Strategic Plan Pillar Chairs' Committee (PCC) in a regular manner.

Standard 1 Exhibits

1.1	LAU Academic Catalogue 2013 - 2014
1.2	Strategic Plan 2005-10
1.3	Minutes of BOT meetings
1.4	NEASC letter to the President
1.5	Strategic Plan 2011-16
1.6	Minutes of Council of Deans (CD) meetings
1.7	Minutes of President's Cabinet (PC) meetings
1.8	NEASC Self Study 2007
1.9	School Reports
1.10	Reports from OCE
1.11	School missions, objectives and learning outcomes
1.12	Report on Student Focus Group
1.13	Report on Questionnaire Regarding University Mission
1.14	Civic Engagement Report

Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation



Description

[Planning]

LAU has embraced strategic planning as a means of linking its mission, priorities, and human and physical resources in a system of evaluation, decision-making, and action to shape and guide the organization. It embarked on the formulation and implementation of its second institution-wide strategic plan [\[Exhibit 2.1\]](#), based on the insights and experience gained from its first 5-year strategic plan. The plan emphasizes the continuous enhancement of the institution's academic core and was developed through input from across the institution. It consists of six pillars focusing on the areas of education, students, faculty, outreach, areas of focus, and graduate studies and research.

The *SP 2011-2016* also incorporates areas of opportunities and challenges highlighted by the Institutional Research and Assessment office (IRA), the 2007 and 2009 institutional self-studies, reports of visiting accreditation teams, reports from the NEASC Commission, and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, peer review studies and program accreditation reports, along with the goals and aspirations of LAU's internal and external stakeholders [\[Exhibit 2.2\]](#). One such goal identified by NEASC as an area in need of improvement is the establishment of a uniform approach to academic honesty and integrity across campus (chapter 11).

For efficient implementation of the strategic plan detailed schedules were generated and identifiable resources—financial, human, facilities and technological—were allocated in coordination with the Office of Finance and the Office of Human Resources and University Services (HRUS). These resources were then incorporated in the respective plans of the support units to ensure their availability based on institutional priorities as determined by the University Budget Committee (UBC) followed by the President's Cabinet (PC). The UBC consists of a broad spectrum of the LAU community [\[Exhibit 2.3\]](#) while the PC consists of the president, the provost, and the VPs. Final approval of *SP 2011-16* was obtained from the Board of Trustees in March 2011.

A three-tier reporting structure was established to ensure accountability, to evaluate progress and to monitor the attainment of goals. Quarterly reports are developed by coordinators and champions assigned to actions and action items respectively. These are then compiled in a progress report for each pillar and reviewed by designated pillar chairs in meetings held regularly to signal out accomplishments, address concerns and challenges, and to suggest alternative strategies when needed [\[Exhibit 2.4\]](#).

>> Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA)

Since its establishment in 2008, IRA has played an increasingly significant role in supporting the institution's decision-makers in planning, policy formulation, assessment, evaluation, and institutional effectiveness efforts. IRA analyzes, warehouses, and disseminates data about the academic, administrative, and support functions of the university. The *LAU Fact Book*, published annually since 2009, is a reflection of the range of functions and pertinent information IRA covers [\[Exhibit 2.5\]](#).

IRA ensures the integrity and consistency of information for official reporting using the "Glossary of Terms" [\[Exhibit 2.6\]](#) it developed at its inception. Reporting of information to help identify and develop new opportunities has been facilitated through the recent acquisition of Business Intelligence (BI) technologies for which IRA is the power user. Using BI, IRA has developed dashboards to empower decision-makers to meet set targets particularly in relation to enrollment management. Many of the reports and dashboards are hosted on the IRA webpage.

IRA has been instrumental in supporting institutional accreditation as well as program review and program accreditation efforts. By providing academic programs and administrative units with direct operational measures of assessment such as retention, graduation rates, degree attainment, faculty qualifications, faculty productivity, resources and facilities [\[Exhibit 2.7\]](#) as well as the indirect measures of assessment that include analysis of interviews and surveys of stakeholders' perceptions and satisfaction—student, faculty, alumni, employer—institutional effectiveness and academic quality are assessed. IRA has conducted a series of workshops on assessment to help administrative units develop measurable outcomes.

IRA has initiated and participated in several benchmarking studies at the national and regional level. These studies, which assess the level of adaption and implementation of outstanding practices for the purpose of achieving higher standards of excellence, cover areas such as human resources, university governance, and enrollment management. The findings of these

studies have been evaluated and communicated to concerned constituencies for the purpose of continuous improvement. Moreover, IRA plays an important role nationally through its collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education on numerous educational quality enhancement initiatives and its membership in national task forces [Exhibit 2.8].

>> **Academic Affairs**

All schools at LAU have embraced integrated strategic planning as the main decision-making tool to advance their programs and accomplish their stated vision, mission, and goals. While focused on the uniqueness of each school's programs and encompassing all aspects of their programs—education, students, faculty and staff, research, outreach, school specific areas of focus—the strategic plans are congruent with the key elements of the university strategic plan.

The exercise of strategic planning differs in terms of modalities among schools but the strategies employed in the plan development process adopted by all schools and programs are similar to those used in the development of the institutional SP [Exhibit 2.9]. The successful implementation of the plans is ensured through annual evaluation, and the redefinition of priorities and resources needed for the upcoming year, with any necessary revision of the budget (on a 3-year rolling basis).

A key goal of all schools is the attainment of professional accreditation where applicable. The attainment of accreditation by: the five undergraduate programs in the School of Engineering (SOE), the undergraduate Computer Science program in the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), the renewal of accreditation of the Pharm.D. program, the eligibility of candidacy for accreditation of the undergraduate and graduate programs offered by the School of Business, and the undergraduate architecture program in the School of Architecture and Design are a direct result of the rigorous efforts that schools and academic programs have invested in planning. The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing, which admitted its first class in fall 2010 achieved accreditation for the BSN program in fall 2013 from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

The plans for the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM) and the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (SON) were developed as part of the feasibility studies for the schools. They were approved by the Board of Trustees in September 2005 and September 2007 respectively [Exhibit 2.10]. To date, efforts have been made at the school-level to meet the enrollment and graduation targets, create multidisciplinary education among health professional students, after having completed the construction of the new building for the Gilbert and Rose Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Center as established in the feasibility studies. The schools have also drawn on SP 2011-16 to guide the development of the SOM and SON infrastructure (e.g., school bylaws and faculty governance, faculty salary structure, and promotion and tenure criteria). As faculty and staff of the SOM and SON have been hired, they have become involved in implementing the plans. The schools have received ample funding to implement the plans.

To support the schools and respond to their needs, the libraries and learning resources networks engage in short-term and long-term planning, which is discussed in depth in Chapter 7. It is worth mentioning that in line with the objectives of the 5-year plan, several related action steps were embedded in SP 2011-16 under Goal 1.9: "Intensifying the involvement of libraries in the learning process".

>> **Student Development and Enrollment Management (SDEM)**

SDEM at LAU consists of several units (chapter 4 on Academic Programs and chapter 6 on Students). In collaboration with other constituencies at LAU, these units have been systematically and strategically planning to develop comprehensive and integrated plans to benefit the institution at large [Exhibit 2.11].

The preparation of the Enrollment Management and Development (EM&D) plan of 2013 is a good example of integrated planning. The VPSDEM and the AVPEM developed the strategic plan in close coordination with the provost and academic deans as well as the VP for finance. Relying heavily on data generated by IRA, the plan proposes sustainable enrollment growth for LAU spread across its seven schools by adopting dozens of recruitment and retention initiatives, administering many internal changes to reduce attrition, proposing the creation of new academic programs based on market studies, and leveraging financial aid to enroll students who would not otherwise join the university. The plan, like other plans, was discussed at the level of the University Budget Committee (UBC) and the President's Cabinet (PC). Data collected and information generated in the 2009 Student Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP) was instrumental in devising the 2013 Enrollment Management and Development (EM&D) plan.

>> **Human Resources and University Services (HRUS)**

HRUS is composed of four entities: Facilities Management (FM), Information Technology (IT), Business Services (BS), and Human Resources (HR). The four entities create short-term as well as strategic long-term plans—based on the university's strategic plan and needs—that are presented to the BOT bi-annually.

Facilities Management (FM) (chapter 8I) consists of four divisions reporting to the Assistant Vice President for FM [Exhibit 2.12]. FM develops long- and short-term plans in close coordination with concerned university entities in an effort to proactively respond to evolving space needs of the university constituencies. The developed space re-allocation plans undergo periodic examination and are updated by the Planning and Renovations (P&R) division followed by the Central Facilities Committee (CFC) and finally the PC, where feasible priorities are established [Exhibit 2.13]. FM aligns the goals of its own strategic plan with those of the institutional strategic plan and with other university needs by devising a yearly plan for new facilities management initiatives [Exhibit 2.14].

Capital Projects are driven by the university's and schools' strategic plans and are included within the Beirut and Byblos campuses' master plans [Exhibit 2.15]. These projects are included within the university capital budget [Exhibit 2.16] and are individually overseen by steering committees including representatives of Facilities, Information Technology, Finance and end-users [Exhibit 2.17]. The Project Management and Contract Administration division manages the capital projects by maintaining a master schedule that is regularly updated in order to make sure that deadlines are adequately monitored and controlled [Exhibit 2.18].

IT develops short-term and long-term plans for each of its four IT departments that report to the Assistant Vice President for IT [Exhibit 2.19]. Planning in IT is driven by the needs of the various university constituents, projects initiated by the strategic plan as well as projects of a technical nature needed to maintain advanced IT services at LAU. The IT department has already implemented a disaster recovery system in order to protect university records, protect data from unforeseen events, and ensure operational continuity in times of disaster.

The three-year IT plan is updated annually based on constituent needs channeled directly to the IT department or through the various councils and committees including the University Planning Council (UPC), the University Library and Information Resources Council (ULIRC), the Council of Deans (CD), and the President's Cabinet (PC). The IT plans are integrated with the FM plans through the Master Plan Steering Committee, and all the respective capital projects steering committees. Planning for academic computing facilities is done at the school level and budgets set according to the schools' computing needs. In general, one-third of specialized computing facilities and one-fourth of general computing facilities are upgraded per year to yield a full upgrade every three or four years respectively. The IT planning process is flexible enough to accommodate the unpredictable influences of change and opportunity and to be on par with the fast changing information technology sector.

The Business Services division prepares short- and long-term plans based on input from the university constituents through committees and councils, including the UPC, CD, and PC and is based on direct feedback and surveys. The Business Services department leads many university committees and/or is actively involved in several committees in order to plan and provide better services. The committees, and depending on the nature of the issue, always include representatives of university stakeholders, such as Finance, FM, Security, IT, HR, and Academic Affairs. All operations are conducted with the highest ethical standards and full legal compliance.

HR collaborates with major units at LAU to develop short and long-term staffing plans. In addition, based on the performance appraisal, HR receives a skeletal plan relating to staff training and development. A key HR activity driven by the strategic plan is the recruitment and retention of qualified personnel based on identified needs. HR plans for reviews of the HR study by monitoring the job market and getting involved in compensation surveys to help shape retention plans and maintain internal and external equities [Exhibit 2.20]. This plan also relies on HR membership in the Job Assessment Committee (JAC). The JAC appraises new organization structures and restructuring plans and integrates them within the university salary scale, career ladder, and grading grid [Exhibit 2.21]. The overall goal is to maintain the position of LAU as the employer of choice in the country. In addition, HR updates its plans for services and benefits based on input from the Staff Advisory Council allowing staff to participate in the governance of the university. These plans are then submitted to the President's Cabinet for approval.

>> Finance

The Board of Trustees (BOT), through the Finance and Planning Committee (FPC), is the highest authority to oversee the financial, planning and budgeting aspects of the university. This committee also oversees the development and modification of the BOT policies covering program planning, facilities and personnel.

The UBC oversees LAU's operating and capital budget processes and presents recommendations to the university president on the planning of and preparation for the budget which is revised and approved annually by the BOT. This committee plays an active role in the review and recommendation of budget priorities. As part of the efforts to improve the budget process, a 3-year operating budget and a 3-year equipment and furniture budget are reviewed and approved annually by the BOT. Each school and office proposes its operating and capital budgets and presents them to its dean or director for his/her scrutiny prior to submission to the appropriate vice president. Vice presidents, deans, chairs/directors must then

justify their budgets at scheduled meetings, after which the operating budget is prioritized, compiled and presented to the President for his approval prior to submission to the BOT for final ratification. The SP 2011-16 has been incorporated within the university budget. A Capital Budget that includes construction and renovation projects is developed and reviewed periodically based on Facilities plans. The operating and capital budgets include contingency amounts that are reserved for unforeseen events.

Starting in 2006, financial plans have been developed and updated on a regular basis. The most recent plan which was revised and updated in 2012 is comprised of forecasts and projections that are centered on the following initiatives: maintaining constant growth in student enrollment and tuition revenue; strengthening the endowment and net assets base; setting funding needs for planned capital projects; and enhancing fundraising revenues [Exhibit 2.22].

LAU's BOT Investment Committee is the highest authority to oversee the management of LAU's Endowment. The Investment Office, headquartered in New York and reporting to the vice president for finance, manages the day-to-day operation of the endowment, in close coordination with an outside investment consultant. Recommendations regarding the endowment are channeled through the Investment Office to the Investment Committee which acts on these recommendations that are ultimately reviewed and approved by the full BOT.

The Finance department's close involvement with almost all the activities of the university reflects the institution's emphasis on comprehensive, broad-based, and integrated planning. LAU's financial plan is a typical repository of all other plans at LAU. Senior management strategies are also reflected in various planning scenarios in order to evaluate the institution's financial abilities vis-à-vis those strategies. The financial plan integrates the university's academic, enrollment management, financial, capital and fundraising plans and determines the financial impact of the underlying projected operations, thus setting priorities and sources of financing for these plans.

>> University Advancement (UA)

UA is composed of five entities: Development, Advancement Services, Alumni Relations, Marketing and Communications (MarCom), and Public and Media Relations.

At the end of each academic year, the senior staff of Alumni Relations in Beirut and Byblos hold a retreat to evaluate accomplishments and plan the upcoming year. The plan, driven by the mission of the Alumni Relations Office and the university, is shared with all advancement entities [Exhibit 2.23]. It is also shared with SDEM for collaboration on student or alumni events and to support student recruitment. The Alumni Relations Office in New York coordinates long-term planning periodically with the Beirut office but mostly develops plans for North America independently.

Goals for the Development Offices (Beirut and New York) are set annually, with activities divided along geographical lines. To ensure coordination, the assistant vice presidents in Beirut and New York meet regularly via video conference. The Development Offices have developed two long-term plans, the Campaign Plan and the Communication Plan for the "Fulfilling the Promise: LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence" to raise funds to support the goals set out in the SP 2011-16 [Exhibit 2.24]. Timetables and budgets were allocated for each plan. Progress in implementing the plans is continuously evaluated to ensure that goals and targets are being met in a timely manner.

The Marketing and Communications Department (MarCom) was established during AY2007-08, in compliance with LAU's SP 2005-10. With a dynamic presence on both campuses, MarCom promotes LAU's unique ethos and visionary ambitions to the public (see chapter 10 for detailed description of MarCom). A document on the creation and production process has been developed for all regular publications, detailing timeline, role division and budget to streamline implementation and share production responsibilities with LAU entities [Exhibit 2.25].

LAU Relations and Media Office liaises between the university and the internal and external community. The office handles relations with the LAU community, media, public opinion, governmental authorities, leaders and politicians, among others. The office is currently working on a "Strategic Vision" based on the fundamentals of public relations, including objectives, media and digital tools, and contacts.

[Evaluation]

LAU's mission is evaluated and revised at the start of each 5-year strategic planning period. The mission statement was revised in 2010 to better articulate the principles guiding the development and implementation of SP 2011-16, inform environmental analysis, and allow the university to set goals. The revised mission emphasizes "civic engagement" thus adding a new dimension to the institutional educational goals.

Most academic programs, where applicable, have attained or are in the process of attaining professional accreditation that ensures the regular and systematic evaluation of these programs. For academic programs where professional accreditation is non-existent, a program review system is in place to ensure the systematic review of both undergraduate and graduate programs (see chapter 4 on the Academic Program for more detailed description of the Review and Assessment policies) [Exhibit 2.26].

Faculty productivity is a measure of faculty performance in the areas of teaching, research and service. Evaluation of faculty productivity is conducted on a yearly basis by department chairs and deans of schools based on criteria adopted by the CD. Faculty undergo comprehensive peer evaluation internally and externally through outside referees based on teaching, research and service at the level of the school and then at the institutional level when they apply for promotion.

Concurrently all administrative and support units have developed or are in the process of developing and implementing their assessment plans that allow them to systematically assess the attainment of their unit outcomes and evaluate the impact of their operations in supporting institutional effectiveness.

Staff evaluations are conducted on a yearly basis by the immediate supervisor/director/VP. Results impact promotion and merit increases. Staff, however, do not formally appraise the performance of their supervisors, although they have other informal means of doing so.

An array of in-house institutional surveys, such as the orientation and exit surveys alongside the standardized National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the related Faculty Survey for Student Engagement (FSSE) which provide benchmarking opportunities with similar US institutions, are administered annually in order to assess the level of student engagement and the quality of the student experience at LAU [Exhibit 2.27]. A study was conducted to track trends within LAU in student engagement and their overall satisfaction with their LAU education over the period extending from 2006 to 2011 using NSSE results. In 2013, the NSSE Academic Advising and Development of Transferable Skills modules and a mapping of NSSE items onto corresponding NEASC standards helped identify areas in need of improvement [Exhibit 2.28]. Alumni surveys administered at the institutional and program level as well as employer surveys provide valuable information about the success of LAU's graduates [Exhibit 2.29]. Many other programs and initiatives are individually assessed and improved through focus groups. Additionally, the Career Fair portal, the networking events with employers and fresh alumni members, the one-on-one meetings with the various HR or professional administrators of the various sectors of employers, the Career Services professionals at SDEM and within the various schools receive detailed feedback from employers about LAU graduates which is reviewed and evaluated. Extremely successful stories about LAU graduates are highlighted on the LAU website and articles are published in the various LAU publications.

In the libraries, an array of appraisal tools and instruments are used on a monthly and yearly basis as discussed in chapter 7.

Appraisal

[Planning]

LAU has shifted from an institution where planning was reactive to internal and external contingencies to a proactive mode where planning delineates short-term actions needed to move the institution in the right direction in the immediate future and long-term actions involving more complex, evolutionary changes. Short-term and long-term planning is employed at the institutional level as well as at the level of the academic, administrative, and support units. While there is opportunity for significant improvement, LAU is increasingly evaluating the outcomes of its planning process by reporting the level of activity (percent of progress), measuring the ongoing results of a plan against the plan's goals, and taking corrective action across the different elements of the strategic planning process (champions, coordinators, resources, KPIs, assessment of quality, etc.) when deemed necessary to successfully achieve its mission. Further, LAU is constantly adapting its various reporting mechanisms to enhance effective implementation and follow-up of its SP.

Although significant headway has been made in attaining or progressing towards achieving many of the goals set in the SP, implementation has been negatively impacted in certain areas where the champion of the action step is a body, where the area is new to LAU or LAU does not have extensive experience or expertise, or where there has been a change in leadership. To give greater impetus to the implementation process, the president called for a retreat of the University Planning Council (UPC). The retreat brought together university leaders who were charged with identifying where the university is versus where it should be vis-à-vis five topics of interest using the overarching definition of leadership as espoused by LAU as the foundation for discussions [Exhibit 2.30].

Held over August 25-27, 2013, the UPC retreat served as a focus group where participants assessed the strategic planning process and planning in general at LAU. To be able to respond to the university's rapidly evolving circumstances and the leadership role it aspires to play in higher education in Lebanon and the region, the UPC identified new strategic action steps and initiatives that needed to be incorporated in the SP 2011-16 and other existing ones that need to be reinforced and given high priority [Exhibit 2.31]. The UPC also emphasized the importance of maintaining unity of purpose, consistency, compatibility of results, and continuity of flow in strategic initiatives, such as graduate programs, assessment, honor programs, websites, public disclosure and many others that cut across different schools and units. As most of the initiatives are academically focused, particularly those related to Pillars 5 and 6, it was deemed necessary to restructure the school budgets to integrate the SP budget for these two pillars under either their 3-year operating budgets or their 3-year capital budgets to streamline implementation. Communication was another significant factor impinging on the effective implementation of the SP. Although progress reports have been readily accessible to concerned university constituents on the web or in different software applications this mode of communication can be improved upon. In this spirit, the CD has recently agreed to revamp the champion reporting network.

>> Institutional Research and Assessment

Although much progress has been made in developing LAU's internal databases and collecting information on its constituencies to support planning and evaluation, the lack of national databases covering all aspects of the Lebanese higher education system from mission, governance, student admissions and enrollment, and financial aid to human, physical and technical resources and facilities where one can extract reliable information hinders LAU's ability to benchmark with peer institutions. The scant national statistics available related to employment trends, market demands, and population demographics data also limits LAU's ability to perform comprehensive data driven planning. The same limitations encountered at the national level apply at the regional level impeding benchmarking efforts.

>> Academic Affairs

LAU has made significant progress and improvement in its academic planning efforts as described in the Description section. Schools and academic programs already have their individual strategic plans or are in the process of having them developed in alignment with the university strategic plans. Although broader coordination of efforts may be warranted, especially when common goals intersect across disciplines in order to ensure horizontal alignment and consistency of plans and strategic initiatives across schools, some schools are already coordinating their planning efforts at different levels. For instance, the Deans of the LAU health science schools (SOM, SON, SOP) meet periodically to address common issues of mutual concern such as select matters related to LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH), the Clinical Simulation Center, and the Chagoury Health Science Center. Commitment is essential for successful plan implementation at all levels of the school and can only be ensured through active engagement.

>> Student Development and Enrollment Management

SDEM is very proactive in its strategic and long-term planning. The "White Paper" of the VPSDEM (2013), entitled "Recruit, Retain, Transform," is an aspirational overview of LAU's goals with recommendations for SDEM's priorities and growth in the coming five to ten years [Exhibit 2.32]. While SDEM carefully monitors and readjusts its plans to achieve objectives, closer collaboration and realignment of planning is still needed between most LAU constituencies. SDEM has come a long way in its planning and has been very successful of late. It has progressed from a phase where there was no comprehensive enrollment management plan that integrates university and program enrollment targets, to one where plans set strategic directions and goals, coordinating functions across the various SDEM units such as admissions, enrollment, and financial aid on the one hand and outreach, civic engagement, and student academic and personal development on the other hand. SDEM has been successful in meeting most of its goals and targets. The continuous growth of the student population led to the need for additional space for staff growth as well as the need for additional support staff, e.g., more counseling professionals.

>> Human Resources and University Services

The senior leadership of the various HRUS areas is engaged through the HRUS Advisory Team in planning and coordinating strategic HRUS projects, issues and priorities. In its endeavor to substantially improve the planning process at LAU, the FM is keen on active representation and participation in most of the university planning committees (e.g. UPC, SP, NEASC, CFC, etc.). Despite the enormous planning efforts, changes in leadership positions have entailed consequent variations in some schools' and departmental plans, as well as in strategies and priorities, dictating equivalent changes in facilities plans; this resulted in substantial disruptions and delays to planned and on-going projects. However, FM managed to react in a timely manner by improvising feasible interim solutions to arising setbacks, and often succeeded in mitigating the majority of the ensuing delays.

To be able to respond to ever-growing university needs, FM embarked also on a series of internal divisional re-structuring, qualitative resource build-up, as well as a strategy of staff training and re-organizing. Consequently, and in order to remain

efficient and measure the effectiveness of the services, it was recognized that the implementation of a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) remains a top priority. Satisfaction with FM services (Operations and Maintenance, Space Allocation and Planning, Capital Projects, etc.) is measured through surveys and feedback received at the Operations help desk.

Even though important progress was witnessed on many fronts, especially regarding projects and space management procedures, the development of needed FM procedures on access control, asset disposal, safety, energy management, and capital budgeting procedures, is essential and remains a main concern that is yet to be accomplished. Furthermore, the development of departmental evaluation schemes and assessment plans is seen as a vital initiative that needs to be completed and implemented during the upcoming year.

IT continuously measures the effectiveness of its planning of major projects and IT services. Major projects always start with a project plan. During project execution, a working team meets regularly to assess and manage the project and the plan. Typical issues faced during team meetings are related to coordination between the departments requesting the project and the implementation team. The result can be delays in plan execution, exceeding budget limits or deferring certain modules from the original plan. Satisfaction with IT services provided is measured through surveys and help desk tickets review.

HR measures the effectiveness of its planning through four major means: 1) the assessment of project plans, 2) surveys used to determine customer satisfaction, to highlight possible problematic areas and to benchmark against market standards, 3) internal audits and 4) feedback from university-wide committees such as the JAC, the University Insurance Committee, and the UPC.

The Business Services (BS) division measures the effectiveness of its plans and activities through assessment of project plans and surveys. The outcome of this assessment of the planning implemented a supply chain management system, thus promoting transparency, tracking inventory and orders, and providing the management with a tool to monitor expenditures [Exhibit 2.33].

>> Finance

LAU enjoys sound overall financial circumstances; it has a relatively sizeable endowment and net assets, and maintains a manageable level of short-term liabilities (see chapter 9 regarding Finances). The university's stability is strongly derived from positive returns from operations, positive investment results, low spending from endowment and improved fundraising.

Finance produces a variety of informative and relevant budgeting reporting tools that support university operations. Without neglecting the important feedback usually obtained from audited financials, more reliance is now placed on periodic and relevant reporting from various sources covering all components of operations and investments. In fact, the Finance department has always had a solid periodic management reporting system that was built, strengthened and tested throughout the years, however, it was not frequently shared with other university constituents. This practice was historically attributable to the absence of a well-established institutional research unit. At present, and with the establishment of IRA, financial data has become readily available to all concerned university constituents.

>> University Advancement

The Development Office continuously monitors progress in the implementation of the Campaign Plan and Communication Plan of the "Fulfilling the Promise" Campaign. In addition, the Development Office obtained ISO 9001:2008 Certification, which will improve communication, consistency and efficiency, boost customer satisfaction levels and build on the office's culture of continuous improvement. The office documents, implements and maintains a Quality Management System (QMS), and strives to regularly improve its practices in accordance with ISO requirements. An annual external audit is conducted by the British Standards Institution (BSI), a multinational business services provider that advocates, defines and implements best practices. BSI audits the Annual Management Review (AMR) developed by the Development Office and issues an assessment report upon completion. Management is responsible for ensuring that action is taken to correct any detected nonconformities and their causes.

Although the Development Office has been very successful in its work, there are some areas that could be improved. This includes weak interdepartmental communication and collaboration among LAU constituencies, resulting in duplication of efforts in targeting donors, as well as the need to expand fundraising efforts to areas like Africa and South America, where there is a huge Lebanese diaspora and many LAU alumni. In addition, there could be more effective engagement of local communities in activities organized by alumni chapters, which necessitates enhanced collaboration between the Development Office and the Alumni office.

The Alumni Relations Office itself faces a number of challenges, particularly regarding inaccuracies in the alumni database. This is especially the case for alumni who graduated over 10 or 15 years ago, for whom email addresses are mostly unavailable. This has made them harder to contact and engage. Another challenge is the poor or sometimes nonexistent relationship between the schools at LAU and their graduates. Although the Alumni Relations Office strives to keep alumni connected to LAU through different activities, alumni retain their strongest ties with their schools and professors. With the recent emphasis on a culture of assessment of student learning at LAU, programs are gradually reaching out to the Alumni Relations Office for alumni contact information. Another major challenge is finding good alumni volunteers to serve on committees of alumni chapters.

Since its inception, MarCom has demonstrated a proven capacity to work under pressure, multitask, and show flexibility. Although a structured plan of action was developed at the time of MarCom's creation [Exhibit 2.34], the scope of work has been mounting to a degree that necessitated regular adjustments in the work plan. This is at times made more acute in the race against deadlines, the rapid pace of emerging priorities and the add-ons to the department's mandate due to the rapid expansion of the institution. The department often finds itself in need of resorting to outsourcing and the use of free lancers to meet its target.

The Relations & Media Office makes sure it is moving in parallel with the LAU current strategic plan and it is abiding by LAU's Media & Public Relations Policy. In terms of media coverage, our evaluation is done through what is known by the "RAVE" or "AVE" study (Real Advertising Value Equivalency or Advertising Value Equivalency), where RAVE/AVE is a formula that we use to 'measure' our benefit from media coverage of a PR campaign. Media monitoring / press clippings / and coverage links are also used for evaluation as well as weekly meetings and post-event evaluation meetings. Every time there is an event (conference, lecture, inauguration, commencement, etc.), the Relations & Media Office follows up with the concerned media to ensure maximum media coverage. The office meets twice a year (every six months) to review the data collected using the assessment methods, "Log" and "Post Event Evaluation Form" (PEEF) [Exhibit 2.35].

[Evaluation]

"Foster the development of program and learning assessment culture across all programs" and "Strengthen/Establish assessment culture throughout [the] university" are two goals in SP 2011-16 that emphasize the importance of institutionalizing assessment across all academic, administrative, and support entities in the university. LAU's response to achieving these goals has been through attaining program accreditation where applicable. All other academic undergraduate and graduate programs, except for the newly established programs such as translation and philosophy, have undergone program reviews subject to evaluation by external peer reviewers (chapter 4 on Academic Programs). The assessment exercise will now include school institutes based on the fact that the CD has just completed a comprehensive study of their current status in terms of effectiveness.

Annual evaluation of faculty is based on a clear set of guidelines and a well-established process that starts with an annual report prepared by each faculty member. Mentoring of junior faculty is a practice now in place as a first step towards promotion. Promotion and tenure criteria have been revisited over the past year leading to the development of school-based promotion criteria, and an evaluation process that involves peers at the school and institutional levels. This peer review process also includes external evaluators whenever deemed necessary but always when academic promotion and tenure decisions are considered.

The evaluation of academic administrators is the responsibility of school deans. The process, as correctly practiced, needs to be streamlined and the CD has already addressed the issue and started to map the evaluation process in the interest of making it more uniform and systematic across schools.

LAU's administrative and support units have been conducting both formative and summative assessments to evaluate their processes and to make the needed changes to enhance effectiveness. The assessment exercise however is not systematic and evidence-based decisions for the purpose of improvement are not always documented, making it difficult to track the changes made and the rationale behind them. Most administrative and support units are currently in the process of developing clear mission statements, objectives and outcomes. Successively, assessment plans are developed detailing assessment instruments used to measure the achievement of unit outcomes. All units are at different stages of the process, steadily progressing towards their respective goals.

Career ladders and job descriptions in all departments are being revisited along with professional development opportunities to enhance performance. As such, the staff evaluation process needs to be reviewed, especially since the perception is that these evaluations were neither consistent with merit increases nor with grade promotions.

Projection

[University-wide Planning]

The respective VP's will see to it that all administrative offices will systematically implement their assessment plans to ensure the continuous improvement of their services (2014-17)..The president has already established a University Effectiveness Council (UEC) that oversees the work of the University Assessment Center (UAC), which is the operational arm of the UEC. The UAC will be tasked with the applied side of assessment activities assigned by and supervised through the UEC along three tracks: program assessment, assessment of non-academic support units, and assessment of academic personnel as well as course assessment (2014-17). A specialized committee is currently working on defining parameters and flow charting processes for assessment at different levels and in multiple tracks

[Institutional Research and Assessment]

The recent acquisition of the TK20 accreditation and assessment software will enable schools/departments/units to consolidate and enhance their assessment efforts leading to the strengthening of a culture of assessment across the institution using compatible criteria in multiple channels (2014-16).

[School Planning]

Strategic decisions and the results of planning need to be disseminated to all members of schools and concerned stakeholders, to nurture a sense of commitment and belonging to the schools and their plans. Significant achievements and unique characteristics need to be emphasized and communicated to all internal and external stakeholders through various communication channels. In addition, the respective deans will ensure that their schools will:

- Expand the role and integrate the feedback of school advisory councils and respective university stakeholders (students, faculty, staff and alumni) in the implementation of schools' strategic plans and the review of degree programs to ensure employable graduates (2014-16)
- Introduce improvements to the process of annual evaluation of faculty and administrators particularly for purposes of inter-school consistency
- Integrate the development of e-learning opportunities and students' exposure to blended learning experiences into schools' strategic plans to expand the graduates' skills beyond the traditional (2014-20)
- Involve schools in fundraising initiatives in support of their strategic plans (2014-20)
- Implement an ongoing Faculty Development program for all schools at LAU that will enhance faculty productivity and instructional effectiveness (2014-16)

The *School of Medicine* has come up with its own strategic plan in the context of the broader institutional plan to develop assessment rubrics that use externally validated measures with current internal assessment methods. The idea is to review and validate the innovative competency based curriculum that the school has implemented.

Student Development and Enrollment Management will develop and implement a Universal Advising plan to ensure that students are supported by a "close student-advisor relationship intended to aid students in achieving educational, career, and personal goals through the utilization of institutional and community resources" (AY 2014-15). SDEM will also establish an "Educational and Psychological Assessment and Intervention Center" that will allow the SDEM team to intervene and assess high-risk students at an early stage in a very practical and efficient manner (2014-16).

[Human Resources and University Services]

To improve and facilitate planning, Facilities Management (FM) will develop procedures, processes and guidelines, to include university construction guidelines, capital budget preparation guidelines, space and furniture guidelines, lab safety procedures, key procedures, critical systems assessment & related emergency response procedures (2014-20). FM will update the existing university Master Plans and implement the asset management software; both initiatives will assist in data-based planning, evaluation and decision-making.

The Alumni Relations Office will strengthen the ties between students and alumni by establishing an alumni mentorship program that brings together alumni mentors with senior students to help them with professional and career development (2014-16) and establish an alumni mobile application to strengthen connections of the alumni community with the university (AY 2014-15).

MarCom will develop an integrated communication strategy based on the assessment of the current processes and flow of internal and external communications (AY2014-16).

The Development Office will be raising annually approximately \$6,000,000 in funds over the next three years to support the university's various academic and research initiatives.

Institutional Effectiveness

Over the past decade, LAU's advancement and progress have been greatly supported by the adoption of two consecutive five-year strategic plans (SP). *SP 2011-16* gives priority to the continued development of the university's academic component. The successful implementation of the strategic plan can be mainly attributed to the horizontal and vertical alignment of short-term and long-term plans of academic and functional areas to the institutional plan. The completion of activities is monitored quarterly by the Pillar Chair Committee, a designated steering committee that signals accomplishments and challenges and proposes alternative courses of action as deemed necessary including the need for more effective integrated planning.

Monitoring of the implementation of the SP is not limited to the level of completion of activities. It goes further to include the monitoring of the quality of completed activities. The award of program accreditation and positive program reviews, an important goal in *SP 2011-16*, is an indication of academic quality and effective student learning. As the program assessment process is systematic, continuous and is subject to external review by peers, relevance and quality enhancement of programs is safeguarded. Benchmarks studies with peer institutions as well as external and internal audits are mechanisms used to demonstrate the attainment of thresholds of quality. Since its establishment, the IRA office has played a significant role in providing relevant, accurate and timely data and information in support of evidence-based decision making, planning, and institutional effectiveness efforts.

