Self-Study Report

Prepared for
The Middle States Commission on Higher Education
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American University in Cairo (AUC) is a premiere English language institution, which is chartered in the State of Delaware and has a North American model of education. AUC offers a broad spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs in multiple disciplines within a liberal arts context. In addition, AUC has a sizable and reputable continuing education school and community-service learning opportunities. Over the years, AUC has earned the accreditation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), in addition to several international and regional program and unit accreditations. In 2011, AUC became the first institution in Egypt to earn the accreditation of Egypt’s then newly formed quality assurance authority, NAQAAE (0.01). Today, AUC is one of the top institutions in Egypt and the region.

In 2018, AUC seeks reaffirmation of its accreditation by MSCHE by demonstrating compliance with affiliation requirements and standards as stated and assessed by MSCHE. To demonstrate compliance with all requirements, AUC formed a carefully selected steering committee in 2015 to ensure the involvement of the AUC community. The mandate of this committee primarily included undertaking the preparation of the self-study report and communicating all aspects of the MSCHE accreditation standards to all university constituents including students, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees (BoT), and parents.

The self-study addresses three primary aspects. First, it demonstrates that AUC has fulfilled all requirements of affiliation. Second, it examines the strengths and opportunities for improvement so AUC can continue to excel. Third, as there have been many developments within the University and in Egypt since 2008, it allows the University to reflect and share the incredible and exciting story that has unfolded over the past ten years.

After the move to the new campus, AUC reviewed its mission in 2008 based on the recommendation made by MSCHE. The process of articulating the new mission was conducted collaboratively by different constituents across campus. Today, the new mission is perceived as a reflection of AUC practices and aspirations. The new mission fosters the concepts of liberal education, meaningful research, community service and high-impact practices. Finally, AUC must continue its sincere efforts for internationalization on all fronts as a cornerstone of its mission, despite regional, political, and socio-economic challenges.

AUC has been vigilant about ethics and integrity. The institution has been exerting efforts on all relevant fronts including freedom of speech, equal opportunity, avoiding conflict of interest, instilling diversity, addressing grievance cases, affordability and others. In the midst of political and economic challenges nationwide, AUC has taken some administrative and operational actions to fulfill expectations on ethics and integrity such as developing a Diversity and Advocacy Unit and hiring a Title IX coordinator. While AUC is constrained by the external political environment in freedom of expression and challenging societal norms, the University exercises its right to foster such values. In addition, the University will continue its efforts to offer all personnel fair and equal opportunities.

AUC offers its students a distinct learning experience through rigorous and coherent programs and benchmarked degrees. The self-study recommends investigating ways to support English-language skills of students, which remains a challenge for most English-language institutions operating in a non-native language environment, in addition to reviewing the corresponding means for placement to

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1 In 2017, AUC was ranked #5 in the Arab Region for QS University Rankings [https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/arab-region-university-rankings/2016](https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/arab-region-university-rankings/2016)

2 High-Impact Practices (HIPs) share several traits: They demand considerable time and effort, facilitate learning outside of the classroom, require meaningful interactions with faculty and students, encourage collaboration with diverse others, and provide frequent and substantive feedback. As a result, participation in these practices can be life-changing” [http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/high_impact_practices.cfm](http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/high_impact_practices.cfm)
Executive Summary

ensure its efficiency in placing students. More effort is being exerted on attracting research funds and scholarships for graduate students, and AUC should consider blended learning as an alternative teaching and learning modality for graduate students, including students in executive and continuing education.

Evidence provided in the self-study demonstrates effective and meaningful support of the student experience. This includes the admission process, academic advising, career advising, placement and counseling. Administrative actions and processes were revisited and adjusted to ensure effectiveness and responsiveness, in addition to institutionalizing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) supported by a state of the art Business Intelligence (BI) platform and the deployment of data analytics to track and improve student performance and success. Diversity is also considered central to AUC’s operations despite the presence of political and economic challenges. Furthermore, AUC continues to maximize student engagement through value-added activities and international exposure and captures these experiences in a new co-curricular transcript, which is unique in our entire region. Recently implemented tuition fee policies and financial support are continuously revised to cope with potential changes in the value of Egyptian currency. Supported by a major USAID grant and at the invitation of the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education, AUC is replicating its unique University Career Development and Counseling Centers across the Egyptian national university system.

In 2007, AUC launched assessment plans for all academic and non-academic units. The results are used to enhance their performance and advance the University’s mission. The self-study reveals some lack of consistency in the implementation. Hence, the Provost appointed an Associate Provost for Assessment, Evaluation and Special Projects to ensure effective processes for continuous improvement of AUC’s academic programs. Likewise, the new President in 2016 launched systemic management quality control processes. These include processes for employee position definition and matching-to-market for compensation and benefits to ensure quality recruitment and retention, plus processes for performance evaluation and recognition. The initial successes of these reviews and assessment processes, plus the impetus of the MSCHE self-study process, have also informed the Administration’s launch in early 2017 of a community-based process of revising the standing (2015) strategic plan, charged explicitly to enable performance assessment on the basis of specific key performance indicators.

The University remains committed to the four key objectives of its standing strategic plan (published in 2015): 1) to reposition AUC in the world as Egypt’s global university; 2) to unleash learning and maximize University service to the community; 3) to capitalize on AUC’s new campus and its location; 4) to continue to instill integrity, accountability and sustainability

The Self-Study has stimulated AUC to take a fresh look at its standing processes to ensure effective leadership and sound governance. The results indicate a clearly articulated governance structure with well-outlined roles and responsibilities. Nevertheless, The University found that it should review, clarify and better communicate roles played by each constituency. The administration has been working with faculty, students and parents to establish effective mechanisms and policies for resolving issues of concern. AUC’s community reflects an appropriate shared-governance structure, in which all parties contribute and play meaningful roles.

The BoT undertook a self-assessment survey on board governance in 2015. In February 2017, the BoT revised the charter and the name of its former Trusteeship Committee specifically to include governance. It engaged a top outside consultant throughout 2017 to ensure continuous benchmarking against best practices in American higher education. As one result, the BoT formed a task force under the Trusteeship and Governance Committee to review the bylaws and all key governance policy issues. In January 2018, the BoT approved the task force’s recommendations. These include a regular review and reaffirmation of trustees’ responsibilities, and establishment of a process for regular individual, committee, and full-board self-evaluation against these, with timelines for implementation of results. The task force also recommended that the BoT review and update certain trusteeship policies of concern over the years. In 2017, the BoT leadership, President, and Secretary to the BoT began re-examination and redefinition of the position description of the latter, deliberately comparing
it against similar positions in other American universities, for that officer’s key role in ensuring the
BoT’s continuous connectivity to the University.

In conclusion, the Self-Study demonstrates that AUC is compliant with the seven standards, examines strengths and opportunities for improvement, and conveys its story. Therefore, as AUC approaches its centennial in 2019, it is confidently moving forward to serve as a liberal arts beacon of learning in Egypt, the region and the world.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS SUGGESTED IN SELF-STUDY PROCESS IN 2008 AND PROGRESS MADE

The previous self-study report completed in 2008 was used as a main source at the beginning of the current self-study process, where recommendations made by both the AUC accreditation team and MSCHE reviewers were examined in addition to the progress made by the university with regards to these recommendations (0.02).

MISSION AND GOALS

One of the main recommendations that arose from the previous self-study was revisiting AUC’s mission through a collaborative process, which took place in 2009. AUC revised its mission in a highly collaborative process led by a task force composed of a cross-section of faculty from diverse disciplines with input from a wide variety of staff. In 2010, the university added a vision statement and articulated a set of core values to help guide planning and decision-making. These were communicated to the AUC community through posters with the AUC mission, vision and values in strategic locations on campus.

AUC also established in its revised strategic plan institutional priorities of “Education for Citizenship and Service” and “Outreach Enhancing Engagement and Access.” Additionally, the university included “Effective Citizenship” as one of its learning outcomes, established a community based learning (CBL) program and implemented the Academic Community Engagement (ACE) educational approach. This approach involves students in meaningful community service directly related to their course goals, enabling students to link theory with action through guided reflection.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Some recommendations were made regarding encouraging the University to involve faculty more in the academic integrity efforts, and continuing to enhance the concept of academic integrity.

The Council for Academic Integrity and the Academic Integrity Committee continue to rely on dedicated members (of all faculty ranks, with some staff) to fulfill their missions. They also relied on faculty to participate in redesigning the graduate academic integrity tutorial required for all new graduate students, which was introduced two years ago. The Community Standards Office (CSO) is also partnering with the Writing Center to create a new workshop on avoiding plagiarism for students who have been caught plagiarizing. The Code of Academic Ethics is available, in digital form, and all new community members are required to sign. However, with the change to digital format, enforcement has been more difficult, and we are currently exploring different means of encouraging regular reminders for students.

ASSESSING SATISFACTION

Another recommendation was made to survey staff satisfaction, which was scheduled for launch in 2011, but was delayed due to the Egyptian revolution. In an effort to address this issue, AUC recently launched a culture and institutional effectiveness survey in fall 2017 (0.03) surveying all university constituents (students, faculty, staff, senior administration) as part of a vast project to assess the culture and institutional effectiveness of AUC. The results of this survey will be used to establish a clear assessment of the current culture at the University and develop a plan to move forward towards a
more ideal culture and vision of institutional effectiveness. This plan will inform and contribute to AUC’s revised strategic plan.

**EFFICIENT NUMBER OF FACULTY**

Addressing the need to maintain an efficient number of full-time faculty and adequate number of adjunct faculty was another concern that arose from the previous self-study. In 2014, Former Provost, Dr. Mahmoud ElGamal started to study the optimum number of faculty per department and formed a task force to develop a faculty workload point system. In 2015, Former Provost, Dr. Sherif Sedky built on Dr. ElGamal efforts and reviewed the optimum number of faculty needed in all departments across the University to ensure that each department had sufficient full-time faculty to meet student demand and, at the same time, to ensure that adjunct faculty did not exceed 25% of the total number of faculty within the department. As a result of this review, in addition to the generated credit hours by full-time and part-time faculty, one can see that the average generated credit hours for full-time faculty from fall 2012 to fall 2017 was two third and that of the part-time faculty over the same period was one third. In addition, looking at numbers of full-time faculty over the past ten years, AUC had 435 full-time faculty in 2008, with a peak of 505 in 2013, followed by a decrease to 436 in 2016. However, efforts made to ensure departments hire any needed faculty since 2015 have begun to show results in 2017, with an increase in total number of faculty from 436 in 2016 to 452 in 2017 and a decrease in adjunct faculty numbers from 157 in 2016 to 146 in 2017 (0.04).

Furthermore, the Monitoring Report in 2010 mentioned that 40 to 50 percent of core curriculum classes are presently taught by part-time faculty, and that more full-time faculty need to be encouraged to teach in the Core Curriculum. The University has made a number of changes to encourage faculty to teach in the Core Curriculum, and by looking at the number of pre-300 level sections taught, we can see that 36% of these sections were taught by part-time faculty in 2017.

**TRACKING SUCCESS OF AUC GRADUATES**

Better tracking of the success of AUC graduates was an important recommendation made in 2008. Since 2011, the University’s Career Center has conducted an annual survey of undergraduate and graduate student alumni in their first-year post-graduation. The survey focuses on gathering information concerning market demand, career placement and graduate study. In addition, several departments launched tailored employer and/or alumni surveys to assess their graduates, examples include surveys sent out by: Department of Mathematics and Actuarial Science in 2017; Department Computer Science and Engineering in 2016 and 2014; School of Business in 2013; Political Science in 2011 and Global affairs in 2010 (0.05, 0.06, 0.07, 0.08).

Furthermore, in 2015, the alumni office in collaboration with a consultant company launched a qualitative research project to help understand AUC alumni’s views about the quality of education at the University: provide an assessment of the alumni office in terms of the services provided, engagement and credibility; and formulate recommendations to enhance the strategy of the office to reflect graduates’ needs and expectations. Methodology of the research included focus groups and in-depth interviews with alumni. Recommendations based on the assessment of the results included: communicating the office’s offerings more efficiently, increasing the willingness to contribute funds, highlighting the benefits of the alumni card, and providing interesting and more frequent events for alumni (0.09).

**PROGRESS IN PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT PROCESSES**

Another major recommendation made by the reviewers was the continued direction of the campus-wide assessment process and its continued integration into the planning function.
Since 2008, AUC has undertaken an ongoing development process for its institutional assessment. AUC has clear policies and procedures to document progress in student learning and clear assessment processes at different levels within the institution. All programs follow a six-year assessment cycle and are required to report their results annually, in addition to reporting how they have used the results to improve their effectiveness. Furthermore, AUC administers many institutional surveys to assess different aspects of the university (5.08), including international surveys and skill tests such as NSSE (5.24), ECAR (5.23) and the CAAP test (3.78), which in addition to assessing institutional effectiveness, allows benchmarking.

After the 2008 reaccreditation self-study process, efforts to link planning to resource allocation were implemented through an in-house developed system: The Planning Matrix; however, these efforts were found to be insufficient. Planning and assessment were governed by two distinct committees with separate mandates and members, where assessment was positioned as an academic function and planning as a resource allocation function. To improve the effectiveness of both the planning and assessment processes, the University integrated the processes of planning, assessment and resource allocation, and consolidated their governance under the umbrella of one committee: the Planning and Assessment Committee (PAC).

In 2016, the Provost requested that all units - academic or non-academic - submit their 2016-2019 strategic plans in alignment with the University mission and outlined strategic plan. Departments and units are required to link their planning process to the budget, followed by assessing the progress of their plans annually, which began in November 2017 (5.05). The results of these efforts have been impressive, nevertheless, the PAC Committee needs to continue to instill the culture of planning and assessment in all aspect of AUC’s operations to yield workable plans, integrated, assessed and more importantly ensure the use of these results for continuous improvement.

**IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE**

AUC has recently undergone several challenges with regards to the recent events in Egypt, beginning with the 2011 revolution and recently with the devaluation of the Egyptian pound. This necessitated a course of action by the University to ensure that it maintains its worthy reputation and continues to attract the best caliber of students possible.

In 2012, the late Provost Haroun established taskforces to address a variety of issues around campus such as Advising, Registration and Mentoring (ARM) and its CARE standing committee, which address the quality of academic services provided. In addition, assessment of learning outcomes of all academic programs are conducted annually, where all departments are asked to report on the achievement of their learning outcomes. Furthermore, departments are also required to explain how they will use their assessment results by including an action plan for improvement. Alongside these taskforces, efforts to address full-time faculty workload were initiated, based on the recommendation made from the previous self-study process in 2008 to move from a 3-3 teaching load to a 3-2 teaching load. These efforts led to the creation of a designated taskforce created by former Provost ElGamal to design and develop a flexible faculty work load point system allowing faculty more time for research (3.33).

Accordingly, in an effort to ensure that AUC continues to assess effectively and maintain a high quality of teaching, the Provost created a task force in 2017 with the following charge: 1) appraise the quality of education at AUC; 2) specifically devise mechanisms that would enhance and promote good teaching practices across departments; 3) develop a comprehensive teaching evaluation program that would include a multifaceted approach (0.10).

The task force began carrying out its charge by collecting data on perceptions of different constituents (students, alumni, parents, the market) regarding the quality of education at AUC, and created further
action items such as developing a comprehensive teaching evaluation program and improving teaching and learning assessment tools. The taskforce has concluded its findings, which was shared with the Provost Council, Cabinet and BoT and translated into a set of action items and measurements to monitor progress. Recommendations to keep this as a standing taskforce is also in progress to ensure that this continues to receive the focus it deserves.
INSTITUTION OVERVIEW

The American University in Cairo is an independent, not-for-profit, equal-opportunity institution offering English language, American-style liberal arts and professional undergraduate and graduate education to students from Egypt, the region and the world. In Egypt, AUC operates within the framework of a 1975 protocol with the government of Egypt; this protocol is based on a 1962 cultural relations agreement between the Egyptian and the U.S. governments. In the United States, AUC is licensed to grant degrees and is incorporated within the State of Delaware.

MISSION

AUC is a premier English-language institution of higher learning. The University is committed to teaching and research of the highest caliber, and offers exceptional liberal arts and professional education in a cross-cultural environment. AUC builds a culture of leadership, lifelong learning, continuing education and service among its graduates, and is dedicated to making significant contributions to Egypt and the international community in diverse fields. AUC upholds the principles of academic freedom and is dedicated to excellence.

VISION

Our vision is to be a world-class University internationally recognized for its leadership and excellence in teaching, research, creative expression and service. We build on our existing strengths to become the leading university in the Middle East and the destination of choice for students and faculty members from around the world seeking in-depth cultural exposure, combined with outstanding academic programs, cutting-edge research, as well as an ethically engaged, diverse community of scholars.

VALUES

Excellence  
Diversity  
Social Responsibility  
Integrity  
Lifelong Learning

AUC was founded in 1919 as a preparatory school and university by a group of Americans devoted to education and service in the Middle East. Its founding president, Dr. Charles Watson, wanted to create an English-language university based on high standards of conduct and scholarship and to contribute to the intellectual growth, discipline and character of the future leaders of Egypt and the region. At first AUC was only for men, but AUC enrolled its first female student in 1928, the year that marked the first graduating class. In 1950, AUC added its first graduate programs. In 1951, it phased out the preparatory school program. By the mid-1970s, the university offered a broad range of liberal arts and science programs. Afterwards, AUC added Bachelors, Masters, and diploma programs in engineering, management, computer science, journalism and mass communications, and natural and applied sciences. It also established several research centers, including business, social sciences, philanthropy and civic engagement, and science and technology. Currently, AUC offers 36 Bachelor’s degrees, 44 Master’s degrees, two doctoral degrees in applied sciences and engineering, and graduate diplomas in two schools: Global Affairs and Public Policy and Humanities and Social Sciences. AUC’s School of Continuing Education offers non-credit courses and contracted training programs. Other professional education programs are offered by the Engineering and Science Services Unit, the Global Affairs and Public Policy Executive Education Program, the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership Program, the Professional Development Program in the Kamal Adham Center for Television and Digital Journalism, and the School of Business Executive Education Program.

Academic program enrollments have grown to over 5,474 undergraduates and 979 graduate students (fall 2017). Adult education expanded and now serves more than 24,000 students each year in non-credit courses and contracted training programs through the School of Continuing Education. Ninety-
five percent of students are Egyptian; the remaining 5% comprised of 49 nationalities from around the world.

Long considered a leader in higher education in the region, the University has sought national, regional and international accreditation as a means of fostering excellence in governance and academics. In addition to its accreditation by the MSCHE, AUC was the first university in Egypt to receive accreditation from Egypt’s National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (NAQAAE) with additional school and department level accreditation the School of Sciences and Engineering and the department of Management.

AUC was located on a nine-acre campus in the heart of downtown Cairo, a city of more than 18 million people and the largest urban area in the Middle East and North Africa. In 1997, the University decided to relocate the campus to the planned community of New Cairo and use the opportunity to build an entirely new campus to create a “City of Learning”, designed to embody the University’s liberal arts tradition and provide room for growth. AUC raised more than $100 million in a comprehensive capital campaign in 2003 to raise construction funds, as well as additional monies for scholarships, professorships and other strategic areas (.01). In 2008, the University moved its academic programs to its 260-acre new campus. The downtown campus was refurbished to secure the growing continuing and professional education programs, as well as to increase the promotion of cultural and public service programs. Since its move to the new campus, the University has explored ways to make best use of the beautiful, state of the art facilities for academic and co-curricular programs, students, faculty, staff and the community.

Political, economic and social upheaval in Egypt following the 2011 uprising significantly affected the entire AUC community, but also reinforced the importance of AUC’s mission and the role it plays. As members of the AUC community came together after the revolution to help their country and their community build a new future, AUC launched several initiatives on campus to help incorporate the revolution into various aspects of the academic and social life of AUC, such as holding panel discussions, public lectures and integrating information about the revolution into different courses. In addition, course curricula were adapted in order to reflect the new political and economic changes resulting from the 2011 revolution. This provided several different opportunities for community and civic engagement, which helped to raise awareness and provided opportunities for the AUC community to give back.
# AUC at a Glance

## Incoming Class (Undergraduate Admissions), Fall 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applied</td>
<td>2,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted</td>
<td>2,286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of applicants admitted (selectivity)*: 54%

*Percentage of admitted students enrolled (yield)*: 72%

## Academic Program Enrollment, Fall 2017

Enrollment figures are given by school; individuals with double majors are counted twice once in each of their respective majors. Totals are given by headcount. AUC offers 36 undergraduate majors, as well as 44 masters and two PhD programs.

### Degree-Seeking Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School of Education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Business</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Global Affairs &amp; Public Policy</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Sciences and Engineering</td>
<td>2,002</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undeclared / Undergraduate</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Attributes, All Academic Students, Fall 2017

### Gender

- Male: 2,908 (44%)
- Female: 3,662 (56%)

### Nationality

- Egyptian: 6,229 (95%)
- Non-Egyptian: 341 (5%)

### Top Countries

- United States: 90
- Saudi Arabia: 23
- Germany: 21

## Degrees Awarded, 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
<th>Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate School of Education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Business</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Global Affairs &amp; Public Policy</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Sciences and Engineering</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total degrees awarded</td>
<td>1,163</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Retention and Graduation Rates

- First-year Retention Rate (Fall 2016 cohort): 93%
- Six-year graduation rate (Fall 2011): 76%

## Full-Time Faculty, Fall 2017

- Full-time Faculty: 452

### Faculty by Tenure Status

- Tenured: 151 (33%)
- Tenure Track: 76 (17%)
- Not on Tenure Track: 225 (50%)

### Faculty by Gender

- Male: 233 (52%)
- Female: 219 (48%)

### Faculty by Nationality

- American: 106 (23%)
- Egyptian: 248 (55%)
- Other: 98 (22%)
Overview of Accreditation

Accreditation is a mark of excellence endorsed by peer reviewers. It is critically important to universities, especially in a global context where prospective students, faculty members, and employers view it as a measure of academic excellence and institutional quality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation of University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accreditation of Schools and Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academy of Liberal Arts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Academic English Program (IEP) Academic English for the Liberal Arts Academic English for Graduates Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School of Business (Triple Crown reaffirmed)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting, BAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration, BBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration, MBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics, BA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Masters of Business Administration, EMBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Information and Communication Technology, BBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Finance, MSF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration, MBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Masters of Business Administration, EMBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School of Continuing Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School of Science and Engineering</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Engineering, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Engineering, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Engineering, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics Engineering, BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering, BS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

³ NAQAAEE is currently reviewing its accreditation standards and AUC will start its process of reaffirmation of NAQAAEE accreditation once these standards have been announced and shared.
As AUC approaches its centennial, conducting a comprehensive self-study was an opportunity for reflection on its long history, extensive contributions to Egypt and the region, as well as a conducive media for continuous improvement and advancement. To do this, AUC evaluated every aspect of its programs and services, governing and supporting structures, resources, and educational outcomes in relation to the institution’s mission and goals. This model engaged the community and emphasized how institutional goals are aligned with its mission. It also provided opportunities for institutional improvement based on the assessment involved in the self-study process.

AUC organized seven working groups; one for each of the seven standards. Each of the working groups reviewed all the criteria and research questions, which guided their analysis, research, study, data collection and reports. Working groups were required to provide evidence that the University is meeting each criterion through documentation or their equivalents, which are clearly listed in the Documentation Roadmap. Each working group had two co-chairs with at least one of them serving on the Steering Committee. The co-chair(s) were responsible for any communication with the Steering Committee in addition to ensuring alignment with other working groups. The Requirements of Affiliation was managed by the chair of the Steering Committee.

In preparation for the self-study process, AUC purchased the accreditation software module Compliance-Assist in fall 2015. This software served as the repository for the documentation and evidence supporting the self-study process and is managed by the Office of Data Analytics and Institutional Research (DAIR).
OUTCOMES OF THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study outcomes were developed based on the strategic initiatives of the institution, then reviewed against the Middle States Revised Standards for accreditation, as well as the Self-Study Design samples provided by other institutions in the Collaborative Implementation Project (CIP).

OUTCOME #1: COMPLIANCE
Assess how efficiently the University is in compliance with MSCHE’s newly revised accreditation standards and requirements for affiliation.

OUTCOME #2: ACHIEVEMENT OF MISSION
Provide evidence that the University is actively monitoring its achievement and progress towards its goals and mission.

OUTCOME #3: REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY ASSESSMENT PROCESSES
Evaluate assessment processes within the University and provided evidence that the University is committed to assessment as a tool to improve student learning and to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of its academic and non-academic units.

OUTCOME #4: ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF INTEGRATED PLANNING
Establish a culture of integrated planning, based on the use of predictive analytics to inform planning, resource allocation, assessment and continuous improvement and innovative university advancement.

OUTCOME #5: REFLECTION AND IMPROVEMENT
Provide opportunity for reflection and continuous institutional improvement.

OUTCOME #6: RECOMMENDATIONS
Draw on the findings and recommendations emerging from the self-study process to evaluate current challenges and to explore possible means of overcoming them, in addition to informing the development of the University’s next strategic plan.
STANDARD I: MISSION AND GOALS

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“An institution’s mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution’s stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and clarify how the institution fulfills its mission.”

2. SUMMARY

The mission serves as the umbrella for all schools, programs and service units. Work Group I assessed AUC’s mission statement, goals, and strategic plans by using documentation, assessment tools, surveys, focus groups and other forms of community input. In their analysis of the mission statement, the members of Work Group I divided the mission statement into individual components and assessed the University’s compliance to the standard.

As a result of the 2008 Middle States Accreditation Process, AUC updated its mission statement. The process of formulating the new mission came in a highly participatory approach and, as of today, the new mission is perceived as a reflection of AUC practices and aspirations. It has also come to foster the concepts of liberal education, meaningful research, community service and high impact practices. After the president approved the new mission statement in 2009, the University implemented an initiative to communicate the new mission statement to all members of the University through posters that were posted around campus. While the Standard I Work Group’s research has not found any evidence to support the need to update the current mission during this accreditation cycle, research collected through focus groups and interviews has made it apparent that the mission is not as well-known throughout the University as it should be. One significant way that the mission has been integrated into daily life at AUC is how some departments and schools have incorporated it into their own mission statements such as GAPP and HUSS schools and the Rare Books and Special Collections Library.

The self-study reveals, that despite the clear connection between department missions and the mission of the University, more efforts need to be exerted in raising awareness of the mission to ensure the involvement of all constituents and help fully integrate the mission into life at AUC.

Transparency and academic freedom need to be further reinforced taking into consideration Egypt’s prevailing situation. Despite regional political and socio-economic challenges, AUC must continue its sincere efforts for internationalization as a cornerstone of its mission.

Finally, the Work Group also recommends that AUC take practical steps to better put its mission into action, including, but not limited to, increasing engagement with the broader community, continuing to work on increasing the number of international students on campus and reaffirming its commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression in order to continue to ensure all members of the community have the opportunity to learn, teach, conduct research, create, and innovate.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STANDARDS

Due to the broad, inclusive, and foundational nature of the University’s mission and goals, Standard I stands in a unique relationship to the other standards in this report. In a perfectly coordinated institution, the mission and goals inform and drive all areas of development and operation. AUC’s liberal arts identity; curriculum; assessment policies and practices; academic and extracurricular student life programs; faculty life commitments such as teaching, research and service; program development; outreach; technology, research; staff development programs and practices; and budgeting and resource allocation operations are all informed and guided by its mission and goals. Consequently, the Standard I Work Group report refers to elements of the reports of all other standard working group reports. This is evident in the overlap and co-referencing of documents in the evidence inventories of the seven working groups.
Link to AUC’s Mission: MSCHE requires that AUC remain true to its own mission.

4. **ANALYSIS**

4.1 **History**

In response to AUC’s 2008 Reaffirmation of Accreditation Self-Study, seven recommendations were made regarding Standard I. The broadest was: “AUC should revisit its mission statement through a collaborative process led by the faculty.” Four of the six remaining recommendations raised issues that were to be addressed in the mission statement, while two others focused on both the mission statement and institutional goals related to it. As was indicated in the monitoring report in 2010 and the periodic review report in 2012, significant progress was made with respect to all seven recommendations (1.01, 1.02, 1.03).

The most significant development since 2008 related to this standard was the revision of AUC’s mission statement. The revision process involved a task force composed of a cross-section of the constituencies at AUC. The mission statement is a result of a collaborative revision of the former statement by representatives from various campus constituencies. Consultation was broad and inclusive, and it resulted in a revised mission statement that was approved by the University Senate and President in May 2009 (1.04, 1.05).

Moreover, once the new statement was approved, colorful attractive posters were printed and distributed to every department with the request that they be hung in prominent areas to raise awareness. Data gathered as a result of focus groups, surveys, and interviews conducted in 2016 confirmed the need to continually disseminate information related to the University’s mission.

The current mission statement reads as follows:

*AUC is a premier English-language institution of higher learning. The University is committed to teaching and research of the highest caliber, and offers exceptional liberal arts and professional education in a cross-cultural environment. AUC builds a culture of leadership, lifelong learning, continuing education and service among its graduates, and is dedicated to making significant contributions to Egypt and the international community in diverse fields. Chartered and accredited in the United States and Egypt, The American University in Cairo is an independent, not-for-profit, equal-opportunity institution. AUC upholds the principles of academic freedom and is dedicated to excellence.*

The foci of AUC’s revised mission statement are: (1) a sustained commitment to the development and delivery of an English-language American liberal arts education; (2) the continued cultivation of professional programs, technology development, entrepreneurial innovation; and policy analysis for Egypt and the region; (3) the pursuit of excellence in local, regional, and global recognition of its high caliber research; and (4) the cultivation of a culture of service, leadership, and lifelong learning in the context of a rapidly evolving ‘city of learning’.

After looking at the AUC schools, departments, and offices mission statements, it is evident that some have integrated elements of the AUC mission statement into their own. For example, the mission statement of the Rare Books and Special Collections Library includes: “…to support excellence in research and learning by assembling, conserving, and facilitating scholarly access to comprehensive collections of information material about Egypt and the region”. The School of Humanities and Social Sciences mission states: “…to help…connect us with our local, regional, and global communities…” and “…to produce groundbreaking research and provide the finest liberal arts education…”. Also, the School of Science and Engineering’s mission statement includes: “…realizing a global impact through innovation, discovery, the pursuit of excellence…to meet current and future needs in service to…our
regional and global communities”. Finally, Department of Public Policy and Administration’s mission statement includes: “…builds a culture of leadership and service among its graduates and is dedicated to making significant contributions to Egypt and the international community (1.05).

The development of the new mission statement, and subsequent efforts to serve it, reflect two further commitments that emerged as a result of sustained institutional self-reflection: (1) collaboration, shared-governance and inclusivity in all aspects of decision making; (2) data and evidence-based assessment in all areas of operation, academic and otherwise. These commitments are manifest in the process whereby the mission statement was revised, as well as all subsequent efforts to serve that mission (1.06, 1.07).

4.2 Goals and Strategic Plans

In fall 2013, the University President and the chair of the Board of Trustees (BoT) launched a comprehensive process to develop a new strategic plan to build on the University’s strengths, chart its course though its one-hundredth year, and lay the foundation for the next century. Led by a steering committee of faculty, administrators, students, and trustees, AUC’s strategic planning process was carried out in a way intended to embody AUC’s core values, enable meaningful community involvement and consultation, engage stakeholders in AUC’s future, and build accountability at all levels. A draft document was prepared, circulated and discussed on campus, and reviewed by the BoT. This strategic plan is currently being revised as AUC approaches its centennial in 2019.

The result of this process is a document that foregrounds four institutional priorities:

   **Education for Citizenship and Service**: AUC believes that a sound education not only prepares students for professional success but also for responsible citizenship and community engagement. The liberal arts tradition, with its emphasis on the broad education of a common core curriculum and the experiential learning of rich extracurricular programs, strengthens the curiosity and courage of AUC graduates and promotes civic participation.

   **Research Reflecting Innovation and Impact**: AUC is a source of insight and inspiration in many fields, and the University expects faculty and students to participate in scientific, scholarly, and/or artistic production. Particular emphasis is placed on those domains in which there is the prospect of a tangible effect on the development of disciplinary knowledge or the enhancement of societal welfare.

   **Outreach Enhancing Engagement and Access**: AUC is dedicated to serving communities in Egypt and around the world through extension and outreach programs that bring university expertise and insight to a wider public and that serve to inform and enlighten public discourse, enhance access to information and knowledge, and enrich artistic and intellectual life.

   **Management with Sustainability and Integrity**: AUC is committed to managing the operations of the University so as to reflect and foster the values taught to students, expected of our faculty, and which the institution wishes to exemplify in Egypt. AUC’s practices should exhibit a commitment to environmental, social and fiscal responsibility, and all stakeholders should observe the highest standards of integrity in the workplace and in their dealings with vendors, clients and other constituents.
4.3 Strategic Objectives

These four institutional priorities, in turn, produced the following four strategic objectives:

I: Make Our Place in the World: Egypt’s Global University

AUC must realize its promise to be the “destination of choice in Egypt and the Middle East for students and faculty from around the world” through an intentional focus on maintaining and strengthening the international diversity and exposure of both its student body and its faculty.

II: Unleash Learning: Opening the AUC Classroom

To create “an ethically engaged, diverse community of scholars” in the twenty-first century, AUC needs to embrace and adopt new pedagogies that emphasize learning-by-doing and so prepare students with skills and confidence that not only build on but also transcend their particular majors or graduate-level disciplines.

III: Location, Location, Location: AUC as an Anchor and a Magnet

AUC is extraordinarily fortunate to have exceptional campus facilities in two vibrant and fast developing sites in a uniquely important and dynamic city. The University needs to ensure that it builds on these assets to strengthen its campus culture, community engagement, national reputation, and international standing.

IV: Instilling Integrity, Accountability, and Sustainability: Managing Continuous Change

Perhaps the most striking element of AUC’s ongoing self-reflection and deliberation is how often it has acknowledged a need to improve its processes and procedures. Whether in looking at how scholarships and fellowships are allocated, faculty are recruited, teaching assessed, employees hired, teaching rewarded, enrollment managed, or research promoted, there is far more confidence that AUC knows what it wants to do than how this should be accomplished.