Standard 2 Exhibits

2.1	Strategic Plan 2011-2016	2.19	University Report 2014-IT Plans
2.2	Self-Studies, Program Reviews and Accountability Reports	2.20	Benchmarks of Compensations
2.3	University Budgets: Roles, Responsibilities and Procedures	2.21	Grading Grids
2.4	Pillar Chair Committee-Minutes of Meeting	2.22	Financial Plan
2.5	Fact Book 2013-2014	2.23	Alumni Relations Plan
2.6	Glossary of Terms	2.24	Fulfilling the Promise Campaign
2.7	Program Review Data prepared by IRA - MS COMP	2.25	MARCOM Creative Briefs
2.8	Benchmark Studies and Collaborations with MEHE	2.26	Program Review Document of Procedures
2.9	School Strategic Plans	2.27	Institutional Surveys
2.10	SOM and SON Feasibility Studies	2.28	NSSE 2013
2.11	SDEM Plans	2.29	Alumni & Employer Surveys
2.12	FM Organizational Charts 2013	2.30	Retreat Agenda
2.13	Space Re-allocation Plans	2.31	New Strategic Initiatives- 2013
2.14	Central Facilities Committee Minutes of Meeting	2.32	SDEM White Paper
2.15	Master Plan	2.33	Business Requirements for an Automated Procurement Solution
2.16	Capital Budget 2012-2017	2.34	MARCOM Work Plan
2.17	Projects Steering Committees	2.35	PEEF
2.18	Master Schedule		

Standard 3: Organization and Governance



Description

The university is governed by a Board of Trustees (BOT) and benefits from the advice of a Board of International Advisors (BIA). The president of the university, the chair of the Faculty Senate and church representatives are ex-officio members of the BIA and BOT, in addition to the chair of the BIA who is an ex-officio member on the BOT. University boards have their own bylaws [Exhibits 3.1 & 3.2]. The Council of Deans (CD), composed of the provost and school deans, makes decisions pertaining to academia, while the President's Cabinet (PC), composed of the president, the provost, and the vice-presidents, makes decisions concerning the university offices and their advancement [Exhibit 3.1]. As the highest academic council, the CD is in charge of all academic matters at the university, acting as an advisory and recommendatory body to the provost and the president on academic programs, processes, and procedures as well as a liaison body among the heads of the academic units, promoting discussion and the exchange of ideas on the effective management of schools. Needless to say there is a fair bit of overlapping between the two bodies.

The faculty participates in the governance of the institution through the Faculty Senate. The Senate is composed of 34 members equally allocated between the Beirut and Byblos campus and representing all schools. The university councils, their mandate, composition and terms are specified in the Senate Bylaws [Exhibit 3.3]. Through these councils (and through school councils), faculty members decide on admission criteria, oversee curriculum development, guard faculty welfare, and act on grievances [Exhibit 3.4]. Staff members of the university have an elected Staff Advisory Council representing all university offices [Exhibit 3.5]. The Council serves as an advisory body and a forum for LAU staff to voice their concerns. Two student councils were formed in 2007, one in Beirut and the other in Byblos to oversee the interests and benefits of students according to certain policies as well as having student representatives on university councils [Exhibit 3.6]. The two councils combined constitute one overarching student council.

The university bodies have clear reporting relationships: The Senate recommends to the provost who presides over the CD. Chairpersons of academic departments report to school deans. Schools are managed through school bylaws [Exhibit 3.7]. Staff members report to the heads of their respective divisions who in turn report to specific vice presidents. Reporting relationships are clearly defined in the university organizational chart [Exhibit 3.8].

[Board of Trustees (BOT)]

The BOT follows up on the university mission and purpose. The BOT approves the long-range plan, a variety of budgets, non-budgeted expenditures, inter-fund transfers, changes in fees, changes in salary schedules, changes in the total number of employees, and the acquisition, use or disposal of all assets including funds, lands, buildings or major pieces of equipment. It also acts on all investment recommendations.

BOT membership is for a three-year term. BOT members are recommended by the Nominating Committee of the BOT and approved by the Board. They can be re-elected for one additional term following a positive evaluation. They have no direct financial interest with LAU nor are they employees of it. In fact, BOT members are asked to sign a conflict of interest form prior to serving on the Board [Exhibit 3.9]. In general, BOT members are chosen because they are professionals who have a record of good or notable performance in their profession and who are willing to serve and contribute to LAU's development.

There are ten standing committees. Each committee consists of at least three trustees [Exhibit 3.1]. The standing committees facilitate the work of the BOT by maintaining appropriate and productive channels of communication among its members and with the institutional community. They are responsible for overseeing the business of the university, monitoring its solvency as well as its financial status, and reviewing all university policies and procedures through meetings and assessment of regular administrative reports. The Executive Committee meets regularly and may exercise all the power vested in the Board but its decisions remain subject to review and control by the Board. Currently, the Office of the General Counselor is working on documents detailing the role and responsibilities of the chair and members of the BOT. In addition, a charter is being developed for each standing committee describing its functions.

The BOT continuously evaluates its effectiveness through self-evaluation questionnaires [Exhibit 3.10]. BOT bylaws were last reviewed in March 2014 [Exhibit 3.1]. Since 2009, multiple improvements have been implemented to the structure and functions of the BOT including the most recent addition of the fiduciary and conflict of interest documents [Exhibit 3.11].

Board meetings are held twice a year on a pre-set date agreed upon in advance to periodically review the institution's success

in fulfilling its mission. After their bi-annual meeting, the Office of the Legal Counsel minutes all resolutions and circulates them to concerned constituencies for follow-up. The different Board committees report back during the next meeting to ensure implementation of action items.

The Board of International Advisors acts as an advisory body to the BOT [\[Exhibit 3.2\]](#).

[The BOT and the Chief Executive Officer (The President)]

The BOT utilizes its unique position to elect and support or remove the president of the university. The selection process is described in the BOT bylaws. The term of office for the president shall normally be for four years subject, however, to a formal review after three years by a committee of the BOT. Appointment for additional terms of up to four years per term may be made by agreement of a majority of the voting membership of the BOT. The current president, Dr. Joseph Jabbara, has been serving in this capacity since 2004 and accordingly reviewed and reelected for three full terms with the most recent evaluation occurring in September 2013. In addition, the performance of the president is evaluated on an annual basis [\[Exhibit 3.12\]](#). As per the University Bylaws, the president shall be the executive, administrative, and academic head of the university with full responsibility and authority for giving leadership to the operation of the university within the framework of the Constitution and bylaws and under the guidance and policies of the BOT. The president is an ex-officio member without vote on both the BOT and the BIA, and on all official committees and councils of the two boards and of the university. An interview (May 2014) with Mr. Antoine Frem, a member of the BOT and ex-chair, confirmed the foregoing and the relationship between the BOT and the president.

[Internal Institutional Organization of the University]

LAU is a multi-campus university with campuses in Beirut and Byblos, a separate medical center and an executive center located in Beirut as well as an academic center in New York City. The university has one president, one provost, and vice presidents who have responsibility for their respective areas on both campuses, one Faculty Senate, and unified university councils. The president regularly meets with the vice presidents individually to discuss university business and to follow through on matters relating to each VP's jurisdiction. The president is responsible for reviewing all actions to ensure compliance with the policies, rules and regulations governing the university and shall take such action, including veto, as deemed necessary.

Also contributing to the governance of the university is the Council of Deans, the University Planning Council (UPC), the Staff Council, the Student Affairs Council, and other university academic councils as stipulated in the Faculty Bylaws. The CD acts as a recommendatory body to the president on school initiatives as well as institution-wide academic matters. Being the highest academic body, the Council of Deans receives recommendations from some university councils. The Faculty Senate also recommends initiatives and policies related to faculty welfare, both academic and non-academic, to the Council of Deans [\[Exhibit 3.3\]](#). The Staff Advisory Council (SAC) sends its recommendations to the offices of the Vice President for Human Resources and University Services; and the Student Affairs Council deals with issues and makes recommendations to the VP for Student Development and Enrollment Management (SDEM) to ensure that the university meets its mission in making it a student-centered institution and offering a liberal arts education to a diverse body of students. The president normally meets with the staff, faculty, and students at least twice a year to inform them of university developments and BOT decisions and initiatives.

The university has seven operational schools: The School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Architecture and Design, the School of Pharmacy, The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing, and the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine. Three schools are operational on both campuses: The School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, and the School of Architecture and Design. The schools of engineering, medicine, nursing and pharmacy are only operational on the Byblos Campus; students can enroll in Beirut for their first year of education in Pharmacy and in Engineering, and their first semester in nursing but then have to transfer to Byblos.

The School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Business were until AY 2011-12 headed by two deans, one in Beirut and the other in Byblos. This was also true for department chairs. The university however had strategically decided to streamline the administration and operation of all schools; as such a single dean for the School of Arts and Science, and a single dean for the School of Business were hired in 2011-12. By the following academic year, single chairpersons were hired for all academic departments. The School of Architecture and Design as a separate entity was established in 2009 (prior to that it was part of the School of Engineering and Architecture), as such there was never duplication in its academic administration. All schools have their own bylaws that operate on both campuses. Schools have unified councils dealing with curricula, admission criteria, faculty development, research, and promotion. On the operational level, key positions (such as School Assessment Officers) are now hired for the entire school. Needless to say, other administrative positions such as Administrative Assistants and lab supervisors remain campus-based. In non-academic matters, most key university offices are now headed by one single officer.

[Governance]

>> Faculty Governance

The governance structure of the university ensures that faculty members have a substantive role in assuring the academic integrity of the institution's educational programs. As per the Senate Bylaws, the composition of all university councils includes senators, and elected faculty members representing each distinct school [Exhibit 3.3]. Further, each school has its governing councils as per the pertinent school bylaws [Exhibit 3.7].

All new educational programs at the university are initiated by the concerned academic departments. These programs are then forwarded to school faculty councils before they are finally reviewed by the University Curriculum Council. Similar processes are applied for introducing new courses or changing the contents of existing ones. The hiring process of faculty members is also initiated by academic departments. Search committees are formed consisting entirely of faculty members; recommendations for hiring are sent to the school deans, who make the final recommendation to the provost. In choosing a chairperson/associate chair for a department, the school dean is required to consult with faculty members individually. In selecting a dean and provost, search committees are formed; these include faculty members and representatives from the Faculty Senate. Faculty members are also involved (but to a lesser extent) in selecting staff members, especially if their work responsibilities lie within an academic department (e.g., lab supervisor, academic assistant).

>> Student Governance

In December 2007, the first student councils of LAU were elected. As per the bylaws (revised in 2011), there are three such councils: the University Student Council and two Campus Student Councils (CSC)—one for Beirut and one for Byblos [Exhibit 3.6]. The USC is composed of ten student representatives, five from each campus. As for the Campus Student Councils, each CSC has 15 students representing the various schools (Beirut: six School of Business, six School of Arts & Sciences, three School of Architecture & Design; Byblos: three School of Architecture & Design, three School of Arts & Sciences, three School of Nursing, three School of Business, three School of Engineering and three School of Pharmacy). The USC and CSCs were formed with the aim of integrating students within the shared governance culture encouraged and endorsed at LAU [Exhibits 3.13, Initiative 4 & 3.14]. As such, student representation is found on many university councils and committees [Exhibit 3.1].

>> Staff Governance

A Staff Advisory Council was reactivated in the summer of 2013. In light of the expiring mandate of the current council and the increase in the staff members, the bylaws [Exhibit 3.5] are to be revised and the concerns of the staff will be looked into. The president meets with the staff at the beginning of each academic year as well as twice throughout the year to update them on BOT decisions relevant to the needs of the staff. During a general staff meeting in October of 2013, President Jabbra encouraged the staff to come forward and participate actively in university shared governance.

Appraisal

[Board Operation]

The BOT is responsible for the university's quality and integrity and has assumed this duty in an excellent and professional manner, directing the institution towards growth and prosperity. The Board does not interfere in the direct management of the university giving it sufficient independence to oversee its operations in accordance with the institution's mission, vision, and values. However, when the university faces any financial difficulty or crisis, the BOT makes every attempt to ensure that university losses are minimal [Exhibit 3.15]. Indeed, the Board effectively exercises its fiduciary responsibilities by approving on a yearly basis the Operating and Capital Budget of the institution.

The orientation package [Exhibit 3.16] provided to new board members is all-encompassing and prepares members adequately for their duties. Guided by the association of governing boards, the Legal Counsel refines as necessary the currently available documents delineating the rights and responsibilities of the Board as well as the standing committee members. The recently updated questionnaire [Exhibit 3.10] for board members' self-evaluation clearly shows that the Board is committed to continuous improvement, periodic evaluation, and enhanced effectiveness.

[The Board and the Chief Executive Officer (The President)]

The president, who is the chief executive officer chosen by the BOT, is managing the university effectively and efficiently. The president's role is not only to ensure that excellence is the goal of the institution but also to prepare action plans in case of force majeure situation such as problems related to enrollment and political instability in the country. Through this governance structure, the president makes sure that proper and sufficient resources are allocated to the different entities and schools to fulfill the university's mission. To ensure effectiveness, the president has the authority to reallocate funds from a contingency

fund that exists in the Operating and Capital Budgets if needed for extra human resources upon a legitimate request from the requesting entity. The president's performance is assessed continuously by the Board.

[Governance]

The governing system has been effective over the past five years with the president as the leader. The structure and line of reporting from faculty to chair to dean to provost and president has overall given a clear communicative path in which work has been more efficiently and objectively accomplished.

The multi-layered system of governance assures the quality and integrity of the academic programs at the university. The introduction of new programs or changes to existing programs undergoes an extensive filtering process before taking effect. The diverse membership in the school and university councils is an additional guarantee for integrity and quality. The introduction of new schools requires the approval of the Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees, raising the assurance bar to the highest possible level.

The strategic decision to appoint one dean for each school and to unify departments when they operate on two campuses is relatively new. While the schools have adjusted well to the unified structures overall, the unification of departments has not been as smooth. For example, to better merge departments in the SAS, chairpersons and associate chairpersons have been appointed, each belonging to a different campus, with their duties and responsibilities clearly stated in the new school bylaws. Committees are common, all meetings are common and the chair and associate chair cooperate consistently (in most cases). Yet, the culture of departments being independent prevails in some instances so it will take some time before unification is felt throughout all processes.

>> Faculty Governance

The governance structure of the university provides a sound system for properly managing the departments and schools. Consultations with faculty members of individual departments are required for appointing chairpersons, as stipulated in School Bylaws. Results are presented to the provost for proper action, often involving the president. There were instances where individual deans were perceived as making decisions unilaterally without the requisite consultations. In such cases, complaints were raised and addressed by the senior administration. At least in one case, the process ended with the resignation of the dean.

The appointment of deans is the result of an extensive search in which faculty members, other deans, and the provost are involved. Their input is reflected in the recommendation of a search committee established for the purpose to the president where the final decision is made in conjunction with the BOT. More specifically, membership in search committees to recommend a dean includes individual faculty members, Senate representatives, and other deans. Once applicants are shortlisted, presentations are scheduled for the entire university community and their input is requested through an online questionnaire.

Under the precepts of shared governance practiced at LAU, a system of checks and balances is in place allowing different academic decision-making levels to evaluate each other, albeit informally in some cases. Faculty members voice their evaluation of chairs, who in turn make informal remarks about the performance of deans. Deans, on the other hand, have the opportunity to voice their opinions of the provost. The process also works, more formally, in the opposite direction as well. There is strong buy-in among all constituents involved to improve inter-level evaluation, although we are still some ways away from a 360 degrees system.

Since senators began sitting on university councils, shared governance is stronger at the university despite the prevalence of junior faculty in the Senate membership. Shared governance is expected to further improve as the Senate becomes more efficient and effective and when the ranks of the members become more senior and 50% senior tenured faculty is attained.

Surveys were administered to faculty, staff and students in June 2013 regarding their perceptions of the governance structure at the university [Exhibit 3.18]. Overall, these groups were satisfied but each group highlighted areas of governance that they feel are lacking.

>> Student Governance

Major advancements have been made in implementing a culture of shared governance regarding students. Students are now voting members on several university and campus councils. The main duties and responsibilities of these councils are to act as effective liaisons between the students on one hand and the faculty, staff, and administration on the other hand. Other duties include establishing proper channels for communicating campus issues to the whole student body, and enhancing campus atmosphere and life through extracurricular activities.

One drawback regarding student representation is the absence of graduate students on these councils. This had been noted by the university and accordingly a graduate council election was carried out in 2009. However, only one student nominated himself/herself. The reason for the lack of nominations may be due to the fact that the many graduate students work off campus and thus are available at the university only during class hours (that run usually in the evenings). No additional efforts have been made since 2009 regarding graduate student representation. It is hoped that with the hiring of the first Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (October 2013), more can be accomplished on this front.

To assess further the effectiveness of student governance, a student focus group was carried out with the Student Council in May 2013. In addition, a questionnaire on student governance was administered to 2,483 students enrolled in ENG 009, 101, 102 and 202 courses in spring 2013. Of those invited to participate in the paper-based survey, 1,059 responded yielding a response rate of 42.6%. Sixty eight percent (68%) of the students agreed or strongly agreed that students are represented on university councils while 26% believed they were not. Sixty percent agreed or strongly agreed that students are heard and their opinions taken into consideration by university councils, while 32% did not. Many students reported that even though they were able to freely express their opinions, they feel unable to make any change.

The results of the focus group meeting and those of the questionnaire were communicated to VPSDEM who responded that the office continuously lobbies within PC and CD for improvements that directly affect student life on campus. In spite of the financial restrictions and the space challenges, many changes have been implemented, some in direct response to meetings with students on both campuses (see chapter 6 on Students).

>> **Staff Governance**

Following a series of meetings since February 2013 between the current Staff Advisory Council (SAC) officers, the HR directors, and VP for Human Resources and University Services (VPHRUS), an action plan was devised in light of the expiring mandate of the current council and the addition of new schools and entities causing an increase in staff numbers. The role and bylaws of the Staff Advisory Council are also being revisited [Exhibits 3.5 & 3.19] in order to allow for greater staff input into university governance.

Projection

The Provost's Office will continue to rigorously follow up on the initiatives of SP 2011-16. SP action item 3.4.1.4 requires the amendment of the faculty recruitment procedure to include procedures for hiring school academic administrators over the next few years. While action item 3.4.1.5, which calls for the assessment of academic administrators (and the transparency and effectiveness of the procedure), should also be implemented given the call to reinstate the practice of evaluating chairpersons, school deans, and the provost based on some newly developed criteria (to be complete over the next two years). In addition, action item 3.4.1.6 (due to begin in April of 2014) requires that School Bylaws be periodically assessed, thus creating a continuous process for improvement.

>> **Board Governance**

The BOT is committed to diversifying the profile of its membership especially through adding academicians, medical professionals, and financial experts. The Office of the President and the BOT leadership will identify and recruit new members during the upcoming two years. The BOT continues to post its bylaws and management on the LAU website. It is required that the BOT continues to update the information on the LAU website.

>> **Faculty Governance**

The Faculty Senate approved a communication plan [Exhibit 3.20] in November of 2013 whose "purpose is to ensure prompt and proper flow of information in an official and transparent manner" within the Senate and between the Senate and other university entities. In communicating with the administration, the plan indicates that the Senate expects to receive formal feedback from the administration on each of its recommendations, and that a follow-up procedure shall be developed and implemented.

>> **Student Governance**

Student governance is being maintained and strengthened through more representation on university councils (for further details, refer to chapter 6 on Students). Efforts should be made to have graduate students representation on university councils.

>> **Staff Governance**

Under the guidance of the VPHRUS, meetings are scheduled with the current SAC officers and with concerned entities at the

university. Elections were launched in May 2014 and a new chair and SAC members were voted in. In addition, it has been agreed that the SAC bylaws will be revised and amended by the new council beginning 2014.

Institutional Effectiveness

Strategic Plan (SP) 2011-16 covers all facets of the university. The SP addresses issues related to students, faculty, and staff governance. The President's Cabinet has initiated a review process for the structure, representation and bylaws of the Staff Advisory Council to develop effectiveness of staff governance, in addition to reviewing the Faculty Senate membership and responsibilities. The action plans in the SP are followed up by the Strategic Plan Pillar Chairs' Committee (PCC) which meets regularly to monitor the work and timeline.

New policies are taken to the BOT meetings twice a year for discussion and recommendation. There is continuous follow-up on accreditation. Chairs of the Strategic Plan Pillars submit quarterly reports to the provost's office as a regular follow-up [\[Exhibit 3.21\]](#).

The schools have been active in recommending necessary changes in structure in the various schools. There are many initiatives that are under way or completed at the university at large and in various areas and schools. A conference held by the World Bank on university governance rated LAU among two other universities in Lebanon as having the highest governance ratings [\[Exhibit 3.22\]](#).

Standard 3 Exhibits

3.1	University Bylaws: http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/constitution-bylaws/lau_bylaws.pdf
3.2	BIA Bylaws: http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/constitution-bylaws/bia_bylaws.pdf
3.3	Faculty Senate Bylaws: http://facultysenate.lau.edu.lb/bylawsaug2007.pdf
3.4	Faculty Governance: http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/constitution-bylaws/faculty_governance.pdf
3.5	Staff Advisory Council Bylaws
3.6	Student Council Bylaws
3.7	School Bylaws
3.8	University Organizational Chart: http://sb.lau.edu.lb/about/organization-chart.php
3.9	Conflict of Interest Form: http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/conflict_of_interest.pdf
3.10	Board Members Self-Evaluation Forms
3.11	Conflict of Interest Documents for Board Members
3.12	Evaluation Form of the President
3.13	SP 2005-10- Initiative 4
3.14	SP 2011-16
3.15	Interview with Vice President for Finance, Mr. E. Laham
3.16	Orientation Package for Board Members
3.17	Cost of Living-A Study by the School of Business
3.18	Faculty students and staff Surveys
3.19	Report from SAC Chair
3.20	Senate Communication Plan: http://facultysenate.lau.edu.lb/senate_communication_plan.pdf
3.21	Samples of SP action items quarterly progress report
3.22	World Bank Report

Standard 4: The Academic Program



>> 4.1 – 4.20 / Undergraduate Programs

Description

LAU focuses its mission as a comprehensive university on positively changing the lives of its students by offering 32 undergraduate majors in addition to a teaching diploma [Exhibit 4.1]. LAU does this through seven schools: School of Architecture & Design (SARD), School of Arts & Sciences (SAS), School of Business (SOB), School of Engineering (SOE), Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM), Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSN), and School of Pharmacy (SOP).

LAU awarded its first associate's and bachelor's degrees in 1955 in arts and applied science, and arts and sciences respectively, as a four-year college-level institution chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. In 1993, LAU also began offering the degrees of Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Interior Architecture, and Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy. In 2010, the BS Nursing students were admitted.

All the five Bachelor of Engineering degree programs are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission and the Bachelor of Computer Science program is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET (Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology). LAU graduates of pharmacy are eligible to sit for licensure exams in the United States and Canada [Exhibit 4.2]. The BS in Nursing was recently (October 2013) accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education's Board of Commissioners for five years. The Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.) and the programs at the SOB are undergoing relevant professional accreditation processes. The Associate's degree programs were discontinued in fall 2011, though students already enrolled will be able to complete their degrees.

Special programs that lead to a teaching diploma as well as language programs in intensive English and special Arabic are administered by the university. All academic programs are described in the Academic Catalog [Exhibit 4.2], on the university website (<http://www.lau.edu.lb>), and in many cases in brochures. All programs are designed in conformity with Lebanese higher education laws and meet the requirements of the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. Financial resources to support the university's academic program are described in Chapter 9.

The higher education law in Lebanon requires the successful completion of Baccalaureate II (Bacc II) exams (or the equivalent) to be admitted into higher education institutions. The Bacc II program is similar to the International Baccalaureate and equivalent to the freshman year program in the American system of education. Thus, holders of the Bacc II or approved equivalency are granted up to 30 credits of freshman level courses upon enrolling at LAU [Exhibits 4.3]. The exact number of credits transferred depends on the scores obtained on the SAT examination, high school grades, and English Entrance Exams such as the TOEFL or SAT I writing score.

All schools at LAU have developed academic plans that include course offering schedules allowing students in good standing to graduate with a BA or BS degree within three years, with a Bachelor of Engineering degree in four including three summers, a B.Arch. degree in five, also including four summers, and a B.S. in pharmacy in five years and one additional year for the Pharm. D degree [Exhibit 4.4]. The Curriculum Advising and Planning Program (CAPP) of the Banner system assists students in planning their academic schedule.

Academic programs seek to educate the whole person through a combination of program-specific education and fulfillment of the Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC) required of all students. Students are offered numerous opportunities for civic engagement and to develop into current and future leaders (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/student-engagement/outreach/civic-engagement.php> and <http://students.lau.edu.lb/student-engagement/mun.php>). Faculty and student scholarship, including joint faculty-student research, is ongoing in schools.

All schools at LAU have academic plans and/or strategic plans that are updated at set intervals, [Exhibit 4.5]. Review and amendment of academic programs are initiated at the department level through the involvement of faculty then seek the approval of the School Academic Council (SAC), the University Curriculum Council (UCC), and the Council of Deans (CD) [Exhibit 4.6] programs that have not yet been reviewed and revised are scheduled to do so by the end of AY2013-14 [Exhibit 4.7]. The CD requires new programs [Exhibit 4.8] to have a mission statement, program objectives and learning outcomes, which are spelled out in the Academic Catalog, and prepared according to the CD approved template.

Each program maps its curriculum to courses based on performance criteria. Program-wide assessment is most established in the professional schools while it is in the process of being instituted in other schools such as SAS. Schools and departments may use specialized accreditations, if outcomes-based, in lieu of the institutional process [Exhibit 4.9]. The Provost's Office, working with the various deans and concerned entities, provides faculty lines and necessary resources for all program delivery and assessment [Exhibit 4.10].

The various schools, working in cooperation with the Office of Admissions, carry out undergraduate admissions. The University Admissions Council (UAC) is entrusted with initiating policies and procedures for the admission to the university's various academic programs [Exhibits 4.2 & <http://admissions.lau.edu.lb/>]. All incoming students have to take the SAT I and TOEFL or its equivalent, the English Entrance Exam (EEE). Each program/school sets its admission criteria/scores (school grades, SAT scores) and follows the UAC procedures and policies regarding retention.

To facilitate student degree completion in a reasonable time frame, course work in most programs is sequenced through a system of prerequisites and co-requisites, initiated at the department level, school level and approved by UCC and the CD [Exhibit 4.11]. Advising is mandatory for all students for the first 24 credits and strongly recommended thereafter; advising in SOE and SOP is mandatory for all students. Lists of students on probation are sent to each department every semester and students in this situation are closely monitored. In AY2012-13, the on-line CAPP was upgraded to help students plan how to meet graduation requirements as well as for advisors to electronically record notes on advisor-student meetings. All bachelor's degrees require the completion of a senior study, a final year project, and/or an internship for graduation [Exhibit 4.2, p15].

The schools have implemented various strategies to improve student retention rates [Exhibit 4.12]. The Office of the Dean of Students on each campus has hired Academic Advisors to better follow up with students at risk of or already on academic probation (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/registration/difficulties.php>).

A variety of instructional methods are used in courses though in some programs lecturing is the primary mode of teaching. Assessment of student learning is based on projects, homework, writing and research assignments, simulations, clinical performance, and scheduled exams. Active learning is also a common mode of instruction in some courses and specifically in professional schools [Exhibits 4.13 & 4.14]. The Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC) requires all students to take English courses as well as other courses considered key to educating the whole person [Exhibits 4.15 & 4.16 at <http://admissions.lau.edu.lb/undergraduate/entrance-exams.php>].

By continuing the culture of both internal and external evaluation of programs, LAU guarantees that its programs keep pace with generally accepted practices. All the programs at LAU have a coherent design, as evidenced by the clearly laid out CAPP on Banner. This design is characterized by appropriate breadth in covering all relevant areas of each field, appropriate depth through the increasing complexity of courses and the requirement of a minimum of 36 credits in the major. Pre-requisites and co-requisites are clearly stated and constitute a basis for sequential learning [Exhibit 4.2]. Elective courses (free and technical) are varied and add further depth and breadth to the learning process. Programs are committed to offering the required courses as well as the elective ones so that all students graduate in the allocated period of time, though students may choose to take longer to graduate.

The libraries and laboratories on both campuses are essential parts of the education process at LAU (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/index.php>). The university also encourages the use of Blackboard and library e-reserve. All schools at LAU have their own computer labs (Apple or PC) as well as classrooms for courses for which the computer is an essential tool. Both campuses include a large number of smart classrooms. Wireless networks exist on both campuses and are open to all students.

All schools at LAU undergo cyclical reviews of their programs and various schools have sought or are in the process of seeking relevant professional accreditations in their fields and programs of study. All of the five programs in SOE are ABET accredited following a thorough review process. The Computer Science program is ABET accredited. The B.S in Pharmacy was reviewed during the SOP's successful renewal of the Pharm.D accreditation by ACPE. In SAS, all programs have been reviewed at least once in the past five years as per CD decision except for the BA in Political Science [Exhibit 4.17]. The Architecture Program has been accepted for review by NAAB. The Foundation Program and the Fine Arts Program were reviewed once in 2012 by external reviewers, the Interior Design and the Graphic Design programs are in the process of internal review as part of their application for accreditation [Exhibit 4.18].

Programs leading to a new degree require the approval of the Lebanese Government and registration with the Board of Regents of the State of New York.

In addition to their academic studies and supplemental activities, LAU students can benefit from programs that broaden their

global perspective and develop their leadership skills as well as improve their other soft skills through civic engagement, internships, and exchange programs [Exhibit 4.19]. The Study Abroad Office guides and assists students wishing to enrich their international cultural experience abroad through exchange programs. It also caters for the needs of incoming students wishing to enrich their cultural experience in Lebanon (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/student-engagement/exchange.php>). The Department of Architecture and Design has “International Studio” and “International Workshop” courses in which students travel with a faculty member to various destinations in the world to study particular aspect of architecture or design [Exhibits 4.2 & 4.20]. In Spring 2014 SDEM established a Study Abroad Steering Committee with faculty representatives from all schools to further strengthen the support for study abroad.

Any addition or deletion of a program aligns with the institutional mission and goes along with faculty expertise, students’ needs, availability of resources, and market needs. In general, when program requirements are changed, the new requirements only apply to new students with the previous requirements maintained until enrolled students have graduated. Departments work very closely with the Registrar’s Office and advisors work with students to ensure that the students complete their degree with minimum disruption, if any. If courses are deleted, a clear equivalency of old and new courses with effective dates is published.

Internships are offered at various schools in organizations, companies, community, and hospital sites, in Lebanon and abroad [Exhibit 4.21]. Proper implementation of agreements is overseen by LAU faculty on-site, directors, department chairs and/or company representatives. A large pool of alternate sites is available if agreements are breached or not renewed. Practicum/clinical experience conducted at the Lebanese American University Medical Center-Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH) ensures more control and continued availability of resources. In some cases, the Student Manual or syllabus lists the contracted practice sites in Lebanon and abroad (including conflicts of interest) as well as rules and regulations pertaining to student conduct and duties on site [Exhibit 4.22]. The SOE, SARd, and the SOB require internships at discipline-related organizations and businesses. Students are responsible to secure their sites but the schools have career officers to help place the trainees. The syllabi for the associated courses include the rules and regulations and the student has to seek the approval of the department chair/course instructor.

All programs offered at LAU cover relevant areas of each field through increasing complexity of courses, continuity, and sequential progression. BA/BS degrees require the successful completion of at least 92 credits excluding freshman level courses and a minimum of 122 including freshman credits [Exhibit 4.23]. Of the total credits required for graduation, 34 are in the LAC, 30-48 are in the major, and 18-21 credits are in specific disciplines required under the emphasis or track within the major. Any remaining credit hours consist of electives. Students may earn more than one degree provided there is only minimal overlap between the credit requirements. While most programs have unrestricted electives, which allow students to explore fields outside their area of specialization, SOE, SOP, Architecture and Interior Architecture offer only technical/professional electives [Exhibit 4.2].

All undergraduate LAU students must complete the Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC) which comprises a minimum of 34 credits, in addition to two freshman level English courses (ENG101 and ENG102). The LAC covers the major areas of knowledge in liberal arts and seeks to provide students with a considerable amount of flexibility and choice in fulfilling their requirements (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/academics/common/lac.php>).

Students at LAU have a wide choice of majors/emphases/tracks available to them within their programs. In the past few years several new undergraduate majors, emphases, and tracks have been introduced and/or amended [Exhibit 4.24]. It should be noted that this expansion was accompanied by a significant increase in faculty members (chapter 5).

It should be noted that emphases, tracks and minors do not appear on the diplomas granted by LAU. Emphases and tracks appear as a “concentration” on student transcripts (the programs in political science/international affairs and science education are exceptions), and minors are only recognized by the university through a statement provided by the Office of the Registrar upon the request of the student.

Majors leading to a bachelor of science (whether in the SAS or SOB) have long maintained a higher number of credits in the major, averaging between 38 and 69 credits. For professional degrees in engineering, architecture, and pharmacy, major course requirements are significantly higher and range between 62 credits for graphic design, 107 credits for civil engineering, and 137 credits for pharmacy (<http://publications.lau.edu.lb/academic-catalog/>).

Program Advisory Councils composed of academics, employers, and prominent professional have been formed in the SOP, SOE, SON and Computer Science Department. The SOB has populated its advisory council.

Appraisal

Faculty and academic administration are continuously engaged in the active oversight of the content and delivery of courses and programs. New faculty are introduced to the council structure that ensures oversight through annual faculty orientation sessions [Exhibit 4.25]. Nevertheless, some aspects of this oversight need to be more structured. According to a review of the UCC minutes, LAU's programs are in a constant state of change, as evidenced by the number of proposals submitted to the UCC [Exhibit 4.26]. Although most of the proposals concern amendments to existing programs (mostly as a result of program reviews), proposals to introduce new courses or even new programs are also common. Procedures governing the introduction of new academic programs or courses are properly implemented.

Coordination among and between multi-section courses and across the two campuses is one other aspect of academic oversight. Efforts are in place to develop and implement general guidelines for coordination among multi-section courses.

Academic programs and plans are reviewed per a university-wide schedule with oversight by the academic administration. While progress has been made in terms of institutionalizing assessment at the program and school levels, more needs to be done at the program level in some departments, and especially at the university-wide level (e.g., proficiency of students' English skills at time of graduation). All programs at LAU have developed, or are in the process of developing, the infrastructure for assessment of student learning and are carrying out the specific assessment plans.

Admission standards are set by the schools and deadlines have been established for submission of applications for admission, yet the practice of rolling admissions is still a hindrance to individual program and school planning. LAU now emphasizes regular and high quality advising as demonstrated by the new university-wide advising software and the advising hours of professors during each semester.

In line with SP 2011-16, LAU has allocated additional funds to sustain and improve its academic programs through the hiring of new faculty, purchase/lease of new property tied to its academic programs, renovation of existing physical space, and continued emphasis on external fundraising. LAU continues to act conservatively regarding its financial operations to safeguard its ability to sustain and improve its academic programs (see chapter 9 on Financial Resources).