4.4 Analysis by Criterion

In their analysis of the mission statement, the Work Group divided the mission statement into individual components to help clearly assess the University’s compliance to the standard (1.08, 1.09).

Criteria used to analyze the Mission Statement:

I. A sustained commitment to the development and delivery of an English-language American liberal arts education

II. The cultivation of professional programs, technology development, entrepreneurial innovation, and policy analysis for Egypt and the Region

III. The pursuit of excellence and local, regional, and global recognition of its high caliber research

IV. The cultivation of a culture of service, leadership, and lifelong learning in the context of a rapidly evolving ‘City of Learning’.

4.4.1 A sustained commitment to the development and delivery of an English-language American liberal arts education.

English-language proficiency is a requirement for all students, which is why AUC provides foundational English-language skills and supporting academic resources. This is most conspicuous in the Academy of Liberal Arts (ALA): “The academy's more than 100 dedicated faculty members provide foundational language, writing, critical thinking and cross-disciplinary courses for AUC undergraduate students, including cornerstone classes in the...
new Freshman Program of the Core Curriculum, as well as providing intensive Arabic and English-language instruction for a wider community, including graduate and international students” (1.10, 1.11). In addition to the Freshman Program, which provides all AUC freshmen the academic skills and English-language proficiency they need, the ALA also influences students by coordinating capstone courses within and outside of students’ majors. More generally, the Core Curriculum requirements ensure that all students are exposed to courses from a diverse range of disciplines which reinforce foundations in critical thinking, ethical, and reasoning skills. These courses also ensure that all students take courses that instill cross-cultural competencies and develop awareness of a diverse range of local, regional, and international contexts. All the Core Curriculum learning outcomes relate to AUC’s mission and goals (1.12).

All AUC majors and minors strive to incorporate these mission-based values into their courses. Regardless of a student’s area of academic focus, an emphasis is placed on ensuring that he or she graduates capable of studying, working, and participating in civic and social life in Egypt, the Arab region and/or internationally. For example, syllabi incorporate the department’s mission statement, which includes: “…build[ing] a culture of leadership and service among its graduates and… dedicated to making significant contributions to Egypt and the international community…” (1.13). Syllabi also contain expected learning outcomes which give additional evidence of incorporating the University’s mission, for example ECON 2051’s syllabus includes: “enable students to assimilate, evaluate and synthesize knowledge,” and “studying and understanding this culturally diverse and strategically important region” (1.14). Also from the Academy of Liberal Arts’ Rhetoric and Composition Department’s Mission Statement, from RHET 4260: “equipped with values of community building…human service,” which aligns with the University’s Mission Statement phrases related to service and community (1.15).

Community Based Learning program (CBL) is a teaching methodology that advances course-learning goals through service to a partner community. It combines community service with explicit academic learning objectives in preparation for community work and deliberate reflection. CBL courses and related initiatives are coordinated by AUC’s CBL Program, which is hosted by the Academic Community Engagement Office (1.16, 1.17)

To ensure that AUC’s curriculum delivers on its commitment to the delivery of an English-language American liberal arts education, all programs and courses are regularly assessed. Assessment practices are coordinated through a planning and assessment software: Compliance Assist. It facilitates assessment at the program level for academic areas and strategic planning and assessment (Integrated Strategic Planning) at the department and school levels for academic and non-academic areas. In all domains, Compliance Assist is used as a database for all strategic and assessment plans and reports and has been a cornerstone of AUC’s assessment practice since it was introduced in 2013. With each passing assessment cycle, the University has become increasingly self-aware of how it’s academic and non-academic practices should be modified in order to better serve the mission and goals.

In addition, three other modes of regular assessment serve the mission and goals: student evaluation, peer evaluation and self-evaluation; the self-evaluation is completed via the submission of Annual Faculty Reports. These assessment tools contribute to a ‘culture of assessment’ that is on par with best practices at peer and aspirational peer institutions around the world (1.18).

AUC ensures that its program curricula fulfill its mission and goals by incorporating input from across the academic community at all stages of development. To achieve this objective, the University requires that all catalog changes, regardless of size or scope, are approved by the faculty with the input of students, administrators, and staff. The annual curriculum approval process is multi-staged, with departments submitting proposed changes through an

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4 http://www.aucegypt.edu/academics/academy-liberal-arts
online system that is accessible to approved reviewers at all levels. These proposals are then processed by school level committees, the University Senate and the Provost. Not only does this process guarantee that all curricular changes are thoroughly reviewed, but it is also a mechanism through which AUC’s academic mission is shared with all relevant constituencies.

AUC’s faculty are the most significant contributors to this criterion. It is for this reason that the University invests in recruiting and retaining exceptional local and international faculty. All faculty-recruiting processes are coordinated by the Provost’s Office in consultation with school deans, departmental search committees, department chairs, program and center directors, and individual faculty members. This is a broad and inclusive process that establishes the foundation on which AUC’s academic identity and reputation is grounded (1.19).

In addition, faculty development opportunities are also offered through the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT), which provides faculty with various resources, services and personalized support to help them create a stimulating learning environment (1.20, 1.21).

AUC’s curriculum reflects the University’s commitment to diversity, global engagement, community-based learning, and experiential learning in a number of ways. For decades AUC has been home to a broad range of student mobility programs that bring international students to AUC and send AUC students to academic institutions around the world. This work is the responsibility of the Office of International Students and Study Abroad (1.22) 5. Since 2012, every year over 100 AUC students have participated in exchange or study abroad programs in over 24 countries (1.21).

Students are also offered non-academic support mechanisms to help them throughout their time at the University and to raise awareness of the university’s mission and goals. For example, at the beginning of each semester, the First-Year-Experience new student orientation program facilitators orient new students by introducing the different support mechanisms available to them and discussing relevant issues to ease their transition to AUC. The program also raises awareness of the mission, where facilitators discuss the AUC Mission Statement with new students (1.23).

4.4.2 The cultivation of professional programs, technology development, research, entrepreneurial innovation, and policy analysis for Egypt and the region

This is served through a variety of programs situated in different institutional contexts across the different university’s schools. In addition to undergraduate and graduate degree programs, all schools offer a variety of professional programs, which promote technology development, research and entrepreneurial innovation. Following are some examples:

- The School of Business Executive Education offers globally-recognized executive education in three areas: open-enrollment programs, customized programs, and collaborative programs. These programs enable today’s business leaders to develop the strategic thought processes and skills necessary to successfully grow their businesses in today’s dynamic global marketplace. In addition to Egypt, AUC provides Executive Education training programs in Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Program offered by the school enhances the business knowledge and leadership skills of Arab women entrepreneurs (1.24, 1.25, 1.26) 6,7.

- The School of Global Affairs and Public Policy Executive Education mission is to provide capacity building that serves to reinforce and reinvigorate leadership capacities

5 http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/offices/office-international-students-and-study-abroad-issa
6 http://schools.aucegypt.edu/Business/exced/Pages/default.aspx
7 http://schools.aucegypt.edu/Business/WEL/Pages/default.aspx
within Egypt and the region. The school also hosts a number of research centers that provide degree certificates, professional programs, entrepreneurial innovation and community service such as The Center for Migration and Refugee Studies and The Institute for Gender and Women's Studies (1.27, 1.28, 1.29)\(^8\)\(^9\).

- The Graduate School of Education contributes to education reform by providing theoretical and applied components needed to build the capacity of professionals and policymakers in the education system (1.30)\(^10\).
- The School of Humanities and Social Sciences hosts a large number of departments whose faculty members are teachers-scholars who strive to produce groundbreaking research and provide the finest liberal arts education in the region (1.31)\(^11\).
- The School of Sciences and Engineering hosts The Engineering and Science Services that has been dedicated to serving and developing engineering and science related industrial communities for more than 30 years (1.32)\(^12\).
- The School of Continuing Education offers certificate programs, noncredit term-length courses and variable-length, and customized courses to fulfill the continuing education needs of individuals and organizations in Egypt and the Middle East. Also through its Community Lecture Series, the School offers the community an opportunity to discuss a variety of issues (1.33, 1.34, 1.35).
- The Center for Sustainable Development’s mission is to guide sustainable development efforts in Egypt, the region, and beyond by providing holistic academic programs, applied interdisciplinary research, and community service to improve lives and livelihoods while safeguarding natural resources for the future generations to come. This is achieved through a number of projects facilitated by a wide network of national and international partners (1.36).

In all of these areas, three themes that emphasize the mission and goals stand out: (1) outreach with impact, (2) a focus on the local, regional, and the international and the relations among them, and (3) the development and support of programs that produce groundbreaking research and innovations in policy development and technology innovation.

4.4.3 The pursuit of excellence and local, regional and global recognition of its high caliber research.

Research is a foundation of AUC’s mission. Much of AUC’s reputation and consequent brand recognition is the result of generations of research produced by faculty and students. The publication record in all disciplines and areas of expertise is remarkable (1.37, 1.38).

To serve this component of the mission and goals, AUC recruits, develops, and retains faculty of the highest caliber. AUC invests a considerable portion of its budget and resources to this end.

AUC serves faculty and their research agendas through internal and external funding mechanisms. Internally, the Office of the Provost oversees an internal grant system that invests over $1 million of university funds per year in faculty research. Faculty can access funds to attend conferences, coordinate conferences, and conduct research projects. Additionally, this grant system supports faculty efforts to enhance pedagogy and develop new course content and programs. Faculty are engaged at all levels of review (departmental, school, and university) in the process of evaluating grant proposals. This process is coordinated through an online system that ensures collective participation and transparency. To assist faculty in securing external funding to support their research, AUC’s Office of

\(^8\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/GAPP/exceed/Pages/default.aspx
\(^9\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/GAPP/IGWS/Pages/default.aspx
\(^10\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/gse/Pages/default.aspx
\(^11\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/huss/Pages/default.aspx
\(^12\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/sse/Pages/default.aspx
Sponsored Programs provides assistance in seeking funding sources to match proposed projects, drafting and submitting grant proposals, and follow up support for grants that are funded. This office has been extremely successful in helping AUC faculty and programs secure needed funding (1.39, 1.40, 1.41)\(^\text{13}\).

Research produced by AUC faculty is disseminated in the form of books, journals, conference proceedings and other discipline-specific media. Faculty (and student) research is also publicly showcased, both on and off-campus, on a regular basis via a number of online mechanisms, publications, and community-engagement conferences. Research at AUC is not restricted to discipline-specific academic productions. Additionally, creative works and other artistic productions play a vital role in the University’s research agenda, so the funding mechanisms are made available to artists and creative practitioners working outside of traditional academic disciplines and parameters.

In addition to individual faculty research support, AUC provides support and funding to larger, institutional research producing entities, which broadly fall into the categories of research initiatives, centers, and institutes. These entities are referred to as Organized Research Units (ORUs) and are administered by AUC’s Research Administration. In addition to supporting ORUs, the Research Administration also assists faculty in securing research approvals (e.g. CAPMAS), and oversees the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Intellectual Property Policy (1.42, 1.43, 1.44)\(^\text{14}\).

As noted above, research support at AUC is not restricted to faculty. The University also invests considerable resources in providing support to its students. In addition to undergraduate and graduate conference grants and research grants, the University also offers students the opportunity to work as Research Assistants and interns (1.45).

4.4.4 The cultivation of a culture of service, leadership, and lifelong learning in the context of a rapidly evolving ‘City of Learning’.

The School of Continuing Education’s mission is to improve the employability of and provide lifelong learning for participants by extending the resources of the University to Egypt and beyond. It offers a wide range of professional certificates in many fields including HR, translation, language enhancement and IT programs (1.46)\(^\text{15}\).

Additionally, AUC supports academic and non-academic student clubs and programs. All these organizations are coordinated by the Office of the Dean of Students under the auspices of the Office of the Provost (1.47)\(^\text{16}\). They range from academic clubs, cultural associations, student government committees and community service organizations that work closely with the elderly, the orphans, the underprivileged and the sick (1.48). AUC supports numerous and varied formal and informal sports programs coordinated by the Athletics Office and the Office of Student Engagement (1.49)\(^\text{17}\).

To ensure that the AUC outreach efforts are brought back and integrated into the curriculum, the CBL unit was created. The CBL Program aims to support and foster Community-Based Learning, which is a methodology that advances articulated learning goals through student service to a partner community. Launched from the classroom and lectures, readings, and discussions, students apply academic theories and innovative thinking in co-developmental, hands-on service with local, Egyptian, and international communities. This allows learning to extend beyond the University campus for a more rounded student learning experience (1.16, 1.17).

\(^{13}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/about-auc/offices/office-sponsored-programs
\(^{14}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/research/research-administration
\(^{15}\) http://schools.aucegypt.edu/sce/Pages/Programs.aspx
\(^{16}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/students/life/organizations-and-clubs
\(^{17}\) http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-life/office-athletics
The “Open Classroom Initiatives” aspire to create “an ethically engaged, diverse community of scholars” in the twenty-first century who embrace and adopt new pedagogies that emphasize learning by doing, thereby preparing students with the skills and confidence that not only build upon but also transcend their particular major or discipline (1.50). The University must continue to foster learning innovatively in the coming years since the era in which education was defined as bound in time by class hours and semesters, and in which degree programs restricted in space to desks, classrooms, and a campus is no longer sufficient. To that end, AUC has begun a Blended Learning initiative to explore expanding learning beyond the classroom. The Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) offers workshops about the Blended Learning model (hybrid or mixed-mode instruction) and encourages faculty to try it in their classes. AUC defines Blended Learning as a combination of face-to-face and online instruction, which entails replacing a percentage of class time (20-50%) with online instruction. The percentage of online versus face-to-face instruction varies according to context. In online learning, students do not meet face-to-face for instructional purposes; however, they might meet in person for orientation or assessment. Conversely, in web-enhanced learning, students meet face-to-face 100% of the time, and any online component then would not replace face-to-face meetings. Internet-based tasks and assignments may also be used to supplement in-class instruction. With Blended Learning, online activities and interaction become integral to the learning and teaching process (1.52, 1.53).18

In addition, the AUC community should recognize extra-classroom experiences like service-learning, internships, research or study abroad experiences in designing graduation requirements, and better monitor, recognize and reward extracurricular involvement. This will require redesigning many aspects of the learning experience from majors to transcripts, and courses to clubs. Four specific initiatives recommend themselves as catalysts for such restructuring: (1) a “co-curricular transcript” that reflects student involvement in co-curricular activities; (2) the “Cairo in the Curriculum” program, in which each major certifies that it offers at least one course every semester that takes students into the local community for study, research, or service; (3) expansion of the “Sustainable AUC” theme across campus, encouraging visible, innovative projects involving students in learning beyond the classroom by using the campus as the classroom and demonstrating the University’s commitment to sustainability, such as roof gardens, solar energy, carpooling, etc. and; (4) an enhancement of the capstone requirements of the Core Curriculum for undergraduates, and the final project and thesis requirements of the graduate programs to ensure that students have appropriate workplace English proficiency and presentation skills (1.51).19

The Community Outreach program, with its message as “No university is an island,” introduced the Neighborhood Initiative in 2015 in the form of an AUC–AUB symposium intended to spark discussion on universities’ responsibilities toward engagement with local communities. Since then, the initiative has unfolded into a research project aimed at ultimately establishing an official entity dedicated to inspiring engagement on AUC’s campuses and in its local community. Currently, the research team is working on mapping the surrounding communities, both that of AUC New Cairo and AUC Tahrir Square. The Neighborhood Initiative serves as a hub for connections between AUC and its neighbors, involving support and outreach it can offer to neighbors and vice versa. Some events that have been offered include the Department of the Arts’ live streaming of Opera performances from the New York Metropolitan Opera, public lectures by key figures, workshops for people outside the AUC community who wish to enhance various professional skills, and student initiatives like the Business School’s Volunteers in Action which strives to help orphans, and the Venture Lab which enables potential entrepreneurs to incubate and accelerate their business ideas. As of spring 2017 eight acceleration cycles were completed, 85 startups were

18 http://www.aucegypt.edu/faculty/center-learning-and-teaching
19 http://www.aucegypt.edu/faculty/center-learning-and-teaching/blended-learning
accelerated, 43 million LE were generated in revenues by startups, 27 million LE were raised in funding by startups, and 432 job opportunities were created \( (1.54, 1.55, 1.56)^{20,21} \).

5. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

AUC fulfills Standard I through the demonstration of its mission statement, its institutional priorities, and strategic objectives. AUC has promoted its mission, vision and values through various AUC publications. Furthermore, AUC aspires to cultivate a culture of transparency, shared governance, and collective participation in all aspects of its operations. This is very challenging given its geographic location and the surrounding political and cultural environment. These issues are fundamental to the mission and goals of the University, as a perceived lack of transparency undermines the institution’s ability to fully harness faculty, student, staff, parent, alumni, and community energy and resources.