Undergraduate programs at LAU provide students with a broad based education through a balance between program-specific requirements and fulfillment of the LAC. By continuing the culture of both internal and external evaluation of programs, LAU guarantees that its programs keep pace with generally accepted practices. Program objectives and learning outcomes are published in print [Exhibit 4.2]. LAC allows the students to explore a wide range of learning and methods of inquiry. However, no formal assessment of LAC learning at the institutional level is taking place; the Provost created a University Committee on LAC Assessment and Improvement in 2013 for this purpose.

The library's physical holdings, electronic resources and acquisition policy respond to the needs of students and faculty and IT resources and personnel are adequate to meet the needs of staff and faculty (see chapter 7 on Libraries).

LAU has committed to review all programs at least once every five years, and reviews are initiated by the faculty. By the end of AY2013-14, it is expected that the remaining programs will have gone through the review process. Professional schools have undergone program reviews to align their programs with accreditation requirements. Some of the programs have already implemented program changes called for in the self-study and report of the external reviewers; while others are planning their implementation.

As academic planning and execution takes a long time, sometimes LAU must reassess decisions made earlier. LAU administrators are able to evaluate their decisions and deliver changes in plans as necessary. The institution remains keen on allocating resources on the basis of academic planning, however. The UCC and the CD recently approved proposals for the introduction of a new program in Petroleum Engineering in SOE, based on the foreseen need to produce experts in the field of a newly found natural resource in the country [Exhibit 4.27]. Fashion design is another new program and SARd has secured the necessary resources for start-up of the program [Exhibit 4.28].

When programs are eliminated or program requirements are changed, the concerned department makes appropriate arrangements for enrolled students so that they may complete their degrees with minimal disruption.

As of October 2013, some LAU students are able to take classes (initially EMBA and MBA, and Architecture and Design courses, and general interest workshops and conferences) in the heart of downtown Beirut following a partnership with Solidere (the Lebanese company that is developing and reconstructing the Beirut Central District). Opening the center is

part of a strategic decision by LAU to outgrow the traditional campus model and bring itself closer to the communities it serves [Exhibit 4.29].

Because the overwhelming majority of students are not native speakers of English, it is imperative to measure the proficiency and competency in written and oral English. LAU relies on the writing and critical reading SAT scores for placing students in appropriate level of English-language instruction. Because student deficiency in English is of most concern to the university faculty and administration, SAS has developed an English Lab to which faculty can send students for remedial instruction. Adequate English writing skills are one of the learning outcomes identified by LAC, however. LAU graduates are not assessed for their competencies in oral and written communication upon graduation. The successful implementation of LAC will not be fully completed without careful assessment of learning outcomes—particularly oral and written communication skills, critical thinking, as well as analytical, scientific and quantitative reasoning. While LAU does not currently have in place a centralized mechanism or a comprehensive process for assessing the learning effectiveness and the extent to which LAC courses are successful in meeting their outcomes and objectives, this should be addressed in the coming year by the LAC Assessment and Improvement Committee that was appointed in 2013 by the Provost and CD.

The range of majors available to students at LAU has continued to grow over the last five years. It should be noted that this expansion was accompanied by an increase in faculty members (see chapter 5 on Faculty).

Students are offered sequential courses within the majors, as is apparent in the curriculum [Exhibit 4.2]. Course content is consistent across the two campuses (e.g., POL201 has one syllabus for all sections on both campuses). LAU has developed and articulated specific learning outcomes for all degree and certificate programs.

The Lebanese government requires a minimum of 36 credits for a major, as does the LAU Charter. For many degree programs, after accounting for LAC and major courses, the remaining number of credits needed for graduation necessitates enrolling in electives. This can encourage students to seek two majors; however, the Lebanese government will not ratify two majors earned within the same school in the same general discipline.

While there are assessment plans in place, a system for evaluating curricular effectiveness is still lacking in most schools. Exit exams, exit surveys, alumni surveys, and/or employer surveys are necessary to ensure the continuous data-driven improvement of the curriculum. Advisory Boards composed of academics, employers, and prominent professionals have been formed in the SOP, SOE programs and Computer Science. The SOB has just formed its advisory board and programs in other schools are being encouraged to form their own Advisory Boards. In professional schools, professional training is well coordinated with other components of the curriculum. An effective relationship exists between curricular content and subsequent practice, as evidenced by the evaluation surveys (student and employer) conducted by SOE.

Projection

With almost all of the professional schools receiving external accreditation and the slow but steady institutionalization of an assessment culture in all schools at the university, the new goal will be how best to use the assessment findings to improve education at LAU. The administration, faculty and staff will continue to ensure that the university offers high quality programs consistent with its mission.

LAU is committed to ensuring that all undergraduate degree programs meet the requirements of the Lebanese government and the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. The LAC committee is looking into this issue.

While advising in SOE and SOP is mandatory for all students, it is agreed that advising should be strengthened for all LAU students. The CD is cognizant of its obligations and will address this issue in the near future.

SDEM, in coordination with the CD, will conduct a study to establish a system for assessing student performance as compared with the admission qualifications and criteria by September 2016. Based on the results of this study, schools will either modify or maintain admission criteria by January 2017.

Programs that have not yet been reviewed and revised are scheduled to do so by the end of AY2014-15. Programs that have professional accreditation will work to continue to uphold this status. LAU will continue its cyclical review of all existing academic programs ensuring that every program will be reviewed every five years. LAU commits that program reviews will be data-driven and benchmarked against existing standards for the respective majors, using surveys as appropriate (exit, employers', and/or alumni surveys; external evaluators; as well as more effective school and/or program advisory boards).

Per SP 2011-16, a Standing Committee on Writing and Speaking the English Language shall be established to examine the content and goals of the writing courses, the work of the Writing Center, the importance of offering training in writing pedagogy to graduate students and working opportunities for graduate students as teaching fellows in undergraduate courses. The CD has pledged to address this issue by appointing a committee to propose an initiative for English writing aptitude across the curriculum in the coming year.

The university has committed to a periodic review of the LAC (SP 2011-16, Pillar 5) through a process that will be devised by a special committee appointed by the provost. This committee is also entrusted with establishing an implementation plan for LAC. In addition, the committee will develop a process that will enable the assessment of learning outcomes (oral and written communication skills of LAU graduates, and their abilities in analytical, scientific and quantitative reasoning) in the liberal arts core curriculum at the program level.

>> 4.21 – 4.29 / Graduate Programs

Description

Graduate programs at LAU, twelve in all, are offered at the Master’s and Doctor of Medicine degree levels. The School of Business grants an MBA and an Executive MBA, the School of Arts and Sciences grants MS degrees in computer science and in molecular biology as well as MA degrees in education, comparative literature, and international affairs. Four new programs have been recently introduced, pending actual launching (MA in Migration Studies, MA in Gender Studies, LLM. and Executive MS in Actuarial Science). The School of Engineering grants MS degrees in computer engineering, civil and environmental engineering, and industrial engineering and engineering management. The School of Pharmacy grants a Pharm D program.¹ The curriculum for each graduate program has been developed by the faculty and approved by the School Curriculum/Academic Committee, University Graduate Council, and by the Council of Deans. Academic Rules & Procedures for Graduate Programs are published in the Academic Catalog available on the LAU webpage.

A Dean of Graduate Studies and Research was appointed in October 2013; however, the school deans are currently fully in charge of graduate studies in their respective schools. The University Graduate Council (UGC) is composed of faculty members of the rank of associate professor or higher. The faculty members are elected one per school in addition to two elected senators of the same rank, and one graduate student and an alternate from the other campus. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research is an ex-officio member of this council. Its mandate is to review, evaluate and recommend policies pertaining to the graduate studies programs of the university.

Graduate programs have educational objectives and learning outcomes that are published in the Academic Catalogue and on the LAU webpages. The MD program is built on core competencies formalized into learning objectives. These competencies are available to students in special documents and on Blackboard [Exhibit 4.30]. Learning objectives are revised during curriculum review meetings [Exhibit 4.31].

Financial aid support is made available to selected students. With the exception of the MD program, financial aid is based on graduate assistantships (GA’s) where the student is expected to work/assist faculty or the department (teaching assistant, research assistant, etc.). The average GA budget provided to each program amounts to 25%-30% of the graduate tuition revenues per program except for the newly established graduate programs where the budget amounts to 50%. Each department/school allocates GA funding based on performance. Staff, information resources, information technology, and physical resources are available for supporting students in the graduate programs.

Graduate courses in all programs are taught by faculty holding terminal degrees as part of their normal teaching load, exceptional cases are in the MBA and EMBA programs where professional qualifications are required.

All graduate programs require Bachelor’s degrees from recognized universities; a minimum GPA of 2.75 is also required, except for the EMBA. In addition, GMAT is required for the MBA program, and the GRE is required for all other graduate programs excluding EMBA and MD. Competitive scores on the MCAT examination are required for the MD program. Credit requirements for graduation vary between programs: 30 credits for MA and MS degrees, 36 credits for the EMBA program, and 39 credits for MBA program. All credits must be earned in graduate-level courses. For the MD program, the requirement is based on the completion of a specific four-year program. Some programs have emphasis areas and others have tracks. All graduate programs have cohesive curricula and require scholarly and/or professional activities designed to advance the student considerably beyond the educational accomplishments of a baccalaureate degree program. Only the MA in comparative literature requires a written comprehensive exam.

1 LAU is aware of the fact that the Pharm D degree is not always listed as a graduate degree but our own listing is based on its clearly being a post-bachelor’s degree.

Excluding the EMBA and Pharm D, graduate programs require the demonstration of research and theoretical skills through the successful completion of a six-credit thesis or a three-credit project with faculty supervision. However, for the MBA the thesis and project are optional and may be replaced by an equivalent number of course credits. Hard copies of all theses are archived at the LAU library. In addition they were recently digitized and made publicly accessible (<https://ecommons.lau.edu.lb:8443/xmlui/>). The MD curriculum incorporates active learning methods (problem-based) and extensive practice experiences whereby students apply their knowledge, skills and abilities using real world problem solving approaches.

Except for a few programs, the mission, objectives, and learning outcomes have been revised in the past few years. To date, there have been no formal program assessments. However, a few programs have initiated assessment plans for future implementation. Achievement of program objectives of the MD program is tracked by monitoring future studies and career pursued by the students. These are monitored by the colloquium pass rate and performance on the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE).

Appraisal

Students can find the requirements for graduate programs, as well as their rationales, objectives, and learning outcomes relevant to each program published on the department/school website as well as in the academic catalog [Exhibit 4.2]. The website and catalog are updated reflecting any changes pertaining to the program requirements. Most graduate programs reflect a high level of complexity in the objectives and student outcomes.

Concerns have been raised that insufficient financial resources are available for graduate students. In order to attract more students, some programs use part-time faculty funding to hire selected students to teach lab courses under the supervision and coordination of full-time faculty members. Many students opt to have additional work outside the university in order to support themselves financially [Exhibit 4.32]. This hinders students from dedicating more time to completing their course/thesis requirements in due time. It would be more beneficial for the research productivity of both students and faculty if programs offer 100% GA support including a stipend where available.

Criteria often adopted by students in selecting a university's graduate program of choice include: university rankings and reputation, diversity of graduate programs, stipend, assistantship, location, and educational system adopted by a university (American or non-American). The rankings of a specific program and employability are also important among considerations. In general, graduate student enrollment is higher in Beirut than in Byblos because the Beirut campus is closer to where they live. Competitive assistantship packages attractive to students are being offered by similar universities in Lebanon. The drop in the total number of graduate students is mostly due to the drop in the MBA program. However, this drop is consistent with MBA enrollment trends worldwide [Exhibit 4.33].

Limited office and lab space is allocated for graduate students. However, this scarcity may become a growing concern when the number of full-time graduate students with assistantships increases, depending on the program and the campus. The information resources and information technology resources are adequate.

Almost all graduate courses are taught by full-time faculty holding PhDs (and/or MD for the MD program). Most full-time faculty members teaching graduate courses are adequately engaged in research activities. Based on the current teaching load and number of full-time faculty members, there is a concern about the capability of offering a larger variety of graduate courses. When it comes to faculty research support, it is obvious that the extramural grants obtained lately by faculty members are very limited [Exhibit 4.32]. Given that research funding has fallen worldwide, it is expected to be even more difficult in the future to secure funding from external funding agencies.

The admission criteria adopted by graduate programs are adequate. Most of graduate courses offered are compatible with graduate courses in reputable American universities. There is some concern about lack of depth of some graduate courses, particularly their research rigor. Due to low enrollment in some programs, the number of offered elective courses is limited. In all programs, however, required courses are appropriately scheduled to ensure timely graduation of students. The university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) has been instrumental in ensuring faculty and students' appropriate research conduct (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/irb/>).

Students' post-LAU employment, their pursuit of doctorate degrees, and their publication records from research done at LAU have been shown to be satisfactory [Exhibit 4.32]. All MD students have successfully passed the colloquium (a Lebanese governmental requirement). In addition, all those who sat for the USMLE Step I, Step II Clinical Knowledge and Step II Clinical Skills have successfully passed. However, the MD program is still at an early stage in the evaluation cycle since the first class

graduated only in 2013. Similarly, all SOP Pharm D students had a 100% success rate on NAPLEX in 2013 (<http://pharmacy.lau.edu.lb/files/naplex-colloquium.pdf>)

The major strengths of most programs at LAU reside in faculty dedication, in student/faculty interaction, and in the enthusiasm and quality of graduating students. The major weakness of most programs is low enrollment which is partly related to limited student financial support. Until today, there is no formal program assessment which ensures continuous improvement. In addition, the heavy teaching and services load seems to interfere with the ability to be efficiently engaged in research and academic publications. Recently, a dean for Graduate Studies and Research was appointed showing more commitment to graduate studies.

Projection

LAU is striving to strengthen its graduate programs and research environment in several ways. This includes the development of a strategic plan for graduate studies and research under goal 6.1 of SP 2011-16 covering development of a marketing plan to increase graduate student enrollment, and securing dedicated physical spaces for graduate students. An amount of \$200,000 faculty seed fund for research was made available under the Provost's Office Research Fund for AY2014-15. The Dean of Graduate Studies and Research is establishing a mechanism that will secure increasing tuition revenue allocation to graduate assistantships as part of SP Action Step 6.1.2.3.

LAU is committed to the review of all its graduate programs including the MD within the next five years. LAU is considering launching a number of new multidisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary graduate programs within the next few years. Programs under consideration include Master's degrees in petroleum engineering, chemical engineering, conflict resolution, child and adolescent clinical psychology, Middle East studies, interdisciplinary studies, health & medical informatics, energy & earth resources, as well as arts education.

>> 4.30-4.47 / Award of Credit

Description

LAU safeguards the integrity of all its academic programs—length, content, and level—through the alignment with common practices followed in the American system of higher education as documented in the LAU Catalog [Exhibits 4.2 & 4.34]. Schools provide study plans for each major, full course descriptions are listed, and separate undergraduate, minor, and graduate offerings are detailed [Exhibit 4.34]. Course offerings for past, current, and next year's semesters are electronically available [Exhibit 4.35]. In programs with limited enrollment, such as the BA in English, a course may be offered on a tutorial basis to allow a student to graduate [Exhibit 4.36].

In line with the goals of the Strategic Plan and LAU's mission, university requirements were revised to create a general Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC), as previously discussed.

Course learning outcomes are mapped with the program outcomes and their evaluation criteria are specified on syllabi, which state the assessment criteria for each course. The scope and depth of course requirements at LAU are stated in the course syllabi and aim to correspond to the field of study and the level of the course. In SAS and SOP, multi-section courses have a coordinator with a published job description to ensure the effective and consistent implementation of evaluation criteria. All schools maintain course files including student course evaluations [Exhibit 4.37]. Graduate theses/projects criteria are not consistently defined in all schools.

As part of its academic rules and procedures, the university publishes requirements for degrees that list courses required for graduation as well as grade point average requirements [Exhibit 4.38]. Moreover, rules that govern academic standing such as distinction, honor, academic probation, academic suspension, and academic dismissal are published [Exhibit 4.39]. The Registrar's Office implements these rules using the Banner system. At the end of each semester, the academic standing lists are communicated to the school deans and students receive individual letters.

As previously described, CAPP is used by students, advisors, and the Registrar's Office for degree audit and/or graduation evaluation. Degree evaluation compares the student's academic history to the program in which he/she is enrolled. Students expecting to graduate are required to submit an application for graduation to the Registrar's Office one semester prior to the projected graduation date. The application includes the report produced by CAPP. The Registrar's Office oversees the degree evaluation process and issues graduation clearance letters [Exhibit 4.40].

Faculty members ensure the academic integrity of the grades and credits awarded. The on-line grade entry procedure is sent to all faculty members by the Registrar's Office. There is a clear Change of Grade procedure requiring the instructor's signature, approval of the department chair, and the approval of the school dean.

LAU has a Student Code of Conduct, which is available on the LAU website [Exhibit 4.41], and the importance of abiding by the academic integrity rules is reiterated by each school through syllabi or other forms of direct communication with students (see chapter 11 on Integrity). Papers or projects for courses requiring research are routinely checked by faculty members using Turnitin anti-plagiarism software while the School of Medicine curbs cheating attempts through on-line exams and other measures.

While abbreviated or concentrated time courses are uncommon at LAU, the SOB, SArD, and ARCSON have offered them. Except for the one such course offered by the SOB, all of these are undergraduate courses. With regards to content, they are similar to the traditional 15-week courses. The course evaluation and assessment of students completing these courses ensure that appropriate levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies are acquired [Exhibit 4.42].

Students who follow off-campus courses acquire competencies consistent with LAU learning objectives. Many programs require students to take off-campus courses as part of their program requirements. These courses are offered in clinical settings (hospitals, community pharmacies, dispensaries, clinics) for the health-related majors (Medicine, Nursing, Nutrition, and Pharmacy), or in companies and agencies for the other majors. The off-campus courses are designed and supervised by faculty members to ensure that they meet the expected academic standards and the learning outcomes of the course.

LAU has approved policies and procedures related to undergraduate transfer credits which are applied based on predetermined criteria. Transfer credits are granted to relevant courses that students have completed with a grade C or above at other universities. The SArD requires a student portfolio from transferring students to any of its programs [Exhibits 4.43; 4.44; 4.45]. Credits towards the completion of the professional program in Pharmacy may be transferred from one ACPE-accredited professional degree program to another.

LAU has MOU agreements with institutions of higher education abroad, namely in the USA, Canada, France, and Germany [Exhibit 4.46]. Transfer of credits is also granted to applicants with the Lebanese Baccalaureate or equivalent to admit them to the sophomore class [Exhibit 4.47] while English placement exams or SAT scores determine the level of English courses to which students will be admitted [Exhibit 4.15].

LAU requires its students to complete the last 30 undergraduate credits and at least 50% of major courses at LAU [Exhibit 4.48]. The transfer of credits for graduate programs is very limited; a maximum of 6 graduate credits in 30 credit programs, and maximum of 9 graduate credits in 39 credit programs [Exhibit 4.49].

Appraisal

[Recognition of Degree Requirements]

The degree requirements of all programs comply with both the American system and the specific conditions of the Lebanese Government; this explains why the lengths of degree programs vary, especially in the professional schools, from three to seven years.

Based on the outcomes from the Student Survey, 78% of respondents agreed that the study plans and course offerings at LAU allow them to graduate within the normal time frame. Faculty members from the professional schools did raise the concern that when students' entry level of English is insufficient they have to take additional English courses, which delays graduation by one or two semesters [Exhibits 4.50 & 4.51].

[Oversight of Curricular Development]

University documentation confirms that new programs are introduced or revised based on the stated procedures. University LAC requirements are implemented according to the stated policy and no graduation clearance is issued unless these requirements are satisfied. Students transferring from other universities who lack liberal arts courses are required to fulfill this requirement [Exhibit 4.52].

[Awarding of Academic Credit]

Course syllabi [Exhibit 4.53] from across the university demonstrate increased attention in recent years to detailed information regarding course content and how it maps onto the learning outcomes for the course. Most respondents of a student survey

(89%) agreed that the criteria are “always” or “most of the time” stated in the course syllabi. While the syllabi of multi-section courses are mostly uniform, there is inconsistent implementation which varies from structured, clear coordination through an assigned coordinator to an unstructured, free-hand approach.

The practice of offering tutorial courses across the university merits revision to ensure that tutorial courses are truly the academic equivalent of regular courses.

The Registrar’s Office utilizes the automated CAPP module to ascertain that the various degree, residency, and grade point average requirements are met before issuing degree recommendations. The Registrar’s Office oversees the degree evaluation process and certifies the degrees to be awarded. The final confirmation for the award of degrees is ensured through the vote of the School Faculty and the Faculty Senate. Students find the process of graduation, namely the confirmation of fulfillment of graduation requirements, to be lengthy.

[Students’ Access to Relevant Information about the Award of Credit]

The university clearly publishes its policies regarding the award of credit. The catalog details the reasons why students are placed on probation; steps needed to be removed from probation, and causes of suspension as well as outlines the process for readmission after suspension. Every semester, the Registrar’s Office produces probationary/suspension lists manually based on the students’ academic records. These lists are communicated to the schools, and individual letters are sent to the concerned students [Exhibits 4.54 & 4.55]. The algorithm for calculating grade point averages and probationary/suspension lists is quite complex. To avoid errors during the manual calculation process the lists should be generated by the system. The Student Focus Group revealed that they are not really aware of suspension and readmission rules [Exhibit 4.50].

Students confirmed during a focus group that they use the website for information about programs yet suggested that a better search engine is needed [Exhibit 4.50]. They also noted that in the case of graduate programs neither the website nor the Academic Catalog clearly describes the requirements of a thesis or a project nor do they specify the quality assurance mechanisms adopted by each program. Apart from referring to academic advisors to get academic information, 70% of respondents in the student survey chose the LAU website to learn about academic rules and procedures and 64% chose the website to learn about the requirements of a major. Given the obvious importance of this source of academic information, the policy on the timeframe of updates on the website, and the specific authorization for the content of programs before they are uploaded, should be clarified [Exhibit 4.50].

[Integrity of Grades]

All faculty members use the on-line grade entry feature provided in Banner. The Change of Grade process is implemented according to the university rules. A three-year comparison table of Change of Grade entries shows that all such changes are justified [Exhibit 4.56]. Change of Grade Report shows that about 15% of Incomplete grades are changed automatically to “F” or “NP” on the Beirut campus and about 10% in Byblos, which can be minimized through better follow up and monitoring by the schools. On the other hand, faculty entry errors including miscalculations or misreporting seem to be on the increase on both campuses (from 8.3% to 12.2% in Beirut; 12.4% to 18.4% in Byblos) which can be mitigated through more vigilance by faculty members.

There is a consolidated effort by all schools to raise students’ awareness regarding academic integrity rules to avoid cheating and plagiarism. These rules are stated in course syllabi, underscored by every faculty member at the beginning of each term, and are found on the website under the Student Code of Conduct [Exhibits 4.41 & 4.53]. The Writing Center and the Cooperative Learning Center give workshops to help students avoid plagiarism. The School of Pharmacy has compiled a “Pharmacy Student Handbook” where academic integrity rules are clearly specified.

[Off-Campus Courses]

Off-campus courses are designed and supervised by faculty members to ensure that they maintain the expected academic standards and meet the desired learning outcomes of the course. In the Faculty Focus Group it was clarified how the nature of the major determines the level of involvement of faculty in these off-campus courses. In the SArD, one faculty member is assigned to a group of 15 students registered in the International Studio course, requiring intensive interaction and oversight, while in the School of Nursing one faculty member is assigned to four to six students during their clinical rotations in health care settings. The School of Medicine offers direct bedside teaching or patient-directed teaching in clinics with oversight by LAU faculty members. The interaction with internship students in the School of Engineering is done mainly before and after the internship period.

[Transfer Credits]

Policies related to transfer of courses are strictly abided to by the Registrar’s Office and the school councils. Based on

the evaluation of equivalence by schools, the Registrar's Office grants the transfer of credit. CAPP ensures that no student graduates if more than 50% of the major or emphasis courses are taken outside LAU, nor if the last 30 credits are not taken at LAU (unless given a special exemption). Schools find it challenging to evaluate transfer courses from other universities due to variations in the curricula, especially when the student comes from a non-American system of higher education. A Faculty Focus Group also noted that a university-wide directory for transfer courses based on a mobility trend from most cited universities is lacking and they underscored the need for consistency and speed. Moreover, in the absence of a common grading chart that shows our grading system as compared to a variety of other major institutions, each school has adopted its own grade equivalency chart to determine if a course qualifies to be transferred.

Projection

Schools will establish a process to ensure regularly updated study plans are posted on the website by December 2014. Schools that offer multi-section courses will develop a policy and procedure (if still lacking) by June 2016 to ensure the consistent implementation of the syllabus and evaluation criteria in all sections. If a coordinator is assigned, the job description of this person should be clearly stated. In addition, schools will establish a university-wide accepted policy for tutorial courses to ensure comparable rigor as in regular courses by June 2016.

The Registrar's Office will create an automated process for confirming the completion of graduation requirements by June 2016 to abolish the practice of issuing clearance letters. This action will align with the green culture of the university. In coordination with the IT department, the Registrar's Office will replace the current paper based academic standing letters with electronic versions effective this summer. The IT department will create an on-line process for diploma clearance by June 2015 to speed up the process of handing out diplomas to students.

To eliminate the need for manual interventions, the Registrar's Office will introduce an automated system to identify students on probation by June 2016. The Registrar's Office, in coordination with the Dean of Students Offices, will ensure student awareness of some critical rules such as suspension and readmission as well as review the student advising process and establish clear guidelines for advisors and students by June 2016, as specified in the SP (goal 2.2).

Regarding the transfer of courses and credit, the Registrar's Office and the academic units of the schools will develop a university-wide directory for the most common transfer courses based on student mobility trends from other universities (June 2017). In addition, the Registrar's Office, in coordination with the Office of the Provost, will develop a reliable grade equivalency chart that shows our grading system as compared to other universities, benchmarked against international norms (to be completed by June 2016).

The Office of the Provost will develop a policy by June 2015 regarding the authorized persons who will ensure updated academic information on the LAU website as well as the timeframe for doing so. The Marketing and Communications Department (MarCom) will improve the search engine of the LAU website by June 2015 to facilitate information search.

The schools offering graduate programs will clearly communicate to graduate students, through the website and the catalog, the details about requirements and standards for a thesis or a project (to be completed by June 2015). The schools will also establish a system of faculty orientations at the school level to minimize errors in grade entry (by June 2015). Last, all schools are expected to adopt clear policies on acceptable similarity rates on Turnitin. This action aligns with SP Goal 1.2 and will be completed by June 2016.

>> 4.48 to 4.55 / Assessment

Description

Since the 2009 self-study, and the requirements placed by NEASC to enhance and develop the assessment of student learning, LAU has endeavored to foster student learning from multiple perspectives.

As described earlier in this chapter and in chapter 2 on planning and evaluation, at present, most programs have already conducted their review/self-study, either based on university guidelines or on the requirements of the accrediting body whenever applicable. Program review and evaluation guidelines were developed and published by the LAU community [Exhibit 4.57], and are continuously reinforced by the Center for Program Learning Assessment (CPLA) and the Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA) [Exhibit 4.58]. Below is a description of the status of each school with regard to assessment of student learning.

>> **School of Arts and Sciences (SAS)**

In line with the SP 2011-16, SAS established the necessary assessment infrastructure including the hiring of two assessment officers and the establishment of a school-wide council that fosters and facilitates assessment, the School Learning Assessment Council (SLAC). The SLAC includes representatives from all SAS departments and has been meeting on a monthly basis to lead and guide departmental assessment efforts [Exhibit 4.59]. Furthermore, the CPLA has assisted various program coordinators with developing their assessment processes. SAS also has pushed towards systematic learning assessment, program accreditation, and cyclical program reviews. As of fall 2010, the computer science program was accredited by ABET. The school has also set a plan to accredit the following undergraduate programs: nutrition, education, and biology [Exhibit 4.60].

As repeatedly noted, all active school programs are required to develop learning assessment plans. Programs that are either under-enrolled or inactive are required to finalize their plans as of spring 2014. The school has also set guidelines and a cyclical schedule for the systematic review of SAS programs. The school has consequently reviewed all SAS programs that have been active for at least five years. All reviewed programs have closed the loop and changes are typically implemented within a year [Exhibit 4.61].

Student outcomes are measured and evaluated using a variety of instruments such as embedded assessment, student surveys, rubrics, and portfolios. Program educational objectives are assessed using either advisory councils or alumni surveys [Exhibits 4.62].

>> **School of Business (SOB)**

Learning goals for the five programs offered by the SOB cover key general, management-specific, and appropriate discipline-specific knowledge and skills which are derived from the SOB Mission [Exhibits 4.63 & 4.64], and cover expected characteristics of the graduates of the school. Each of the program learning goals has at least one specific and measurable learning outcome defined [Exhibit 4.65].

The programs at the SOB go through a continuous improvement review cycle, at least once every five years [Exhibit 4.66]. In 2011-12, the school embarked on an internal evaluation of its programs for the purposes of continuous improvement and pursuit of accreditation in line with SP 2011-16. This plan specifies that the SOB will pursue two accreditations from two major international accrediting bodies: the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS). In preparation for accreditation and in pursuit of continuous improvement, the school has revisited all the degree programs it offers and made recommendations for changes.

Assessment of student learning at the program level was reviewed, and in 2012, the SOB founded the School Assessment Council (SASC), whose main mandate is to monitor the school's assessment and program review process as well as to ensure that departments develop and implement systematic assessment outcomes. An Assessment Officer was also hired. Faculty members and staff attended training seminars, offered by AACSB on Assessment and Applied Assessment [Exhibit 4.67], and assessment workshops conducted at LAU [Exhibit 4.68].

The SOB supports student learning and preparedness for the profession in many ways, such as facilitating the taking of international exams, ensuring good advising, providing academic opportunities, and encouraging extra-curricular activities related to business disciplines [Exhibit 4.69]. The school also monitors long term professional outcomes using surveys [Exhibit 4.70].

>> **School of Engineering (SOE)**

The SOE at LAU has attained ABET accreditation for all its Bachelor of Engineering (BE) degree programs. The self-study was submitted and a review site visit took place during November 2010. Accreditation was received from the Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of ABET in July 2011, and its action extends retroactively from October 1, 2009 (<http://main.abet.org/aps/AccreditedProgramsDetails.aspx?OrganizationID=71355>). All undergraduate and graduate programs offered by the school have clear and published learning outcomes and educational objectives (<http://soe.lau.edu.lb/> and the Academic Catalog at <http://publications.lau.edu.lb/academic-catalog/>). Evaluation of the graduate programs is planned to take place over the next three years.

After gaining ABET accreditation, the SOE embarked on continuous improvement guided by its rigorous assessment program. All five BE programs in the school have developed and followed comprehensive three-year assessment plans. The Office of the Dean supervises the process and receives an annual assessment report from each program chair by the end of September each year [Exhibit 4.71].

At the end of the academic year the Program Review Committee (PRC) closes the loop in an annual retreat. The PRC reviews all assessment results, discusses the report of the Program Advisory Council meeting, addresses the needed changes in the Learning Outcomes, and initiates improvement to the curriculum [Exhibit 4.72].

Feedback to the student is consistently provided through exams, projects, quizzes, and homework. All engineering students culminate their studies by a capstone design project. During this project, close faculty attention and feedback is provided to the student. The SOE further prepares students for the profession in many ways, such as ensuring good career advising, providing academic opportunities, and encouraging extra-curricular activities related to engineering disciplines [Exhibit 4.73]. The school also monitors long term professional outcomes using surveys [Exhibits 4.74 & 4.75].

>> School of Architecture and Design (SArD)

Learning outcomes and educational objectives for the six programs offered at the SArD are identified and derived from the school's mission [Exhibit 4.76]. The Bachelor of Architecture program first received an equivalence with the French "Diplôme d'Etat d'Architecte Français" from the Ministry of Culture and Communication, France, in 2003 and was last renewed in 2011 for a 5-year period [Exhibit 4.77]. Additionally, the program applied to the National Architecture Accrediting Board (NAAB) in 2011 and received the status of Eligibility in 2012 [Exhibit 4.78]. The program has currently applied for Initial Candidacy. In this respect, the mission, program objectives, and learning outcomes were revised to meet the NAAB performance criteria [Exhibit 4.79].

In 2012, SArD developed its first strategic plan [Exhibit 4.80] in which all programs were requested to conduct reviews and pursue accreditation. In this regard, the Architecture program has completed its initial candidacy report, and both the Interior Design and Interior Architecture programs are undergoing internal revisions and self-studies [Exhibit 4.81]. An Assessment Steering Committee is being created and will be responsible for reviewing the school programs and supporting the alignment of programs with the various accreditation standards (CIDA for Interior Design and NASAD for Graphic Design and Fine Arts).

The assessment plan in architecture has been comprehensively developed to meet NAAB standards [Exhibit 4.79]. Other design programs are currently working on the development of an assessment process that links assessment tools to program goals and learning outcomes, leading to curricular improvements. Students are continuously provided with feedback on their performance through the jury report [Exhibit 4.82], and all design programs at the school include external perspectives in the assessment of student learning through the internship required for study completion. Closing the loop in the architecture program will be ensured every five years and is planned to be applied later to other programs at the SArD.

>> Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON)

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program offered by ARCSON was launched in 2009. The first class of students enrolled in fall 2010 and in July 2013, the first BSN class graduated. Since 2009, the Dean's Office and the faculty have developed the program's curriculum and assessment plans. The school applied for and in November 2013 was granted accreditation for the BSN program for a period of five years, April 2, 2013 through December 31, 2018, from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), a US Department of Education-recognized nursing accreditation agency. The BSN program has an established mission, vision, objectives, and student learning outcomes for which an assessment plan has been identified [Exhibits 4.83 & 4.84]. Student learning takes place in three different settings: classroom, laboratory or simulation center, and clinical sites. Assessment of student learning is performed using formative and summative methods in classrooms and experiential learning.

Faculty members assess student performance in line with the student learning outcomes of each course. Feedback and advising are consistently delivered to students, especially those with academic weaknesses using the Meeting with Student form [Exhibit 4.85]. Details of the course assessment plans are available to students in the course syllabi, which are posted on Blackboard. Since its inception, ARCSON has worked on developing an evaluation plan that integrates a number of evaluation tools/methods to measure achievement of expected outcomes and program effectiveness at three levels: students, employers of graduates, and alumni [Exhibit 4.86]. Formal program reviews will be conducted on a 5-year cycle basis. Furthermore, external reviews are planned to be consistent with the CCNE accreditation process and cycle [Exhibit 4.87]. ARCSON also subscribes annually to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing/Educational Benchmarking, Inc. (AACN/EBI) Undergraduate Nursing Education Exit Assessment to gather further data to assess achievement of learning outcomes and other aspects of the BSN program

>> School of Pharmacy (SOP)

The SOP mission, vision, and core values, and the program educational goals (PEG) and outcomes (PEO) are identified and are subject to continuous revision following a specific timetable [Exhibit 4.88]. Based on assessment results, some were later revised in order to ensure that they are measurable and are in-line with the LAU mission, SOP mission, national goals of

pharmacy education, and ACPE (Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education) standards.

The school's assessment plan was revised in 2010 and is now geared towards a programmatic and documented assessment of learning outcomes as well as the other school programmatic components with a clear schedule, instruments, and strategy for their application. The assessment of the mission and PEGs is based on the input of the following program constituencies: students, alumni, employers, and prominent leaders in the pharmacy field and higher education (School Advisory Council). Assessment is done on a 5-year cycle. The input of students and Advisory Council members on PEGs is gathered annually through focus groups. The input of alumni and employers is collected through surveys once every five years. The assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) is repeated every three years and findings are incorporated within the plan for periodic feedback and improvement of the curriculum [Exhibit 4.88].

The SOP qualifies graduating students to sit for the National Competency Assessment Examination (Colloquium) in Lebanon, and for the North American Pharmacy Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) in the United States. Support for student learning is ensured through monitoring of student performance, advising, continuous review of the program and achievement of goals and outcomes, and through ensuring exposure to adequate learning environments. The latter is guaranteed by the availability of optimal teaching laboratories, and the development of partnerships with pharmacies and hospitals, both locally and in the U.S.

>> Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM)

The MD program consists of four years of medical training offered to holders of at least a Bachelor's degree and who meet other requirements for admission. Teaching is roughly divided into two pre-clinical years, where students are taught in classrooms, laboratories, and in some clinical facilities, and two clinical years, where students learn in clinical facilities and deal with real patients.

The SOM at LAU recruited its first class in 2009. The MD program follows the American model of teaching medicine. Curricular development started before the recruitment of the first class, and involved a team of faculty and the contribution of Partners Harvard Medical International (PHMI). During the clinical years, students rotate at the main LAU teaching facility, the Lebanese American University Medical Center-Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH) and other LAU-affiliated hospitals, serving either as sites for core clerkships or as sites for elective rotations. The first class graduated on June 7, 2013 and is pursuing Graduate Medical Education (GME) either at LAUMC-RH or at other local or international institutions. The Residency program at LAU includes specialties in Medicine, Surgery, Radiology, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics/Gynecology. The curriculum has been developed for most of its parts and the teaching occurs basically at LAUMC-RH, with elective rotations in other affiliated hospitals.

The objectives of the MD program, in addition to core competencies, constitute the cornerstone of the curriculum [Exhibit 4.89]. Based on these competencies, course and clerkship learning objectives were defined. Evaluation of student performance includes both summative and formative forms of assessment. Furthermore, the assessment system has three main characteristics: first, it is competency-based, and includes testing at the workplace and outside the clinical environment; second, it depends on multiple sources for feedback; and third, it tests longitudinally for ongoing development of competencies.

The SOM ensures that students gain the best teaching and preparedness for the practice of medicine and for pursuing further post-graduate studies, both locally and internationally. This is ensured through the identification and recruitment of qualified teaching faculty, monitoring and maintenance of teaching quality, offering international clinical experience, and through the availability of the physical structure, with new technologies to meet teaching requirements [Exhibits 4.90-4.95]. Students are encouraged to seek international elective rotations, especially in the US, and are helped in ensuring such rotations through affiliations that the SOM has and is still seeking, and through the direct contacts that LAU SOM faculty have internationally.

Evaluation of the curriculum includes assessment of the teaching activities, the modules/rotations/courses, and the clinical sites [Exhibit 4.96]. The MD curriculum is reviewed each year by the faculty and committees following the feedback received from students [Exhibits 4.97 & 4.98]. Furthermore, many workshops were organized by the team of PHMI that addressed specific aspects of the program, aiming at providing suggestions for improvement. The National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) was invited for program review in June 2011 and the team provided their report that included suggestions for improvement as well [Exhibit 4.99]. Student performance on international exams is considered central to our program review. In this regard, the SOM offered the NBME exam over two consecutive years in order to compare our students to others coming from local and international medical schools. Furthermore, the SOM was put on the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) web portal, in order to track student performance on USMLE testing. Results to date show very good performance among those who took the test [Exhibit 4.100].

Following the graduation of the first class, the school is planning to review the program objectives, mission and vision, and

learning outcomes, and implement necessary changes. There is currently no US-based accrediting body that accredits MD programs outside the US. In Lebanon, there is no accrediting body for MD programs and local medical schools are not accredited but they are recognized by the Lebanese Ministry of Higher Education.

>> Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC)

The Lebanese American University initiated an internal process to assess the Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC) in 2009 when the CPLA was charged with coordinating a longitudinal pilot study to assess competence in written and oral communication. Study results are currently being analyzed and interpreted. Meanwhile, the CPLA advisory committee was asked by the provost to propose a new mission and update the LAC objectives and outcomes so that they can be measured. The committee also proposed a methodology to certify LAC courses. The proposal was approved by the Council of Deans on May 31, 2011 [Exhibit 4.101]. Concurrently, SP 2011-16 dedicated various actions items for assessing, evaluating, and updating the LAC. Concrete LAC assessment measures were modest and limited to classical evaluation of individual course objectives. In September 2013, the Provost's Office and the Council of Deans appointed a university-wide LAC assessment committee to ensure proper assessment of the curriculum aiming at improving the link between assessment of student learning and curriculum objectives and learning outcomes [Exhibit 4.102]. The committee has developed two progress reports since its formation, including description of completed tasks, concerns, and plans for next steps [Exhibit 4.103].

Appraisal

In parallel with the development of the SP 2011-16, the institution requested that schools develop their own strategic plans, aligned with SP 2011-16, to pursue accreditation whenever applicable, and to develop/review assessment plans that are comprehensive and conducive to improvement. Program review guidelines were developed among schools and included the introduction of assessment at different levels, from the course to the program [Exhibit 4.61]. The institution has supported the development of an assessment culture through the CPLA and IRA services, and through the empowerment of individual schools regarding the adoption of school-based strategic plans [Exhibits 4.105 & 4.68]. Currently programs and schools are at various places in the development and implementation of plans depending on baseline status, age of the program/school, and priority criteria. Further reinforcement and monitoring of progress are clearly needed to ensure all programs are nearly equal in the adoption of rigorous assessment plans.

LAU is monitoring the quality and effectiveness of academic programs by overseeing the program review process at each school [Exhibits 4.104-106], supporting accreditation of individual programs, managing the SP 2011-16, and supervising the implementation of changes for improvement based on assessment data [Exhibit 4.107]. Furthermore, LAU is ensuring proper career advising and academic feedback through the Career Guidance Office (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/career-guidance/>) and individual advising at the school level.

>> School of Arts and Sciences

All SAS programs have objectives and learning outcomes that are linked to the school mission and academic needs, and prepare for advanced studies. All active programs have current and comprehensive assessment plans, including assessment schedules and assessment instruments. Data are being collected by the Assessment Officers and reports are being regularly developed by the Dean's Office. All programs were designed such that advanced courses build on prerequisite courses in order to ensure that the academic level becomes more complex. Many programs in the school (eight) have closed the loop based on the reports of external reviewers; therefore, nine programs were reviewed by external reviewers while the remaining programs are new programs and will be reviewed within five years of being established at LAU [Exhibit 4.108]. All teaching faculty are involved directly and indirectly in assessment and most have attended development workshops. Academic advising and student feedback are continuously practiced in all departments and programs [Exhibit 4.109].

>> School of Business

The SOB has clear goals and learning outcomes for all programs and at all levels (from course to program) are aligned with the institution and school mission, and are basically driven by the needs of the profession. These outcomes become more complex with the academic level [Exhibit 4.110], and prepare the students for further studies and future employment as demonstrated by an alumni survey conducted in 2013 [Exhibit 4.70].

Assessment plans reflect the requirements of the accrediting bodies. The assessment plans follow a cycle and implementation is currently in progress towards closing the loop. Therefore, assessment data are being collected but cycles are not yet completed for any program at the school. One limitation to the assessment plans at the SOB is the absence of any external perspective on the performance of the students. The school visibly supports student learning, provides feedback, ensures preparedness for the profession through conducting orientation sessions and workshops/summits to host prominent leaders

in business [Exhibit 4.69]; however, external views are not an integral part of the assessment and systematic feedback is lacking and relies only on the Career Guidance Office at the institutional level. Moreover, further exit surveys results are needed, in addition to market studies, in order to align learning outcomes with local market needs.

The SOB is continuously undergoing program reviews and implementing interim changes [Exhibit 4.111], and is currently preparing for accreditation of its five programs. However, interim assessment results and survey data need to be communicated to all departments and faculty, and feedback should be requested in order to maintain faculty involvement and secure proper communication and implementation of a thorough and undivided assessment.

>> School of Engineering

All five accredited undergraduate programs at the SOE have goals, objectives, and learning outcomes that are linked to the institution and school missions, needs of the academic community, and requirements for graduate studies and employment [Exhibit 4.112 & 4.113]. The latter is ensured by maintaining and monitoring data on school graduates at the career office [Exhibit 4.114]. Learning outcomes become more complex with advanced academic levels since student learning at the SOE follows a well-organized flow of sequential courses that is conducive to progressive acquisition of competencies (<http://soe.lau.edu.lb/resources/public.php>). The SOE follows a rigorous assessment schedule fulfilling all ABET standards, including external perspectives [Exhibit 4.115]. ABET stipulates assessment and continuous improvements of student learning. The SOE is progressing efficiently toward the second review due in the fall 2016 semester.

The advising process at the SOE is compulsory for students each semester. During advising the faculty provide feedback on student learning and career options. The SOE is monitoring the progress of the performance of its graduates in the market using many indicators such as employability rate (monitored by the career office), employer surveys (administered once every three years) [Exhibit 4.74], alumni surveys (administered once every two years) [Exhibit 4.75], and internship employer surveys [Exhibit 4.115].

Graduate programs at the SOE meet all NEASC standard requirements regarding the availability of aligned goals and learning outcomes, assessment plans and review cycles. They are all due for review between 2014 and 2017, according to the SOE Strategic Plan 2013-18.

>> School of Architecture and Design

In seeking accreditation by NAAB, the Architecture program is in the process of aligning its curriculum with NAAB standards at all levels including assessment of student learning [Exhibit 4.80]. Reviews are currently being conducted for the Interior Design and Interior Architecture programs; however, other programs at the school are still at an earlier stage in the development of aligned learning outcomes and assessment plans. All faculty are involved in the assessment of student learning and they were all prepared to conduct assessment through university workshops.

How to better support student learning, increase preparedness for graduate studies and future employment, and improve academic and career advising, remain works-in-progress at the institutional and school levels and the integration of strategies to address them in a thorough manner is not currently available at the school. Furthermore, the monitoring of assessment results and the analysis of assessment data in an integrated cycle leading to closing of the loop has been conducted only for a limited number of programs/courses [Exhibits 4.116].

>> Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing

The BSN Program at ARCSON was granted accreditation for a 5-year period by CCNE in fall 2013. The program has goals and objectives in line with the school mission and learning outcomes that are linked to BSN curriculum requirements (Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2008), profession needs, and to the academic level [Exhibits 4.117-4.119]. The program prepares nursing students for graduate study and employment through academic advising, feedback, and early exposure to clinical encounters and professional experience; however, there is currently no career advising system that offers guidance and orientation to nursing students for their future profession.

The assessment plan at ARCSON is aligned to program objectives and clinical student learning outcomes, and includes external perspectives through the evaluation of student performance by the employer and the practicing nurse during the clinical experience [Exhibit 4.120]. Many tools are identified that cover most assessment areas and expectations for student learning.

ARCSON did not develop a strategic plan; instead, it is operating following the university's feasibility study and proposal to establish the school. However, strategic planning will be developed by the faculty and school leadership in 2014-15.

Achievement of learning outcomes is monitored through students' evaluation of courses and exit surveys. Colloquium pass rates of the BSN graduates are considered indicators of comprehensive student learning and are to be calculated semi-annually by the school's Assessment Officer and assessed by the faculty. The first graduating class recently underwent the Colloquium exam with an 89% first-time pass rate, and a 100% pass rate after 1-repeat.

>> School of Pharmacy

The school has developed an assessment plan that ensures the achievement of its mission by evaluating program goals mapped to the five PEGs. The SOP mission was found to be adequate and in line with the institutional mission as documented by the mission mapping done by the students' focus group and the external advisory committee [Exhibit 4.121]. Student focus groups identified the need to include research in the mission, and stakeholders highlighted the need to improve on students' management skills, research, and public health knowledge.

The assessment plan takes a comprehensive approach to all aspects of the school education programs (BS and Pharm. D.). The assessment plan collects data on goals (every five years) and outcomes (every three years) [Exhibits 4.122 & 4.123]. This current academic year (2013-14), the SOP will finish the PEO assessment cycle. Data was already collected on most of the PEOs, results were analyzed, recommendations drafted, and changes were implemented leading to "closing the loop" on assessment at the school of pharmacy.

LAU SOP graduates continue to excel, as supported by a number of indicators (passing rate at the colloquium, employer survey, alumni survey, rubrics evaluations etc.). The collected evidence indicates that the graduates have a strong theoretical and practical background in clinical care. Additionally, the pass rate of SOP graduates first-time candidates of the NAPLEX and Colloquium exam is in the upper 90% [Exhibit 4.124]. Results of the alumni survey showed that the school prepared them well in terms of the goals, with the exception of PEG 2 on managing pharmacy operations in industrial settings. To this end the school has initiated a new pharmaceutical industrial rotation. Furthermore, the School Strategic Planning committee [Exhibit 4.125] has outlined the plan to initiate a Master's program in pharmaceutical sciences.

The ACPE Board of Directors, in its meeting in January 2012, granted the Doctor of Pharmacy program at LAU a continued accreditation status extending till June 30, 2015 [Exhibit 4.126].

>> Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine

The SOM has clear program objectives and learning outcomes that reflect the institution and school's mission [Exhibit 4.127]. These learning outcomes are available for the module, course, delivery, and clinical clerkships. They are arranged into competencies and reflect the academic level within the program.

The assessment plan at the school is linked to the program objectives and to the expected student learning outcomes. It includes various tools that cover many aspects in assessment, including periodic feedback and external perspectives provided by the patient and the staff [Exhibit 4.128]. All faculty are involved in assessment and most of them were trained to complete evaluation of student performance. However, the school has not yet appointed an assessment officer, and coordination with CPLA and IRA with regard to assessment is currently limited because of the present work on the Residency Program. Assessment data includes short- and long-term outcomes. Monitoring of student outcomes is ensured through collection of performance data, and program outcomes are censored by tracking performance of students on colloquium, international exams (USMLE) [Exhibit 4.100], and admission into international residency programs, especially in the United States. Currently assessment data are being collected but "closing the loop" still requires the development of a clear assessment plan that ensures consistent and thorough processes for a comprehensive cycle.

Advising, both academic and career, is well-structured with clear set guidelines and proper training and follow-up. This ensures proper preparedness of the students for the profession [Exhibit 4.129]. The program was reviewed by external reviewers; the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) but the results were not clearly addressed and no cycle was developed for a continued review process. Furthermore, a strategic plan has not been developed by the school.

>> Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC)

Although the School of Arts and Sciences has made great strides in assessing learning in various programs, LAC assessment remains a challenge. The initial plan that called for the pilot study (assessing a cohort of 100 students using portfolios) did not lead to tangible results given the small number of collected measurements of written English, which questions the validity of the interpretation. Furthermore, the delay in implementing action items suggested in the strategic plan and the CPLA advisory committee proposal has delayed progress on LAC assessment.

Projection

>> *School of Arts and Sciences*

The school will continue the 5-year cyclic review process based on assessment data and expects all new programs to be reviewed in the next five years. The exception will be some of the programs that are either under-enrolled such as History, Mathematics, and Philosophy, or programs with no enrollment such as Arabic. The school will also develop plans to assess all graduate programs, and will establish cyclic assessment cycles for these programs in the coming five years. Furthermore, the school will aim to accredit the nutrition and education programs in the United States, and biology in the United Kingdom. The school will also renew the ABET accreditation of the computer science program in 2016.

>> *School of Business*

The Office of the Dean will review the Advisory Council input on the school mission and program learning outcomes in AY2014-15, and will review assessment data and recommendations received from the departments in the coming three years. The chair of the AACSB sub-committee will review the results of the students and alumni opinion survey on the school's mission, and will collect data on placement and career progress of graduates and alumni, and on the use of library resources and instructional technology in AY2014-15. The School Assessment Council and the assessment committees of the school departments will gather and analyze assessment data for the defined learning outcomes, communicate analysis results to faculty, and close the loop for all programs according to the following timeframe: BS in Business and BS in Economics in 2014-15, and BS in Hospitality and Tourism Management, MBA and EMBA in 2015-16.

>> *School of Engineering*

All programs at the school will continue reviewing the program learning goals as required by ABET and the faculty will keep reviewing the learning outcomes. The Dean's Office will oversee the rigorous implementation of the ongoing assessment cycles that are required to maintain ABET accreditation for all undergraduate programs. Furthermore, the Dean's Office and the concerned departments will review all the graduate programs as planned in the SOE Strategic Plan according to the following timeframe: Computer Engineering by the end of AY 2014-15, Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management by the end of AY 2015-16, and Civil and Environmental Engineering by the end of AY 2016-17.

>> *School of Architecture and Design*

The Office of the Dean will create a school assessment committee in 2014-15 to follow-up on accreditation requirements on assessment for Architecture, Interior Design and Graphic Design. The school will also organize assessment workshops in the coming two years to further advance the skills of faculty in the development and implementation of assessment cycles. The Office of the Dean will also request from school departments of the remaining programs to develop and/or advance in the implementation of their assessment cycles and to prepare plans for program reviews in the coming two years. Furthermore, the office will work on a strategy to better ensure student academic and career advising, to monitor student outcome, and to integrate outcome data in the review of the school programs.

>> *Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing*

The ARCSO Curriculum and Academic Council will perform formal program review every five years starting in AY2015-16. The council is currently building its database for continuous assessment and has gathered the first set of data on Key Performance Indicators for the first class. This process will continue annually and the results will be assessed by the council and improvements will be suggested accordingly. Results of program changes will be assessed as part of a 5-year cycle, starting in 2020. Faculty will continue course-by-course assessment and will submit assessment results each semester to the Dean's office. Results will be reviewed and discussed by all faculty in the annual curriculum retreat. Furthermore, the school will establish a strategic plan that will be completed in spring 2015. In spring 2014, the Office of the Dean conducted the first of annual town meetings for senior students to advise students regarding the Colloquium, graduate study, and licensure abroad.

>> *School of Pharmacy*

The chair of the pharmaceutical science department will coordinate the feasibility study for establishing a graduate program in pharmaceutical sciences, to be completed by fall 2016. Furthermore, the chair will coordinate the establishment of a graduate program in Pharmaceutical and Industrial Pharmacy by fall 2014. The Office of the Dean will continuously oversee the school processes and ensure compliance with ACPE accreditation standards. The school will continue its program review process and the implementation of the Strategic Plan action items according to the stated timeline.

>> *Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine*

The Office of the Dean and the school faculty will work on the development of a strategic plan for the school to be completed in the AY2014-15. In the next three years, the school leadership will ensure recruitment of more faculty for basic and clinical

teaching to meet the educational needs of the curriculum. An assessment officer will be appointed in 2014, in addition to a school assessment committee and formal curriculum committee. A continuous internal review of the program will be initiated and included in the strategic plan action items, and external review will be conducted in AY2014-15. The dean will develop and implement a faculty development program in 2014-15 to enhance the use of current concepts in medical education. The school will also ensure follow-up on accreditation issues worldwide and secure preparedness for accreditation whenever applicable. Furthermore, the Office of the Dean will assure more clinical training sites for students and residents starting 2014 and will monitor teaching quality at these sites.

>> Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC)

The university leadership (Provost's Office, CD and SAS leadership) will continue to treat LAC assessment as a priority and engage faculty in this process. The LAC assessment committee will complete a comprehensive LAC assessment plan by the end of summer 2014 and implementation will start in fall 2014. The plan will map course learning outcomes to the LAC objectives and outcomes, and will include champions who are responsible for data collection from various courses based on clear and well-defined instruments. The LAC assessment plan will adopt a cycle format with loop closure ensured every three years and suggested improvements implemented accordingly.

Institutional Effectiveness

The institution will continue to monitor the quality, integrity and effectiveness of its academic programs and to provide all needed support that allows further advancement of its schools and programs. LAU has worked hard to build a culture and practice of assessment to maintain and improve the quality of its academic programs. The university is also in the process of putting in place a university-wide committee on effectiveness. To institutionalize assessment, revision, and comparability across programs, LAU has created new departments and offices where before there were ad-hoc committees or no coordinating body at all. Furthermore, university leadership has supported the services provided by IRA and CPLA to assist schools in meeting the quality and effectiveness goals of their academic programs. This has been addressed in the university strategic plan and is currently being discussed by the CD.

Standard 4 Exhibits

4.1	List of Lau Degrees Offered
4.2	Academic Catalog 2013 - 2014
4.3	Composition of Bacc II
4.4	School Academic Plans
4.5	School Strategic Plans
4.6	List of Programs Reviewed in Previous Five Years
4.7	School and Departmental Meeting Minutes and Letters from Dean Regarding Assessment Schedules
4.8	Template for Proposal of New Programs
4.9	Samples of Assessment Plans
4.10	Approved Budget Requests
4.11	Statistics on 150% Degree Completion Rates
4.12	Student Retention Rates Over Last 5-7 Years and Document on Strategies for Improving Student Retention Rates
4.13	Pol322 UN Security Council Simulation Description
4.14	MGT420 Syllabus
4.15	Table for Placement of Students in English Classes
4.16	Lac Description and Course Listing
4.17	IRA Lists of Reviewed Programs
4.18	Internal Communication IRA
4.19	Bus299 Syllabus
4.20	Sard Document
4.21	Examples of Off-Site Training Agreements
4.22	Samples of Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Student Conduct and Duties on Site
4.23	Credit Requirements for Degrees Requiring Over 92 Credits
4.24	List of New Programs Majors Minors and Emphases
4.25	Faculty Orientation
4.26	UCC Minutes
4.27	Petroleum Engineering Professor Advertisement
4.28	Fashion Design Resources List
4.29	Agreement with Solidere
4.30	Study Guide and Handbook
4.31	Minutes—Curriculum Review
4.32	Self Studies of MD and Graduate Programs
4.33	Global MBA enrolment
4.34	Programs
4.35	Course offerings
4.36	Tutorial courses
4.37	Summary- School surveys
4.38	CAPP degree evaluations
4.39	Academic rules
4.40	Graduation clearance letter
4.41	Student code of conduct
4.42	Table of abbreviated/concentrated time period courses
4.43	Admission of Transfer students
4.44	List of common transfer courses
4.45	Evaluation of transfer courses
4.46	List of institutions that have MOU's with LAU
4.47	Table of credits granted for Lebanese Baccalaureate
4.48	Transfer rule in catalogue
4.49	Graduate transfer rule in catalogue
4.50	Student survey results and analysis
4.51	Summary of faculty focus group meetings
4.52	Course equivalence for transfer students
4.53	Course syllabi
4.54	Academic standing letter
4.55	Academic standings email to Deans
4.56	Change of grade comparison

Standard 4 Exhibits (cont.)

4.57	Program Review and Evaluation Guidelines
4.58	Assessment workshop April 2013
4.59	Minutes of SLAC Meeting 2012
4.60	Report on accreditation, assessment and program reviews
4.61	Summary of program reviews
4.62	B.S. in Biology program assessment plan
4.63	SOB mission map
4.64	SOB programs goals
4.65	Map of goals and outcomes
4.66	Self-studies and external reviews
4.67	Training seminars
4.68	Assessment workshops
4.69	Leaders in Business Summit 2013
4.70	SOB Survey
4.71	COE Assessment Report 2012-2013
4.72	PRC of mechanical engineering program report 2012
4.73	Advising Form
4.74	Mechanical engineering employer survey
4.75	Mechanical engineering alumni survey
4.76	School learning outcomes and educational objectives
4.77	French equivalence letter
4.78	Eligibility letter
4.79	Initial candidacy report
4.80	SArD SP 2012-17
4.81	Interior design and architecture program review
4.82	Jury report form
4.83	Program mission, objectives and outcomes SON
4.84	Self-study report
4.85	Meeting with student form
4.86	School evaluation plan
4.87	Program development and review table
4.88	SOP assessment plan
4.89	MD program competencies
4.90	List of recruited physicians
4.91	List of affiliated Hospitals
4.92	Logbook Template
4.93	International Electives Database
4.94	Career Fair Program
4.95	List of Campus equipment
4.96	Evaluation form template
4.97	Module Assessment by students
4.98	Module Review Minutes
4.99	NBME Report
4.100	Student performance on USMLE
4.101	LAC proposal
4.102	CD minutes Sept 5, 2013
4.103	LAC Assessment Reports
4.104	Program Review Procedure 2010
4.105	CPLA report
4.106	Monitoring of program review process
4.107	Council of Deans retreat academic plan agenda paper 2009
4.108	SAS Program review schedule
4.109	SAS Advising Packet and Guidelines
4.110	SOB Curriculum map
4.111	SOB implemented curricular changes
4.112	SOE Program Advisory Council minutes

4.113	Map of courses and outcomes
4.114	Career Office Report
4.115	SOE Employer evaluation of student intern
4.116	SArD Proposal for curricular changes 2013
4.117	SON alignment matrix with AACN
4.118	SON alignment matrix with profession needs
4.119	SON alignment matrix with academic level
4.120	SON Co-op Evaluation form
4.121	SOP Mission assessment progress report 2012
4.122	SOP PEGs Progress report 2012
4.123	SOP PEOs Progress report 2012
4.124	NAPLEX chart
4.125	SOP Strategic Plan 2012-2017
4.126	Accreditation Certificate
4.127	School mission and program objectives
4.128	Clinical Years Assessment System
4.129	SOM Advising program

Standard 5: Faculty



Description

[Faculty Size and Qualifications]

LAU is primarily a teaching institution and continues to prioritize the recruitment of PhD and terminal degree holders. In fall 2013, the university employed 301 full-time faculty and 11 adjunct faculty¹. Of the 301, 117 were tenured, 113 were tenure-track and 71 occupied non-tenure track positions [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.1]. In fall 2013 [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.2], 51.6% of full-time faculty held their highest degrees from North American universities while 26% from European universities and 22.4% from universities in other parts of the world.

[Faculty recruitment, retention, and appointment]

The recruitment of full-time faculty follows established procedures [Exhibit 5.2]. The profile of faculty to be recruited is recommended by the concerned department and new faculty positions are openly advertised [Exhibit 5.3]. A designated search committee is responsible for selecting and short-listing candidates. When the interview occurs in Lebanon a full-fledged interview and campus visit are conducted. Faculty are appointed according to the *Personnel Policy* [Exhibit 5.4]. At present, the percentage of full-time faculty versus part-time faculty teaching is 53% vs. 47% university wide [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.3] with some schools doing better than others (Pharmacy 79%; Nursing 71% Business 67%, Engineering 49%, Arts & Sciences 48%, Architecture and Design 48%); 16% percent of lab courses and 54% of remedial courses are taught by full-timers

In 2010, LAU moved from limited tenure to tenure. Faculty members are full-timers until the age of 65. Their full-time contract may be renewed yearly upon the recommendation of the chair and the dean until they reach the age of 70.

At the end of academic year 2012-13, 21 faculty left LAU; the reasons were because they reached retirement age, chose to accept employment elsewhere, or were not promoted [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.4]. Nonetheless, there has been a net increase in faculty numbers over the years [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.5].

[Ranks of faculty]

Faculty ranks are spelled out in the *Personnel Policy*—Faculty section. Criteria are listed for regular, full-time academic appointments at the ranks of Assistant Instructor, Instructor, Senior Instructor, Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Clinical Instructor, and Clinical Assistant Professor. Special academic appointments may also be made with the titles of Visiting and Adjunct. Faculty members at the rank of Associate Professor and above are tenured until the Lebanese government retirement age of 65. The contracts of tenured faculty can only be terminated through due process spelled out in the *Personnel Policy* [Exhibit 5.4: *Personnel policy*], which requires Board of Trustees approval.

[Equal opportunity and non-discrimination]

The university's policies emphasize providing equal opportunity when recruiting faculty. The majority of the faculty is relatively new at LAU with 126 out of 301 full-time faculty having served at the university from 0 to 4.9 years, 66 from 5 to 9.9 years, and 24 from 10 to 14.9 years [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.6].

[Faculty workload]

The workload of faculty members at LAU consists of teaching duties, responsibilities in the area of scholarly, creative and professional activity, and service [Exhibit 5.4]. As of fall 2006, full-time faculty in all professional ranks have been required to teach 18 credits per year while faculty in non-professorial ranks have been required to teach 24 credits per year. Faculty may be asked to teach fewer credit hours because of administrative duties and/or service to the university. Deans are required to teach a total of six credits per academic year; deans whose duties encompass two campuses are exempted from teaching. The total annual instructional workload of associate deans, assistant deans, and assistant provosts is reduced to 9 credits. The total annual instructional workload of chairpersons and associate chairs is reduced to 12 and 15 credits respectively [Exhibit 5.5]. The total annual instructional workload of directors varies by contract. Per SP pillar 3, goal 1, action step 1.7, LAU is trying to update the workload assignments of faculty according to discipline [Exhibit 5.6]. In fact, *SP 2011-16* stipulates the revisiting of the teaching load of 9+9 credits for tenured and tenure-track to reflect school specific workloads.

Faculty members are also required to work closely with students. The maximum lecture class size is 40 students with the possibility of an administrative increase of 10% while the maximum is 25 for language classes, 20 for lab and studio lab sections, and 18 for architecture and design lab sections. It is the faculty's duty to provide effective academic advising to

1 The figures are Fall Census data figures

students. In spring 2013 and fall 2013, LAU hired academic advisors to offer better services to the students [Exhibit 5.6].

[Faculty compensations and benefits]

Faculty compensation packages include cost of living increases and merit increases. The Personnel Policy–Faculty section mandates annual faculty evaluation and the forms for faculty evaluation have become school specific. The general areas required are the following: teaching effectiveness, research and/or scholarly work and creativity, service to the university, and community service [Exhibit 5.7]. Based on the evaluation, a merit increase is awarded to faculty accordingly.

The average faculty salary at LAU in 2013 [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.7] was \$127,371 for full professors, \$79,623 for Associate Professors, and \$60,717 for Assistant Professors. Over the past five years, a salary adjustment combining both a high cost of living as well as a merit increase was granted to the faculty. In October 2011, LAU moved to a school based salary system. Faculty benefits are spelled out in the Personnel Policy. Current faculty benefit packages include 75% coverage of health insurance, a group life and long-term disability insurance policy, educational benefits for dependents, and a pension plan. All these benefits are in addition to US Social Security benefits for US citizens and an indemnity for non-US citizens. Part-time and adjunct faculty do not qualify for any of the above-mentioned benefits [Exhibit 5.4].

[Faculty rights and responsibilities]

Faculty rights and responsibilities are defined in various policies. *The Academic Affairs Policy* [Exhibit 5.8] guarantees academic freedom and spells out the duties and services expected from faculty. Department chairs, deans, and the provost are charged with ensuring that faculty members observe their obligations as stated in the Faculty Bylaws [Exhibit 5.5]. A number of policies and codes govern faculty rights and their exercise in an ethical manner [Exhibit 5.8]. All important policies and procedures that affect faculty are put together in the annually updated faculty handbook available on the LAU website. These policies are put in place to ensure an environment supportive of academic integrity. However, the grievance policy for faculty is not well-delineated.

[Evaluation of part time faculty]

The evaluation of part-time faculty members includes student course evaluations, class observations in some departments, as well as course files. Part-time faculty are compensated at an hourly rate established in accordance with the average salary of the related grade. It is based on their discipline, training, experience, and an assessment of their ability by the chair and the dean [Exhibit 5.2].

[Promotion Criteria]

As of fall 2012, promotion in rank takes place through a peer review process, first at the school level [Exhibit 5.9] then at the university level [Exhibit 5.10]. The dean sends recommendations to the provost who convenes two university promotion committees, one for promotion and tenure of assistant professors to associate professor with tenure, and another for the promotion of associate professors to full professor and to grant tenure for non-tenured associate and full professors. The provost sends the recommendations of the university promotion committees to the president who sends a final recommendation to the Board of Trustees for action [Exhibit 5.9].

[Graduate Assistants]

The involvement of Graduate Assistants in teaching is minimal. Graduate assistants mainly support faculty by grading and conducting research.

[Faculty governance]

The Faculty Senate was founded in fall 2006. The Senate is the representative body for the full-time faculty at LAU. Membership includes voting representatives from every department and from each of the schools with equal representation of both of the university campuses. At regular monthly sessions and throughout the year in committee work, the Senate discusses academic issues and provides the administration and BOT with faculty perspectives and recommendations on matters of concern to faculty. All faculty members are welcome to voice their concerns to their respective Senate representatives. Senators are entrusted to keep their colleagues abreast of the deliberations that occur during the sessions of the Senate. The minutes of the Senate meetings are posted within a few days of a session's end. The schedule of meetings for the Senate is posted on the Senate website (<http://facultysenate.lau.edu.lb/>). In addition, this website contains a great deal of information about faculty-related issues, including links to the Faculty Handbook, the Constitution of the Faculty and Bylaws of the Faculty Senate, minutes and agendas from previous meetings, and an archive of past Senate Actions and Resolutions.

[Scholarship, research, creative activity, and continuing professional development]

LAU's faculty development components include sabbaticals (nine in 2012), study leaves, summer research grants (three in 2011), and a new faculty seed fund [Exhibit 5.6; pillar 3, action step 2.3]. These constitute an investment on the part of the

university to support the continued professional development of the faculty. There are also faculty travel grants that were administered by the URC up to the end of the AY 2011-12; as of 2012, the travel grants are administered by the respective schools [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.8]. In 2011-12, 2012-13 respectively, 115 and 87 travel grants were awarded to faculty. There are also possibilities for faculty to pursue professional development by attending in-house or international workshops and conferences [Exhibit 5.11]. These workshops are to provide faculty with the means of improving instructional information, methods of teaching, as well as delivery of information.

Since 2008, LAU has embarked on institutionalizing program and learning assessment. As a result, each program has been requested to prepare its own assessment plan. Furthermore, courses with multiple sections though taught by different faculty using different methods of instruction have the same learning outcomes [Exhibit 5.6].

Appraisal

[Faculty Size & Qualifications]

LAU has been able to attract a good number of highly qualified faculty members despite the political instability and economic crisis in the country. Tenured and tenure-track faculty numbers have increased since fall 2008 (230 in fall 2013 as opposed to 162 in fall 2008). However, there continues to be an increase in the percentage of instruction by non-tenured (56 in fall 2008 and 71 in fall 2013) and part-time faculty (47% of courses are taught by part timers) [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.3]. This is mainly due to the growth in the number of students joining LAU and the attendant need to teach more service courses (chapter 6).

[Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Appointment]

LAU has been able to recruit and retain qualified and diversified faculty over the years. Although the recruitment process for full-time faculty seems to be transparent, some faculty believe that not all schools and departments have a transparent recruitment record and claim that there are still some cases where faculty hiring is not initiated at the department level [Exhibits 5.12 & 5.13]. Recruitment in principle follows established procedures that are published in the Faculty Handbook. In fact, the faculty body is recruited from around the globe with more than half coming from North American institutions. Faculty members have received appropriate education from first-rate academic institutions. The school based faculty salaries established as of 2011 are helping to retain faculty members [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.1]; there is a net increase in full-time faculty numbers.