While the University meets the Standard, there are some shortcomings. First, the mission statement is not as well-known throughout the community as the University would like. Second, despite the University’s continuous efforts to maintain transparency, it faces a perceived lack of transparency. Hence, the administration needs to continue directing its efforts towards changing this perception. Third, recent events on campus, reflective of the current economic conditions in Egypt, require that AUC explore new ways of engaging parents and incorporating their input into the University’s decision-making processes.

The Work Group prepared a list of recommendations to facilitate AUC’s continuous improvement as it heads into its second century.

**Recommendations**

1. Continue to promote and publicize the University’s mission and goals by emphasizing the AUC mission and goals through multiple venues and mechanisms including: reprinting the statement in various publications, putting up posters and banners around campus highlighting the mission statement, including the mission statement in emails, placing keywords/phrases from the mission statement on large banners hanging from library, having the mission statement displayed on home pages of Blackboard or other university websites and/or platforms, including it in the planners given to new students, and creating bookmarks with the mission printed on them to be used as giveaways.

2. Explore new ways of engaging parents and incorporating their input into the decision-making processes, as parents play a crucial role in supporting the University and therefore their input should contribute to how AUC operationalizes its mission and pursues its goals. Efforts to accomplish this have already begun; in fall 2016 and 2017 the Provost and Dean of Students organized information sessions with parents of the new incoming class. Furthermore, the Parents Association, as representative of parents, has been playing a more profound role as a strategic partner and more alignment and engagement would be very beneficial.

3. Analyze and address reputational challenges. These challenges include, the lack of understanding and sometimes appreciation of the concept of liberal arts education, as AUC is one of the very few institutions in Egypt that promote the ideals and principles of liberal arts education. Second, there is the perception that AUC targets a specific class strata, as its fees are the highest among the private universities in Egypt, despite the fact that AUC offers extensive need-based scholarships for its students.

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\(^{20}\) [http://schools.aucegypt.edu/huss/arts/Pages/default.aspx](http://schools.aucegypt.edu/huss/arts/Pages/default.aspx)

\(^{21}\) [http://schools.aucegypt.edu/Business/aucvlab/Pages/Who-We-Are.aspx](http://schools.aucegypt.edu/Business/aucvlab/Pages/Who-We-Are.aspx)
STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions in all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully”.

2. SUMMARY

Evidence suggests a strong respect for intellectual property, yet academic and intellectual freedom and freedom of expression have faced significant challenges. Academic and intellectual freedom have faced greater governmental restrictions on social science research since 2013, and freedom of expression is challenged due to internal and external pressures.

AUC has taken a positive step in promoting diversity and inclusion among students, faculty, staff and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives by creating an Office of the Dean of Students (DoS), with a Diversity and Advocacy Unit and a Title IX coordinator. In order to create greater opportunities for students to engage with one another in a positive manner, the DoS has restructured the offices of International Student Life and Student Engagement so that they report to one executive director. The newly appointed Provost has consistently supported the DoS’s efforts to remove pockets of marginalization among the student body, and to diversify representation in the university Senate and Student government bodies, by including students who are not Egyptian or who are Egyptian but not from the majority socioeconomic and demographic stratum. On the academic side, the Freshman Program introduced “diversity” as their common reading theme for 2017 with assorted topics and readings infused into their curriculum in the first-year courses.

AUC has an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) Committee that ensures compliance with applicable U.S. federal and state laws, including Title IX, FERPA, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Violence against Women Act, and other applicable laws and regulations as required. Students, faculty, and staff at AUC have their own separate means of petitioning and grieving. In some cases, there are multiple channels for grievance and reporting claims.

AUC has stated conflict of interest policies covering key administrators and recipients of funding. Members of certain boards, such as the IRB, must also identify any conflicting interests when joining and reviewing cases. For hiring, evaluation, promotion and discipline, AUC has evidence of fair just hiring and promotion policies at the faculty and staff levels. Efforts are underway to clarify the benchmarks for faculty promotion and tenure, including Professors of Practice (PoP) faculty. Disciplinary procedures and policies are transparent. However, evidence suggests that many students do not file complaints against faculty because they fear retaliation (2.28).

AUC is open and transparent through its public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, website and internal communications. “Transparent” in the above statement refers to the openness and clear means of sharing AUC’s communication standards to the community internally and externally. AUC has communications policies that outline the rules and regulations governing the representation of the University to all internal and external audiences. The purpose of these policies is to ensure that all communication that takes place on behalf of the University is conducted in a manner that is consistent with the University’s quality standards, branding and visual identity manual, editorial style guide and strategic positioning. In addition, recruitment of staff and faculty, admissions, registration, advising and major declarations all have set policies and procedures that are shared on the website to the community. AUC has demonstrated its commitment to inclusiveness by involving faculty, students, and parents in discussions of AUC’s financial health and plans to increase tuition. Information related to recruiting and admissions found on the web is clear, accurate, and updated.
continuously. The formation of an academic communication committee is evidence that AUC has taken steps to improve accessibility of information on its website.

In promoting affordability and accessibility, AUC has worked diligently to provide several options for families hit hard by the 2016 currency devaluation, including providing emergency grants and increased financial aid. In line with best practices for inclusion, AUC has moved away from merit-based and toward a need-based model. The University is working with key intermediaries such as the Parents Association, student engagement, and the Career Center to demonstrate the value of an AUC education relative to cost.

AUC addressed compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements to include reporting regarding the full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensure or licensing board pass rates in spring 2017. The Career Center maintains graduation employment statistics. AUC is in the process of bringing its website into full compliance with Title IV requirements.

Much improvement has been made to raise awareness of policies, but compliance is inconsistent. Work is needed in the area of policy awareness and compliance by students, faculty, and staff. This includes policies regarding the campus, student codes of conduct, academic rules and regulations, financial policies, and staff policies.

3. **Relationship to other Standards or Criteria**

This standard clearly relates to Standard I Mission and Vision, as the mission and vision are the basis from which ethics, integrity and values of AUC are determined. There is also a clear connection with Standard IV, where clear ethical policies and processes to admission, education, and support services are essential to guarantee successful student support. Finally, ensuring a clear governing structure that outlines roles and responsibilities (Standard VII) is needed to avoid conflict of interest and unethical practices.

**Link to AUC Mission:** Ethics and integrity hit at the core of AUC’s mission. Excellence, one of AUC’s key pillars, is impossible to achieve without integrity as its backbone.

4. **Analysis**

AUC is viewed as a regional leader in the protection and promoting of academic and institutional integrity. To evaluate this claim, the following criteria were assessed and evaluated using interviews, surveys and other methods of data collection.

4.1 *Provide evidence of a commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression and respect for intellectual property.*

Evidence suggests a strong respect for intellectual property, yet academic and intellectual freedom and freedom of expression have faced significant challenges (1.06, 2.01). Academic and intellectual freedom have faced greater governmental restrictions on social science research since 2013, and freedom of expression is challenged due to internal and external pressures.

AUC demonstrates support of academic freedom through its academic freedom statement included in the *Faculty Handbook* (2.02, 2.03). Unfortunately, the statement leaves students and staff, including those hired on research grants, theoretically unprotected.

The Academic Freedom Committee was formed by the Provost, at the request of the President in March 2016 (2.04). The Committee is currently addressing the limitation of the current academic freedom policy with regards to students and staff. The committee is also trying to assess the nature and the magnitude of the internal and external challenges being faced by the AUC community and is collecting incidents of perceived infringements of academic freedom or freedom of expression experienced by faculty, staff or students in the
classroom, in the context of activities on campus, and/or research on or off campus. The committee’s work is still underway. To facilitate this, a special academic freedom email account was created and an anonymous submission form has been circulated.

As further evidence of academic and intellectual freedom, AUC continues to include courses, such as SEMR 1099 (Gender and Sexuality) that attempt to introduce more inclusive perspectives and bring attention to a number of issues (2.05). These courses are well-attended. However, progressive forces are fighting an entrenched conservative and exclusionary majority that includes parents, alumni, faculty, students and the wider community. Aggression against the presence of human rights activity - perceived negatively as ‘Western influenced’- continues. Web forums and open discussion often invoke resistance to the expression of what is considered nonconformist behavior. Presentations that highlight concerns like LGBT issues, women's rights, racism, anti-harassment of women are often dismissed as either 'ultra-liberal', 'Western imposed' or 'against societal norms' (2.06) The student body is bifurcated into groups that support open discussion (either with conservatives or diverse-aware groups) and those who do not accept this form of free speech.

AUC has a stated commitment to supporting a culture that values freedom of expression. However, faculty are protected more than students. For example, sexual orientation is not listed as a protected factor for admission of students, whereas it is listed as a protected factor in faculty recruitment.

AUC has been obliged at times to struggle to balance its commitment to free expression with the reality that it exists in a society where the law does not honor it to the same extent that AUC does. Due to external constraints, restrictions were imposed in some past cases when national authorities warned that a specific project would either pose a serious national security risk or potentially put members of the community in harm’s way. The case of AUC’s refusal in 2015 to allow a Skype conference with a popular voice of Egypt’s 2011 revolution, subsequently exiled broadcaster Bassem Youssef, was a clear example. Without informing AUC’s administration, several students had arranged with Youssef to livestream him into campus. When members of AUC’s administration were warned by local authorities not to allow this to occur, AUC complied with the authorities’ wishes.

AUC states its support of freedom of speech, as attested by its published freedom of expression policy, its support of academic tenure, its code of community standards, and its student rights and responsibilities (2.07). AUC understands that diverse views are part of the community. However, there is a concern about reports of strong opposition and in some cases intolerance to groups and individuals who hold views other than those that conform to perceived conservative and/or fundamentalist ideology. A survey conducted by the University in 2016 showed that the majority of students agree that there is a well-adopted freedom of expression policy with stated procedures and that students are able to express themselves freely in and outside class (1.07). However, 20% of the surveyed students also stated they were unable to take a stand (neutral) on whether their professors will allow them to research topics that challenge societal norms. Data therefore suggest that AUC struggles internally within its own population. However, the formation of an academic freedom committee and the continuation of support for the student-run publication “AUC Times” are two examples of how AUC is making efforts to promote diversity and inclusion on campus, in curriculum and in student and faculty life. AUC’s academic freedom committee has supported students’ use of controversial posters and slogans for classroom purposes even when members of AUC security deemed them impermissible on campus.

AUC has an unequivocally worded Freedom of Expression policy that applies to the entire University community (2.07). The policy is content-neutral, with time, place, and manner restrictions. However, the content neutrality of the policy has not been observed. Much of this is related to AUC’s need to maintain positive relations with the Egyptian government; however, a sizable population of the internal AUC community does not support content-neutral time, place and manner restrictions.
4.2 A climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives

Excellence, one of AUC’s key pillars, is impossible to achieve without integrity as its backbone, which is why they are featured in the mission and vision of the University as core values. To support these principles, the Code of Academic Ethics was written by a University Senate task force and ratified by both the president and the University Senate. With its adoption came the creation of the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) to adjudicate purported violations and the complementary Council on Academic Integrity (CAI) formed from the task force to conduct regular reviews of policy and assist with the dissemination of policy awareness (2.08), the Council is also responsible for investigating alleged integrity violations by faculty (2.08, 2.09)22. A part-time staff person was hired to coordinate the AIC. In fall of 2012, the part-time position was turned into a full-time position, and thus formed the Academic Integrity Office (AIO).

Complementing the work of the AIO was the Student Community Standards (SCS) Office (formerly the Student Conduct Office). In November 2016, the Student Conduct Office merged with the AIO to form the Community Standards Office (CSO), with direct reporting to the Provost. The unified office is responsible for all community-wide policies. This includes the review of existing policies, drafting of needed policies, establishing processes for implementation and procedures for addressing violations. It also contains the Community Standards document for students (2.10, 2.11).

All new undergraduate students have a session on the Code of Academic Ethics during First Year Experience; graduate students must successfully complete an online tutorial during their first semester to proceed with their studies; there is an academic integrity statement required on all course syllabi. Student signatures used to be more widely collected, however, with the conversion to digital copies, the signatures became less numerous. HR requires all new staff to sign the Code upon appointment.

The AIC adjudicates reported cases of alleged student violations. Review of the policies for which the CSO are responsible takes place annually. The CAI reviews the Code of Academic Ethics for modification and updates, and the directors of the CSO and the Office of Diversity and Advocacy (D&A), which is contained within the Office of the Dean of Students, reviews the Code of Community Standards, which is “owned” by the Office of the Provost. An online report form exists to report student violations. This automatically feeds into a database that automates the processes of notification, record keeping and follow-up. While each case is considered according to its own merits, continuity in sanctions for similar violations is always sought. Due to the multiple stages of review of ethics and integrity violations and the fact that the Provost reviews all recommendations before making a decision, decisions are final. The petitioner can appeal, but only in cases with substantial new information. However, in practice some petitions are considered if they appeal directly to the Provost, regardless of the amount of new evidence. Only in rare cases have decisions been overturned.

A significant initiative is the formation of an Office of Dean of Students containing the Office of Diversity and Advocacy (D&A). The D&A supports a multicultural environment where students support the principles of social justice, inclusion, equity, and respect for the rights of others. The D&A conducts events, activities, and training that serve to educate AUC students on pertinent issues of social justice, identity and advocacy, including a comprehensive understanding of Title IX obligations and protections (2.12). It supports all students through wide-ranging programming that serves to foster a sense of belonging, and to facilitate multicultural understanding and respect. The Title IX coordinator is housed in the D&A office. Additionally, D&A staff members may serve as advisors supporting students in addressing issues of inclusion and cross-cultural understanding to advocate for a healthy campus climate. The values of the D&A are Equity: Commitment to equitable treatment for

22 http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-committee
all regardless of difference; Social Justice: Elimination of discrimination in all forms and all programs; Lifelong Learning: Ability to lead toward engagement in a spirit of pluralism; Inclusion: Creating an environment that is inclusive of all members of its community and last but not least Accountability: Commitment to efforts to build awareness of the impact of one’s actions on oneself, others, and the community at large.

To expose AUC’s students to diversity, AUC’s Common Reading Program Selection Committee chose a “diversity” theme for the 2017-18 academic year around which “5 Campus Conversations” will be implemented. The “5 Campus Conversations” chosen for implementation include (1) Diversity through Music and the Arts, (2) Culinary Culture and Food Justice, (3) Urban Segregation, (4) Inclusive Virtual Communities, and (5) Student Well Being. The theme was chosen with significant input from student focus groups.

AUC is at the forefront of including academically qualified differently-abled students into its community (2.13)\(^23\). The Office of Wellbeing under the DoS has a certified disability management officer who is networked with key members of AHEAD in the United States and whose team has provided support and enforced accommodations for our differently-abled students, six of whom successfully graduated in spring 2017 with bachelor’s degrees.

4.3 A grievance policy that is documented and disseminated to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty, or staff. The institution’s policies and procedures are fair and impartial, and ensure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably

The University expects those who make management, administrative and personnel decisions to make them fairly, to the best of their abilities and consistent with established AUC policy and practice. Therefore, AUC provides a grievance procedure for legitimate complaints from faculty, staff and students who believe they have been adversely affected by a decision that contravenes AUC policy and practice, without fear of retaliation. A legitimate grievance is a complaint that an AUC policy or procedure has been violated to adversely affect an individual’s rights and privileges.

In an effort to ensure clear, comprehensive and considerate response to community concerns about actual or potential discrimination or harassment, AUC replaced the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action with an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) Committee. This Committee has overall responsibility for the management of the University’s policies and procedures concerning discrimination and harassment and ensures compliance with applicable U.S. federal and state laws, including Title IX, FERPA, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Violence against Women Act, and other applicable laws and regulations (2.14)\(^24\).

The right to express a grievance is granted to students, faculty, and staff at AUC. There are multiple grievance submission channels for each constituency of the AUC community. This can create confusion and duplication; however, the majority of surveyed students and faculty perceive these channels as clearly stated and are well aware of their roles.

Students convey their complaints through academic channels or via the Dean of Students (2.15). In 2013, AUC hired external consultants to conduct a comprehensive review of student life. As a result, it was decided to purchase a software to record and analyze complaints. AUC invested in "Simplicity" which is now used for Academic Integrity, Conduct, and Well-being, so there is a database of student psychological complaints and student disciplinary violations and sanctions. Access to this system is maintained at the highest confidentiality levels due to the sensitivity of the information it captures.

In addition, the Dean of Students maintains a log of all student visits with complaints whether academic, financial, or other in nature, and is clearly recorded and captured. This information


\(^24\) [http://aucadmin.aucegypt.edu/affirmative/EO_AA_policies_harras.htm](http://aucadmin.aucegypt.edu/affirmative/EO-AA_policies_harras.htm)
is used to see if there is a policy and/or procedure available that addresses the issue. An example would be identifying that a policy was needed for disability cases as a result of information obtained from student complaints. AUC was able to address this with a policy that was recently approved by the University Senate.

Academic petitions are channeled from student to instructor to department chair to dean, with the option of appealing to the Provost. Students may also submit claims to the Academic Integrity Office when they believe an ethical violation has occurred and they wish to remain anonymous. When handling an academic grievance, the Dean of Students directs it to the proper channels: Title IX grievances are handled by the D&A office; other conduct matters are handled by the CSO.

The staff at AUC may report their grievances through any of the following channels: two private syndicates, an EOAA Committee, a legal office or the Human Resource (HR) director of staff affairs (2.14).