The schools have been active in recruiting full-time faculty. *SP 2011-16* [Exhibit 5.6] requires that the full-time FTE reach 70% or accreditation-set targets by 2015. For instance, the School of Business had 67% of the courses taught by full-timers in fall 2013 as opposed to 32% in fall 2008. Yet, some schools seem to be seriously understaffed, i.e., Architecture and Design (48% in fall 2013 but it was 43% in fall 2008) despite the fact that *SP 2011-16* stipulates that the university aims to reach a 70% (or school specific percentage) of full-time faculty. While the SArD benefits from having many visiting and adjunct faculty to offer a variety of perspectives and models (especially in design) to students, the full-time faculty percentages at SArD might not be up to accreditation requirements for its programs.

The majority of the faculty agree that the tenure system that LAU adopted in 2006 provides the job security that faculty aspire to have [Exhibits 5.12 & 5.13]. New faculty joining LAU at the Full Professor and Associate Professor ranks should apply for tenure within three to five years from their date of hire at LAU [Exhibit 5.5].

Faculty members report that committee work and advising can be overwhelming at times and that the division of the work is not always fair [Exhibits 5.12 & 5.13]. The category of Senior Instructor established in 2012 was well received by non-tenured faculty as it gave them the motive to continue professional development [Exhibit 5.9].

While in spring 2006, the Council of Deans established an evaluation procedure for academic administrators, this has been implemented twice so far. For the past few years, faculty have not evaluated academic administrators. However, the Council of Deans is revisiting the issue of evaluating academic administrators and the Faculty Senate is in the process of proposing a new policy on this issue. Progress is expected on this front soon.

The faculty handbook is comprehensive and user-friendly. The information and content are comparable to those found in manuals and handbooks at other international institutions.

[Faculty Workload]

LAU has put greater emphasis on faculty research as the university's reputation for scholarship and research has grown, leading to increasing amounts of work to keep up not only in scholarship but also with teaching and service. Furthermore,

many schools and programs have been seeking specialized accreditation for the first time (e.g., ABET, ACCSB, NAAB, AACB, CCNE, etc.), yet the teaching load of faculty has not changed since 2006 (nine credits per semester for tenured and tenure track faculty). The latter was supposed to ease the burden on faculty instruction load but other issues have kept faculty busy. There is no additional time for faculty to conduct research.

[Evaluation of Faculty]

In AY2011-12, the promotion system was changed to a school-based promotion system with two levels of evaluation. Prior to 2011-12, promotion and tenure committees' recommendations were upheld most of the time. From 2011-12 onwards, school recommendations have in some cases been overturned by the University Promotion Committee (UPC) [Exhibit 5.1, Table 5.1.9]. Promotion and tenure are based on a peer review process complemented by external evaluators. The Faculty Welfare and Promotion Council (FWPC) has completed the review of the school-based promotion criteria.

Annual faculty evaluation is also school specific. It is based on a clear set of guidelines and a well-established process that starts with a yearly report prepared by each faculty member. However, the timing of the annual faculty evaluation seems to vary from year to year.

[Faculty Compensation and Benefits]

LAU has a salary structure that combines rank with discipline or area of specialty. Cost of living increases have not kept up with inflation [Exhibit 5.14] over the past few years. Financial strain on faculty has increased and to a certain extent has caused a decline in faculty morale. This is despite yearly tuition increases and higher student enrollment figures [Exhibit 5.15]. Merit salary increases, tied to school budgets rather than directly to an earmarked fund, are regarded as almost nominal. Many faculty perceive that merit increases do not accurately reflect yearly performance evaluations [Exhibits 5.12 & 5.13].

[Evaluation of Part-time Faculty]

Evaluation of part-time faculty relies on student evaluations and course files, as well as classroom observations in some departments, yet there is no clear procedure, and there is no documentation.

[Graduate Assistants (GA's)]

The teaching load of GA's is mainly restricted to lab courses, computer application courses, and the odd pre-freshman language course. However, GA's do not undergo proper training before teaching at LAU. At the time being graduate assistantships are similar to financial aid or research assistantships; thus, a radical change regarding GA's role should take place.

[Faculty Governance]

The Senate has evolved into a promising partner in the LAU shared governance system. Recently, its membership of tenured faculty members has increased tremendously. Yet, the Senate is still operating within an evolving university shared governance system that is moving towards school autonomy and thus the interrelationship between schools and university faculty councils is still being delineated.

[Scholarship, Research, Creative Activity, and Continuing Professional Development]

In fall 2013, following a search process, the university appointed a Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. It is expected that the Office of the Dean will help in seeking research funds and in providing a more viable infrastructure for increased research.

There is a perception among the faculty that the publication output of full-time faculty increased annually from 2008 to 2013. The data collected so far supports this perception however further interpretation is needed.

Continuing professional development for faculty differs among schools. Most professional development initiatives are related to attending a short course at a conference. Some schools, i.e., Arts and Sciences, Pharmacy, and Nursing do offer workshops to faculty (assessment, grant writing, active learning, SPSS, etc.), but others do not [Exhibit 5.11].

[Faculty recruitment and retention]

SP 2011-16 stipulates that schools are expected to develop school specific faculty recruitment plans to meet set recruitment targets. Furthermore, SP 2011-16, pillar 3, goal 1 specifies the importance of having procedures for recruiting distinguished faculty. While the 2013-14 Faculty Handbook describes the recruitment of faculty, the Provost's Office is in the process of preparing a more comprehensive manual that will highlight the procedures to follow for hiring school academic administrators and faculty and for part-time faculty recruitment and post-recruitment rules and regulations as stipulated in SP 2011-16. The Provost's Office will ensure that follow-up on the set processes is clear and transparent. The manual will also include a system for improving faculty orientation and mentoring system from full-time faculty as specified in the SP 2011-16, pillar 3.

[Equal Opportunities and non-discrimination]

The university is committed to policies that reaffirm non-discrimination and equal opportunity. The Office of the Provost will keep improving and updating the current Faculty Handbook. It is expected that a grievance policy for faculty will be added in the next review; the Council of Deans will initiate the process.

[Faculty workload]

Workload distribution under the current system requires tenure track and tenured faculty to teach 18 credits per year. The *SP 2011-16*, pillar 3, goal 1 recommends revisiting of the teaching load to allow release time for scholarly activity, as well as to establish school guidelines for faculty teaching load based on faculty academic duties and services to the school.

[Faculty compensation and benefits]

The Senate is conducting periodic studies regarding salary adjustments. Recommendations from the Senate are forwarded to the President's Cabinet which undertakes the necessary and adequate measures in that regard. Furthermore, the *SP 2011-16* pillar 3, goal 1 suggests the formation of a committee to look into a housing policy.

The academic administration will ensure that merit increases are closely tied to faculty performance. *SP 2011-16*, pillar 3, goal 4 recommends that assessment of academic administrators be conducted periodically.

The university has established school criteria for promotion based on scholarly output as stated in *SP 2011-16*, pillar 3. It is expected that in the next three years a re-evaluation of these criteria will be undertaken to ensure fairness, equality, and transparency.

[Scholarship, research and creative activity]

The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research will in the next few months conduct a survey on the current needs of the faculty in terms of research and required resources. Based on the needs assessment, the Office of the Dean will be able to help faculty seek the research funds needed for resources and research. *SP 2011-16*, pillar 3, goals 2 states that by 2015 faculty should be given necessary support in writing proposals for research grants.

At the school level, support is given to faculty to attend conferences and workshops for professional development. The Provost's Office has put in place (as of spring 2014) a university effectiveness council whose role is to provide support for teaching development of faculty to enhance use of pedagogy that engages students in learning. Seed funds are made available to junior faculty in their first two years to encourage them to pursue research.

[Faculty governance]

The Senate has been most active as a medium for faculty to exchange views. The administration will continue working with the Senate and give it a more strategic role in the university governance structure.

Institutional Effectiveness

The university has been able to capture the loyalty of its faculty via its vision and mission despite the unstable situation in the country. *SP 2011-16* addresses the current size and adequacy of the LAU faculty at the institutional and school level. Tenured and tenure-track faculty are heavily involved in teaching, conducting research, and providing service to LAU. Faculty evaluations take place on a yearly basis as well as in the promotion and tenure years. These evaluations are based on clear procedures and guidelines and follow due process. Faculty orientation and mentoring are becoming the norm; feedback results are used for improvement.

Standard 5 Exhibits

5.1	Faculty Information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 5.1.1: Full-time faculty according to ranks • Table 5.1.2: Countries of faculty highest degrees • Table 5.1.3: Percentages of courses taught by full-timers versus courses taught by part timers. • Table 5.1.4: Departed full-time faculty • Table 5.1.5: Increase in full-time faculty • Table 5.1.6: Full-time faculty serving at LAU • Table 5.1.7: Average salaries of full-timers • Table 5.1.8: Travel Grants • Table 5.1.9: Faculty Promotion
5.2	Faculty Handbook
5.3	Faculty Position Ads on the web (http://lau.edu.lb/career opportunities)
5.4	Personnel Policy
5.5	Faculty Bylaws
5.6	SP 2011 – 2016
5.7	Schools Forms: faculty evaluation
5.8	University Policies (http://lau.edu.lb/policies)
5.9	Schools' Based Promotion criteria
5.10	Promotion process 2013 – 2014
5.11	Professional Development opportunities for faculty
5.12	Questionnaire Survey
5.13	Focus group interviews with faculty
5.14	COLA study
5.15	IRA reports on enrollments (http://ira.lau.edu.lb reports – reports and data – enrollment)

Standard 6: Students



Description

[Admissions]

For the past five years, the LAU Board of Trustees has set a goal for 2% annual growth in student enrollment. In line with this goal, *SP 2011-16* calls to analyze the availability of potential prospective students for the next 3-5 years and to maintain student diversity by sustaining a 20% international student body, which is what LAU currently has [Exhibit 6.1]. These goals correspond with LAU's mission to form leaders in a diverse world and also with LAU's vision to provide access to superior education for a diverse student body. LAU's undergraduate enrollment grew by 7.82% between fall 2009 and fall 2013 (from 6,880 to 7,418 students) while at the graduate level enrollment decreased by 22% (from 933 to 728 students) for the same period [Exhibit 6.2]. During the same period, LAU's total enrollment increased by 4.3% (from 7,813 to 8,146 students). LAU is addressing the decrease in graduate enrollment through *SP 2011-16* which calls for the creation of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. In October 2013 a Dean for Graduate Studies and Research was hired.

At LAU, the male to female enrollment ratio changed from 53/47 in 2009 to 50/50 in 2013 [Exhibit 6.3]. For the past five years, LAU has maintained a student body that consists of 20% international students. To increase the number of international students LAU aggressively recruits students from outside Lebanon and the university increased the number of its exchange agreements with other institutions and universities abroad from 12 in 2010 to 21 in 2013.

To ensure that we have a broadly representative student body from across Lebanon, LAU has partnered with USAID on a number of University Scholarship Program (USP) grants, recruiting 52, 53, and 94 (for a total of 199) "Ambassador Merit Scholars" students from public high schools from all different regions in Lebanon in fall 2011, 2012, and 2013. Additionally, LAU works with the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) to offer the Tomorrow's Leaders (TL) Scholarship program for students both in Lebanon and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Without these programs, these students would not have been able to pursue an American-style university education. These programs, which offer full scholarships, monthly stipends, book allowances, residence and other benefits, allow LAU to recruit students who demonstrate outstanding leadership potential but who may not otherwise have the opportunity to receive an American-style education. Furthermore, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Zahle, LAU opened a liaison office in Zahle to serve students and the community in the Bekaa. LAU is also in process of opening a similar office in Tripoli with the Safadi Foundation and in Saida with the Hariri Foundation to serve students and the communities of the North and South respectively.

Each undergraduate and graduate program at LAU has specific admissions criteria as discussed in detail in chapter 4. All admission requirements are available to all students and prospective students electronically on the LAU website (<http://admissions.lau.edu.lb/undergraduate/>), in the yearly academic catalog (<http://publications.lau.edu.lb/academic-catalog/>) and in recruitment documents that are widely distributed by the Admissions Offices, thus providing transparency and equal opportunity to all students. LAU standards of admission for graduate degree programs are compatible with American universities and aim to recruit qualified students.

In line with its mission, LAU defines the characteristics of the students it seeks to serve and states its commitment 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. Accordingly, LAU has raised admissions standards in order to admit students with the ability and drive to excel in their chosen academic program [Exhibit 6.4]. LAU SAT scores are comparable to those required in US universities [Exhibit 6.5]. SAT scores along with high school grades are indicators of potential success in the admitted program and minimum requirements vary amongst majors.

For some students, with identified particular academic needs, appropriate remedial courses are offered. Students with academic difficulties are provided with academic advising as needed. In fall 2013, 91.3% of students on probation were advised while it was 65% in 2009. This represents the highest ever percentage of students reached. In addition, LAU has cooperative learning centers that provide free tutoring to students with academic problems in certain courses. Academic advisors under the Offices of the Dean of Students communicate directly with students potentially at risk of facing academic difficulties (CGPA \leq 2.2) in view of alerting and advising them on what to do to prevent probation. To further address the needs of students with particular weaknesses, and as per *SP 2011-16*, SDEM hired six additional academic advisors and trained them in close coordination with all schools. SDEM also is regularly reviewing its orientation program to address particular issues of new students.

LAU endeavors to integrate specifically recruited populations into the larger student body and to assure that they have comparable academic experiences. As such the 199 USP “Ambassador Merit Scholars” students are excelling academically with a retention rate of 98%.

A combination of evaluation methods is used to identify academic deficiencies; these methods include entrance requirements. Students with minute deficiencies relative to the admissions’ criteria may be conditionally admitted on probation and then switched to regular status upon satisfactory completion of 12 credits. Some students can also be admitted with remedial courses to be taken during their first semester. LAU also launched the “Undecided” category to help undecided students make an informed decision about their major after one year of taking courses in different fields. Similarly, LAU launched the university “Bridge Program” in fall 2013 to enable students who are very close to meeting the regular admissions’ requirements to join the university by giving them a second chance. Students in the “Bridge” Program must register in a specific set of courses during their first year and meet certain admission conditions. Students who successfully complete their first year will move on to their program of study as regular students. In fall 2013, LAU admitted 51 students in the Bridge Program and is closely monitoring them. LAU also assigned particular professional and academic advisors to ensure their success.

[Retention and Graduation]

To aid in student retention and student success, LAU has admission requirements that vary among the different programs and majors. These program-specific requirements are designed to ensure that admitted students will be able to succeed. Since 2009, LAU has revised its admission requirements to meet NEASC requirements and admission criteria are now based on more international standards. Undergraduate admissions primarily depends on SAT scores (SAT Critical Thinking & Math), high school grades, and English proficiency (<http://www.admissions.lau.edu.lb>). Specifically recruited students such as the USP and MEPI cohorts are subject to a more in-depth selection process which includes a personal interview.

LAU provides accessible and effective leadership programs, workshops, and outreach activities and services to help students be successful in their academic pursuits and improve their leadership skills. Such services include study abroad and international exchanges, volunteering with Outreach and Civic Engagement, LAU NGO fair, LAU Model United Nations (MUN) and Model Arab League (MAL). LAU expects students to participate in a number of supplemental activities aimed at developing their interpersonal, leadership and professional skills. The USP students are given leadership and civic engagement workshops and activities at LAU which assists in building key cognitive and leadership skills.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment measures and tracks student success through enrollment statistics. These statistics include retention rates, graduation rates and employment statistics for LAU graduates. These figures are available to the public on the LAU website (<http://ira.lau.edu.lb>).

LAU continues to pay special attention to academically challenged students. The percentage of enrolled students on academic probation (GPA of < 2.0) has decreased from 2009 to 2013 while the percentage of enrolled students with honors and distinctions has increased [Exhibit 6.6]. Retention and graduation rates for specifically recruited student populations are evaluated. The university retention rate for the general student body has been at 90% in recent years, while it has been at 98% for the specifically recruited USAID USP students. The services and opportunities provided to this group of students - as well as the students themselves - have proven to be an effective combination for success. Data on retention, graduation and other measures of student success are compiled on an annual basis. The results are analyzed regularly by various departments at LAU including SDEM. Data are gathered and used to make appropriate recommendations for improvements to the Council of Deans and to the President’s Cabinet.

Retention and graduation rates are directly related to LAU’s mission as indicators of academic excellence and student success. Improving these rates is a continuing goal for LAU. In 2009 the average retention rate at LAU was 90.8% and steadily increased each year until 2012 when the rate was 92.3% [Exhibit 6.7]. The graduation rates have also improved steadily in recent years. The six-year graduation rate is the percentage of students entering the institution as full-time, first-time, degree seeking undergraduates in a cohort who complete their degree within six years. The six-year graduation rate was 73.8% for students admitted in fall 2003 and increased to 83% for students admitted in fall 2007 [Exhibit 6.8].

[Student Services]

In line with its mission, LAU provides its students with a comprehensive array of services to meet their diverse needs. In fall 2012, SDEM introduced a new “Student Services Track” at the Registrar’s Office by dedicating full-time staff to better serve students by welcoming them and answering their questions. SDEM also launched Curriculum Advising and Program Planning (CAPP) in 2010, which provides an online tool to students to view their academic records, what courses they still need to complete, and to simulate “what if” analyses should they wish to do minors or change majors. To improve student services, SDEM changed the on-line registration process instead of registration beginning at midnight, it now begins at 8 a.m. on the

first day. In another concrete step showing an improvement in student services and due to the large numbers of graduating students, LAU started having two commencement exercises on the Beirut campus effective July 2010 while on the Byblos campus there is still only one.

In terms of improving communication with students, LAU introduced the Student Portal in 2013 and SDEM will have its own communication manager to take care of all SDEM websites and communication with students in 2014 as indicated in the SP 2011-16. Furthermore, SDEM already revamped its three student websites and rendered them more student-friendly, launched the LAU phone application, and is regularly using text messaging (SMS) to reach students. Last, SDEM leadership meets on a yearly basis with a group of students on each campus to listen to their concerns and answer their questions.

The Dean of Students' Offices offer many critical services on each campus. Counseling is available to all students and can assist students with many academic, relational, and emotional concerns. Counselors are committed to meeting the specific needs of individuals from varied backgrounds. In fall 2013, 229 students were provided counseling services (131 in Beirut and 98 in Byblos) compared to 125 in fall 2009.

Academic Advisors take the time to keep students on track for academic success. Advising at LAU is taking on new meaning, with nine instead of three full-time professional academic advisors now in place on both campuses—some designated with special expertise in particular schools to better administer ongoing and in-depth advising to LAU's undergraduate students. All new advisors have been trained in basic advising techniques, the rules and regulations of LAU, and use of CAPP and Banner. They will be coordinating closely with the schools on their needs and will complement the advising of the faculty. Freshman students at LAU have the lowest retention rates, so compulsory advising with academic advisors will be in place this fall. The Academic Advisors have witnessed a notable increase in the number of "at risk" or students on probation they have advised this spring semester 2014 (90% v/s 70%) They will continue to monitor this at-risk group.

A Career Guidance Office (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/career-guidance>) provides assistance and advising to LAU students and alumni during the career planning process by providing the latest high quality training, tools, and resources. Additional Career Guidance staff in SOB and SOE further cater to their student needs. In addition, and upon the request of many local high schools, the Beirut campus Career Guidance Officer held career presentations at a number of high schools. The Byblos campus Career Guidance officer has been selected for an Erasmus Mundus exchange to spend a month at Sciences Po's Career Center.

Each campus has an Activities Coordinator in the Dean of Students' Office who organizes numerous activities each year. Both LAU campuses encourage extracurricular involvement by hosting many student clubs which organize events and activities regularly on a variety of themes. There are currently more than 80 official clubs operating on both campuses (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/activities>). As a result of the different nationalities represented on its campuses and to encourage diversity, LAU has developed programs to help international students fully integrate into the university community and the larger Lebanese society. International students are encouraged to form national cultural clubs and more than a dozen clubs have already been formed.

Students are provided with personal lifetime email accounts, unlimited internet access, wireless internet access, student information systems (Banner, CAPP and the Student Portal), and a library automation system (OLIB). Furthermore, food is provided by a professional catering company in the campus cafeterias with a variety of healthy meals and a la carte options. LAU provides five residence halls with two in Beirut and three in Byblos. Every residence hall is manned 24 hours a day by full-time supervisors, security personnel, and student floor assistants who must undergo a compulsory training session before assuming responsibilities (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/housing/>).

Available on each campus for both residential and non-residential students is a Health Services Office headed by a registered nurse with LAU-affiliated MDs available for consultation. The nurses provide day-to-day healthcare services and are able to respond to emergencies that may arise on campus. The nurses also provide training, seminars, and awareness campaigns to the student population.

Each campus has 24-hour security to ensure the safety of LAU campuses day and night. All security personnel are well-trained career professionals. Safety devices (e.g., fire alarms and fire extinguishers) are installed in all laboratories, studios and workshops (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/hhw>).

Information on student services is available to students and prospective students through many outlets including email notifications, posters on campus, the LAU website, LAU social media platforms, the student portal and printed material like the Academic Catalog and materials distributed during orientation.

A comprehensive orientation for new students is provided by the Dean of Students' Offices before the start of each semester. Orientation introduces incoming students to the various offices and services available to them (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/registration/first-year>).

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Offices offer financial assistance for undergraduate students, regardless of their nationality, race, religion or gender, in compliance with LAU Financial Aid policies and procedures which are published online. Financial Aid packages are awarded according to a matrix assessing financial need and academic merit. Financial Aid is offered in various forms including work-study, grants and loans. Scholarship offerings based on academic performance vary and include merit, entrance and honor. Athletic scholarships, program scholarships, MUN scholarships and external scholarships are also offered (<http://aid.lau.edu.lb>). LAU also participates in the Federal Direct Loan Program for U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens. Need is assessed using the FAFSA application which assesses need without any form of bias. Entrance Counseling, which informs students on the debt and provides repayment information, is required of Direct Loan recipients prior to loan disbursement (<http://aid.lau.edu.lb/us-federal-loans/>).

As a component of the university mission, LAU is committed to the formation of student leaders. One of the most essential aspects of student engagement in leadership and governance is student elections (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/activities/student-governance>) (see chapter 3 on Governance)..

Student leadership is particularly fostered through the Outreach and Civic Engagement Unit (OCE). OCE offers students a multitude of opportunities for leadership training and experience as well as civic engagement through Model United Nations, the Model Arab League, and a series of workshops (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/student-engagement>). To further encourage students to increase their involvement with society, the School of Business introduced a required Civic Engagement Course with zero credit that is compulsory for all business students. There are presently more than 800 students involved on a volunteer basis in outreach activities.

Nowadays, academic exchange for students is an important element of education and leadership development. For this reason, LAU created the Study Abroad and International Exchange office under OCE and an exchange coordinator was hired (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/student-engagement/exchange.php>). LAU promotes the Erasmus Mundus and Sciences Po exchange opportunities among an increasing number of other attractive programs. For example, in 2013, LAU signed an exchange agreement with the University of Ottawa in Canada.

SDEM offers the Summer Institute for Intensive Arabic Language and Culture (SINARC) program which is a multi-faceted language and cultural immersion program that welcomes foreign students. SINARC not only allows students to learn and improve their Arabic language skills but it also helps to gain a true understanding of the cultural and social dynamics in the region.

Athletics are an important part of student life for many at LAU. Extracurricular sports and activities are organized on recreational, instructional, and competitive levels (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/athletics>). Student athletes are required to maintain the same academic standards and Code of Conduct as the general student body. Recipients of athletic scholarships must abide by and adhere to Financial Aid and Scholarship office (FASO) rules and regulations (http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/student_code_of_conduct.pdf).

LAU respects the rights of individuals and the confidentiality of their records. The Registrar, Admissions, and Financial Aid offices have developed policies on student record keeping. In 2010, LAU approved a confidentiality policy in this regards. These policies are publicly available on the LAU website (http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/record_retention_policy.pdf) and at (http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/confidentiality_policy.pdf).

Appraisal

[Admissions]

LAU has orderly, ethical, and consistent admissions processes for all schools that are clear and consistent with the LAU mission as well as are transparent and available to all students and prospective students. Each school has an Admission Council which in collaboration with the Admissions Office makes the final admission decision and prescribes remedial courses for any academic deficiencies of admitted students.

For the past five years, the university and the BOT have been targeting a 2% annual growth in enrollment. In fall 2012, LAU

witnessed a slight decrease of 1% and in fall 2013 the overall enrollment remained steady. The volatile political situation of the region and the country discourages students and parents from sending their children to university in Lebanon. The objectives of increasing admission standards and of reducing our admission rate, the decrease in graduate enrollment, and the increased competition to enroll the academically top students are factors that should lead to a review of the 2% required annual growth. It is important to note that increasing admission standards and increasing the total enrollment is almost an impossible formula. Furthermore, today's total enrollment is what LAU should have in fall 2015, had we limited ourselves to a 2% annual growth in the past 5 years. A new Strategic Enrollment Plan shaping the future enrollment of LAU and tightly aligned with schools, IT, Finance, and Facilities should be initiated.

LAU is addressing the decrease in graduate enrollment through *SP 2011-16* with the creation of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Generous scholarships for graduate studies, a review and needed revision of existing graduate programs, and the creation of new ones are needed to help reverse this decrease. Additional scholarship funding is needed to attract and enroll prospective students, as is more investment in the research infrastructure on both campuses.

Approximately 80% of LAU's students come from Lebanon while the remaining 20% represent other countries. The percent of international student enrollment has remained essentially unchanged since the last self-study.

Through its visits to high schools and educational fairs nationally and internationally and its various recruitment activities, LAU is succeeding in recruiting and enrolling academically qualified and talented high school students from diverse backgrounds. Moreover, with the support of USAID and the US Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), LAU continues to have a diverse student body. LAU needs to consider a plan allowing for the continuation of this kind of recruitment especially from public high schools, should at one point USAID or MEPI stop their initiatives. Our liaison office in Zahle targeting the Bekaa area and potential/possible liaison offices in Tripoli and Saïda targeting the areas of the North and South will play a major role in this regard.

Since 2009, LAU has increased its admission standards to attract and enroll a more highly qualified and diverse student body. This was accomplished by raising the criteria for SAT scores and high school grades. However, LAU believes that students should be given a second chance; hence it also conditionally admits students who are borderline cases and are very close to the required admission requirements by imposing remedial courses. LAU introduced in fall 2013 the "Undecided" category and the "University Bridge Program" to help this category of students.

[Retention and graduation]

In 2008 LAU established the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA). This was a major turning point and an essential step in the collection of data, measurement, and tracking of student success through enrollment statistics. These figures are available to the public on the LAU website (<http://ira.lau.edu.lb>) and IRA publishes a yearly statistical report.

To be in line with international standards and to maintain high retention and graduation rates, LAU revised its admission requirements. As indicated in *SP 2011-16*, article 1.7.1, accredited programs in Engineering, Nursing, Computer Science, Pharmacy, and Architecture and Design have their own specific requirements for accreditation purposes and serve as a means of moving towards international standards. The School of Business is on its way to receiving its accreditation and will join the ranks of the above list. This is contributing to maintaining an overall retention rate of 90%.

LAU pays special attention to students with particular academic needs and this is part of LAU's mission. As such, the university provides a wealth of assistance and support through the SAS and SOB Cooperative Learning Centers and the Dean of Students Offices (DOS). The percentage of enrolled students on academic probation (CGPA < 2.0) has decreased from 2009 to 2013 while the percentage of enrolled students with honors and distinctions has increased. Given the small decrease in the percentage of students on probation (5.8% to 4.3%), the trend does not prove statistically significant. The previous system of student advising posed a weakness in providing the necessary aid to academically weak students. As a result, SDEM hired six additional academic advisors. Furthermore, to give the necessary attention to students under the USP and MEPI programs, SDEM implemented a system whereby OCE—in direct coordination with schools, faculty advisors, and academic advisors—follows up consistently with USP-USAID students.

LAU's retention rate has been steadily increasing from 90.8% in 2009 to 92.3% in 2012. This is considered to be a high retention rate and in line with rates in the US <http://collegeapps.about.com/od/collegerankings/tp/Best-Six-Year-Graduation-Rates.htm> [Exhibit 6.8]. As for the overall university graduation rate, some schools have proven more successful than others. Analysis should take place to identify the reasons behind this discrepancy and necessary measures to improve retention rates should be implemented.

[Student Services]

LAU provides its students with a comprehensive array of services including academic advising, career and personal counseling, comprehensive health services, residence halls, career guidance and placement services, 24/7 campus security and safety devices, wireless IT, student extra-curricular activities through social and professional clubs, training seminars and awareness campaigns, and a wide range of sports and recreational activities.

Campus residence halls continue to enjoy full capacity on both campuses and waiting lists are considered on a first come, first serve basis. There is still not enough capacity to accommodate all interested applicants including international students on both campuses, however. At the time when the university is opening liaison offices in the Bekaa, the North, and the South to bring in students from these communities, LAU will be expected to offer students the opportunity to live in university residence halls.

The Health Office (HO) has been at par in continuously organizing health related activities that mark international dates that are health related (e.g. International Aids Day). On the other hand, the HO remains inadequate to meet the needs of students and is clearly understaffed with only one registered nurse per campus. Now that LAU has three schools in the health sciences and a hospital, it is recommended that plans for infirmaries be forthcoming.

Our career services have established a positive reputation in the external community as well as putting in place a very efficient placement services system. Our career officers offer an array of personalized services to students ranging from CV writing, career advising, and recruitment presentations. Various career events such as career and internship fairs, opportunities for networking, and receptions are organized and have become essential in preparing students for their professional careers; all such services are provided to students and alumni alike. However, the local and regional economic conditions and the presence of some disengaged students, make it, on occasion, very difficult to deliver the expected results. A vision of transforming the career services into a Career Centre is being considered.

The activities and cultural club coordinators continuously organizes various types of social, athletic, educational, and recreational activities that help train students to brainstorm, plan, and implement such activities. As part of its SP, particularly that of SDEM, LAU inaugurated in fall 2013 a new and fully equipped student center on the Beirut campus to cater to students' needs. Still, the athletics facilities remain insufficient for the increasing number of students on both campuses and new facilities are still needed to bring LAU up to par with competing universities. The LAU community on the Byblos campus still needs a similar Student Center especially an appropriate fitness center. LAU leases several sports venues to meet its needs and hires some of the best coaches available. Student-athletes have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as other students and are still expected to keep a good academic record.

Outreach and Civic Engagement division (OCE) already engages 20% of the LAU student population in volunteer activities but has the potential of doubling that percentage. All activities and programs organized by OCE help in the education of the whole person and formation of leaders in a diverse world. OCE is also managing the international exchange programs and the multi-dimensional aspects of the USAID-USP programs.

SDEM is investing in better customer service, creation of the "Student Services" track at the Registrar's Office is a strong signal of this. At the same time, SDEM's vision is to move towards a paperless environment and is thus offering most of its services online. Many steps have been taken towards achieving this goal such as CAPP, updating the website, the portal, social media, and the ability to order transcripts and statements online. However, aggressive university policies regarding improving customer services and moving towards a paperless environment are needed. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is one tool to be considered.

Another priority item that helps in improving customer service is making the LAU campuses accessible to students with physical challenges. At this time, only a few buildings are accessible to physically challenged individuals.

Financial aid packages and the variety of scholarships ranging from 10% to 100% that are offered by LAU provide assistance to close to 30% of LAU's students. In 2010 LAU enhanced some of its scholarships such as program grants, and launched the athletic scholarships, the restricted grants and the entrance scholarships. Regular financial aid is based on an automated financial aid system which is supposed to offer fair and equal assessment to all applicants without discrimination. However, the system needs to be continuously updated and re-visited to ensure consistency and fairness. Moreover, there are some challenges in adequately leveraging financial aid to meet enrollment targets on both campuses.

LAU in partnership with USAID continues to offer the generous USP scholarships to high-achieving high school students. It is highly recommended, however, that the university consider allocating internal funds to extend permanent help to this category of students.

Ethical standards to guide student services as well as policies on student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures, are clearly stated, well-publicized and readily available in the Student Code of Conduct (http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/student_code_of_conduct.pdf). They are also consistently implemented.

The Registrar's Office consistently implements policies regarding the kinds of information that will be included in the permanent record of students as well as policies regarding the retention, safety and security and disposal of such records. Its information-release policies respect the rights of individual privacy, the confidentiality of records, and the best interests of students and the institution.

Projection

[Admissions]

LAU will continue to enroll academically top students and to gradually and carefully increase its admission standards without hurting its enrollment objectives. Doubling the Merit scholarship budget is a key factor in attracting top students and we hope to achieve this by 2019. Similarly, the university will maintain its policy of giving students a second chance by admitting borderline students to specific programs such as the Bridge and the undecided major while imposing specific courses and conditions.

SDEM will review its enrollment target growth and adopt a new Enrollment Management plan through to 2020 while taking into consideration all factors such as accreditation requirements, the volatile political situation of the region and the country, facilities growth, and market demand.

LAU will address the decrease in graduate enrollment and plans to have a graduate student body of 15% of its total population by 2020. Revising existing graduate programs, creating new ones, and offering generous graduate scholarships and assistantships are needed to help reverse this decrease.

LAU will maintain its international student population at the 20 to 25% level of its total student body and will continue to bring student diversity to its campuses. Also, LAU will continue enrolling financially needy and academically strong students from disadvantaged backgrounds from across Lebanon. Having a separate financial aid budget for this category of students is a crucial element to this success. LAU will continue to strengthen its presence across Lebanon by opening regional liaison offices similar to the Zahle one; the next targets are the South and the North.

[Retention and graduation]

SDEM will continue to use data for its projections and recommendations. Data will also be used to track student success through enrollment statistics to help increase retention, graduation, and employment rates for LAU graduates. SDEM has set a retention rate of 94% by 2019. Furthermore, LAU should increase its freshman student retention rate. The overall graduation rates have also improved steadily in recent years. LAU aims to keep it at a minimum of 85%.

SDEM will continue to reward academic excellence by improving the honor scholarship system. Additionally, LAU will introduce honors courses beginning in spring 2015 to attract and retain top students.

SDEM will continue to pay special attention to students with particular academic needs and universal advising will become an integral part of the academic calendar with full operation by 2015. Also, a better advising system will be in place effective 2014 for students admitted in specific programs such as the Bridge, the undecided, on probation, and freshmen. Acquiring the necessary software to centralize advising and information about students is a must.

Continuous improvement of student life at the university through Outreach and Civic Engagement activities and other social events organized by the Dean of Students offices will also contribute to the success of students, their retention and thus on-time graduation.

Analysis should take place to identify reasons behind discrepancies in retention rates among the different schools, find ways to improve them, and implement those measures.

[Student Services]

SDEM will continue to provide its students with a comprehensive array of services as discussed throughout this chapter.

Participation of students in the university governance remains a key objective. The best example is student participation in

the determination of tuition fees for AY2014-15. Student elections are a key element to successful student life and SDEM reformed the election process two years ago and will continue to work with students on improving the process going forward.