Two syndicates carry out the role of representing the workers/employees of the American University in Cairo. Each seat of a board member is open for elections every five years. In 1970, a decree was issued and published in the official AUC gazette, approving the establishment of the Syndicate of the Workers of the American University in Cairo. Since the said date, the above Syndicate has carried out the role of the body representing the employees of the University. Upon the appointment of a new board for the Syndicate, a new decree was published in the official gazette. The last decree to that effect had been issued and published in the official gazette on November 28, 2006. The Workers Syndicate Law No. 35 (1976) and Amendment No. 12 (1992) govern the operation and activities of this Syndicate. The board of this Syndicate has carried out its duties and worked closely with senior management throughout the years to serve the University community and protect the rights of its staff. The current board includes 11 staff members. Spurred by the January 2011 uprising in Egypt, Minister of Manpower and Immigration Dr. Ahmed El Boraie issued an administrative decision allowing for the formation of independent syndicates in Egypt. This administrative decision was issued pursuant to the International Labor Convention No.87 of 1948, regarding freedom of association. International Labor Convention No. 87 was ratified in Egypt in November 1957. Following the 2011 administrative decision regarding independent syndicates, Minister of Manpower and Immigration Kamal Abou Eita issued another decision in 2013, instructing all the offices of the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration to approve and authenticate the documents in relation to the establishment of independent syndicates. On January 30, 2012, AUC sent a request to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, seeking his advice in respect of the legitimacy of the establishment of the Independent Syndicate and regarding AUC’s obligation to acknowledge both syndicates. On February 8, 2012, AUC received the Minister’s response. In his response, the Minister confirmed that the Independent Syndicate is a legitimate body and asked AUC to continue dealing with both syndicates, acknowledging them as legitimate representatives of the American University’s staff. The current board includes 15 staff members.

Faculty may submit their complaints to their Department Chair, School Dean, Grievance Committee of the Senate and /or Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs in the Provost’s Office (1.19). However, the normal practice is that faculty grievances are filed through the Senate. In this case the Senate Grievance committee checks if procedures were appropriately followed. All Senate resolutions, including the findings of the Grievance Committee, are recommendations for the President, Provost and Administration. The Senate Grievance Committee is undergoing revision of its policies to ensure clarity. If a case needs technical assessment, re-evaluation or investigation of an issue initiated by the Provost, the Provost forms an ad-hoc committee to look into such cases.
4.4 The avoidance of conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents:

AUC has a Conflict of Interest Policy that is meant to supplement Egyptian and U.S. laws to ensure that university operations and resources are used solely for the benefit of AUC. The policy requires annual signed disclosure forms by only the Board of Trustees (BOT) and key administrators. The policy is published on the website under policies that outline the University's approach to identify and evaluate potential conflicts of interest and assists all of its employees, faculty and staff in addressing them (2.17). By adopting this Conflict of Interest Policy, the University demonstrated its commitment to the ethical principles that guide university operations and established a mechanism to safeguard the integrity of the university and its employees. In addition, AUC has a research conflict of interest policy that applies to external funded projects.

Furthermore, the interview with the Associate Vice President (AVP) of Human Resources confirmed that AUC strictly adheres to the avoidance of nepotism policy, which particularly relates to the hiring of relatives (2.18).

4.5 Fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employee:

AUC strictly adheres to processes and policies for hiring staff and faculty. Fair and equal opportunities are given to all staff applicants, since all applications are announced and collected in the Human Resources (HR) Office to be screened, classified into separate folders and sent finally to the hiring department. Screening of applicants is based on comparing their profiles to the announced job qualifications to ensure that shortlisted applicants are those with the most relevant skills, educational background and/or work experience.

Faculty recruitment follows the procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook 2015-2016 (2.02). Early each spring, all departments are asked to provide their school dean with a list of replacement and new positions for which they would like to conduct searches during the following year. The deans then submit their search requests, documenting the need for each position. In May of each year, the Provost informs the deans of those searches that have been authorized; the deans then consult with the departments to return to the Provost’s Office the text for the position advertisement, the outlets in which the ad should be placed, and the members of the search committee (2.19). All search committees must be composed of at least three faculty members, one of who is from a department external to the department conducting the search. The search committee conducts interviews with the short-listed candidates and communicates their final selection to the Provost through the School Dean. The Provost then sends the offer after drafting it in consultation with the School Dean. As for recruitment of adjunct faculty, efforts are being exerted to maintain equity and fairness. A new search process, similar to that of full time faculty, has been implemented as of 2015-2016 to ensure hiring qualified adjunct faculty. The new process includes interviews at the department level and an assurance of English language proficiency. The salary scale is regularly updated with clear definitions of ranks to maintain equity and to attract distinguished adjunct faculty members.

To ensure extra measures of fairness and transparency, some schools adopt additional mechanisms to the HR recruitment process. The School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) established two standing committees to oversee the new full-time staff hiring and promotion. The first committee deals with the hiring and promotion of staff from level 8 to above, while the second committee is responsible for level 7 and below. Another example is the School of Continuing Education (SCE), which creates ad-hoc committees for every vacancy. The members of the ad-hoc committees are selected from all the different departments of SCE. In HUSS, the Associate Dean reviews the suitability of the candidates for a position that is to be filled internally, and if none are suitable, requests to hire externally.
Adjunct faculty hiring follows the *Adjunct Faculty Handbook* (2.03). A new search process, similar to that of full time faculty, has been implemented as of 2015-2016 to ensure hiring qualified adjunct faculty. The new process includes interviews at the department level and assurance of English language proficiency. The salary scale is regularly updated with clear definitions of ranks to maintain equity and to attract distinguished adjunct faculty members. They receive the same professional development opportunities as full-time faculty with regard to receiving training and mentoring. Adjunct faculty are eligible to enroll in CLT workshops and to utilize its services for specialized assistance in strengthening teaching skills and expanding the instructional toolkit. They go through regular evaluations through the department.

Adjunct faculty are also provided space and equipment. They have library privileges and access to athletic facilities. Adjuncts are eligible to receive medical care by the AUC Medical Center in case of emergency. In addition, AUC facilitates work permit for foreign adjunct faculty and confirmation of work visa eligibility. In accordance with the University Senate committees, the Faculty Affairs Committee develops, reviews, approves, and monitors policies and other matters relating to faculty personnel matters (2.02). It is responsible on behalf of the Senate for the contents of the *Faculty Handbook* governing faculty appointments and conditions of service (2.02). It is responsible for recommendations to the University Senate of policies and procedures relating to faculty appointments, promotion and tenure, and compensation and benefits. The Provost has been working on more clear benchmarks and guidelines for each school and this is being finalized for the next cycle of tenure and promotion cases (2018-2019). The Provost Office ensures fair and impartial practices by following up on the policies and procedures compiled in the *Faculty Handbook* in relation to hiring, promotion, tenure and disciplinary actions.

The Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Committee (EOAA) was created to replace the previous Ombuds office – which did not serve students – as an entity that serves the entire community (2.20, 2.14). The EOAA Committee has staff support, including access to U.S. resources through the University’s New York Office.

4.6 Honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, as well as in internal communications

The Office of Communications and Advancement is responsible for the strategic positioning and reputation management. This includes: creative and editorial services, media relations, marketing, publications, internal communications, the website, Arabic outreach, advertising and new media. The goal is to publicize AUC’s invaluable contributions to research, service and outreach in Egypt, the region and the world across all mediums through crafting clear, consistent and quality communications. It has communications policies that outline the rules and regulations that govern internal and external representation. These policies extend to all forms of communications and apply across all channels and communication vehicles in which the University is being represented as an institution. The purpose of these policies is to ensure that all communication that takes place on behalf of the University is done in a manner that is consistent with the University’s quality standards, branding, visual identity manual, editorial style guide and strategic positioning. In addition, it is responsible for ensuring compliance with the policies outlined on the University policies’ webpage (2.21).

The AUC website is the main source of disseminating information regarding admissions of undergraduate, graduate and continuing education students (2.22).
4.7 As appropriate to its mission, services or programs in place to: (1) promote affordability and accessibility; (2) enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring costs.

4.7.1 Current tuition rates at AUC: An assessment of affordability

AUC’s tuition is approximately three times as high as the second-ranked private institution in Egypt (2.23, 2.24)\textsuperscript{25 26}. In dollar terms, AUC’s tuition and fees have sharply \textit{decreased} since 2012 (2.25). Nevertheless, many families whose income is primarily in Egyptian pounds have faced considerable financial struggle since the November 2016 devaluation sharply \textit{increased} AUC’s tuition and fees, as stated and collected in the national currency.

Long before the 2016 devaluation, AUC had taken strong measures to rein in costs and absorbed some of these cost increases by implementing pay freezes and other budget cuts. From FY 2012 to 2016, AUC reduced costs in salaries and fringes by 13%, supplies and services by 14%, utilities by 4% and depreciation by 13%. However, the increase in fees has remained inevitable because of high inflation in Egypt, operating costs incurred in USD - including faculty and administrator salaries, imported equipment and university contributions to pension schemes - and the devaluation of the Egyptian Pound.

AUC moved in 2013/2014 to a tuition formula where half of the tuition for Egyptians was denominated in USD (but could be paid in EGP equivalent at the prevailing official exchange rate), while the rest was denominated in EGP. In November 2016, the EGP currency devalued significantly from an exchange rate of 8.88 to an exchange rate of 18.15 in 2017. AUC, in response to the demands of local students and shortage of foreign currency in the country, reverted to a model of stating tuition exclusively in local currency for Egyptian students, unpegged to the USD. For foreign students, the full tuition and fees remain stated and payable in USD. In dollar terms, AUC fees for Egyptian students at the new exchange rate in spring 2017 were approximately $16,200 for 15 credits, compared to $18,992 prior to the devaluation of the Egyptian currency. Tuition and fees for non-Egyptians are over twice the cost.

4.7.2 Review of the financial aid policy

In an interview in 2014, the AUC Financial Aid Director identified that the bulk of financial aid had previously been going to students who could afford to pay full tuition, as it was merit-based, which hindered the University’s goal of diversifying the student body and resulted in a change of policy. In 2015-2016 AUC fully replaced merit-based with need-based aid, while continuing to support those students who were already enrolled and receiving some form of merit-based aid. The eligibility for competitive awards now depends on demonstrated financial need, as well as merit. With this change in policy, albeit strongly resisted by the more affluent students, AUC has been in a stronger position to offer more inclusive opportunities to the highly qualified but needy public school and less-affluent private school students with demonstrated financial needs.

Through need-based strategies, AUC has reaffirmed its efforts to promote accessibility to students from disadvantaged backgrounds and guaranteed that no student would need to withdraw from AUC due to an inability to afford the tuition. In 2017, AUC’s Scholarship and Financial Aid office revised its formula of determining financial need due to increased hardship faced by the majority of the student body following the 2016 devaluation. Approximately 50% of AUC students now receive some sort of financial aid. The University currently offers over $23 million in financial aid and scholarships (2.26)\textsuperscript{27}. At the same time, AUC introduced an emergency fund in spring 2017 to assist those families who were most

\textsuperscript{25} http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees
\textsuperscript{26} http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/financial-affairs/faqs
\textsuperscript{27} http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/scholarships
impacted by the devaluation of the Egyptian currency. To date, no enrolled student has reported having to leave AUC because of affordability issues, and the emergency fund was able to help 2114 undergraduate students and 119 graduate students.

Currently, the different types of financial aid are: endowed scholarships based on merit (legacy-only) and need-based financial aid (with ceilings) funded by AUC; need, merit, and need/merit scholarships funded by outside sources like foundations; case-specific financial support in case of unforeseen hardship which is limited to only a few cases each year; full tuition waiver for the children of faculty and staff who are admitted to AUC; a 75% tuition waiver for new faculty hired in 2017 for up to two children; and the work-study program which enables students to work as teaching/research assistants or in administrative offices in return for monetary compensation. In contrast to banks in the U.S., Egyptian banks do not provide student loans, so AUC students rely primarily on parents or scholarships to finance their education.

4.73 Access to fellowships and scholarships

AUC has a number of fellowships targeted mostly to graduate students, with eligibility criteria that are fellowship-specific (2.27)\(^28\). The award of fellowships is managed by selection committees that typically involve department and school-level representation. In addition to fellowships, there are a number of merit and need-based scholarships.

The philosophy guiding the preference of need-based scholarships is affirmative action toward a goal of increasing compositional diversity by providing academically qualified and deserving students, in financial need, the opportunity to enrich the AUC student body.

4.8 Compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements to include reporting regarding

All requirements for the Commission’s Requirements of Affiliation are met. Two of them (3 and 11) are evidence of the importance of AUC’s political and financial stability. The Commission’s requirements of Affiliation draw attention to the importance of complying with the request from DAIR to the schools and support units to report and evaluate via Compliance Assist because many of the requirements relate to documentation of assessment and planning.

4.9 Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices and the manner in which these are implemented.

AUC’s new President has upgraded its Internal Audit office (IAO) by restoring it as a direct report to the BoT and the President, vs. formerly reporting directly to the BoT and EVP; recruiting additional compliance officers; and other measures to empower the IAO in accomplishing its standing responsibilities. Such measures have strengthened the structure and efficacy of management controls in place to mitigate risks. Risk can be expressed, in simple terms, as whatever can prevent us from achieving our organizational objectives. IAO conducts different types of audits:

1. **Operational audits**: IAO reviews strategies and procedures to determine whether units are implementing the processes in the most effective way, or if changes and updates to streamline these processes to achieve operational objectives are required.

2. **Compliance audits**: IAO benchmarks different offices and departments against the standards they should be following. The offices and departments themselves determine some of these standards, while others are sometimes determined by

external entities such as accreditation bodies or federal and non-federal grant institutions. IAO reports on discrepancies between the ways offices and departments are handling their activities and how they should be handling them.

3. **Financial audits:** IAO reviews AUC’s financial performance to ensure they are applying the right accounting standards and financial practices.

4. **IT audits:** IAO reviews the IT backbone of AUC.

In addition to the regular audits, IAO conducts special assignments. These assignments address many subjects, including irregularities that are identified by management or that come to their attention and require an audit to investigate what went wrong from a control perspective and determine how to strengthen the control structure to correct and prevent future recurrences.

At the beginning of each year, IAO prepares an annual audit plan. It features the highest risk areas from an audit perspective through a risk assessment process. Up until 2015-2016, this process was conducted manually, involving one-on-one interviews. Since May 2016, IAO launched a web-based risk assessment. It is more interactive and offers different offices and departments the opportunity to go into the online system and put in the risks they believe they are facing. Based on what is entered on the system, IAO builds the annual audit plan. The IAO has a dual reporting line, which reports to the President and the Audit Committee of the BoT, so both parties approve the audit plan before implementation. This reporting structure provides independence, objectivity and organizational stature.

In addition, AUC applies an employees’ performance review, which is conducted annually. This staff performance appraisal system started in 2012. After feedback from trade unions (syndicates) and focus groups, HR implemented changes to the system and provided training and orientation sessions to make sure the community was able to conduct the annual performance appraisal effectively. The evaluation and assessment of performance was suspended in April 2015, to be reviewed and aligned with competencies evaluation. During this period of suspension evaluation occurred by providing a short description of performance in the contract renewal forms until the new form was released in 2017. It is important to mention that part of the appraisal system was dedicated to assess work ethics and values as one of the competencies required by all staff. The new president and provost recognized the suspension and general inadequacy of faculty and staff performance evaluation as a significant risk factor. Besides strengthening the audit function, in 2016 and 2017, the administration engaged expert outside assistance to launch systemic review of all employee positions, compensation and benefits, and performance evaluation processes.

5. **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

AUC adheres to ethics, integrity and values stated in its mission. Over the past decade, AUC has made deliberate, constant strides to improve ethics and integrity, as demonstrated through the appointment of a Title IX Coordinator, conflict of interest policies, easily accessible and transparent policies on the University website, and expansion of the academic integrity unit to be a multi-person office. However, some university units and stakeholders require time and a change in habits to increase their awareness and adoption of university policies. The primary issues of concern which AUC faces in terms of ethics and integrity lie in dealing with its external environment in matters relating to freedom of speech and expression, and societal norms.

**Recommendations**

1. The University should continue to exercise its right, as a private association, to set its own limits on the free expression it will support, even when that appears to constrain freedom of speech to maintain effective cooperation with the host government.

2. The University should strengthen its culture of transparency, shared governance and collective participation in all aspects of its operations and resource allocation decisions.
3. The University should continue to foster an environment of respect for all members of the community, including efforts to address issues of discrimination, retaliation, harassment and other related issues.

4. The University should continue to provide rigorous and regular awareness and orientations for all AUC community including supervisory level faculty and staff.

5. The University should continue to increase communication of policies and procedures and changes to the entire community.

6. Reassess and streamline grievance policies.
STANDARD III: DESIGN AND DELIVERY OF THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.”

2. SUMMARY

To demonstrate that AUC provides learning experiences that are rigorous and coherent, the Work Group consulted online websites and documents, handbooks, strategic and assessment plans of schools, curriculum maps and syllabi, student artifacts, surveys, and numerous other documents. They also contacted and/or interviewed relevant administrators, offices, school representatives, organized and conducted focus groups, and contributed items to an all-AUC survey of faculty and students.