Moreover, a study should take place to indicate how many total students the existing facilities can absorb on each campus and project a plan for the next 5-10 years to be aligned with Enrollment Management especially that the university is targeting increasing enrollment at the graduate level which calls for specific facilities such as labs and offices for graduate students.

Also, at the time when the university is opening liaison offices in the Bekaa, the North, and the South to bring in students from these communities, LAU will be expected to offer students the opportunity to live in university residence halls. In the past two years, LAU signed agreements with a number of off-campus residence halls that are now providing accommodation for our students that match our residence halls. We will continue to rent off campus appropriate facilities to accommodate our growing needs. LAU has already started outsourcing residence halls under university services' supervision.

While the SEMP calls for an increase in international student enrollment, regional, political instability and associated insecurity in the country is affecting our ability to recruit more students from abroad. However, LAU will continue to promote itself internationally and penetrate new markets for diversity purposes as our mission states in preparation for the future

The health offices continue to offer adequate services to students, faculty, and staff. Nonetheless, it is recommended that planning begins for infirmaries so that more extensive services can be provided.

SDEM is planning to expand our career services into a Career Center which should help in increasing employment rates for our graduates.

Student activities are an integral part of student life and SDEM will ensure that this remains a priority. The focus is now on creating a student center on the Byblos campus similar to what was inaugurated on the Beirut campus this past year. An expanded Byblos fitness center, fully equipped with quality fitness equipment should be in place. Plans for a Byblos Athletics Center are forthcoming.

OCE already is engaging 20% of the LAU student population in volunteer activities but we expect to raise this percentage to 25% by 2020.

LAU improved in admitting physically challenged students but our campuses are still not fully accessible and the university should improve accessibility for students, faculty and staff with disabilities.

Institutional Effectiveness

Since LAU is a student-centered institution, SDEM in close collaboration with the Institutional Research and Assessment, the Council of Deans and the President's Cabinet will continue to assess all offered services on a continuous basis for improvement and student satisfaction purposes. Assessment systems will cover Admissions, Recruitment, Financial Aid and Scholarships, Registrar's Office, all Dean of Student Services, Outreach and Civic Engagement activities, and Testing Services. Many assessment tools and systems are already in place (surveys, benchmarking, internal assessment procedures) and we will continue using them.

Standard 6 Exhibits

6.1	Student Enrollment by place of origin
6.2	Enrollment by level
6.3	Student Enrollment by gender
6.4	First time undergraduate students SAT scores
6.5	Average SAT scores: LAU v/s US
6.6	Student Academic Standing
6.7	Bachelor's degree retention rates
6.8	Bachelor's degrees six-year graduation rates

Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources



Description

[Background and Mission]

The Lebanese American University comprises four main campuses: Beirut, Byblos, New York City, and the Lebanese American University Medical Center–Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH), which is the university's teaching hospital, also located in Beirut. Except for the Byblos campus which includes two libraries, the main library and the Health Sciences Library (HSL), the other three campuses each has one library, the Riyad Nassar Library (RNL) in Beirut, NYAC Library in New York, and Lebanese American University LAUMC-RH Library in Beirut (<http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/about/beirut.php>)

As LAUMC-RH is not formally incorporated into the university it was judged appropriate not to include it in the self-study. It is projected that such incorporation will indeed take place sooner rather than later, at which point all aspects of the medical center will have to be brought within the purview of the university's planning and assessment processes. A plan to that effect is being currently worked out.

The mission of the libraries is to support the academic curriculum, i.e., the teaching, learning, and research, plus the intellectual and cultural pursuits of the university community (<http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/about/welcome.php>). In terms of SP 2011-16, the libraries were assigned the task of accomplishing the goal of intensifying the involvement of libraries and IT in the learning process and encouraging faculty to collaborate with the librarian and IT support staff for instructional purposes [Exhibit 7.1, goal 1.9].

[Organizational Structure and Personnel]

RNL, Byblos Library and HSL are all headed by a University Librarian who reports to the provost [Exhibit 7.2]. While a new organizational structure is being prepared, the Byblos Library Director is currently responsible for monitoring daily operations. There is one University Library and Information Resources Council with advisory duties and whose members represent all academic departments [Exhibit 7.3]. In addition, a new service has been recently introduced, i.e., Library Liaison Program aiming to improve collection development, research needs, and information literacy skills for the LAU community (<http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/library-services/llp>).

All LAU libraries have identical administrative structures. There are 12 professional librarians including two library staff with graduate degrees in Computer Science. There are 18 paraprofessionals, two support staff, two part-timers, and 67 student assistants [Exhibit 7.2]. Library patrons are served through a variety of units (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/library-services/>).

The LAUMC-RH Library is under the governance of the teaching hospital and is staffed by one librarian who reports to the Chief Medical Officer [Exhibit 7.2]. Some collaboration with the LAU libraries exists particularly through sharing of online resources as well as information literacy. Services such as Inter-Library Loan and Document Delivery, research assistance, reference requests, etc. are available to LAUMC-RH staff, LAU faculty, students from the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and School of Pharmacy [Exhibit 7.4].

While a clear governing structure is not yet in place for the NYAC Library, the sharing of resources will be established when the latter becomes fully functional.

[Policies and Procedures]

There are common policies for identical departments in all libraries [Exhibit 7.5]. The policies map the scope, objectives, responsibilities, and the expected output pertinent to every job [Exhibit 7.2]. Rules and procedures that regulate and safeguard copyright law, database licenses, computer use policy, borrowing of materials, and so on, are listed on the Library website [Exhibit 7.5]. The libraries document their services and functions through regular reports [Exhibit 7.6] and by posting their annual statistics on the American College and Research Libraries site for benchmarking purpose [Exhibit 7.7].

[Information Resources and Services]

The LAU libraries use the Oracle Libraries (OLIB system). Their website, which was visited around 70,000 times in AY2011-12, allows remote access and acts as gateway to all resources and services (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/index.php>). The libraries' entire collection may be accessed via the online library catalog which was accessed 56,000 times in 2011-12 <https://librarycatalog.lau.edu.lb/olib9>, <http://lau.worldcat.org/>, through Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.com/scholar> and through Serials Solutions see (<http://ku7rj9xt8c.search.serialssolutions.com>). Additionally, all announcements are posted

on the university website and the University Portal, as well as on the Library Facebook page and its Instagram account which are linked to the library website (see https://www.facebook.com/pages/LAU-Libraries/45399139516?ref=br_tf).

In order to fulfill constituent needs for materials not available in the libraries and in order to share resources, the LAU libraries are in agreement with four different consortia locally and globally [Exhibit 7.8].

The libraries have well-posted hours of operation. During exam periods both libraries open beyond regular schedules [Exhibit 7.9]. The LAUMC-RH Library is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. only.

The libraries vary significantly in their size and holdings [Exhibits 7.6, 7.7, & 7.10]. In terms of information technology, all libraries have a wireless environment and wired furniture [Exhibit 7.4].

The total annual budget for the libraries in 2011-12 amounts was \$4,152,074 of which \$2,272,089 was allocated for the purchase of/subscription to library material including print, electronic, and AV material [Exhibit 7.11]. However, the LAUMC-RH Library does not have a separate budget

[Information and Technological Literacy]

All newly-enrolled students must visit either main library during the Orientation Week. Brochures are distributed to inform the LAU community about the services, staff and basic rules and regulations of the libraries [Exhibit 7.9]. Staff is engaged in one-on-one and group training of end-users as well as answering reference questions in person or via online chat on a daily basis. The total count for 2011-12 was 10,413 questions [Exhibit 7.7]. Furthermore, specialized online research guides are available with information resources related to the major schools of the university, as well as general online tutorials are developed by library staff to help end-users in their research (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/help/evaluating-info.php>, and <http://libguides.lau.edu.lb/content.php?pid=323025>)

The diversified methods of user education that are provided by LAU Libraries are necessitated by the fact that most high-schools in Lebanon have inadequate library services. This is aggravated by the fact that there are very few public libraries in the country. This makes the creation of a 'library culture' a main responsibility at the university level to be fulfilled by LAU libraries.

Appraisal

[Background and Mission]

While the LAU libraries are located on four separate campuses, they complement each other in a close-knit manner of cooperation and coordination. The daily active Inter-Campus Borrowing presents the libraries to their clientele as one entity concerned with catering for their needs in compliance with the mission of the university. About 1800 transactions were performed between the libraries during fall and spring 2012-13 [Exhibit 7.12].

The mission of the libraries as announced on their website conforms to the mission of the university, i.e., "student centeredness" and the "education of the whole person" (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/about/welcome.php>, and <http://www.lau.edu.lb/about/mission/>). In their effort to implement their mission, the libraries' acquisitions cover material related to LAU's curricula as well as to multicultural matters. In addition, the libraries provide access to online resources with very limited restrictions, and an open stacks environment—both key elements in educating the whole person—as well as open and friendly space (mainly in RNL and HSL), enticing visitors to read, study, and socialize [Exhibits 7.13].

Being members of national and international consortia have significantly helped the libraries in increasing the number of online resources available to LAU's constituents by 70% (between 2007-08 and 2011-12) [Exhibit 7.14]. This also has enabled further access to large and highly diversified collections of libraries located around the world through inter-library loan and document delivery service agreements. For instance, in 2011-12 the libraries borrowed 305 books and 735 articles via OCLC [Exhibit 7.15].

[Organizational Structure and Personnel]

When compared to other similar local and regional institutions, such as the American University of Beirut and the American University in Cairo, one concludes that LAU libraries have an inadequate number of staff. In 2012, we had one staff for every 234 FTE while in AUB there is 1 staff for every 102 FTE and in AUC there is 1 staff for every 93 FTE [Exhibit 7.16]. Whereas a new career ladder has been developed to fulfill the current and future needs of the libraries, only a small number of new staff has been added (mainly in circulation) [Exhibit 7.10].

The majority of the library departments have been centralized except for three divisions, i.e., Cataloging, Acquisitions, and Collection Development. With regards to Information Systems, another centralized division, the huge increase in the number of PCs and peripherals in all libraries (from 233 in 2007 to 391 in 2013), necessitated the addition of a dedicated staff member at the Byblos and HS libraries [Exhibit 7.17].

The library staff is comprised of professionals and para-professionals, secretarial staff, and student assistants, all highly committed to offering quality services to end-users. All professional librarians hold graduate degrees in Library and Information Science. Likewise IT staff have graduate degrees in Computer Science. To date all staff have substantial years of experience. Part-timers and student assistants working in the libraries often go through systematic training to enable them to attain high-level expertise and professionalism in rendering technical or public services. Staff regularly attends training sessions, workshops, professional seminars/webinars, lectures and conferences held locally, regionally or internationally.

The LAUMC-RH Library is staffed by one person who holds a library degree. The addition of another librarian will maximize the efficacy of the services offered to physicians (amounting to 49 FTE) [Exhibit 7.10]. As for the NYAC Library, future plans reveal recruiting one librarian, which should be sufficient to serve a community of 500 students and a collection of 5000 items.

It is worth mentioning that the staff are seen by most of the LAU community as knowledgeable, welcoming, courteous, helpful, and available when needed, as demonstrated by answers regarding library staff on the Faculty and Staff Survey and the Student Survey [Exhibit 7.18, p5].

[Policies and Procedures]

Internal policies and procedures that regulate all functions, services, and activities are clearly stated. Copyright law announcements are also posted on the website as well as next to each photocopier and scanner. Unfortunately, university constituents (students, faculty, and staff) currently are not required to sign a pledge to abide by the Code of Ethics policy. This should be enforced as soon as possible to avoid copyright infringements and misuse of technology (see <http://ereserve.lau.edu.lb/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=659>).

[Information Resources and Services]

LAU libraries are considered mid-size among the libraries in Lebanon as well as the region. End-users are satisfied with the traditional and non-traditional (electronic) formats, in quality as well as quantity [Exhibits 7.18 & 7.19, p2]. Faculty integrate library resources in their courses through assignments (42%), Blackboard (32%), Syllabi (26.8%), and research (24.7%), [Exhibit 7.18, p.25]. The student survey revealed that 60.6% of the respondents reported that their instructors encourage them to use the libraries and their resources, and about 70% expressed their satisfaction with the library collections, whether print or online [Exhibit 7.18, p. 5]. The libraries' collections have grown at an average rate of 11.5% per year (2007-13) [Exhibit 7.20].

In 2010, the Libraries established a new service, the Library Liaison Program, where each librarian was assigned as liaison to different schools based upon their background specializations. Except for the close and successful relationship with healthcare programs, the overall outcome of the LLP was not as productive as projected. Survey indicated that about 13% of faculty are involved in selecting or recommending resources for the Library [Exhibit 7.18, p. 31]. Accordingly one Collection Development Librarian was hired on a part-time basis from 2005 to 2013. It is worth noting that the University Librarian is not a member of any curriculum planning committee, hindering and decreasing her awareness of new courses or majors at the university. However, being an ex-officio member of University Library Information Resources Committee (ULIRC) and through receiving the monthly CD minutes [Exhibit 7.21], she becomes well aware of newly introduced majors or courses. In order to respond to student needs, any user can order or recommend resources by filling out order forms available on the Library Website (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/help/order.php>) or by dropping them in the suggestion box.

The annual budget is adequate and has been consistent with a 2% annual increase since AY2010-11. Although thousands of ebooks were added, and about 50% of the journal print subscriptions were switched to online subscriptions and several new online databases were added. This has been possible by reallocating funds from print to online purchases in order to stay within budget. In addition, several specialized online resources are being charged to their respective schools [Exhibit 7.22]. It is worth mentioning that several requests from chairs and deans to add more online resources have been turned down due to lack of budget [Exhibit 7.23].

There has been a steady increase in the use of online resources, encouraged by remote and wireless access, but the use of print resources decreased by 15%. In 2011-12, 212 items were borrowed per day while in 2012-2013 the number was 180. It is worth noting that since the Circulation policy was amended in 2010, the use of print journals has increased extensively (about 96% between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013) [Exhibit 7.24]. As for the average number of students that visit the libraries

on a daily basis, the number has decreased by 6% [Exhibit 7.6].

The LAU libraries offer document delivery and inter-library loan free of charge to current students, faculty, and staff. The cost of providing these two services—rarely offered for free at universities in Lebanon—is growing at a pace of 8% annually [Exhibit 7.6]. Fifty-three percent of the faculty are satisfied with the interlibrary loan process; Inter-Campus borrowing has also proven to be quite popular among all constituents on both campuses [Exhibit 7.18, p.5,].

Since its inauguration in 2006, the Riyad Nassar Library in Beirut has become a place to study and to conduct research as well as a social hub for students. However, recently two drawbacks were observed: a) lack of seating which led to plan for additional seating places in floor 8 and 9 where the serials and some of the reference collection shelves will be removed and replaced by couches and desktop tables, and b) lack of adequate noise control on some floors.

At the Byblos Library, however, the lack of space remains an on-going concern. This fact was well illustrated in the survey section concerning physical accommodations when replies were segmented between the Beirut and Byblos campuses [Exhibit 7.18, p. 80-83]. However and as anticipated, upon the opening of the Health Sciences Library in November 2014, an overall satisfaction was observed among Byblos constituents. Furthermore plans are still underway to build a new and much bigger library on the Byblos campus to replace the current one [Exhibit 7.25].

In addition to the RNL and the Byblos Library, the Health Sciences and the LAUMC-RH Libraries provide additional facilities for all health programs faculty and students to access the wide variety of available resources. Being a small underground room dedicated to a variety of activities, the LAUMC-RH Library does not offer an attractive environment for study and research [Exhibit 7.26]. The book and journal collections, which are minimal and outdated, do not cover community needs. Users have the ability to connect wirelessly through their LAU username and password and hence can fully access LAU's online resources (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/help/offcampus-access.php>). Moreover borrowing is put in place for books and journal articles through ILL/DDS and Intercampus Borrowing services. However, the LAUMC-RH staff has no access to the Health Sciences Library at Byblos. Some of Beirut-based adjunct faculty are involved in teaching medical students at the Byblos campus and vice-versa, as such the use of the library services can be influenced by the geographic location (43 km from Byblos to Beirut) [Exhibit 7.19, p. 14].

The open hours of the RNL, Byblos Library and HSL were rated positively on both campuses mainly because extensions were recently introduced during reading periods and finals [Exhibit 7.18, p. 39]. Nevertheless, we continuously hear demands to open the Libraries 24/7. This demand remains unmet due to financial constraints [Exhibit 7.18, pp. 80-83].

The library online catalog, e-reserve, print management system, online resources, Library Website, and finding tools, are offered to LAU constituents from anywhere at any time via the Internet (see <http://libraries.lau.edu.lb/index.php>). This has increased library usage drastically and enhanced service quality and cost effectiveness. Yet, based on the Student Survey, IT resources in the libraries were rated positively by 47% of the respondents only [Exhibit 7.18, p. 5]. There is a continuous demand to add more IT resources in the libraries. Accordingly, a plan has been set to do so annually. IT resources have grown at an average rate of 11.3% per year [Exhibit 7.17]. All these systems are planned and administered by three full-timer and one part-time computer specialist in coordination with the IT department.

[Information and Technological Literacy]

The LAU libraries play a major role in information and technological literacy. The Library website is used by 52.1% of students and 42.6% find it easy to use [Exhibit 7.18, pp. 49 -50]; nevertheless, an action step was included in SP 2011-16, goal 1.9 to entirely revamp the Library website. The new website is planned to be launched to the community in fall 2014 [Exhibit 7.1, goal 1.9].

The LAUMC-RH community is diverse and includes pharmacists and nurses as well as full-time and part-time physicians with or without the status of adjunct professors at the LAU School of Medicine. Although 68% of faculty received training on how to use library resources, a significant group is still unaware of these services. Among the respondents that received the training, few are satisfied [Exhibit 7.19, pp. 16-20].

Projection

[Background and Mission]

LAU libraries will continue to cooperate and coordinate in all matters that enhance their holdings and their services. All functions and services will remain consistent with the mission and goals of the university. Furthermore, the libraries will seek

additional funds in order to adequately cope with the ongoing technological changes that affect access to resources and the usability of the learning space.

[Organizational Structure and Personnel]

The Libraries are adamant about retaining and hiring highly competent staff that are both professional and have appropriate training and experience. They are committed to supporting their staff in continuing their education. The provost has endorsed recruiting more staff especially in the newly established department “University Archives & Special Collections” and in HSL. The possibility of founding a Collection Development department will be addressed by upper administration and a final decision is expected by the end of AY 2013-14. Once approved, this step will be followed by the implementation of the new library structure, which will take place in 2014-15.

[Policies and Procedures]

Policies, rules and regulations for proper use of the libraries resources will be modified as needed and posted on the website. In addition, new policies and procedures will be prepared once the Collection Development department is established.

[Information Resources and Services]

While the libraries are committed to providing print and online resources “adequate in quantity and appropriate in quality” with a high level of currency and relevancy, further investments in acquiring and subscribing to digital resources must be secured for the coming five years. A new website will be launched during fall 2014. This task is being undertaken by the library web committee and MarCom.

Currently the Library Information Systems department in cooperation with the InfoCommons department is trialing several “Discovery Service” systems available in the marketplace with the intention of subscribing to the most relevant to our needs. The new service will take off in 2014-15.

The LAU leadership will continue to provide the libraries with budgets that are commensurate with the needs of the university community.

Integration of library resources in the teaching and research processes will be enhanced by strengthening the role of the Library Liaison Program. The libraries will prepare a proper communication plan, which will be addressed to concerned entities and schools. The latter will include sharing syllabi with certain librarians to embed in them relevant library resources. This task will depend on the approval of the Provost and the Council of Deans. Consequently, implementation should start during fall 2014.

LAU’s 2014-19 Capital Expenditures plan includes the construction of the Library & Central Administration project in Byblos for which the design is being finalized. The construction will start in July 2014 and end in fall 2016. The department of Facilities Management is responsible for the accomplishment of this project.

While the number of personal computers (PCs) and other IT equipment in the libraries are never sufficient to meet visitor demand, the libraries are determined to increase the number of public computers annually and to introduce new technological tools as well.

In the surveys and focus groups conducted, students and faculty expressed the need for a greater investment in marketing the library resources, services and events. Hence, extra efforts will be made to strengthen the cooperation between the libraries and other university departments such as Guidance, University Advancement Office, etc.

[Information and Technological Literacy]

Following a decision by the university to cancel the Learning Resource Techniques (LRT) course in the fall of 2007, the libraries intensified their information literacy training sessions (general or tailored) offered to the community and those given one-on-one. There was consensus among students and faculty who participated in the focus groups that there is an urgent need to reinstate the LRT course in the curriculum. For this reason, goal 1.9 was incorporated in SP 2011-16 to offer a similar course online based on the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards of Information Literacy Competency. An ad-hoc committee of professional librarians was formed to design it. The course will be pilot tested during fall 2014.

Institutional Effectiveness

Several types of surveys are being conducted by the libraries in order to effectively align their services and collections with the needs of end-users. Recently two surveys were conducted among students and faculty for this purpose. Seventy-three percent of students resort to Google as their primary source of information; conversely, 90% of faculty uses the libraries' online resources [Exhibits 7.23 & 7.24]. Likewise, informal input is requested from end-users during activities held in the libraries [Exhibit 7.32]. A suggestion box is also available for input. As a quantitative measure of success, in 2012 the libraries performed a return on investment study with a focus on library services. The study revealed a mild improvement in the services rendered to end-users [Exhibit 7.33]. An assessment plan is being prepared to gather further data that provides information on how the libraries are meeting stakeholders' needs and expectations. Ultimately, this process will establish proper directions for improving quality and user satisfaction [Exhibit 7:34].

Standard 7 Exhibits

7.1	SP 2011–16
7.2	Job Descriptions & New Organizational Structure
7.3	Sample of Library Council Minutes and Bylaws
7.4	Library Documents
7.5	Library Policies/ Copyright Statement
7.6	Samples of library reports
7.7	ACRL statistics
7.8	Copies of Agreement
7.9	Library brochures, emails, Facebook, website, and portal
7.10	Library facts and figures
7.11	Library budget
7.12	ICB statistics
7.13	Title collection by classmark/location
7.14	Databases increase
7.15	LIDS Statistics
7.16	FTE statistics
7.17	IT statistics
7.18	Faculty, Staff, & Student Survey
7.19	LAUMC-RH survey
7.20	Library statistics
7.21	CD minutes
7.22	On-line resources budget sheet
7.23	OVID
7.24	Serials circulation statistics
7.25	Plan for Byblos Library
7.26	LAUMC-RH library

Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources



Description

The university continues to upgrade and expand its physical and technological resources in order to better serve students, faculty and the community. Collective efforts are targeted at providing excellence in planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance for facilities, grounds, technologies and utilities in a customer-focused, efficient and sustainable manner. Since the comprehensive self-study that was prepared in 2007, the university has expanded its physical and technological resources to meet LAU's strategic needs, growth of the student body, and above all to enhance the academic and student life experience. Facilities Management (FM) and its departments strive to operate effectively and maintain a safe, functional, technologically advanced and attractive living, learning, and working environment.

[Physical Resources]

The university has two campuses: the Beirut campus and the Byblos. The university also owns a building in New York, the Lebanese American University Medical Center- Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH) and a large parcel of land in Majdelyoun. Additionally, the university rents a number of nearby facilities, convenient to its operations, to house administrative offices, off-campus housing, and university storage. A special 6-year agreement with Solidere grants LAU the use of a modern and fully-furnished academic space in downtown Beirut. The physical aspects of LAU can be seen in Exhibit 8.1. The built-up area has grown considerably in the past five years from 90,797m² to 155,886m².

As LAUMC-RH is not formally incorporated into the university it was judged appropriate not to include it in the Self-Study in terms of IT and facilities. It is projected that such incorporation will indeed take place sooner rather than later, at which point all aspects of the medical center will have to be brought within the purview of the university's planning and assessment processes. A plan to that effect is being currently worked out.

In the past four years, \$63,408,140 was spent on renovation and construction projects (\$14,432,616 on the Beirut campus and \$48,975,524 on the Byblos campus) [Exhibit 8.2].

LAU is currently engaged in the construction of a multitude of new facilities. A new library and central administration building [Exhibit 8.3], an engineering workshop and labs building [Exhibit 8.4], a sports center [Exhibit 8.5], as well as the new infrastructure project [Exhibit 8.6] aims at upgrading the infrastructure systems and installations on the Beirut and Byblos campuses. On the Beirut campus, LAU is in the planning phase for the future construction of the arts and science complex [Exhibit 8.7] on one of the acquired lots and will soon initiate the renovation of the newly purchased Gezairi building to house the School of Architecture and Design (SArD) including the new fashion design program [Exhibit 8.8]. Renovation projects are continuously being executed to uplift many facilities in Beirut and Byblos and to optimize the use of space on both campuses. A university-wide 5-year space re-allocation plan is regularly prepared by FM before being reviewed and approved based on the input and collected needs from all major university constituents [Exhibit 8.9].

The 2014-19 \$333,333,425 five-year capital budget for construction and renovations, prepared in 2012, is divided as follows: \$165,423,716 for Beirut campus projects and \$167,909,709 for Byblos campus projects [Exhibit 8.10].

[Technological Resources]

The IT end-user environment at LAU is comprised of approximately 2657 telephone extensions, 1750 computers, and 1000 printers and scanners connected to a high-speed wired network. All buildings on the campuses are connected via 10 gigabit single-mode fiber optic cabling. LAU is gradually migrating the server infrastructure from physical to virtual with more than 150 virtual machines running on 21 physical servers; 89 physical servers are still running individually. Virtualization has helped IT achieve flexibility and modularity and contributed to LAU's green initiative.

LAU's IT systems are hosted in four data centers, two in Beirut and two in Byblos. All LAU applications are hosted in the Beirut data centers. The primary data center in Beirut is located in the basement of the faculty apartments building and is currently being renovated to higher standards of reliability and redundancy. In 2007, the IT department also implemented a complete disaster recovery solution that consists of a disaster recovery plan and high availability for all major IT systems and services. In 2012, LAU upgraded its storage space in order to accommodate the university's growing data needs for the next five years. Furthermore, given the high data volume of email, the email system was implemented in a highly available manner in the four data centers. The IT department also upgraded the backup system to become faster and reduce (compact) backup data size to cater for the increasing data size and reduced backup window. This will allow the automatic transmission of all LAU backup

data to the Byblos medical school data center which is now the LAU remote disaster recovery site.

With the increasing demand for network resources and growth in the use of wireless devices, the IT department implemented a continuous network infrastructure upgrade for the wired and wireless network core to increase capacity and eliminate single points of failure.

The Beirut and Byblos campuses are connected via a 50mb redundant Wide Area Network (WAN) connection. The New York office is connected to the LAU campuses' high speed 85 MB redundant internet connection. LAUMC-RH is connected to LAU via a 6mb redundant and highly available WAN link. LAU's off-campus residence halls and the downtown center are connected via dedicated WAN connections [Exhibit 8.11].

The university is connected to the internet through two Internet Service Provider's (ISP) with a download speed of 135 mbps and an upload speed of 35 mbps—this more than 11 times the bandwidth reported in the 2007 self-study.

Through the network and web, students, faculty and staff can access the student information system (Banner), library automation system (OLIB), course management system (Blackboard), Raiser's Edge fundraising system, email, Student Portal, Human Resources (HR), Financials, i-procurement and other IT services. In addition, LAU started rolling out mobile applications with Banner and email being the first applications implemented on iPhones and androids. A bring your own device (BYOD) project is in process to facilitate the use of mobile devices. A single-sign-on (SSO) solution was implemented to facilitate access to all web-based applications.

LAU labs are allocated across the two campuses by functionality. Common computing resources are provided to all schools in addition to experimental labs. No fewer than 907 workstations (backed up by 38 servers), 19 scanners, and 73 printers support the total student body of 8000+ students. All labs are operational for nine hours a day on average and are utilized by students 77% of the time [Exhibit 8.12].

IP-based video conferencing systems are available in all meetings rooms on the main LAU campuses, at the New York offices, and at LAUMC-RH. All classrooms on the LAU campuses are equipped with smart classroom technology.

User support is available through the IT Helpdesk Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm; additional assistance is available after hours if needed.

The IT assets at LAU encompass a total net value of \$4,904,759 and total asset cost of \$25,926,869 [Exhibit 8.13]. This total includes computers, multimedia equipment, servers, information systems, networks, and other equipment throughout offices, classrooms, libraries, residence halls and labs.

[Management, Operation and Maintenance of Physical and Technological Resources]

Facilities planning, construction, renovation, and maintenance are the responsibility of the FM. This department consists of the following four divisions: program management & contract administration, planning & renovations, physical plant-Beirut, and physical plant-Byblos [Exhibit 8.14]. The FM department, headed by the assistant vice president for FM (AVPFM, who reports to the vice president for human resources and university services—VPHRUS), is responsible for managing the university's facilities for the benefit of all users and applying best practices facilities management services. The FM department develops and recommends policies, planning guidelines and procedures in preparation for implementing the university's strategic plans and their related initiatives [Exhibit 8.15]. The FM department at LAU employs 75 full-time staff and has an annual operating budget (2012-13) of \$ 8,092,069 [Exhibit 8.16].

FM outsources major design initiatives and acts as a commissioning agent and employer representative for capital projects of value exceeding \$500,000, whereas, most minor renovation projects of value below \$500,000 are designed and supervised by the in-house FM engineers. FM is assisted by a project management firm [Exhibit 8.17] and technical monitoring offices for the management of its major capital projects [Exhibits 8.18].

FM has responded to the growing operational and maintenance needs of the university through expanding its service divisions and cultivating a culture of assessment and data collection. The goal is to improve service levels based on measured outcomes through developing useful key performance indicators necessary for data-based decision-making [Exhibit 8.19].

An energy management committee was recently established, headed by the AVPFM and consisting of engineers from the physical plant departments on both campuses. Members discuss energy saving opportunities, propose short- and long-term projects with lifecycle analysis and payback period, and implement pilot projects on both campuses [Exhibit 8.20].

The IT department, headed by the AVPIT is responsible for planning, implementing, securing, and supporting information technology throughout LAU. There are four main departments within it, each headed by a director: IT infrastructure and support, IT applications and solutions, IT network, telecom and multimedia, and IT security [Exhibit 8.21]. The IT department at LAU consists of 42 full-time employees and had an annual operating budget (2012-13) of \$6,060,890 [Exhibit 8.22]. Academic labs are managed by school staff, who in turn report to their department chairs.

LAU manages six residence halls, four in Byblos and two in Beirut. There is one dormitory on each campus, the rest are within close range. The residence halls are managed by residence hall supervisors and student floor assistants who live on-site. Residence hall supervisors report to the respective campus Dean of Students [Exhibit 8.23]. All residence halls provide comfortable and safe accommodations [Exhibit 8.24] that meet students' academic and social needs (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/housing/>). A free shuttle service is provided between off-campus residence halls and the campus.

[Legal and Regulatory Compliance with Local and International Codes]

Facilities are constructed in accordance with applicable Lebanese construction law and regulations. However, there are minor non-conformities with the local construction laws in existing facilities on both campuses that are being addressed and resolved [Exhibit 8.25]. Newly constructed buildings are in accordance with local construction laws and international standards and codes.

FM architects and engineers provide full design documents for renovation and deferred maintenance projects while following international codes and standards [Exhibit 8.26] and supervise the work of the contractors during execution. They also provide design guidelines; follow space guidelines [Exhibit 8.27] and furniture standards [Exhibit 8.28], review capital projects' design documents prepared by outsourced consultants, and commission and witness the handing over of all building systems during the construction process.

The FM team reviews the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) code requirements for all existing and new building safety systems and equipment [Exhibit 8.29]. The upgrading of existing safety systems is performed through deferred maintenance or as part of renovation projects.

A general computer and network policy is already in place. A complete document consisting of information security regulation, based on existing draft procedures and international IT security standards was created by the IT Security department and will be submitted for approval through university channels. Once approved and implemented, these policies will govern the use of all IT resources [Exhibit 8.30].

[Physical and Technological Resources Planning]

FM develops long-term and short-term plans in close coordination with concerned university entities in an effort to respond in a timely manner to the continuously evolving space needs of the university constituencies. The developed plans undergo thorough periodic examination by the planning and renovations division followed by the central facilities committee and finally the PC where feasible priorities are established [Exhibit 8.31]. FM aligns the goals of its own strategic plan with those of the institutional strategic plan and with other university needs by devising a yearly plan for new FM initiatives, which are often developed and executed by the physical plant divisions [Exhibit 8.32]

Capital projects are driven by the university's and schools' strategic plans and are included within the Beirut and Byblos campuses' master plans [Exhibit 8.33]. These projects are included within the University Capital Budget (Exhibit 8.10) and are individually overseen by steering committees including representatives of facilities, IT, finance and end-users [Exhibit 8.34]. The project management and contract administration division administers and manages the design and execution process of the capital projects as per the capital projects management procedures [Exhibit 8.35] by maintaining a master schedule which is regularly updated in order to make sure that deadlines are adequately monitored and controlled [Exhibit 8.36].

The academically focused *SP 2011-16* outlines the need for the following IT services: provide a platform for performing and documenting the assessment and accreditation activity at LAU, implement multimedia and smart classrooms solutions, automate Continuing Education Program (CEP) activity, assist in enhancing and streamlining the registration process, and contribute to the "green" initiatives taking place on campus.

Appraisal

[Physical and IT Resources]

In March 2014 students, faculty, and staff were surveyed about their satisfaction with FM and its services. The responses

rate was 23% for students and 26% for faculty and staff. The feedback was generally positive and a high level of satisfaction was recorded. FM and IT management decided to explore areas that were identified as weak [Exhibits 8.37-8.40]. Based on the surveys, the areas that require the attention of the FM team on both campuses are better accessibility for the disabled, especially in older buildings; the provision of more indoor and outdoor parking spaces; and the provision of more recreation and sports and fitness facilities space in Byblos. All of these items are already addressed as part of the 2014-19 capital plan that was approved by the BOT in March 2014. In addition, FM identified that better communication is needed to enhance the planning cycle and set the right expectations of the community.

As for IT, the IT team needs to focus more on providing better wireless coverage on campus, increasing internet speed, solving usage issues on Blackboard and the Banner app on smart phones. IT also needs to provide faster support to smart classrooms calls, especially issues raised during class sessions. Resolution of these issues will be achieved through a combination of software upgrades, increasing internet bandwidth, and upgrading the wireless network as well as the smart classrooms older hardware equipment. Following the survey results IT formed a focus group with students from Byblos campus to address the wi-fi connection issues experienced by students. The issues raised in this meeting will be resolved in two phases: in January 2015 and by end of summer 2015.

[Physical Resources]

The university has endeavored since 2007 to implement a dynamic facilities expansion plan to cater to the academic programs and growing space needs, and support institutional strategies, all in support of the LAU mission. With progress and success attained on many fronts came the recognition of the need to develop new plans and procedures and to revisit existing ones.

The acquisition of new land lots, for example, has prompted a revision of the recently-developed master plans. Given the enormous on-going construction process, a capital development plan addressing the requirements for the coming ten years needs to be created. In parallel, as far as space re-allocation is concerned, short- and medium-term space re-allocation plans have been developed for both campuses. As for space renovation, most of the old buildings have undergone or are undergoing major uplifting. Nevertheless, FM is working on developing a comprehensive renovation plan based on a systematic facilities condition assessment and the approved space allocation plan.