AUC has solid mechanisms to set its goals and to assess their success. These mechanisms include institutional, departmental and programmatic strategic planning; assessment planning linked to the achievement of learning outcomes; and periodic program reviews. Programs at AUC submit strategic and assessment plans every five years and assess the achievement of programmatic learning outcomes each year against predetermined benchmarks. The accreditation and positive peer reviews of many of its programs attest to the high educational standards maintained at AUC. However, there are two areas of concern: (1) some units have yet to complete their strategic and assessment plans and curriculum maps and (2) some programs need to incorporate more measurable learning outcomes and criteria for assessment in their course syllabi.

Faculty at AUC are well-qualified, rigorous and effective in their teaching, and demonstrate this through Annual Faculty Reports. They are also rigorously evaluated by peers, deans and the Provost when applying for promotion, tenure, or contract renewal, and in three-year reviews according to written policies and procedures that are explained in the Faculty Handbook and in each department’s governance documents. They hold appropriate degrees for their positions and teaching assignments. Many resources are available to promote faculty development, including a Faculty Support Grant program and support for innovative teaching through the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT). Faculty have access to these documents online.

Programs of study are described in the online AUC catalog and by their advisors. Four- and five-year plans for most programs are available through advisors in departments and accessible online. Non-declared students considering a major can access its plan using Degree Works.

AUC provides an array of resources and learning opportunities to support faculty and students through its Library and Learning Technologies, which constitute the largest English language academic collection in Egypt. AUC provides technology support through well-equipped “smart” classrooms, learning management systems, IT support for students with disabilities, and other instructional technologies. The Office of Undergraduate Research organizes an annual undergraduate research conference, publishes an online journal and assists with funding for undergraduate students to present at conferences. Graduate students are supported by competitively awarded conference, research and study abroad grants. The Common Reader Program and the Writing Center also support students’ language skills. Students also have opportunities to enroll in study abroad programs and/or internship courses.

AUC provides a complete general education program in the form of a Core Curriculum that has been reviewed and redesigned in the last five years to incorporate shared learning outcomes from the Freshman Program to the Capstone level. The program consists of foundation level courses in the Freshman Program designed to introduce students to the liberal arts while developing their cognitive and English language communication skills in an environment in which English is not the native language. Students whose English is below the standard needed for full admission may
take non-credit intensive or semi-intensive English courses through the Department of English Language Instruction. Fully admitted students take theme-based tandem freshman seminar-freshman writing courses in their first semester. Other analytical and reasoning skills are fostered through required courses in research writing, scientific thinking, information literacy, and philosophical thinking. Core electives “Pathways to Learning” courses at the freshman level, and in Arab World Studies, Global Studies, and Humanities/Social Sciences at the secondary level offer options to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience. Capstone level courses allow students to integrate knowledge and skills. Despite a perception expressed by faculty in the last self-study report that AUC students’ English skills were weaker than in previous years, recent evidence indicates that most AUC students have sufficient communication skills in English to perform effectively in their courses and in the workplace after graduation.

Areas of concern include the continuing need for language support at higher levels in the Core and in the majors. The University should also encourage the use of outcomes-based ePortfolios, which are a form of comprehensive assessment allowing students to connect learning outcomes to their individual learning progress. In addition, it is recommended that AUC provide enough assessment support to ensure periodic language needs assessments and effective monitoring of the student exit and placement process.

AUC offers 46 graduate degree programs in five academic schools, and enrollment for the fall 2017 was 979 graduate students. The Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for all issues related to graduate studies. The strengths of graduate programs at AUC include their diversity in a variety of fields and synergies via dual degrees, as well as their uniqueness in the MENA region. A distinguishing feature of some of the programs is that they address priorities in Egypt, such as the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy’s leadership in public policy. In a recent graduate student survey, students and faculty expressed high levels of satisfaction with opportunities provided at AUC to develop students’ skills as independent thinkers and in research.

AUC has three dual-degree or exchange programs that involve third-party providers: M.Sc. in Sustainable Development and a Dual Degree with IL Politecnico de Milano in Italy; an Exchange Program under Department of Management with the University of South Carolina; and an M.A. in Comparative Middle East Politics and Society with the University of Tubingen in Germany. There is appropriate institutional review and approval by AUC for the ongoing programs delivered by third party providers.

3. **Relationship to Other Standards or Criteria**

Standard III and Standard V Work Groups discussed the areas of assessment of learning outcomes and programs. Co-chairs met multiple times and communicated by email to agree on documentation and procedures and to organize, conduct, and share reports on common focus groups. Documents, such as syllabi and assessment plans, were also shared. There was also some overlap with Standard IV in the area of advising, which the co-chairs discussed and agreed on.

**Link to AUC’s Mission:** The design and delivery of the student learning experience is at the heart of the institution's mission and its means of achieving it.

4. **Analysis**

4.1 *Certificate, undergraduate, graduate, and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential, of a length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or other credential, designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning.*

Chairs are responsible for leading the development and implementation of high-quality curriculum, programs, and teaching methods. They are also in charge of guiding and coordinating assessment and accreditation activities, reviewing course syllabi, collecting and sharing data to guide discussions to improve effectiveness, and creating an environment that recognizes and strives for excellence.
AUC provides learning experiences that promote synthesis of learning and that are characterized by rigor and coherence. AUC sets institutional goals and assesses their success. Of the 90 Academic Programs, 93% of assessment plans have been submitted, which represents excellent progress (3.03) However, an area of concern is that although most AUC programs have developed learning outcomes, some individual courses still do not have them, and some have outcomes that are not measurable (3.04). Another concern is that students have expressed a need for clearer assessment and grading criteria, including expectations for complex assignments and class participation.

4.1.1 Strategic and Assessment Plans and Program Reviews

All schools, departments and units are expected to have a strategic plan aligned to the University Strategic Plan. These plans should be revised every 3 years (3.03). In addition, departments and units are expected to submit annual assessment plans that include systematically gathered and analyzed data as the basis for making appropriate changes. As part of AUC’s assessment planning, all AUC degree programs are expected to develop specific and measurable learning outcomes, which are a major component of the assessment plans. The Academic Assessment Sub-Committee reviews the assessment plans and gives feedback to the academic departments. Annual assessment reports are submitted to the deans indicating to what extent students have achieved the established targets and what changes, if any, are recommended to improve the program.

To ensure adequate academic depth of content and rigor, every six years, programs and departments undergo a self-study review process in which the previous five years of assessment are evaluated including what had been done to improve students’ learning experience (3.05, 3.05, 3.06). As part of the self-study process, external reviewers are invited on campus for a formal review visit that usually lasts two days during which they consult with all relevant constituents and with each other. After the visit, the reviewers submit a report with their assessment and recommendations. AUC has solid mechanisms in place to set its goals and to assess their success (3.07, 3.01).

4.1.2 Accreditation of AUC Programs

AUC holds institutional and specialized accreditation for departments and programs (3.08). The full list is available in the “Overview of Accreditation” section.

4.1.3 Curriculum Maps

AUC fosters a coherent and sequential learning experience through program and curriculum development, curriculum mapping, four- and five-year plans and course syllabi.

When developing a coherent, purposeful program of study, units design specific courses and link them to each other with the goals of the specific programs. Curriculum maps, when properly designed, ensure that what students are taught matches the academic expectations in a particular subject area or grade level. At AUC, programs and departments are asked to provide curriculum maps, which would ideally be accompanied with assessment plans (3.09, 3.10).

29 https://www.aucegypt.edu/about/about-auc/accreditation
4.1.4 Four- and Five-year Study Plans

Many units have four- or five-year study plans for their students. These plans reflect the appropriate scope and sequencing of courses to achieve the goals and learning outcomes within the length of the program of study (3.11, 3.12).

4.1.5 The Syllabus

At the course level, faculty provide students with syllabi in which learning outcomes fit within a coherent program and align with institutional learning outcomes. The Senate passed a resolution that spelled out guidelines for a syllabus and provided a template for those who needed extra guidance. The result has been quite successful and most, if not all, courses now have syllabi (3.13, 3.14, 3.15).

4.2 Student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are:

4.2.1 Rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service, as appropriate to the institution's mission, goals, and policies

AUC provides the mechanisms necessary to demonstrate rigor and effectiveness in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry and service. The main mechanism for demonstrating this is the Annual Faculty Report (AFR) (3.17), which all full-time faculty are required to submit via e-Repertoire, which is a research and faculty activities database that enables the online creation of annual faculty reports (AFR), and serves as a historical storage unit for faculty activity for personal reporting and tracking purposes.

Full-time faculty are asked to self-report on activities related to teaching, research, practice, professional development and service. They are asked to reflect on the goals and plans for the previous calendar year. They also discuss goals and plans for the following calendar year. Student evaluations and the syllabi are included. Department Chairs, deans and the Provost use the AFR to determine salary increases and to evaluate faculty for renewal, promotion and tenure.

To ensure effectiveness in teaching, all faculty have the option of asking the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) to conduct mid-semester evaluations and other forms of formative assessment to help improve their teaching (1.20). The CLT also provides workshops with certificates to help faculty improve their teaching and assessment of student learning (1.52).

Instructor level faculty members in the departments of the Academy of Liberal Arts are reviewed regularly with very clear criteria regarding evaluation for merit raises as well as contract renewals and promotions, including peer observations of teaching and Department Chair observations (3.18). Departments with tenure track faculty are required to do third-year reviews, which gives the candidate feedback on their strengths and weaknesses in teaching, research and service in order to prepare for tenure, which often includes peer observations of teaching. Tenure track faculty and tenured faculty also go through a very serious review when they apply for promotion and tenure with faculty committees reviewing the candidate’s dossier at the department, school and provost levels. A similar process is also required of practice faculty when they apply for five-year renewals and promotions. The Provost’s recommendations are forwarded to the President, including reports from the previous faculty committees, chair, Dean, Provost and the candidate’s dossier in order to make a recommendation. Any disagreements or disputes are adjudicated in the final analysis by the President. Renewal (APOPs and POPs) and promotion decisions are made by the Provost and the President (3.19, 3.20). Only tenure cases approved by the President are forwarded to the
Academic Affairs Committee of the BOT for assessment and then presented to the entire Board for approval (3.21). An additional indicator of rigor is that not all applications for tenure or promotion are granted every year (3.22).

The Provost recently restructured the processes for hiring and renewing adjunct faculty in order to maintain rigor and effectiveness in teaching and assessment of student learning. He also restructured the pay scale to make it more competitive in order to attract high-quality adjunct faculty (3.23). Current adjuncts must reapply through the online system to give departments a chance to see the whole applicant pool and a department committee interviews new candidates for adjunct positions. These procedures help to ensure a more selective hiring process. All adjunct faculty must also complete a set of CLT’s teaching enhancement workshops to receive a certificate of participation as part of their professional development, and some departments also conduct their own internal review of adjunct faculty, which includes peer observations of teaching, examining syllabi and exams, and student evaluations to ensure that only high caliber adjuncts are renewed (2.03).

4.2.2 Qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do
AUC actively recruits highly qualified faculty (3.24)30. Most full-time faculty in tenure track and tenured positions have the highest terminal degree in their fields (3.25, 3.26)31. A significant number of full-time faculty have received their degrees from the top 150 universities in the world. Some practice faculty may not have the highest terminal degree but they bring their professional experience and expertise to the classroom. Adjunct faculty who do not have PhDs but have Master’s degrees usually teach lower level courses.

To assure the quality of full-time faculty, hiring is a multi-step process. AUC posts job announcements specifying the areas of expertise and qualifications required on the AUC website, on the websites or email lists of high profile organizations related to certain disciplines, and on social media (3.24). Departmental search committees include a faculty member from outside the department to ensure that the process is fair and standards are maintained. Short-listed candidates approved by the deans are interviewed on campus or by video-conference. If the search committee deems that a candidate is qualified and would be a good fit at AUC, they obtain the approval of the Dean and the Provost (3.19). Different departments’ governance documents contain slight variations on this overall process (3.27).

An indicator of AUC’s ability to retain quality faculty is the faculty’s active publication record, especially tenured and tenure track faculty, despite the high teaching load (3.28).

4.2.3 Sufficient in number
The faculty/student ratios for the past four years have varied between 1:15 to 1:11 (3.29). However, the ratio does not indicate whether some departments have too many faculty members, while others do not have enough. The Provost plans to reallocate faculty lines across the University to ensure there are sufficient numbers of faculty in each department. The criteria for deciding how faculty lines will be distributed are based on course offerings and student demand, essential administrative load to run academic departments, and international diversity (2.03). The AUC faculty by nationality are 55% Egyptian, 23% American and 22% other nationalities (3.23). The current plan is to increase the percentage of Americans and decrease the percentage of Egyptians and other nationalities (in order to comply with the AUC-GoE Protocol) (3.23).

The reliance on adjunct faculty was a concern raised by the external reviewers during AUC’s last reaccreditation where 40% of core curriculum courses were taught by adjuncts (0.02). In

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30 http://www.aucegypt.edu/faculty/services/faculty-vacancies
31 http://www.aucegypt.edu/faculty/faculty-profiles
2016, adjunct faculty taught 23% of core curriculum courses and 35% of the total credit hours, while in fall 2017 adjunct faculty taught 34% of the total credit hours. In few departments, more courses are taught by adjuncts faculty, such as the Department of the Arts, which provides individual music lessons and art courses, relying heavily on professionals hired as adjuncts to teach these specialized courses (3.30, 1.21, 3.84).

One area of concern is faculty workload, a 3/3 teaching load, which was noted in AUC’s last reaccreditation: “The teaching load for faculty needs to be restructured to allow more time for research for research oriented faculty.” (0.02) AUC responded to this concern in the 2013 Periodic Review Report (PRR) (3.32) by appointing a task force to explore how to reduce the teaching load. As a result, some departments piloted the 3-2 faculty workload such as the Physics and Chemistry departments. The Physics department found it successful and continues to apply it, while the Chemistry department found the 3-3 faculty load to be more effective and reverted back to the initial faculty workload.

The university piloted a project that would allow this without negatively impacting the budget or the teaching (3.32). As a result, some departments piloted the 3-2 faculty workload such as the Physics and Chemistry departments. The Physics department found it successful and continues to apply it, while the Chemistry department found the 3-3 faculty load to be more effective and reverted back to the initial faculty workload.

Following the above-mentioned taskforce, the University began to explore other options to allow for more efficient research time and developed a proposal for a faculty work load point system that would allow this to happen without negatively impacting the budget or teaching. This was developed by a taskforce of deans and associated deans from various schools within the University. The proposal was discussed with the Senate Academic Affairs Committee in 2016-2017, which had some reservations on the proposal. The newly appointed Provost, Dr. Abdel-Rahman, is currently reviewing the proposal to take into consideration these reservations and generate a modified version ready to present to the Senate.

4.2.4. Provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation

AUC provides sufficient and financial resources aligned with the institution’s commitment to student learning and faculty development but there is room for improvement.

To support faculty teaching, professional development and research, the University funds a Faculty Support Grant program administered by the Provost. These grants support the following activities: Research Support Grant, Teaching and Learning Enhancement Support Grant, Organization of a Conference Support Grant, Conference Travel Support Grant, and Teaching and Learning Enhancement Travel Support Grant (3.35).

Just over half of the full-time faculty surveyed in 2016 agreed that the internal funding for research, curriculum and teaching enhancement helped them to meet their teaching and research responsibilities (1.06). Despite these grant opportunities, only about 50% of full-time faculty applied in 2016 (3.36). In a survey of faculty who had left AUC in the last seven years through resignation, retirement and end of contract, many noted that while the support for presenting at international conferences was quite generous, the perception of the application process as being time consuming and overly bureaucratic was a disincentive to apply (3.34). AUC has been improving this program by streamlining the online application process so that it takes less time to apply. The time it takes for grants to be approved by the various levels has been reduced and a category of Teaching and Learning Enhancement Travel Support Grant was added (3.36, 3.37). In fall 2017, half of AUC faculty are in tenured and tenure track positions that require research, and a number of faculty need funding in order

32 http://www.aucegypt.edu/research/faculty-support-grants
to conduct their research, mainly in the School of Sciences and Engineering. More of the University budget could go to support faculty research workloads (1.21, 3.19, and 3.27).

The Provost also oversees the Distinguished Visiting Professor (DVP) and Distinguished Visiting Researcher (DVR) programs, which aim to expand and strengthen AUC’s international collaboration; promote AUC’s excellence in research and education; and foster a spirit of intellectual and scholarly inquiry among faculty, staff, students and the wider community. These programs bring eminent scholars to AUC for short periods to interact with faculty and students, and the program encourages international research collaborations (3.38, 3.39, 3.40).

AUC also has the Office of Sponsored Programs, which helps with the application process for external funding for research, and the Grants Accounting Office, which supports faculty once they receive an external grant. Details on the support, processes and procedures related to external funding are in the Principal Investigator’s Handbook (3.41). The number of external research grants (2012-2016) ranged between 17-32 per year (1.21). One of the problems AUC faces regarding external grants is that AUC faculty cannot apply for major U.S. research funding, like NSF and NIH, because AUC is located outside the U.S. The President is actively lobbying the U.S. government to get AUC’s status changed to being considered the same as an American University located in mainland U.S. so it can receive major research funding. In addition, AUC is not eligible to apply for some Egyptian sources of funding because it is not classified as an Egyptian institution. Similar to the internal grants, there is only a small pool of faculty who need funding in order to carry out their research. Full-time faculty’s perceptions about external funding is that 65% surveyed agree that they have access to information about funding opportunities but only about half agree that adequate assistance is provided in proposal writing and preparation of grant budgets (1.06).

AUC also supports several types of leaves to promote research and professional development: development leaves for assistant professors, professional development leaves for instructors, and sabbatical leaves (2.02).

Support for teaching is offered by the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) through workshops leading to certificates, symposia, consultations and training, Student Technology Assistants, and optional mid-semester formative assessments. Almost 80% of full time faculty surveyed felt that the CLT helps them to meet their teaching responsibilities (1.06). The CLT also holds regular workshops for new faculty and developed a new teaching assistant professional development program (1.20); by 2015-16, this program had grown to 648 teaching assistant participants (3.42). In the same year, CLT conducted 54 teaching enhancement certificate workshops and 26 different certificate track workshops, which were attended by 679 faculty members. The CLT contribution to faculty development is extensive and includes collaborating with and supporting faculty members in developing blended learning courses, a new initiative (3.42). In addition, AUC faculty interested in incorporating community-based learning into their courses or curricula can attend CBL workshops and utilize the services of the Academic Community Engagement Office (3.43). In fall 2016, 16 professors included this pedagogical approach in their courses.

During the week-long orientation for new faculty held prior to the start of the fall semester, there are several workshops scheduled to address how the University operates with sessions on teaching, research, and campus technology resources.

http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/undergraduate-studies/academic-community-engagement

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience
4.2.5 Reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, and procedures

AUC has policies and systems in place to maintain rigor by evaluating faculty through an annual faculty report (AFR) and periodically through promotion, tenure and contract renewal reviews. However, an area of concern was the finding that there are inconsistencies across departments and schools regarding the quality of written policies and procedures, how criteria and expectations are communicated to faculty, and the unevenness of the Faculty Handbook in terms of clarity in policies and procedures in how tenure track faculty are evaluated versus practice faculty. The majority of faculty members surveyed in 2016 agreed that the standards, criteria, and process for tenure were clearly defined in their departments and schools. However, only 40% thought that the processes and criteria for tenure are applied fairly and consistently. To address this issue, the School of Business now has a faculty affairs/services office that provides mentoring for faculty. In addition, the school does regular reviews. Patterns of response by faculty about the contract renewal and promotion policies and procedures were similar; although more positive than responses about the tenure process, faculty responses still showed the lowest levels of agreement with the fair and consistent application of these policies (1.06).

Instructor level faculty members in the departments of the Academy of Liberal Arts are reviewed regularly with very clear evaluation criteria. Some departments provide communication of expectations for promotion and tenure informally at the third-year review, while in other departments, some tenure track faculty are unsure about third year reviews and receive no mentoring from senior faculty (3.18). Departed faculty noted that better mentoring would significantly help retain quality faculty (3.34).

In the Faculty Handbook, the expectations for teaching and service are stated but the criteria for evaluating research has been left to the departments (2.02). Some department governance documents provide expectations for adequate research, creations, and productions, but others do not (3.27). There is a sense among some faculty that the expectations are constantly shifting without timely communication to tenure track faculty. Some schools are better at communicating with the candidate for promotion and tenure in how their case is proceeding according to the Handbook guidelines, while in other schools, candidates are only informed after the final decision has been made, which in the case of tenure, is at the BoT level (3.18). This raises a concern about the role of the BoT in tenure decisions, as the faculty has primary responsibility for making decisions in “…appointments, reappointments, decisions not to reappoint, promotions, the granting of tenure, and dismissal” (1.19). The BoT’s own tenure procedures recognize this (3.21). Some faculty have expressed concerns about the level of intervention that the BoT is currently taking in tenure cases. While the BoT has a statutory role and the final determination in the tenure process, the Faculty Handbook reflects the faculty view that “the governing board and president should…concur with the faculty judgment except in rare instances and for compelling reasons which should be stated in detail” (3.45). Thus, some faculty feel the need for more transparency, fairness and consistency in tenure decisions and the prompt communication of decisions (3.18, 1.06).

Finally, although the procedures and policies for practice faculty are stated in the Faculty Handbook (2.02), they lack clarity and often are not followed. According to faculty (3.18) and the Provost (3.23), this has caused problems for faculty in those positions who have gone up for contract renewals and promotions. The Provost has formed a standing committee to address the issues related to practice (3.23).

Relately, the lack of clarity in the Faculty Handbook is another area of concern (2.02). Recently, the University Senate and the Administration started a serious dialogue to review and amend the Faculty Handbook to agree on a handbook that provides clarity of faculty work life policies and helps ensure that they are consistently applied. The overarching goals regarding this process are to ensure the financial sustainability of the University while continuously improving academic operations, quality of education and the student experience.
To facilitate the Handbook revision process and mitigate any confusion pending its completion, at the Administration’s recommendation, the BoT adopted a resolution in January, 2018, reaffirming the University’s contractual commitments to the current faculty, while reserving the Trustees’ authorities and responsibilities as defined in law (7.28).

4.3 Academic programs of study that are clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution in a way that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion

AUC offers Bachelor’s degrees in 36 majors (3.44)35; 24 of these majors and six double-majors, have four-to five-year study plans. These study plans are typically available in hard copy in the various departments responsible for the program (3.45, 3.46). For programs that do not have four- to five-year study plans on record with the Office of Strategic Academic Services, students plan their study based on the requirements outlined in the catalogue with direction from the departments and their advisors. All degree program requirements are listed under each major in the University Catalog online (1.11).

The University has implemented an online degree management system called Degree Works, a web-based degree audit tool integrated with Banner through the Office of the Registrar. This system is available to all faculty, advisors and students and became compulsory in fall 2017. Degree Works allows declared students to plan their study by uploading requirements directly to their page, as well as undeclared students to plan for their intended major using the “what-if” option. This presents them with different scenarios depending on their major and current courses.

4.4 Sufficient learning opportunities and resources to support both the institution's programs of study and student academic progress.

AUC provides academic support resources to faculty and students. AUC Libraries and Learning Technologies (LLT), consisting of the Main Library and the Rare Books and Special Collections, provides information and visual resources to support the needs of all academic programs. AUC boasts the largest English language academic collection in Egypt with total print volumes at 682,671 and currently subscribed access to 255,462 scholarly e-books and interlibrary loans. The Main Library subscribes to approximately 134 databases to support both Ph.D. and M.A. programs and holds all graduate theses produced at AUC in a Digital Archive and Research Repository (DAR) (3.47, 3.48, 3.49, 3.50)36,37. The collections are built in coordination with AUC schools (3.47). A Learning Commons, on the Plaza level of the Library, provides a collaborative, technology-rich environment where users have the hardware and software tools and professional support from Reference Librarians and Student Technology Assistants to access, manage and produce information. There are also dedicated computer stations, spaces for group work, and small classrooms where students can work. Library services include research instruction and assistance through a required one-semester Information Literacy course and upon request to students, faculty, staff, and eligible external users (3.47).

Classrooms are equipped with the latest classroom technology, including a podium with a computer, projector, screen and speakers. Some classrooms have a document camera and DVD/VCR. There is one active learning classroom designed specifically for collaborative work where students can share their desktop work with the whole class. There are two video-conference spaces and four general-purpose computer classrooms (3.51). There are many computer labs on campus, and older computers are replaced by new ones every five years.

35 http://catalog.aucegypt.edu/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=1180
36 http://schools.aucegypt.edu/library/Pages/allDatabases.aspx
37 http://dar.aucegypt.edu/
The School of Science and Engineering contains science and engineering labs, studios and exhibition rooms (3.52).

University Academic Computing Services (UACT) provides adaptive technology with full support for visually impaired students. Other technologies available to serve academia include the Learning Management Systems (LMS) Blackboard, Moodle, Panopto, and Turnitin.com, a plagiarism learning and prevention tool. With these tools and other technologies, faculty develop students’ digital literacy and enhance the learning environment (3.53). Undergraduate students have other learning opportunities organized through the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR). These include presenting research papers and creative projects in the conference on Excellence in Undergraduate Research (EURECA); Undergraduate Support Grants in the form of travel, research internship, thesis-support, and mini grants; the Undergraduate Research Journal; and workshops and information sessions (3.54, 3.55). Resources for graduate studies are provided by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and include support grants (conference, research and study abroad) and academic support workshops for graduate students, offering additional support for research skills, writing skills, library research skills, and soft skills.

The Common Reading Program, initiated in 2014, organizes activities around texts chosen by a selection committee of faculty, staff and students. Beginning with the first-year experience (FYE) sessions followed by co-curricular events such as author visits and essay contests; the program provides a common intellectual experience, helping to integrate academic and social spheres and fostering AUC community dialogue (3.56).

Academic language support is also available through the Writing Center, which serves undergraduate and graduate students by providing both face-to-face consultation and an online writing lab service for graduate students. Many students use these services (3.57).

In addition to study abroad programs, students in some majors have the opportunity to take an internship course that provide them with hands-on experience and a way to bridge theory with practice. Approximately three-quarters of the students responding to a recent AUC survey agreed that the University provides ample academic support opportunities (1.07).

4.5 At institutions that offer undergraduate education, a general education program, free standing or integrated into academic disciplines, that: (1) offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field; and (2) offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire and demonstrate essential skills including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. Consistent with mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives.

AUC offers general education courses in the form of a Core Curriculum designed to introduce students to the liberal arts while enhancing their communication and thinking skills. In 2011, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies was established and under that office, the Academy of Liberal Arts was inaugurated in 2013, with a dean who also serves as Director of the Core Curriculum (3.58). Since then, the Core Curriculum was re-envisioned and redesigned to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience and raise their awareness of the liberal arts. In 2011, the Provost convened a Freshman Year Task Force to review and revise the first year Core Curriculum, with particular emphasis on communication and critical thinking skills. The Task Force created a new Freshman Program with six shared learning outcomes in alignment with the AUC Mission and a curriculum map (3.59, 3.60) to ensure

38 https://urje.aucegypt.edu/index.php/AUC
39 http://www.aucegypt.edu/events-department/office-dean-undergraduate-studies
that English language communication and critical thinking skills are addressed and reinforced.

At the Freshman Level, the Core Curriculum enhances thinking and communication skills through learning communities in tandem first-year seminar/freshman writing courses; emphasizes critical analysis, scientific reasoning, and ethical values in required courses in scientific thinking, philosophical thinking; and research writing courses. It reinforces these skills while widening perspectives in elective “Pathways 1: Scientific Encounters” and “Pathways 2: Cultural Explorations” course options that expose students to the liberal arts. Students take a stand-alone information literacy course as closely as possible with the research-writing course. Secondary level Core Curriculum courses extend students’ cultural and international knowledge and expose them to more diverse perspectives through elective courses in Arab World Studies, Global Studies, and Humanities/Social Sciences. At the Capstone level, courses in the Core are designed to integrate learning outcomes of the Core Curriculum overall with knowledge students acquire in the disciplines (3.61, 1.11).

Quantitative thinking skills are currently being piloted as part of the required Scientific Thinking course (3.62). Most students also take math or statistics and/or research courses involving statistics as part of the requirements for their majors, particularly those in business, sciences and engineering and the social sciences. All of these courses reinforce foundations in critical thinking, ethical, and reasoning skills (3.63).

Through a course development Google site, faculty orientation sessions, and vetting committees for new courses at the Freshman Level, the Office of Undergraduate Studies helped to ensure a unified approach to promoting the new learning outcomes as well as a more engaging array of interdisciplinary courses in the Freshman Program (3.64, 3.65). In addition, a number of faculty have developed and taught new Core courses, and the percentage of adjunct faculty was reduced to 23% of all Core Curriculum course sections in 2016 (3.30).

A Freshman Program Coordinating Committee monitors progress of the program and this leads to change based on feedback, such as a theme book to orient students to the tandem courses (3.66, 3.67, 3.68, 3.69). To ensure that students meet the written communication learning outcomes of the freshman writing and research writing courses, level coordinators share and develop rubrics with faculty, and committees in the Rhetoric Department review syllabi and randomly selected final essays from these courses each semester (3.70). The Core Curriculum is currently being assessed as a complete program. The Core Advisory Committee has revised the Core learning outcomes at the secondary and capstone levels in alignment with AUC and Freshman Program learning outcomes, and an interdisciplinary team from AUC attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities Summer Institute in 2016 to create an action plan for raising faculty awareness of the Core learning outcomes and assessment of Core courses (3.71). Members of the Core Advisory Committee piloted assessment learning outcomes in Core courses in fall 2016, and the Core Director expanded the assessment to include all faculty teaching core courses in fall 2017 (3.72).

The University has long maintained English language admission standards, as well as an English Language Institute (now the Department of English Language Instruction) to allow academically qualified students with insufficient English language skills to improve those skills and achieve full freshman-level admission in one to three semesters (1.09). The 2008 AUC Self-study reported a perception by faculty that AUC students’ written and oral communication skills had deteriorated compared to students in previous years, possibly due to a shift in the admissions requirements (0.02). Assessment measures shifted over the years from the Michigan Proficiency Exam in the 1970s to an AUC-designed and administered English Language Placement and Entrance Exam (ELPET) from 1980s until 2009, to the current use of TOEFL and IELTS scores (3.73). Whenever a new standardized test for admission and placement has been adopted, the AUC Testing Unit or the English Language

40 http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/core-curriculum/core-courses-offered-fall-2016
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Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Instruction (ELI) Testing or Assessment Specialist reviewed the literature, established equivalencies, and conducted studies to ensure that the tests placed students accurately, usually with consultation among administrators of the ELI and the Department of Rhetoric and Composition to ensure correct placement of students. In cases in which there was an uneven writing and proficiency score profile, students were allowed to take an in-house English Writing Ability Test (EWAT) to ensure correct placement. However, this was recently discontinued. In addition, the ELI has compared peer institution cutoff scores, both in the U.S. and internationally, and regularly conducts follow up studies on students who exit ELI courses to ensure that the placement of students, whether by standardized proficiency exams or the ELI exit exams, is accurate (3.74, 3.75, 3.76).

Other indicators show that the English language skills of students are not as poor as some of the perceptions reported in the last AUC Self-study. An all-AUC survey of students in 2016 indicated a high level of confidence in their abilities to use English in their classes, with very high levels of agreement that they could communicate effectively in writing and orally in class (1.07). Faculty feedback was similar in a 2016 survey. Although some faculty perceived that their students’ English skills were poor, the vast majority agreed that students could communicate effectively in class discussions and presentations (1.06). Students writing skills are demonstrated in their papers (3.77).

These findings have been reinforced by other independent sources. In 2015, AUC piloted the critical thinking, critical reading, and essay writing components of the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test. Although the sample was small (n=60) and the students who volunteered to take the test had a relatively high range of GPAs, the results indicated that their critical thinking and writing skills were above the U.S. norms, although their critical reading scores were below the U.S. norms and relatively lower than the other two skills tested (3.78). AUC administered the test again in spring 2017, under the same conditions as in 2015 (sample=48), results confirmed the previous results in 2015 where students showed critical thinking and writing skills above U.S. norms and critical reading skills below U.S. norms. AUC plans to administer the tests again periodically in the future. A second indicator was a 2015 survey by Nielsen of 128 employers in 23 sectors in Egypt and the UAE. The employers indicated that the top skills and abilities of AUC graduates in the workplace were the ability to write in English, computer skills, and technologies to access information, with many employers across sectors mentioning communication skills, self-confidence, and presentation skills as the top strengths of AUC graduates, with the major weakness, surprisingly, being in their written communication in Arabic (3.79).

In addition, although academic writing is taught in Freshman Program courses and supported by the Writing Center, many students do not apply practices and principles in other courses. Finally, AUC operates in a culture where English is not the native language of a majority of its students, and there are some students who continue to struggle with language skills after their ELI or writing courses. Although they are supported by the Writing Center, more support is needed in other skills areas.

Another area of concern is that English language assessment support has been recently reduced. The internally administered writing examination (EWAT) that allowed students with uneven score profiles to be more correctly placed was discontinued, and the release time of ELI Assessment Specialists was recently cut. This decrease in support for assessment, including monitoring student placement, replenishing exit tests in ELI, and follow up studies of ELI students, may result in a decline in students’ language skills or in students wasting time and money on language courses they do not need.
4.6 In graduate and professional education, opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking, provided by faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula;

There are 46 graduate degree programs in five academic schools, with 979 graduate students enrolled as of fall 2017; 934 in Masters degrees and 45 in PhD programs. This represents a significant change since 2007, when there were 23 Masters and no PhD programs. In addition, AUC established two schools with significant offerings in graduate studies—the Graduate School of Education (GSE) and the School of Global Affairs & Public Policy (GAPP), and a number of new graduate programs, including the first PhD programs at AUC, offered by the School of Science & Engineering (SSE). There are also a large number of professional programs offered by the School of Continuing Education (SCE), Executive Education (School of Business) and Engineering and Sciences Services (SSE) (3.11). AUC created the Office of Dean of Graduate Studies to manage these degree-granting programs. The Dean and his team are responsible for all issues related to graduate studies, from admission to support services. The SSE, GAPP, and the Business School also have Associate Deans for Graduate Studies and Research (3.80).