The long overdue upgrading of the electrical infrastructure on the Beirut campus is well underway. Once finished, it will provide a modern and adequate back-up power plant and a new medium voltage power distribution network and infrastructure as well as the building of a state of the art, tier-3 data center. The remaining infrastructure systems (i.e., water, heating, irrigation, landscaping, and networks) will be addressed and upgraded as needed.

[Technological Resources]

The IT department at LAU provides high-end infrastructure and services that support academic, student, and administrative functions effectively. LAU uses an institutional ERP that consists of best-of-breed systems for all core university areas.

The LAU retreat held in August 2013 addressed six areas where LAU aspires to play a leadership role. One of these areas is creativity and innovation in the high tech world. A series of technology initiatives were identified that would help position LAU as a leading technology innovator in the high tech arena. These projects aim at automating processes that seek to attract, retain, and communicate with students before joining, during their studies, and after they leave LAU.

A survey dedicated to measuring feedback on the use of smart classrooms was done in August 2012 [Exhibit 8.41]. The faculty feedback about features of smart classrooms was mostly good or satisfactory. The areas identified as needing improvement are: audio-visuals, authorization access, auxiliary hookup, internet access, and the media control panel. IT reacted by installing audio visual equipment in all classes, automated the authorization process, and adapted the standard features of smart classrooms to include the above. IT also increased its part-time staff in order to react faster in case of a failure during class and to perform end of day reset of equipment and cables in order to ensure that they are ready for next day operation.

[Management, operation and maintenance of physical and technological resources]

To enhance communication and interaction between FM and its university constituents, FM decided to develop a FM website. Preparatory work is underway with MarCom to develop the new website.

To complement university growth, new FM and university-wide initiatives are required. In addition, a review and assessment process of the existing procedures, as well as new guidelines need to be initiated and developed.

With the current growth in size and complexity of the grounds and buildings to be managed, operated, and maintained, the need to implement asset management software has become crucial. Such software will help manage, track, and monitor

service levels and needs, and the performance of the FM teams as well as identify resources necessary for proper university operations. Planning for the software is underway and implementation will follow starting fall 2014.

The implementation phase of the energy management committee's strategic plan will soon start, following the allocation of necessary funding and resources. The four divisions of the IT department allow for continual focus on the four key areas of infrastructure. We closely monitor the log of support calls, which average 2,000 per month, for patterns. We found that at the beginning of each fall semester, students queue in large numbers in front of IT offices in order to resolve access issues to IT resources. Starting fall 2012, we established IT kiosks in areas accessible to students, helping to alleviate the pressure on the IT Support office and provide faster resolution for students' IT issues. In collaboration with the Dean of Students offices, we identified further areas for improvement for this process that we can implement next year.

The demand for residence halls is on the increase especially in Byblos and LAU introduced two new residence halls. In order to meet future demands, LAU decided to collaborate with private owners instead of building and operating our own.

[Legal and regulatory compliance with local and international codes]

The FM department needs to finalize the settlement of the construction non-conformities on both campuses and to establish a dedicated real estate management function to properly handle and manage the documents and formalities of the university's physical assets.

The current official IT policy is limited in scope and only covers computers and the network with respect to end-users [Exhibit 8.42]. Comprehensive IT security regulations, encompassing all major IT areas, have been drafted and will be submitted for approval through the appropriate channels [Exhibit 8.30]. In addition, the financial applications and related IT services provided by it are audited on a yearly basis by Ernest and Young for compliance against Cobit standards.

[Physical and technological resources planning]

In its endeavor to substantially improve the planning process at LAU, FM relies on active representation and participation on most of the university planning committees (e.g., UPC, SP, NEASC, etc.). In parallel, FM has engineered the establishment of several facilities committees to promote inter-departmental communication and enhance integrated planning. The resulting data has been used to develop renovation plans, as well as short and long-term space re-allocation plans; these plans were submitted for the end-users review first, then to the central facilities committee for endorsement and prioritization, and finally carried to the president's cabinet (PC) before being endorsed and approved by a joint PC-Council of Deans meeting.

Moreover, the FM devised a series of internal strategic plans in order to better address the challenges of the university's expansion, and launched many initiatives in line with the university strategic plan, namely in: recycling, energy management, safety of critical premises, sustainability, and university guidelines, to name a few.

Despite the enormous planning efforts, changes in leadership positions entailed consequent variations in some school and departmental plans, as well as in strategies and priorities, dictating equivalent changes in facilities plans; this resulted in substantial disruptions and delays to planned and on-going projects. However, and in order to adapt to such changes, FM managed to timely react by improvising interim solutions and often succeeded in mitigating the majority of the ensuing delays.

To be able to respond to ever growing university needs, FM embarked on a series of internal divisional re-structuring, qualitative resource build-up, as well as a strategy of staff training and re-organization. Consequently, and in order to remain efficient, it was recognized that the implementation of a computerized maintenance management system (EAM) remains a top priority.

Even though important progress was witnessed on many fronts, especially regarding projects and space management procedures, the development of needed FM procedures on access control, asset disposal, safety, energy management, and capital budgeting procedures, is essential and remains a priority that needs to be addressed soon. Furthermore, the development of departmental evaluation schemes and assessment plans is regarded as a vital initiative that needs to be completed and implemented during the upcoming year.

IT develops annual plans for each of its four IT departments. Planning in IT is driven by the needs of the various university constituents and projects initiated by the strategic plan as well as projects of a technical nature needed to sustain IT services at LAU. The IT department has already implemented a disaster recovery system in order to protect university records, protect its data from unforeseen events, and ensure operational continuity in times of disaster.

Projection

[Physical resources]

In response to the rapidly growing needs of the university and in line with *SP 2011-16* and the necessity of providing modern physical resources to all constituents, FM prepared a 5-year capital plan (2014-19) that was approved by the BOT in March 2014. The plan addresses the needs of the university in terms of new construction and necessary renovations on both campuses.

On the Beirut campus, the capital plan includes a new 25,000 m² building for the School of Arts & Sciences and a project to upgrade the campus' electrical power networks and plants. In addition, numerous renovations projects are planned, including major uplifts of Irwin Hall, Safadi Fine Arts building, and the newly acquired Gezairi building by 2018. Other renovation projects are also planned for execution between 2014 and 2017 to enhance teaching facilities and office space on both campuses as well as provided ADA accessibility where needed.

On the Byblos campus, the plan envisages the completion of the following on-going projects: the research floor of the Chagoury Health Sciences Center and the underground parking; in addition, four major new construction projects are due for completion between 2016 and 2019: the engineering workshops & labs, the Byblos library & central administration (aiming for LEED-gold certification), the Byblos sports center, and the Byblos campus infrastructure project. Many renovation projects are planned for the Byblos campus, including in the Tohme-Rizk building, the Science building and in Block A.

Enhancing outdoor landscaping on both campuses is also part of the 2014-19 capital plan and will be progressively executed, as feasible, to improve outdoor landscaped space, parking lots, and main access gates.

[Technological resources]

The theme of Panel 4 of the LAU retreat, "How LAU defines leadership in a high-tech world," led to a number of initiatives. First, LAU plans to partner with the SABIS network of schools in order to automate the submission of students' applications to LAU; IT will develop this task internally by fall 2015. Another initiative is to use communication technology to offer courses across campuses. IT will partner with the School of Business to establish by December 2015 four classes—two in Beirut and two in Byblos—where courses can be taught remotely. The panel also called for easier interaction with LAU alumni through the use of a mobile app; IT will deliver this app on android and Apple Smart phones by the end of 2014. A similar initiative was requested to establish a smart app for students to actively participate in NGO activity. IT will deliver by end of 2014 a mobile app for students that allows them to search for opportunities at NGO's by interest and/or geographical location. The LAU strategic plan calls for the increase of the role of IT in the teaching process through the use of clickers and introducing web tools in classrooms; IT will execute these projects by fall 2015.

[Management, Operation, and Maintenance of Physical and Technological Resources]

In its efforts to ensure consistently high levels of service and further enhance operations and maintenance, FM has formed several technical committees charged with upgrading and developing procedures and strategies related to CCTV, keys, recycling & waste management, critical systems emergencies, energy management, space allocation guidelines, and furnishing guidelines. These FM committees are meeting regularly in view of completing necessary procedures by 2016 and seeking administrative approvals as appropriate.

FM's Safety Office is preparing to launch a safety audit campaign for both campuses with the goal of developing and implementing comprehensive safety plans, by fall 2017, for the different existing facilities, including necessary budget and resources' assessment. FM will coordinate with other university entities to consolidate the university emergency response team whose charge will also include overseeing emergencies related to the university safety environment.

FM launched a new initiative in 2014 to develop university construction guidelines by fall 2016 which shall assist in formalizing the design process of renovation and capital projects. Furthermore, a special FM committee is currently working with MarCom to construct a FM website by spring 2015 that will facilitate interaction with all internal constituents as well as external parties dealing with FM. FM will also conduct in 2015 a "buildings & grounds condition assessment" campaign to compile and prioritize a list of crucial deferred maintenance projects which will be executed within the current capital plan cycle.

In 2013, FM, under the technical guidance of the IT department, initiated the market search for selecting an appropriate asset management software, in view of implementing it within the coming three years; Oracle EAM, judged to be the best available, is an integral part of the university existing ERP. A special steering committee will be formed in fall 2014 to launch and manage this major project, in cooperation with IT, Finance and business services, in view of completing the process by 2017.

[Legal and Regulatory Compliance with Local and International Codes]

FM will establish in 2015 a central real estate management division to organize and handle the cadastral files related to the university's physical assets and to regulate remaining construction law non-conformities by 2018. IT will address all audit issues raised during the 2013 audit cycle with the goal of closing all such items by September 2014 (part of the closure of audit items includes the finalization of the current draft IT regulations).

In order to increase health, safety, and environmental awareness, a university committee will be formed to address these issues as well as emergency situations to ensure business continuity in times of crisis.

[Physical and Technological Resources Planning]

FM engaged in numerous initiatives over the past year including the field of planning and evaluation enhancement. In fact, FM is identifying areas of focus where planning effort is required and has embarked in developing procedures, processes and guidelines that will assist in better serving the university, such as university construction guidelines, capital budget preparation guidelines, space & furniture guidelines, lab safety procedures, key procedures, and critical systems assessment & related emergency response procedures. In parallel, and with the continuing expansion in university physical assets, FM is planning to update the existing university master plans and implement the much-needed asset management software; both initiatives will assist in data-based planning, evaluation and decision-making.

On the evaluation side, FM will finalize its assessment plan which covers all departmental entities.

IT is in the process of establishing its own assessment plan and establishing goals and outcomes in order to measure degree of success. The plan will be finalized by December 2014. IT will also maintain the planning of its projects through the BOT reports that are updated twice a year.

Institutional Effectiveness

Facilities Management and IT conduct surveys as a means of evaluating its performance and for quality control. They also listen and respond to clients' feedback especially feedback coming from the schools' facilities committees.

Standard 8 Exhibits

8.1	Summary of LAU Land Lots & Property	8.25	Settlement of Regulatory Construction Code Compliance
8.2	Cost of Renovations & Construction in the Past 4 Years	8.26	Codes & Standards adopted in Design Projects
8.3	Byblos Library & Central Administration buildings	8.27	Space Guidelines
8.4	Engineering Workshops & Labs Building	8.28	Furniture Guidelines
8.5	Byblos Sports Center	8.29	NFPA & ADA Code Requirements
8.6	Byblos & Beirut Infrastructure Projects - Layouts	8.31	LEED Matrix for Byblos Library & Central Administration Buildings
8.7	Arts & Science Complex	8.30	IT regulations draft
8.8	Gezairi Building	8.31	Minutes of CFC Meetings
8.9	Space Re-allocation Plans	8.32	FM Initiatives
8.10	Capital Budget 2014-19	8.33	Master Plans
8.11	WAN diagram	8.34	Minutes of Capital Projects' Steering Committees
8.12	Class Occupancy 2012-13	8.35	Capital Projects Management Procedures
8.13	IT net asset value and cost	8.36	Capital Projects' Master Schedule
8.14	FM Organizational Charts	8.37	FM Beirut results
8.15	Draft Procedures Developed by FM	8.38	FM Byblos results
8.16	Divisional Budgets	8.39	IT Beirut results
8.17	Contract of DG Jones	8.40	IT Byblos results
8.18	TMO Contracts	8.43	LAUMC-RH results
8.19	Key Performance Indicators (PP)	8.41	Smart classrooms surveys
8.20	Energy Management Pilot Projects	8.42	IT Policy
8.21	IT organization chart		
8.22	IT Operating budget- consolidated sheet		
8.23	SDEM Organization Chart		
8.24	Safety Systems in Dorms		

Standard 9: Financial Resources



Description

Despite the political instability that grips the MENA region, the university continues its steady trek to achieving its goals. Challenges continue to mount but plans are executed regardless of the stressed economic and political situations. Management continues to maintain a solid balance between revenue generation and sustaining high liquidity levels that will assist the university in overcoming the present political tension.

The university's financial statements for the year 2012-13 demonstrate its continuing operational growth. In addition, the financial markets posted strong gains of 17.0% [Exhibit 9.1]. As of fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, total assets rose by approximately \$17 million, or 2.1% and net assets by approximately \$82 million, or 13.1% when compared to last year. Growth in total assets is mainly attributable to increase in property and plant by \$20 million, investment in subsidiaries by \$6 million and increase in investments by \$23 million. The drop in cash and cash equivalent by \$33 million, mainly due to the redemption of taxable bonds, has offset the above increase [Exhibit 9.2]

Fundraising: LAU is midway through a capital campaign to raise \$50 million over a four-year period. To date, the amount raised is \$47.8 million up to September 30, 2013. The silent phase of the campaign ended in spring 2014 and the public phase commenced with a higher monetary value of \$75 million. Despite meeting the targets of the silent phase of the campaign, the prevailing political tension, in Lebanon and the region, has rendered fundraising achievements extremely challenging and uncertain, and reaffirmed the university's overdependence on tuition as a major and reliable source of income. Nonetheless, the university is striving to achieve its goals by improving its visibility through major events in the US, MENA and Gulf regions.

During fiscal year 2012-13, fundraising scored a mere 9.5% of total tuition and fees revenues of the university (2011-12: 18.7%) net of investment revenues. U.S. Government contracts and grants accounted for almost 44% of the total fundraising revenues of fiscal year 2012-13, hence confirming the historical dependence on this type of revenues in the build-up of the fundraising portfolio mix at LAU.

Long-term debt: In February 2013, the university fully redeemed the value of taxable bonds amounting to \$75 million. Alternatively, in August 2013, the university succeeded in floating five-year tax-exempt 2013A and taxable 2013B bonds in the US municipal markets amounting respectively to \$13.9 million and \$2.5 million; hence scoring another milestone in the university's financial history as the first American institution of higher education, fully operating outside the continental USA, to issue a tax exempt bond, and more so, an unsecured bond without pledging any of the institution's financial or real assets. The tax exempt portion of the \$13.9 million bond bears a coupon and yield rates of 5% and 3.3002% respectively. The coupon and yield rates of the taxable portion stand at 4%. The bonds bear a rating of AA- from S&P, with a stable outlook as opposed to a previous rating of A- with a stable outlook [Exhibit 9.3].

Long term debt also includes unsecured bank facilities to finance the Underground Parking and Medical School construction projects in the amount of \$22.0 million. This debt facility bears an advantageous variable interest rate amounting to 40% of the one year Lebanese Treasury bill rate plus 175 bps. For the first year, the interest rate was 4.0%, and effective October 2012, the interest rate became 3.89%. Loans have been fully drawn and the university is currently in the repayment phase (starting July 2012). As of September 30, 2013, the remaining balance of the loan amounted to \$17.8 million. During the first and second quarters of 2013, the university obtained additional unsecured loan facilities from three local banks for an aggregate of \$30 million to finance the construction and renovation of major ongoing projects in Beirut and Byblos campuses. The new facilities are in Lebanese pounds and bear interest rates of 40% of the one year Lebanese treasury bills rate plus 200 bps. During 2013, the university withdrew an amount equal to \$468,000.

Liabilities consist primarily of accounts payable undertaken in the normal course of business amounting to around \$25.4 million, accrued liabilities of \$9.2 million, deferred revenues of \$11.5 million, and accrued end of service indemnity amounting to around \$23.3 million. Liabilities include \$17.0 million representing the value of the remaining portion of the price of the new property payable over a period of three years. The accrued liabilities include provision for taxes in the amount of \$0.8 million, estimated on the basis of \$125K per year for the last six years, in anticipation of any tax review that LAU might be subjected to by the Lebanese tax authorities [Exhibit 9.2].

Endowment spending: During 2012-13, an approved endowment spending of \$6.0 million was made, which is less than the

4% of the 3-year moving endowment average. The spending of \$6.0 million was directly allocated to the general plant fund.

Facilities:

The Board of Trustees approved a revised capital budget for \$333.3 million in March 2014. The new budget entails the acquisition of new properties in Beirut and New York in addition to the increase in prices and space. Executed works amounted to \$90.6 million, hence leaving a budget balance of \$242.7 to be disbursed over next five to six years [Exhibit 9.4].

The capital budget is mainly funded from operations, fundraising and local and international banks. This expansion is favourably impacting the national economy and, at the same time, substantiates the university's position as one of the leading higher education institutions in the region.

Change in net assets: Net assets were up by \$82.2 million during 2013, from \$625.7 million in 2012 to \$707.9 million. This clearly portrays the continued operational efficiency, and therefore, the growth in LAU's net assets resulting from positive financial results in the university's operations. This increase is due to a combination of positive investment returns and a noticeable contribution from operations [Exhibit 9.2]. Tuition fees showed a moderate growth, by approximately 2% when compared to same period of last year despite the drop in enrollment. This is because of the offsetting factor of the increase in tuition rates by around 5%.

Financial income represents interest revenues generated from short-term bank deposits and placements, and returns on investments. The majority of LAU's short-term funds, after excluding the blocked funds in LBP (for more details, refer to risk management paragraph), are denominated in US dollars. These funds are placed with local and overseas banks, maintaining a ceiling of 15% of total-short-term funds per local bank [Exhibit 9.5].

The Board of Trustees' Investment Committee retains full fiduciary responsibility for LAU's investment portfolio in accordance with the university's investment policy. It oversees and directs the management of LAU's investment portfolio through policy setting, asset allocation, hiring and termination of managers, and monitoring of investment activities. Investments consist principally of publicly traded debt and equity securities, alternative investments including private equity, real assets and hedge funds [Exhibits 9.6.1 & 9.6.2].

As a U.S. 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and pursuant to its governing documents, the BOT of LAU has full and exclusive power to manage the university's endowment in compliance with the applicable New York State and federal laws. Accordingly, all transfers from or to LAU's endowment are subject to the Investment Committee and board authorization [Exhibit 9.7].

Investments earned approximately \$39.9 million during fiscal year 2013, compared to net \$46.4 million during FY 2012. The main portfolio returned 17.0% for FY 2013. Included in the above were the proceeds of the settlement of the Madoff claim for a total amount of \$14.1 million. All the funds generated from the claim were reinvested in LAU's investment portfolio [Exhibit 9.5].

Operating expenses showed continuing efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of resources that yielded savings of around 10.9% for the year. The total operating expenses of the university (including financial aid) were \$122.0 million as of the fiscal year ended September 30, 2013. This is in line with the expansion the university is currently undergoing. The educational, common support, and financial aid costs accounted for approximately 69.0% of the total expenses (net of interest on bonds) of the university [Exhibit 9.8].

Compensation is 53% of total expenses of the university of which 60.3% is for faculty. During 2012-13, LAU employed approximately 357 full-time faculty (including adjuncts) and 628 full-time, non-teaching staff, and 437 and 83 part-time employees respectively [Exhibit 9.8].

Budget allocations of \$7.3 million represent reserves taken out of the operating budget as approved by the BOT for replacements and renovation (US \$5.0 million), contingency (\$0.8 million) and medical school endowment (\$1.5 million) [Exhibit 9.8].

Financial aid: The strategic enrollment management plan includes goals and action points related explicitly to leveraging financial aid and scholarships to meet LAU's enrollment goals. The Financial Aid and Scholarship plan (FASP), responds to the specific enrollment goals of the schools as described in chapter 6. Financial aid represents 15% of LAU's annual budget and during AY2012-13, approximately 2554 undergraduate students (32% of total undergraduate students) benefited from financial aid. The average aid award per undergraduate FTE, including loans, was approximately \$6k (42% of average annual tuition fee) in AY2012-13 [Exhibit 9.9].

Strategic Planning: With the successful completion of the 2005–10 Strategic Plan came another list of new goals and aspirations, as well as an increase in planning and evaluation across the university. As detailed in chapter 2 (Evaluation and Planning), LAU created the Strategic Plan (SP) 2011-16, which emphasizes improvement of the institution's academic core. All SP 2011-16 elements related to finance are laid out clearly and assessed consistently.

Subsidiary Entities: In June 2009, the university established two subsidiary entities, Medical Care Holding (MCH) and Medical Care Management (MCM), and purchased the shares of a hospital in Beirut organized as a limited liability company to support its medical, pharmacy and nursing schools. For purposes of compliance with Lebanese laws, the subsidiary entities are owned in their super majority by the university, and the remainder of the shares are owned by nominees of the university who are also BOT members, making the entities owned by the university in their entirety. All three entities are organized under Lebanese laws as for-profit corporations; two of them are limited liability corporations and the third is a holding company. MCH and MCM were established to secure funding to the hospital and to provide management and consultancy services support respectively.

The university remains committed to the hospital project through its continuous financial and logistical support. In accordance with the feasibility study of the hospital that was approved by the BOT when the hospital was acquired, LAU invested an amount of \$35.65 million as of September 30, 2013 to renovate and upgrade existing facilities and equipment. These cash injections were accorded as long-term loans bearing an interest rate of 5.5%. This was done in accordance with the hospital's original financial plan approved by the Board which calls for a total investment of \$41 million.

During FY2013, a new board took charge of the hospital operations composed of BOT members and the president. A new CEO was appointed in July 2013 who was subsequently replaced by another CEO in June 2014. The 2013 operating results reflected a loss of approximately \$5.3 million due to decreased business volume. Following the appointment of the new board and CEO, renovations and upgrade of facilities and equipment were stopped pending the development of a new strategy and related business plan which is still in the works. However, the executive committee of the board approved an allocation of \$10 million in May 2014 for temporary renovations of the operating and emergency rooms and other facilities. The execution of these temporary works is still awaiting an implementation plan to be developed. Once the strategy and business plan are developed, the new funding needs shall be incorporated within the university's financial plan, new priorities set and funding sources identified.

As LAUMC-RH is not formally incorporated into the university it was judged appropriate not to include it in the Self-Study. It is projected that such incorporation will indeed take place sooner rather than later, at which point all aspects of the medical center will have to be brought within the purview of the university's planning and assessment processes. A plan to that effect is being currently worked out.

LAU Health Foundation: On December 11, 2009, LAU established a health foundation in New York dedicated to furthering and supporting the university's health initiatives. The foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) institution operating on LAU's New York premises. The foundation has an independent board of trustees and its own administrators.

[Financial Operations]

The Finance and Planning Committee (FPC) of the BOT oversees the financial, planning, and budgeting aspects of the university. This committee also oversees the development and modification of BOT policies covering program planning, facilities, and personnel. The University Budget Committee (UBC) advises the president on the planning of and preparation for the budget. This committee plays an active role in the review and recommendation of budget priorities. As part of the efforts to improve the budget process, a 3-year operating budget and divisional capital budget are reviewed and approved annually by the BOT. Each division and office proposes its operating and capital budgets and presents them to its dean or director and the appropriate vice president. Vice presidents, deans, chairs/directors must then defend their budgets at scheduled meetings, after which the operating budget is prioritized, compiled and presented to the BOT for approval. The financial effects of SP 2011-16 have been projected in the future operating and capital budgets of the university.

LAU has efficiently managed its financial operations over the last two decades to yield surpluses that have contributed actively to the growth of its net assets base. The financial operations of the university are steered by a 5-year financial plan that is continuously revised in line with changing circumstances. This financial plan is geared toward maintaining constant growth in student enrollment and tuition revenue; strengthening the endowment and net assets base; arranging for funding needs for planned capital projects; and enhancing fundraising revenues [Exhibits 9.10.1 & 9.10.2].

Subsequent to FY 2013, a revised capital project plan of the university was finalized calling for additional funding needs of \$35.8 million, bringing up the total budget to \$333.3 million, of which approximately \$90 million are already spent. This fact together with uncertainties in student enrollment trends have led to a full revision of the financial plan of the university. The

most salient feature of the new revised plan is the freezing of two major projects totalling \$70 million. The new plan does not cater for the funding needs of the hospital, which is awaiting finalization of its plan. Once the new plan of the hospital is formulated, it is expected to add more pressure on the overall finances of the university, hence calling for a new revision of the university's financial plan.

[Accounting and Fiscal Control]

Annual audits of the university's financial statements are conducted by an independent auditor in accordance with U.S. Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS). For the last two fiscal years, the financial statements were audited by Ernst & Young Lebanon, and financial statements for prior years were audited by another one of the "Big Four" audit firms.

Appraisal

LAU enjoys sound overall financial circumstances, has a relatively sizeable endowment and net assets, and maintains a manageable level of short-term liabilities. Long-term bank loans are duly covered by long-term blocked funds in the same currency. The initial long-term taxable bonds were fully redeemed during FY2012-13 and swapped with a five-year tax-exempt/taxable bond for \$17.5. These facts speak well of LAU's overall financial management abilities over the years and confirms the university's solid positioning vis-à-vis challenges and adverse conditions. The university's stability is strongly derived from positive returns from operations, positive investment results and low spending from endowment.

[Finance Evaluation Approach]

The evaluation mechanism adopted by Finance is centred on risk assessment and risk management. It also relies on the collective collaboration and coordination between Finance and other constituents of the university in the decision making process. Almost all actions undertaken are based on evaluating the risks of strategies employed and achieving proper balance between those risks and strategies. This is evident from the alignment of mission and strategic plan goals with planning and budgeting processes and by integrating the latter with strategic risk management processes (e.g., Budget of *SP 2011-16* incorporated within the university operating budget).

Diversifying revenues has always been one of the university's main ambitions. More focus is being put on fundraising as a source of revenues that could ease the historical overdependence on tuition. LAU has made significant progress in widening its fundraising base as demonstrated by the USP I (\$6.2 million over five years), USP II (\$7.4 million over five years), and USP III (\$9.4 million over five years). Still, LAU is striving to reduce its reliance on federal grants by further promoting the private donors portfolio. This has proven to be extremely challenging in light of the prevailing adverse political and economic conditions in the MENA region.

The capital budget is developed in conjunction with the operating budget and is composed of two sections: the operating and capital budget and the capital projects budget. Spending from operating and capital budgets rests with the concerned departments and under financial monitoring by the business offices and the budget office. The spending from capital projects budget is also overseen by the Projects Facilities Steering Committees and the Central Facilities Committee. Unforeseen CAPEX transactions (variations, renovations and major maintenance projects) constitute an integral part of the oversight role played by said committees especially in what relates to securing the required funding. The BOT also plays an active role in the oversight process where the approval for the initiation of any capital project exceeding \$500,000 must be secured from the Board. Additionally, the execution of capital projects is monitored by the BOT's Finance and Planning Committee, and the status is regularly reported to the BOT's Executive Committee during its monthly scheduled meetings.

Finance produces a variety of informative and relevant budget reporting tools that support the LAU's operations. Hard and online monthly budget vs. actual reports and the annual budget reports are good examples of finance integration with various university constituents.

While keeping a close eye on the bottom line, endowment growth, balanced liquidity, and the internal control system, Finance managed to adopt a flexible and efficient approach towards securing proper funding for various needs and projects and to further integrate itself into the overall operating mechanism of the university. The following areas represent good examples of Finance's evaluation approach:

>> Contingency Planning: LAU focuses on preserving university assets and operations from being adversely impacted by sovereign, regional, and international conditions. Given the complexity of the surrounding environment, Finance scrutinizes all political and economic issues and immediately takes appropriate measures, whether in the form of contingency planning or through immediate precautionary actions. For example, Finance has made its contingency plan part of the overall University

Contingency Plan to ensure no rupture in operations is encountered in case of political instability [Exhibit 9.11]. From a budgeting perspective, LAU sets an annual contingency budget of \$2 million to support any unforeseen emergencies. Furthermore, LAU contracts Political Risk Insurance with Overseas Private Insurance Company (OPIC) covering political violence leading to loss of assets and business income for a total amount of \$20 million. The budget for all capital projects includes a 15% contingency for any unforeseen events or transactions that might affect the project(s) under execution.

>> Growth of Endowment: LAU has increased its endowment, despite market volatility and significant spending on expansion, through watching market conditions and the active involvement of the BOT's Investment Committee in managing and monitoring the investment portfolio. This is also evidenced by the establishment of an investment office in October 2009 located in New York, and presently manned by one senior investment officer.

In addition, LAU relies on three benchmarking sources in the evaluation of its endowment; NACUBO [Exhibit 9.12] Russell Mellon Universe Benchmark [Exhibit 9.13], and peer review ranking done by Cambridge Associates [Exhibit 9.14]. Other relevant reporting tools are also generated by management in support of its evaluation and monitoring process.

>> Data and Management Reporting: Without neglecting the important feedback usually obtained from audited financials, more reliance is now placed on periodic and relevant reporting from various sources covering all components of operations and investments. In fact, the Finance department always had a very solid periodic management reporting system that was built, strengthened and tested throughout the years however, not frequently shared with other university constituents. With the establishment of the Institutional Research and Assessment office (IRA), financial data has become readily available to concerned university constituents.

>> Financial Planning: The financial planning process calls for frequent updates and reviews; all significant changes in the circumstances are immediately incorporated into the plan in order to provide better estimates of the university financial projections. Facilities and Finance are consistently and very closely working together towards rationalizing their plans so that financial projections can be properly set. By incorporating all of the various plans at LAU, the financial plan sets the institution's overall financial strategic direction, identifies the resources needed and the sources of funds, and accordingly, allocates these resources among the different constituents and activities of the university.

>> Budget Process: The budget process is being reviewed and improved on annual basis. The UBC has become more involved in developing the budget guidelines through a collective review and evaluation of internal budget information and actual results, and the assessment of external competitive environment and benchmarking. Moreover, the various budget units have gained more autonomy and authority in developing and disbursing their approved budgets.

>> Integrated Planning: Finance's close involvement with almost all activities of the university is in line with the administration's emphasis on integrated planning. Such integration has acquired added urgency due to the steep growth of operations and the rapid expansion of the institution.

>> Market Rating: In line with the issuance of the new 5-year tax-exempt bonds series, LAU had to undergo a new rating process with Standard & Poor's. LAU was assigned an 'AA-' long-term rating on Build NYC Resources Corp.'s series 2013, with a stable outlook. This is a three notch upgrade from the previous rating, a fact unprecedented in higher education bond issuance. Such rating reflects once more the university's strong credit fundamentals as described throughout this chapter.

Nonetheless, such credit power is mitigated by certain important factors which include, a) the operating risks associated with LAU's activities and physical location in Lebanon and the Middle East region; b) a high dependence on tuition and fees; c) a limited, but growing culture of fundraising in Lebanon; d) significant capital balanced by the university history and commitment to build facilities with limited issuance of additional debt and, e) the impact of LAUMC-RH operations on the university's overall financial performance [Exhibit 9.15].

Risk Management: In order to optimally mitigate the effects of currency risk in the Lebanese economy, especially with the tense and unstable political environment, the university opted for the U.S. dollar as its billing currency as well as the currency of the majority of its transactions. Alternatively, the payroll, except for the New York based employees' payroll, is fully effectuated in Lebanese currency for legal considerations. Nonetheless, and to preserve the purchasing power of its employees, LAU indexes salaries to the U.S. Dollar by setting a fixed rate of LL1,507.50 for one U.S. dollar. Approximately 75% of collections during fiscal year ended September 30, 2013 were in U.S. dollars.

To properly address currency and sovereign risk, LAU continues with its prudent cash management approach whereby the majority of its short-term funds as of September 30, 2013 (net of blocked funds) are in USD (82.0%). The high level of

short-term holdings with local banks is mainly in line with the increasing need of readily available cash to respond to the expansion plan undertaken by the university. The relatively high ratio of holdings in local banks in Lebanese currency is mainly attributable to the high level of blocked funds in that currency. In fact, the university has opted to block funds in the same currency of that of the subsidized loans. This action was adopted as, firstly, an act of prudence to ensure that all borrowed loans are properly covered and, secondly, to be able to measure the returns/savings derived from borrowing in Lebanese currency at very competitive rates. Should the blocked funds be excluded, the ratio of holdings in LBP would drop to 18.0%. It is worth noting that the current spread between the loan and blocked funds rates is approximately 2.50%.

LAU carries insurance coverage to protect against various operational risks. It has insurance policies covering its plant assets (war, fire, earthquake, burglary and theft, etc.), in addition to workmen compensation, life and long-term disability, school liability coverage, and directors and officers liability (acts and omissions). In addition, the university has purchased \$20 million of political risk insurance from OPIC for business interruption and damaged assets resulting from war activities. The current OPIC policy is a 10-year policy, which expires in 2017.

Accounting and Fiscal Control: External audit service providers are always selected among the “Big Four” firms to ensure top quality services, partnership, and independence. For more than a decade, only unqualified audit opinions have been expressed reflecting the sound financial practices adopted by LAU and their positive contribution to the image of LAU. Moreover, LAU considers all audit findings, whether issued by internal and external auditors, addresses them seriously and responsibly and establishes prompt action plans to resolve them.

Following allegations of financial irregularities at the hospital, the BOT ordered a forensic audit covering the acquisition of the hospital and financial operations since its acquisition, primarily renovation and upgrade activities. The forensic audit was undertaken by PWC between November 2013 and February 2014. The audit report was issued by PWC in late February/early March 2014 and kept confidential. However, an announcement was issued by the chair of the audit committee declaring that the forensic report declared no evidence whatsoever to support allegations made and confirmed that all amounts spent at the hospital were properly accounted for and all records are in compliance with sound accounting principles.

Systems and Internal Controls: LAU is committed to enhancing its overall control environment through the continuous introduction and upgrade of new/existing policies and procedures. Financial issues are brought up as needed at weekly President’s Cabinet and Council of Deans meetings and are mostly resolved.

The university continues its successful track in implementing state-of-the-art financial and operational applications. The implementation of the e-procurement system and the upgrade of the e-business suite, the shift of accounting currency from LBP to US dollars are another indication of an improved control environment.

Projection

Enrollment: As a private institution, the university’s historical overdependence on tuition necessitates full compliance with the financial plan requirements. Securing a balanced increase between enrollment and tuition constitutes a core element for the success of the plan. Failure to secure positive enrollment targets may lead to significant increases to tuition rates as a means of recovery. Enrollment management and graduate studies and research shall strive to reset their strategies in order to increase student applications for both undergraduate and graduate pools; improve yield rates; and reduce attrition rates.

Fundraising: Despite the tremendous efforts of the senior administration, fundraising activities continue to represent an uncertain pillar in the revenue streams of the university. Fundraising management will strive to reduce the overdependence on US grants as a major ingredient of fundraising revenues by spreading more awareness into the private donors’ niche. The revised fundraising plan calls for reducing such overdependence as well as improving fundraising contributions to the total revenue pool of the university. Moreover, the university has recently recruited a NY-based VP for advancement with a focused task of broadening the fundraising base across North America.

Financial Aid: Due to the poor current economic and security situation, financial aid processes are being realigned to further enhance student retention and, more importantly, attract high caliber students. The balance between maintaining academic excellence and ensuring economic progress will remain a major concern for the university administration, hence compelling proper planning of financial aid needs and the university’s vision for growing its student base.

Budgeting and Financial Planning: The university’s five-year financial plan is revised consistently to address changing operating, economic, and political circumstances. The financial plan’s effectiveness resides in the fact that it is the repository

of all other plans. The plan's main pillars will remain:

- Maintaining a minimum of 4% annual combined growth in tuition revenues for the next five-years;
- Generating operating surpluses to support the university expansion plan;
- Funding the additional needs of the revised capital expenditure budget;
- Securing required funding for the execution of various *SP 2011-16* pillars;
- Achieving aggressive fundraising targets to a) foster revenue diversification and b) support operations and capital expenditure budget; and
- Optimizing financial revenues through proper allocation of monetary resources and aggressively relying on cut-rate funding sources from local and US markets.

LAUMC-RH's management has been restructured with a new board currently in control. The new board started assessing the hospital's capital and operating needs. Those needs will be reflected in the university's financial plan once the new business plan of the hospital is finalized.

Accounting and Fiscal Control: LAU will continue hiring top audit firms (the Big Four) to conduct audit and consultancy services. The historical trend of securing unqualified audit opinions (clean) shall persist through continuous enhancement of the university's internal control system and compliance with local and international applicable regulations.

Systems and Internal Control: Finance will continue to play an active role in enhancing and optimizing the use of existing operating systems and applications. Proposals made during the last university planning committee retreat relating to system optimization are being reviewed for inclusion within the university strategic plan. Finance will also play a dynamic role in ensuring that all functional procedures are updated regularly in collaboration with concerned constituents.

Institutional Effectiveness

The university's consistent growth as proven by the execution of various capital projects, the progression of operations, and the notable increase in the size of the endowment, strongly reflect its financial stability. The market rating of AA- (a three notch upgrade from the previous rating of A-) together with the remarkable increase in net assets and endowment during the last two years provide strong evidence of the financial strength of the university. The university's dynamism is remarkable given the challenging local and regional environments.

The audited financial statements of the university group, including the consolidation, continue to reflect unqualified opinions. The transparency of the disclosures and the level of detail provided in the financial statements are in full agreement with the external auditors and hence provide positive assurances as to the integrity of the financial management. The positive attitude of management and its reaction towards internal and external audit findings also adds to such integrity.

The active role of the BOT is another strong sign of the effectiveness of the university's control environment. The BOT exercises close oversight over the university's operations through regular meeting of the finance and administration, investment and executive committees of the board in addition to the bi-annual board meetings.

[NOTE: Standard 9 was prepared using the figures of fiscal year 2012-13. Updated data and information relating to fiscal 2013-14 will be prepared separately as soon as they become reasonably available.]

Standard 9 Exhibits

9.1	Investment Report September 2013	9.9	Financial Aid Analysis
9.2	LAU Financial Statements 2013	9.10.1	Financial plan March 2014
9.3	Bond Pricing	9.10.2	Financial plan March 2014 (Exhibits)
9.4	Capital projects budget	9.11	LAU Emergency Plan 2013
9.5	Financial Assets as of September 30, 2013	9.12	NCSE Report 2013
9.6.1	LAU Investment policy	9.13	LAU Flash Statistics June 2013
9.6.2	Investment Manual	9.14	Cambridge comparative analysis report 3rd Qtr
9.7	LAU bylaws	9.15	S&P rating report 2013
9.8	Statistical section		

Standard 10: Public Disclosure



Description

In presenting itself to current and prospective students and the community at large, LAU strives to disclose information about itself in an accessible and effective way vis-à-vis a plethora of communication platforms. Much development has occurred since the last NEASC assessment in 2009, and, in keeping pace with the university's growth, the content of the main LAU website has been expanded to include new sections. Content maintenance of school and office websites has been decentralized, offering said entities a high degree of autonomy in maintaining their websites. The university's department of Marketing and Communications (MarCom) includes professional editorial, branding, and web teams, and the news section has been created to promote the development and achievements of the university. The Media and Public Relations office has also expanded its activities to include online social media. Furthermore, since the previous NEASC assessment, a concerted effort has been made to ensure that all forms of print and electronic communications officially representing the institution are consistent with LAU's status as one university with two campuses.

[Prospective/Current Student Needs]

LAU publishes a vast array of information for prospective and current students to assist them in making informed decisions regarding their education. Information relevant to students is communicated via the main LAU website, various Student Development and Enrollment Management (SDEM) web pages, school websites, and print publications. Information that is pertinent to prospective students is clearly communicated through the Admissions Office, Financial Aid & Scholarships materials, Orientation, USAID University Scholarship Program (USP), and Student Life website as well as the ViewBook, and a vast array of other publications. Additionally, various schools offer program-related information in their brochures and student handbooks. Information on the procedures of obtaining financial aid, scholarships, student employment, graduate assistantships, and loans are available online and in flagship publications. The 'LAU at a Glance' publication discloses the average undergraduate and graduate tuition fees along with the doctoral and professional practice program fees. All of this information can also be easily accessed on the main LAU website.

An updated list of student rules and regulations are available on all SDEM websites and within the individual school websites under "quick links" to further facilitate access, but these links aren't consistent across all school websites. The student portal, which caters to current student needs and requires "login" access, contains detailed procedures, guidelines, alerts, and links to various applications. A complete revision of content strategy is currently underway to transfer essential information to the portal so that students can access class schedules, final exams, final grades, and relevant decisions—all in one location. Additionally, prospective international students can access information on housing, residency, orientation, and living in Lebanon/Beirut through the SDEM Student Life website.

School websites currently provide a comprehensive overview of departments, faculty members, programs, and facilities. The School of Business is the only school website with a dedicated web editor. Various social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram pages) further ensure timely news updates and engagement.

[Academic Catalog]

The Academic Catalog is a comprehensive reference on LAU. This annual publication includes information on all the university's academic programs, policies, and procedures and is updated annually and made available in both print and electronic format to current and prospective students, free of charge. The catalog is available online, beginning with the 2005-06 version, to serve the needs of alumni as well as former and returning students. In order to cope with major discrepancies, the 2013-14 Academic Catalog was restructured for greater coherence and to add pertinent information. MarCom is presently working with the NEASC task force members to recommend improved workflow processes, additional editorial changes, and a continuous update mechanism to the current catalog.

[Institutional Information]

Information covering the continuum of institutional functions—academic, administrative, and support units—can be found on the main LAU website and in almost all flagship publications in a clear and accessible manner. The approved Council of Deans' minutes are posted online on a weekly basis, and are accessible to all faculty and staff upon logging in. The Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA) office plays a key role in compiling and analyzing institutional data as well as data regarding the statistics of the student body, rates of admission, retention, and graduation rates of its students. LAU's operational and capital budgets and endowment status are shared with the public on the website as well as in the flagship publications such as the President's Report which makes clear statements on the fiscal health of the institution. Information about LAU's

financial statements and audited financial reports are available upon request through the Office of VP for Finance. Information and updates on new LAU facilities, such as the New York Headquarters/Academic Center (NYHQAC) and Executive Center at Solidere, are also included on the LAU website. Information to promote the activities of the new premises is being handled currently on an ad hoc basis by MarCom in close collaboration with the Office of the Assistant to the President, Strategy Officer for External Projects, and related entities.

[Campuses, Affiliations, and Academic Support]

LAU recently launched its New York HQ and Academic Center along with an executive center in the heart of Beirut. Furthermore, health-related school websites currently provide a link to the LAU Medical Center–Rizk Hospital (LAUMC-RH)'s website without further clarifying its role as a teaching and research facility. A clear link to these websites should be included on the main LAUMC-RH website to reinforce the institution's educational component.

[Public Inquiries]

The institution informs the public regarding where inquiries can be directed. The university website offers a 'question and answer' section which addresses various inquiries. The LAU website, SDEM websites, the various school websites, and the news section on the web also have a section to encourage feedback from users. The IRA office plays an important role with respect to ensuring the integrity and consistency of information for official reporting and preparing the various reports that the university files annually with the regulatory and research entities. A further development made since 2009 is the creation of dean, provost, relations, and MarCom email addresses to facilitate inquiries and promote dissemination of information within the LAU community. Various social media channels also provide an opportunity for the community to request updated information and remain engaged. Finally, all levels of the university foster an open door policy that invites inquiries and encourages relevant requests for information to be promptly addressed.

[External and Internal Communication]

There are various platforms that make information accessible to LAU's audience—namely the flagship publications, press coverage, direct mailing, and online communications including the news section on the web. Internal communication typically covers administrative announcements, new appointments, initiatives or achievements at LAU. These requests are relayed through public announcements by email, public addresses by LAU executives or departmental meetings with colleagues, department heads or faculty and staff. The president addresses the LAU community bi-annually after each Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting to keep the community informed about major decisions and new initiatives. Additionally, the President's Report and LAU Magazine have undergone an extensive revamping to engage the university's constituencies, and promote faculty expertise and student achievements, while ensuring evidence for any statements of excellence. The Alumni and Relations office methodically communicate to alumni vis-à-vis a variety of channels. LAU's president sends alumni a personalized email bi-annually, outlining the major achievements of the university. The development office liaises with donors/prospective donors through a website dedicated to this purpose, the LAU magazine, the President's report, the Case Statement, LAU Matters, and direct mail. MarCom is constantly feeding the news sections with a variety of articles highlighting the community's successes. Schools share—on their respective websites as well as through internal meetings with their staff and faculty—updates on policy, grant information, faculty/student achievements, new majors/minors, and administrative deadlines.

[Social Media Communication]

LAU's official use of social media is still in its fledgling stages. The main university-wide channels consist of a Facebook page, a YouTube channel, a Twitter account, a few LinkedIn groups, a Pinterest account, and an Instagram account, which are primarily curated by the Media Relations Office and the advancement services in NYHQAC. Judging from the feedback, this has been quite successful in attracting attention to events happening at LAU. In the meantime, schools, departments and various student and faculty-led clubs are creating their own Facebook pages and other social media accounts.

[List of board members, decision-making personnel and faculty]

The university provides a listing of its executive and academic officers through its main website. The list of full-time faculty members, showing degrees held and the universities that granted them, is available on the main LAU website and school websites in addition to full biographies. The names and positions of administrative officers are also included. The names of BOT and Board of International Advisors (BIA) members are published on the LAU website along with the main flagship publications. A dedicated website for board members is under construction.

[Accreditation Information]

LAU's accreditation status is explicitly stated in various communication platforms, including public addresses, the LAU website, orientation, and a webpage dedicated to listing all accreditation bodies and affiliations at LAU. The school-specific accreditations are also mentioned on each school website and are included in each school's publications.

[Accuracy and Consistency of Information]

MarCom, in close collaboration with LAU constituents, is responsible for maintaining the accuracy and consistency of information on the main LAU website as well as in the flagship publications. Most of the university's publications are routed through MarCom, which ensures reliability and availability of the publications upon request. The content is compiled and developed in close collaboration with concerned entities and crosschecked for accuracy before printing or posting. Any information sent to the media is cleared and processed by the Media and Relations office, in close collaboration with the office of the president and the LAU community at large. In the absence of dedicated web editors at the schools, updating school websites on a regular basis remains a challenge that is currently being thoroughly discussed.

Appraisal

For a comprehensive list of print publications related to public disclosure, see *Exhibit 10.1*.

[Current Student Resources]

As described at length earlier in this chapter, LAU successfully publishes a vast array of information to assist current students in making informed decisions regarding their education. Additionally, schools offer program-related information in their brochures and student handbooks. All the rules and regulations related to students are available on all SDEM websites and are also available within some individual school websites under “quick links” to further facilitate access. However, the page containing the rules and regulations needs to be added to the “quick links” on all school websites, and a revised list of all links should be shared across all school platforms. A plan to simplify the petition process is also underway to provide students easier, online access. MarCom and SDEM are in the process of reviewing and redesigning the main LAU website and SDEM websites for a more effective user experience, appropriate student engagement, and consistent content strategy; a comprehensive MarCom web evaluation summary has highlighted the major drawbacks of the current content strategy [*Exhibit 10.2*]. Along with improving current content, recommendations include optimizing the website for mobile devices and developing notifications and alerts to meet with new user demands.

[Prospective Student Needs]

While pertinent information is well communicated to prospective students overall, there is some difficulty in accessing information easily, as usability tests conducted by MarCom [*Exhibit 10.3*] have shown that first-time users cannot always easily reach their target destination while navigating the website. Additional surveys have indicated that it becomes easier to manage content when users are more familiar with the layout [*Exhibit 10.4*]. Duplication of information found on the Student Life, Admissions, Financial Aid & Scholarships websites needs to be addressed as well.

[Campuses, Affiliations, and Academic Support]

LAU needs a comprehensive communication strategy for its recently launched New York HQ and Academic Center and executive center in the heart of Beirut. The websites of the health-related schools should further clarify LAUMC-RH's role as a teaching and research facility. These schools should develop the information related to the clinical aspect of their programs. A prominent link to these websites should also be included on the homepage of the LAUMC-RH website to reinforce the institution's academic component. Affiliations and clinical partnerships (for example, <http://nursing.lau.edu.lb/about/clinical-affiliates.php>) also need to be systemically updated, to cater to LAU's growing network.

[Degree Requirements and Educational Costs]

Detailed program information and course lists are provided on all school websites, but these are not systematically updated in the absence of a dedicated web editor. A template is also needed for inter-departmental consistency. This will enable current and prospective students to make more informed decisions, especially with regards to courses offered during specific semesters or in different geographical locations. The CAPP degree evaluation form (<http://students.lau.edu.lb/registration/capp/> via secure Banner access) and sample study plans are also useful, but not all programs publicly share these plans on their websites.

LAU publishes detailed tuition fees on its websites as well as information on obtaining financial aid. Information relating to loan settlement needs to be re-evaluated by the Comptroller's Office-Loan Department. Since student debt upon graduation varies on a case-by-case basis, guidelines should be publicly disclosed to simplify the decision-making process. The addition of a 'cost calculator' where a prospective student can review the program he/she is interested in (tuition, location, housing, transportation), and obtain an estimate, could further support the decision-making process.

[Student Body, Educational Goals, and Accreditation]

All schools need to follow a systematic template and a consistent review process for improved updates on programs, policies,

and procedures. A more rigorous approach to publishing information on co-curricular and non-academic opportunities needs to be promoted as well. To further reinforce LAU's status and appeal to prospective students, SDEM has also highlighted the need for a more explicit and student-friendly accreditation statement to be published in the Admissions ViewBook and the website. Although institution and school-specific accreditation status is explicitly stated online and in relevant publications, there is a need to review the terminology used and logo display in some school websites and publications.

[Board Members, Decision-making Personnel, and Faculty]

The names of Board of Trustees (BOT) and Board of International Advisors (BIA) members are published on the LAU website along with the main flagship publications. A dedicated website for board members is under construction. The list of full-time faculty members, showing degrees held and the universities that granted them, and the names and positions of administrative officers are available in a number of locations but consistency and accuracy is lacking. Part-time faculty members are listed on most departmental websites but not in the academic catalog since it is an annual publication. Including more details relating to their degrees, ensuring consistency across the different schools and adding contact information is necessary.

[Academic Catalog and Publications]

The content of the 2013-2014 Academic Catalog was reviewed and partially restructured for greater coherence. Additional appendices were included for tuition fees and faculty information. All non-academic information has been deleted. MarCom is currently working with the Office of the Provost to create an online version of the catalog—powered by content management systems—enabling monthly updates.

[Public Inquiry, Outreach and Contact Information]

Information covering the continuum of institutional functions can be found on the main LAU website and in almost all flagship publications, as detailed in the description section of this chapter.

[Outreach and News Strategy]

There are various platforms that make information accessible to LAU's external as well as internal audiences as detailed in the Description section. Currently, MarCom is reviewing its content strategy to ensure a focused strategic vision for its news coverage. Entries and feature articles also need to capitalize on the interactive nature of the web and include social media add-ons. A full-scale effort should be launched to further promote school/initiative pages and consolidate these myriad channels within the LAU website for greater exposure and accuracy of information. Social media channels are notable tools for audience engagement, and the development of a comprehensive social media strategy can further promote public access to information. There is also a need, however, to develop staff manuals and improve upon faculty handbooks to ensure clearer communication channels and guidelines.

[Relevance, Accuracy, and Consistency of Information]

MarCom, in close collaboration with LAU constituents, is largely successful in maintaining the accuracy and consistency of information on the main LAU website as well as in the flagship publications. In the absence of dedicated web editors, updating school and departmental websites on a regular basis remains a challenge that is currently being thoroughly discussed [Exhibit 10.5]. Recommendations include hiring SDEM and school-based communication officers, with strong editorial and social media background, who would ensure timely feedback from concerned community members and consistency across the different platforms. These editors can then work towards a more committed review process to update the website, 'news and events', catalog, other publications, and social media pages accordingly.

Projection

Exhibit 10.1 - List of worksheets identifies responsibilities and specific tasks associated with improving public disclosure at LAU as well as a timeline for completion. Most of these specific updates can be achieved through existing resources within the schools and departments, as long as realistic deadlines are set. Some schools, such as the School of Medicine, will need to hire freelance professionals to be able to perform the necessary changes. They have already committed to this endeavor.

For ongoing and comprehensive updates, and in order to keep all LAU communication platforms dynamic and informative, communications officers need to be hired by the schools and SDEM, to take on the role of website editors and communication focal points. Their job descriptions and operational duties will be discussed and reviewed closely with the Council of Deans and SDEM. The new communication officers will be hired systematically and as per order of priority between 2013 and 2015. This will ensure MarCom's ability to provide the necessary training and coaching for them to effectively perform their communication role. The scarcity of talented English-language content producers and web editors in Lebanon may necessitate an extended hiring process. A functional working mechanism will be identified to allow an efficient workflow within each school/

department while ensuring close coordination with MarCom to portray a solid and consistent university brand to the public.

The Academic Catalog's production process is being reformed to ensure accuracy and consistency with the LAU website and other school/departmental publications. An academic coordinator and an editor have already been designated and the new workflow and format of the publication is being discussed between the Office of the Provost and MarCom. The catalog editor will also be aware of NEASC public disclosure requirements in order to overcome any previously identified challenges. The yearly editions will continue, but a year-round content collection and editing process will be established. As of fall 2014, the catalog will only be available online and any additional updates will be fed through a dynamic content-management system. The full-time web editors hired by the school and SDEM will also work closely with the academic catalog editor.

Improving the flow of information inside LAU is part of a long-term solution to public disclosure challenges. The need for an accurate and timely flow of information should also become a significant part of the university's strategic plan. Between 2014 and 2016, MarCom will coordinate with the LAU community to identify key strategic initiatives that can be used as pilot communication projects, and will support their promotional needs by developing a plan of action identifying key messages, audiences, channels, deliverables, and key indicators to monitor impact.

In order to consider an audience-centered approach to public disclosure, MarCom will conduct an in-depth analysis of the audience's needs and expectations vis-à-vis the existing communication platforms in 2014-16. This includes a detailed assessment of the LAU Magazine readership, an evaluation of the news section on the website and user satisfaction/responsiveness, a review of current recruitment material to better meet the needs of prospective students, and a continued focus on an evidence-based approach for a more effective web presence.

A detailed analysis of current and prospective student needs and user experience will assist the schools, SDEM and MarCom in the creation of more student-friendly websites and the development of publications and collateral material that would appeal to current and prospective students. Promotional material should keep in mind the need to recruit.

Institutional Effectiveness

The university strives to create and nurture a culture of communication at the onset of every project or initiative. The institution is currently working towards combining all its communication efforts under the umbrella of an integrated communication plan to promote a solid brand and strong identity for LAU. Furthermore, self-monitoring and ongoing assessment are being promoted across all LAU entities to encourage systematic review, update, and improvement of internal and external communication content and channels. The university will continue to monitor the quality and effectiveness of its public disclosure and to work towards developing effective communication approaches that respond to modern trends, which also embrace social media and its collaborative spirit. This evolutionary stance ensures innovation while reinforcing the university's mission and objectives.

Standard 10 Exhibits

10.1	Data First Form- Standard 10
10.2	MarCom Web Evaluation Executive Summary
10.3	Usability Tests
10.4	Surveys of current students, faculty, and staff <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public disclosure survey current students• Public disclosure survey faculty and staff
10.5	Individual School, SDEM, and MarCom Appraisal Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appraisal main LAU website• Appraisal SDEM websites and publications• Appraisal School of Arts and Sciences website and publications• Appraisal School of Business website and publications• Appraisal School of Pharmacy website and publications• Appraisal School of Engineering website and publications• Appraisal School of Architecture and Design website and publications• Appraisal School of Medicine website and publications• Appraisal School of Nursing website and publications

Standard 11: Integrity



Description

The BOT, which oversees LAU's academic and other operations, is the highest guarantor that the university acts responsibly and with integrity. The BOT's responsibilities include ensuring that: 1) all university constituents observe the highest standards of academic, professional and financial integrity; and 2) that the university is compliant with applicable US and Lebanese laws. LAU's Bylaws state that the BOT "shall be composed of people who command respect"; while the Faculty Bylaws and all pronouncements coming from the president and addressing the faculty underscore the fact that personal and professional integrity is a cardinal value for LAU collectively and individually. There are instances of very few faculty members who committed alleged breaches being investigated in accordance with established due process and sanctioned rather severely. "LAU's Academic Affairs Policy emphasizes promoting among "students a mature independence of mind, honesty and integrity in academic, professional, and personal affairs"; while LAU's Student Code of Conduct stresses the promotion of the "highest ethical and moral values and aspirations, the development of a deep sense of civic engagement, and the advancement of peace, democracy, and social justice." Upholding the highest ethical standards is a compelling injunction expected of LAU students and regularly reinforced both positively and negatively. Positive reinforcement takes several forms including student employment, civic engagement and community service assignments, dealing with students on the basis of trust, and a strong expectation that a moral code will be observed at all times. Negative reinforcement is administered through punitive measures taken whenever alleged breaches of any kind are found to be true following an investigation in keeping with due process. Either way no student can graduate from LAU without having been heavily exposed to an environment where ethical fortitude is reinforced as a top priority almost on a daily basis.

The university has in place many policies and procedures whose aim is to ensure that all members of the institutional community are cognizant of their rights and duties; and discharge their duties in a responsible and forthright manner (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/>) and (http://faculty.senate.lau.edu.lb/Faculty_Manual_2012_2013.pdf). During the annual orientation sessions that are organized for all new full-time faculty, the university leadership explains the university's policies and procedures. [Exhibit 11.1].

The Student Code of Ethics and the Student Code of Conduct are presented to all new students during the orientation sessions and they can be found at <http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/> as well as at <http://students.lau.edu.lb/>. Faculty may voice any concerns regarding academic integrity in faculty, school, or Faculty Senate meetings. They may also speak directly to the department chair, department representative on the Faculty Senate, academic dean, provost, legal counsel, or even president, depending on the nature of the issue. Students normally address their concerns to the concerned faculty, department chair or sometimes the dean of students. Those contacted always protect the identity of the "whistle blowers."

LAU's Code of Ethics and published policies and procedures govern LAU's relations with its internal and external constituents. The institution has in place policies on confidentiality, conflict of interest, copyright and patent, harassment, research on human subjects, and rights and responsibilities of LAU members. These are reinforced on regular basis by the president and the provost at their meetings with the faculty of each school, receive their input and listen to their concerns. As an Equal Opportunity Employer, all FT and most PT faculty positions are advertised on the LAU website. Additionally, FT faculty openings are advertised in *Inside Higher Ed*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and professional venues as identified by the respective schools. Staff openings are also advertised on the LAU website. Openings to key staff positions are also advertised in pertinent professional venues.

Relations with external constituents are governed by published policies and procedures. A formal bidding process must take place before any procurement can be made where the amount exceeds \$1,500. All university transactions are subjected to an internal auditing process that is managed by the Internal Audit Office, which reports to the president and the BOT. The university has in place a Fraud Policy whose aim is to detect, prosecute and eliminate "fraud of all kinds at all levels. (http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/policies/fraud_policy.pdf).

All students must successfully complete ETH 201/Introduction to Moral Reasoning. Students pursuing professional degrees learn about ethics in their respective professions. The School of Nursing, for example, begins teaching its students the importance of integrity in all aspects of patient care before they ever start in the clinical courses. Graduates of the Schools of Engineering, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Nursing take a formal oath during the commencement ceremony, pledging their unswerving commitment to the highest personal and professional ethical standards.

With regard to fostering a culture of academic integrity among students, LAU is working to “establish a uniform approach to academic honesty and issues of integrity in the institution” [Exhibit 11.2]. The Council on Academic and Professional Integrity (CAPI) was created in fall 2013 and is divided into three subcommittees, focusing on students, faculty, and staff [Exhibit 11.3].

As stated in the *Academic Affairs* policy, the “university is dedicated to upholding and preserving the principles of academic freedom.” The institution supports faculty advancement in scholarship and academia by making needed resources available. Each school has its own School Research Council (SRC), the members of which are elected by faculty, that reviews and acts upon school faculty research requests for different type of funds/grants. The university has recently introduced an Institutional Review Board (IRB) which is now a must clearance for all research on human subjects (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/irb/>).

While academic freedom is held sacrosanct at LAU, faculty members are under clear expectations to treat students fairly and equitably in all matters including grading. There are mechanisms to handle students complaints in this regard and norms of integrity are strictly adhered to in all matters pertaining to teaching and learning.

The university has a Copyright and Patent policy to provide guidance to the university’s faculty, staff, and students regarding the use of creative work. The university subscribes to Turnitin and encourages its faculty to utilize it to counter plagiarism. In addition, the university recently renewed its membership with the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI). Fifteen of our faculty and administrators are members.

LAU’s constitution stipulates that the “purpose of the university shall be to extend to students of the Middle East on a non-discriminatory basis an opportunity for higher education.” While the majority of LAU students still come from Lebanon and the Middle East, many other nationalities are represented in the student body. LAU is an equal opportunity employer. Its faculty and staff are recruited based on merit, with no consideration to gender, ethnicity, religion, region, nationality, or socioeconomic background.

The Faculty Bylaws designate the Faculty Grievance Council as the body responsible for hearing and making recommendations on faculty grievances. Staff and students grievances are handled based on the “staff grievance procedure” and the “student grievance procedures” respectively (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/governance-policies/procedures/>).

Appraisal

Members of the university community act responsibly and with integrity; but there are rare discrepancies as in all institutions. Corrective action is undertaken in the very few cases when LAU constituents do not observe the highest standards of academic and professional integrity. The institution can improve on its system of communicating and explaining to its constituents the existing policies and procedures pertaining to integrity as well as the serious consequences of not following them. It is also essential to establish a formal procedure for updating university policies and procedures, whereby the latest versions of approved policies and procedures are promptly posted on the university website and concerned constituents are duly informed (including through emails) of important changes.

The university needs to act on the recommendations of the CAPI regarding: 1) heightening awareness among all university constituents of what constitutes violations of academic and professional integrity and the consequences of such violations; 2) further developing and elaborating on the current procedures regarding the promotion of academic honesty among students; and 3) strengthening and standardizing, across schools, the mechanisms for reporting and acting on violations of academic integrity; as well as of appealing decisions by affected students.

LAU follows best practices in its commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. A potential challenge is to ensure that faculty members understand that fostering a culture of assessment across all academic programs does not infringe on academic freedom. Another area where more work is needed is to encourage students to become life-long learners and to build their competencies in terms of searching for knowledge independently from multiple sources and differentiating between facts, values and opinions; as well as disseminating such knowledge to peers and the outside community. A focus group meeting with students revealed that students understand the meaning of academic integrity and are informed of the rules and sanctions pertaining to cheating and plagiarism through, *inter alia*, course syllabi and oral explanations by faculty early on in the course. Students, however, reported that it is not easy to locate on the LAU webpage information about cheating and plagiarism and applicable sanctions and enforcement mechanisms [Exhibit 11.4]. The webpage is being reengineered to address this issue and other related issues.

LAU recognizes the need to give faculty members who are not given promotion meaningful feedback as to what went wrong

and how can they possibly learn from the process. In this spirit, the Council of Deans has recently approved a procedure whereby the Dean gives such feedback in writing without specifying the stage at which problems were encountered in the promotion process. By the same token, the CD has also approved an appeal process ratified at different levels within the university for faculty members who wish to claim procedural breaches that affected their promotion proceedings. This was put into effect for the first time in AY 13-14.

The Faculty Grievance Council has not been very active in past years, as no cases were filed before it by faculty. Acquiring the pertinent information about how to file a grievance is difficult since the information is not combined in one document, and the person wishing to file a grievance must examine many documents in order to proceed. LAU has not yet developed a wide-ranging list of proscribed conduct that is prohibited on the university premises. Addressing these deficiencies falls under the mandate of the recently-formed CAPI.

There are no grounds to question LAU's commitment to the highest standards of honesty and integrity in its relations with NEASC and professional accrediting bodies. NEASC and professional teams that visited LAU in the past did not raise concerns about problems in this critical area.

Projection

The President's Cabinet (PC) needs to establish a formal procedure for updating university policies and procedures, whereby the latest versions of approved policies and procedures are promptly posted on the university website and concerned constituents are duly informed (including through emails) of important changes. This task needs to be accomplished by fall 2015. MarCom needs to provide greater visibility to the university policies and procedures on academic and professional integrity; and group them under an integrity web-section on the LAU website (by end of 2014-15). The provost, academic deans, the vice president for student development and enrollment management (VPSDEM) and the vice president for human resources and university services (VPHRUS) need to act on the recommendations of the recently formed CAPI as already described.

The PC and the Council of Deans (CD) need to establish more formal procedures for the hiring, evaluation, and renewal of the contracts of academic administrators. The role of the faculty in these processes of hiring, evaluation and renewal (or non-renewal) of contracts of academic administrators needs to be clearly spelled out (by spring 2015). School deans and school administrators need to instill in faculty members the understanding that fostering a culture of assessment across all academic programs does not infringe on academic freedom. Faculty need to work with their students to prepare the latter to become life-long learners and to build their competencies in terms of searching for knowledge independently from multiple sources and differentiating between facts, values and opinions; as well as disseminating such knowledge to peers and the outside community. School deans and deans of students need to strengthen the necessary infrastructure for students to engage in civil, content-rich, and empirically grounded discussions and dialogues inside and outside the classroom.

SDEM will continue to apply for USAID and other grants to support students and work with Development to locate additional scholarships for needy students which will add to the diversity of the student body and help LAU in fulfilling its role of educating the youth of Lebanon and the region. The list of donors is already an impressive one [Exhibit 11.5]. CAPI will follow up on this issue; and make any pertinent recommendations.

The Office of the Provost and the CD will periodically review the operations of all university and school institutes and centers to ensure they are serving the university mission. Such a review has been completed by a task team formed by the CD and the expectation is that such a review will continue to be undertaken regularly.

Institutional Effectiveness

LAU has come a long way in learning from its own performance and improving on its practices in the area of academic and professional integrity. The Student Code of Conduct is being revised to strengthen language regarding academic violations and spell out the appropriate sanctions. The Council of Deans has worked closely with the Faculty Senate and pertinent university councils to review and clarify the procedure for appealing promotion decisions by faculty who were denied promotion. The university has learned the importance of improving on its own communications with faculty, students and staff with regard to issues of academic and professional integrity. With respect to all these critical areas, there is a continuous improvement process at work with every expectation that this will be further refined in the months and years ahead.

Standard 11 Exhibits

11.1	Faculty Orientation and Mentoring Program Questionnaire 2013
11.2	SP Goal 1.2
11.3	USCAI/CAP-Minutes
11.4	Integrity Student Focus Group
11.5	List of Scholarships Provided for LAU Students

NEASC

Accreditation Committees 2014

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Dr. George Najjar, Chair
Dr. Elie Badr, Deputy Co-Chair
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[Standard/Sub-Standard]

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2. PLANNING AND EVALUATION

4. THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

5. FACULTY

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Undergraduate degree programs: - General Education - The Major or Concentration
Jean Chatila

Graduate degree programs

Samer Saab

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

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Assessment for student learning in addition to institution effectiveness

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Notes



**Beirut Campus**

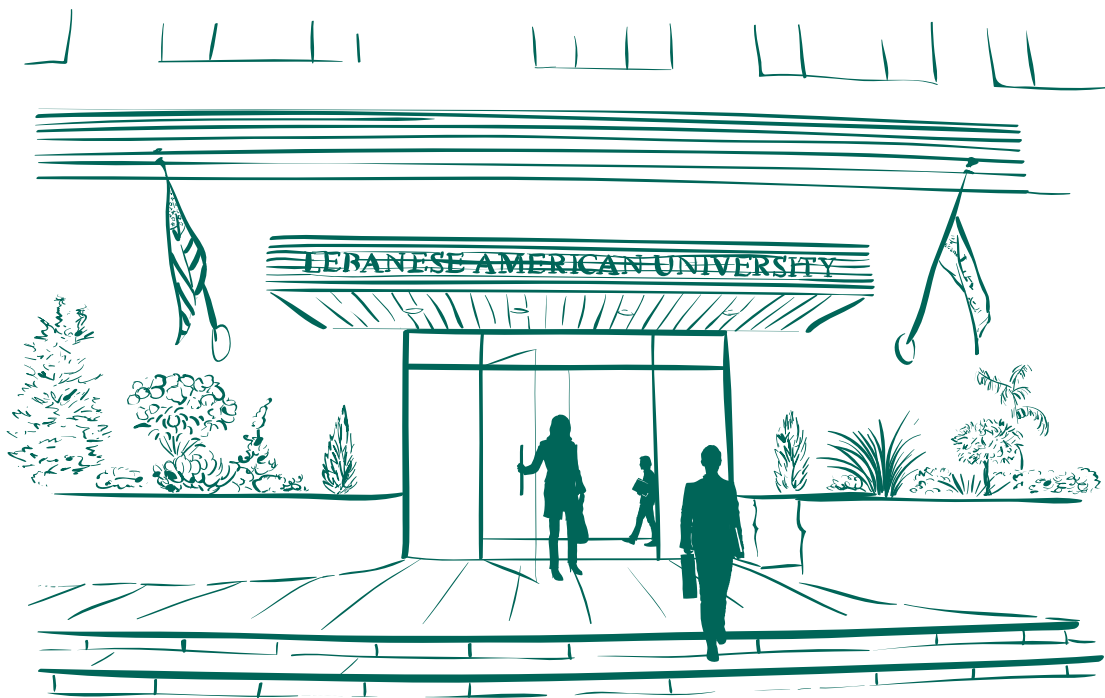
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