The strengths of graduate programs at AUC include their diversity in a variety of fields and synergies via dual degrees; their uniqueness in the MENA region, like the programs in Gender and Women’s Studies and Migration & Refugee Studies; and the fact that AUC’s programs address priorities in Egypt, such as GSE’s education and GAPP’s leadership in public policy. In addition, AUC’s programs are highly ranked: 10 AUC graduate programs were ranked among the top in Africa and best 200 worldwide in Eduniversal’s Best Master's Rankings for 2015-2016, with six of these rated first in their field (3.81).

In institutional surveys, high percentages of graduate students expressed satisfaction with the opportunities provided at AUC to develop their skills as independent thinkers, and similar levels of satisfaction were expressed by faculty who teach graduate students. Graduate students appreciated the opportunity to consider other points of view, take and defend a position, and discuss ideas during class sessions (3.58, 3.36). In relation to opportunities to develop research knowledge and skills, similarly high percentages of graduate students were satisfied, and a large majority of the faculty expressed this opinion. Graduates in a focus group stated that while the course on research methods is helpful, they need “refresher” opportunities on the fundamentals, especially ones tailored to their own field, to support them while they are carrying out their research and writing up their results, usually in the form of a thesis or dissertation (1.06, 1.07, 3.82).

Relatively lower percentages, although still a majority, of students and faculty expressed satisfaction with opportunities for development of knowledge and skills in the area of scholarship, (1.06, 1.07). Research and/or a study abroad grants are means available to provide graduate students with support for both research and scholarship development. These opportunities improve students’ international exposure, and contribute to the development of their research and scholarship.

Graduate students have identified four areas of concern (3.82): (1) More support is needed to fill knowledge and skills gaps that some students may have in areas such as research, academic English, and information literacy and there may be additional challenges in cross-disciplinary programs, or programs where students may have very different backgrounds; (2) university-wide policies are available, but not all departments and programs have easily available and clear presentations of their policies and practices; (3) the administration’s policy toward minimum enrollment for graduate courses often means that a number of elective courses included in the catalog are never offered (4) and course assessment methods must be more transparent and timely.
4.7 Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers.

AUC has three dual-degree or exchange programs that involve third-party providers: M.Sc. in Sustainable Development, Dual Degree with IL Politecnico di in Italy; an Exchange Program under Department of Management with the University of South Carolina (USC); and an M.A. in Comparative Middle East Politics and Society with the University of Tubingen in Germany (3.84, 3.85, 386, 3.87).

AUC provides institutional review for the Sustainable Development Dual Degree Master’s Program as stipulated in an MOU between AUC and IL Politecnico di Milano (3.83). The duties of the Program Coordinators on both sides are to review the effectiveness of the teaching programs, examine the academic results achieved by the students, and propose further actions.

The Exchange Program with the University of South Carolina (USC), is relatively new, and is intended for International Business and other business majors. To supervise the implementation of the program, Academic Chairs from AUC and USC, with a joint committee, review the syllabus, course content, selection of faculty, and the program’s assessment and grading systems. Plans are developed according to the Management Department’s accreditation from The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

The M.A. program in Comparative Middle East Politics and Society with the University of Tubingen, Germany offers an opportunity for 10 students from each institution to study for one semester at the partner university. For program monitoring purposes, AUC has implemented procedures such as weekly conference calls by Program Directors, review of curriculum and faculty and student admission by a joint committee, and an annual program review Board Meeting for the program in Germany, where students, faculty and program directors review the program and make recommendations. Thus, there is appropriate institutional review and approval by AUC for the programs delivered by third party providers.

4.8 Periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs providing student learning opportunities

Each program and department identifies strategic goals, learning outcomes, and benchmarks and is required to report on them annually to DAIR. Departments differ in how they determine the needs of their students, using various methods such as assessment of student work, exit interviews or surveys, monitoring of student evaluations of instruction by Department Chairs and Deans, and other means (3.03, 3.04, 3.05, 3.06). More details on program assessment at AUC are also found in Standard V.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AUC meets the criteria of Standard III as policies are in place, and systems have been established following best practices to ensure a high-quality learning experience at AUC. Students are provided with a multitude of resources to complete their education like curriculum maps, undergraduate research opportunities and a well-qualified faculty.

However, AUC can improve in some key areas. Recommendations addressing areas of concern include orienting all Department Chairs and Deans regarding fair and consistent application of policies and procedures for promotion, tenure and contract renewal across schools and departments, especially for tenure cases. This fall, a holistic orientation initiative and a chair-orientation were implemented and the feedback was very positive.
Recommendations

1. To ensure that all departments have high quality well-sequenced curricula, Deans should work closely with department chairs to submit strategic plans, assessment plans, curriculum maps, and assessment reports annually, and chairs must ascertain that all courses have measureable learning outcomes and clear assessment criteria explained in the syllabus. The University Planning and Assessment Committee is achieving great progress in this regard. More support from the administration will ensure continued progress and the use of assessment results in decision-making.

2. Department chairs and deans should be trained annually to ensure all chairs and deans know the policies and implement them fairly. Efforts are underway in this regard through newly introduced initiatives such as Chair Orientation; the appointment of an Associate Provost on Assessment; and operationalize the chair/dean annual and term review process supported by a well-designed survey.

3. The complete resolution of the issues regarding the Faculty Handbook should be expedited by all concerned parties including the Senate, University administration, and the BoT. In 2016, the university senate and the administration, with the backing and participation of the BoT, started a serious dialogue to review and amend the Faculty Handbook to agree on a handbook that provides clarity of faculty work life policies and helps ensure that they are consistently applied. The overarching goals are to ensure the financial sustainability of the university while continuously improving the academic operation, quality of education and the student experience. In an effort to maintain stability and ensure that University operations continue to run effectively, the Trustees adopted a resolution on Jan 9, 2018 (7.28) urging expeditious completion of the revision of the handbook, and affirmed inter alia that during this revision process, the “University will continue to apply the rules set forth in the Faculty Handbook to other administrative matters, particularly with respect to promotion, tenure and grievances.”

4. A flexible and effective faculty workload system should be adopted, which would allow faculty to carry the workload that suits their academic cycle and help them capitalize on their areas of strength in both teaching and research.

5. Developing more ways to support the English language skills of students after completing their ELI and/or RHET courses.

6. AUC should consider blended learning or online learning as an alternative teaching and learning modality, particularly for graduate programs, as almost all graduate students at AUC work full-time and find it difficult to come to campus. In addition, more online modules and interactive sessions on conducting graduate-level research should be offered. Progress in this regard is taking place through more professional development opportunities and collaborations.
STANDARD IV: SUPPORT OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success”.

2. SUMMARY

The University has been successful in recruiting high-caliber students over the past 10 years. Diversity is a priority, but recruiting undergraduate and graduate international students has been a challenge due to the political instabilities. Securing scholarships and targeted recruitment are critical to attract international students. The university is designing an automated admission process to ensure a smooth and efficient experience for our students. In addition, a dedicated Student Service Center (SSC) was developed to establish a positive relationship with students and parents, and it reflects on AUC’s customer service orientation.

Newly admitted and continuing undergraduate and graduate students are offered a multiple financial support including financial aid, fellowships, scholarships and grants. Information on tuition rates and financial support opportunities are available on the university’s website. Students are also offered quality orientation sessions to equip them with the necessary information to optimize their experience and support their success. In addition, under-prepared students in language, mathematics and research are offered prerequisite courses and workshops necessary to prepare them for their programs.

The Academic Advising Center was established in 2012 to support undeclared undergraduate students. The first phase of an automated study plan and advising tool Degree Works was launched in 2017 in order to simplify the advising process and increase its effectiveness. Also, the University purchased Degree Works software to link the automated advising process to Banner and further improve the advising experience. A Progressive Advising Unit was established to guide undeclared students at risk. Similarly, the Office of Strategic Academic Services (OSAS) offers the same service for declared students in an effort to increase completion rates, maximize retention and support student success. In order to enhance students’ completion rate, new policies regarding repeating and dropping courses and declaration were modified. In 2016, a Retention Management Team was established to investigate and analyze the reasons for student dropout at AUC and design strategies to manage the process sustainably.

One of AUC’s core values is to involve students in co-curricular activities. In 2016, almost half of AUC students were involved in such activities. In December, 2017, AUC capped a two-year design and testing effort by adopting a “co-curricular transcript” for undergraduate students to document a student’s co-curricular involvement – the first such initiative in the MENA region. In addition, the University offers a strong monitoring and assessment system in residential life, food service and bus services. In order to support students seeking transfer courses, the University developed a “Transfer Course Equivalency (TCE)” as an online tool to ensure transparency and consistency. Furthermore, AUC also ensures that all students’ records are well protected throughout their journey at AUC. This is ensured through the purchase of secure international software packages and the application of strict implementation processes.

The Career Center offers a variety of services to support students as they enter the job market. Their services are classified into four categories: (1) self-awareness; (2) major and career exploration; (3) career planning and job search; and (4) access to career opportunities. Several years ago, Egypt’s Ministry of Higher Education recognized AUC’s career counseling and
placement services for students as a best practice, and permitted AUC, with USAID funding, to establish three Employability and Career Development Centers (ECDC) in two Egyptian public universities between 2012 and 2017. Recently, USAID awarded AUC a $20 million cooperative agreement to establish 20 sustainable University Centers for Career Development (UCCD) in 12 Egyptian public universities in Upper Egypt, Delta and Greater Cairo over a four-year duration. In 2017, The Egyptian Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research joined in AUC’s launch of expansion of the UCCD model.

It is imperative to integrate all activities around the students’ journey at AUC. Accordingly, based on the recommendation of AACRAO Consultants, the Provost restructured the student support areas in October 2016 by appointing a new Dean of Students to manage student life and activities as well as an Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) to integrate the offices supporting the students’ journey from recruitment and admission to graduation and career support. This organizational change has proven successful as critical activities related to students’ academics and experience on campus have been addressed and more effective communication channels have been implemented and streamlined.

3. Relationship to Other Standards and Criteria

This standard focuses on students’ journey and experience. It closely relates to Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Learning Experience, which focuses on students’ learning experience and the rigor and coherence of the programs offered.

Link to AUC’s Mission: Strong support for the AUC student experience is necessary to build an environment that fosters critical thinking and nurtures a culture of “lifelong learning.”

4. Analysis

This section details the activities conducted throughout the student’s journey at AUC from recruitment and admission to graduation. It is divided into six sections, following the student’s path: 1) Recruitment and Marketing; 2) Admission and Financial Support; 3) Orientation and Student Services; 4) Retention and Student Success; 5) Protection of Student Records; and 6) Career Support & Services.

4.1 Recruitment and Marketing

4.1.1 Recruitment Strategy

AUC is perceived as the top university in Egypt, and accordingly, prospective students seeking world-class quality education apply to AUC (4.01, 4.02). Despite its high tuition fees, AUC attracts students from all high schools in Egypt, including Egyptian National General Secondary Examination, ICGSE, American Diploma, German Abitur, French Baccalauréat (Bac), International Baccalaureate (IB); and the Ontario Certificate. On average, AUC admits almost one-third of the applicants every year (4.03). The undergraduate recruitment office plays a vital role in attracting prospective students to AUC’s New Campus. The office employs various recruitment tools, including advertisements in regional and international newspapers, advertisements in social media channels, regular school visits, and campus visits for school groups and parents of prospective students (4.04, 4.05). The office also collaborated with some academic departments such as the School of Sciences and Engineering (SSE) to hold an open day to attract prospective students and their parents to visit the new campus and invited IB students to conduct theses research on campus and make use of the available facilities and resources.

AUC’s mission emphasizes the importance of offering education in “a cross-cultural environment” and its vision states “a destination of choice from students from around the world”, so attracting international students is a priority. A major gap facing undergraduate recruitment has been the low percentage of degree seeking international students (5% in fall
2017), which dropped due to the political instability caused by the 2011 and 2013 revolutions (4.06). Accordingly, the undergraduate recruitment office participated in international educational fairs to increase AUC’s visibility and promote the New Campus, and subscribed to the educational guide directory that specifically targets the Gulf. Starting 2010, the office expanded its target to new international markets, such as China, Germany, Kosovo, Syria and Gulf countries.

As internationalization is an institutional strategic priority, AUC hired an American market research and PR agency (Edelman Intelligence) to conduct a study on how to attract American study abroad students to AUC. The research included a visit to the AUC campus to assess its operations and interact with current international students on campus. Then, the company conducted a detailed student on American students, parents and study abroad advisors. They presented their findings and recommendations in September 2017. The research revealed some operational challenges that international students face on campus, which affect their satisfaction. As a result, a committee was formed to follow-up on this project, led by the VP for Advancement and Communication, Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management, Dean of Graduate Studies and Dean of Students. The committee decided to address these challenges first before conducting an aggressive marketing and communication plan. It then decided to assign "Principle Points of Contact (PPOC's)" in order to offer international students effective customer service and avoid the identified operational issues. The purpose of this committee is to make sure that international students are satisfied with their experiences at AUC and are eager to generate positive word-of-mouth to support AUC’s marketing efforts. In addition, Edelman offered a communication strategy to be deployed in 2018. Accordingly, AUC is finalizing an aggressive recruitment plan in the US, targeting stakeholders (university officers, students and parents). A digital campaign will be developed and will be implemented at peak times to support the recruitment process. In addition, intensive presence on campuses and study abroad conferences as well as the hiring of a recruitment officer in the US will support AUC’s marketing.

Similarly, the recruitment strategy for graduate studies was adjusted to face the external changes since the move to the New Campus, which continuously affected enrollment figures, especially for international students (4.07). Accordingly, in 2012, the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies initiated an intensive networking recruitment plan in North America. Representatives from the Graduate Schools visited 13 institutions in the U.S. for meetings and/or information sessions. In 2014, the office of Graduate Student Services and Fellowships shifted its target audience from the U.S. towards Egypt and Africa, using available fellowships as a recruitment tool. This helped in graduate students’ recruitment in Africa (4.08).

Furthermore, the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies launched its first Graduate Open House in 2015, which reached over 30,000 potential applicants through digital and social media channels. The office conducted a survey of the Administration-Faculty Engagement in Graduate Recruitment, and concluded that the open house failed to attract sufficient visitors (4.09). In 2016, a second Graduate Open House was held, and the survey revealed an overall positive feedback among participants (4.10). The office has also worked on increasing partnerships with African embassies in Cairo and educational institutions as a new plan for networking and seeking collaborative efforts to facilitate visits in 2016 to several Nile Basin countries. The team visited universities in three different African countries, and participated in African fairs that attracted a total of 3,000 attendees, and held information sessions at the Universities of Ghana and Kenyatta University in Nairobi. These efforts led to increased applications from Africa, in spite of the continuous political challenges and constraints within Egypt.
4.1.2. Diversity

Diversity is one of AUC’s key values. The university shows acceptable gender diversity; however, the percentage of undergraduate female students has been consistently higher than that of males over the past 5 years (4.11). In addition, 60% of enrolled graduate students had their first degree from an academic institution other than AUC, which is an important diversity objective.

The percentage of degree-seeking international students has been consistently low. However, there are major efforts by the International Programs Office (IPO) to increase the number of incoming exchange and study abroad students on campus. A total of 133 exchange and study abroad agreements have been signed, allowing AUC and its partner universities to exchange students for 1-2 semesters, while paying their home institution’s tuition (4.12). In addition, two scholarships (Ann & Ahmed Al Mokadem and Abdullah Jumaa) were designated to support students on exchange and study abroad (4.13). While the number of incoming international students was high until fall 2011 (83), it dropped significantly following the political instability and reached its lowest total in fall 2013 at only 23 students (4.14). A Dean of Students was appointed to manage students’ activities and problems in 2016.

An important diversity concern is that around 90% of undergraduate students currently originate from Cairo and Giza. Further, more than one-third of the admitted students had obtained an American Diploma, while the remaining six high school degrees, which relatively graduate higher-caliber students, constitute lower percentages (4.03). In 2004, the LEAD program was introduced, targeting graduates from national schools across different cities. It resulted in recruiting a total of 414 students who were admitted over 8 LEAD cohorts. Each cohort included 54 underprivileged students from each of Egypt’s 27 governorates. Unfortunately, this program ended when the funding stopped in 2016. In 2015, the University attracted students graduating from STEM schools, a leading local high-school program focusing on science. Over 50 STEM students were recruited in fall 2017 under Al Ghurair STEM Scholarship. Finally, a total of 42 students were admitted at AUC, supported by Misr El Kheir and Al Ghurair Foundation funds. Based on the current gaps in terms of international students, and students from outside Cairo and Giza, the Provost has initiated a target in his strategic plan to increase the under-represented groups by 2019 (4.15). The Provost appointed an Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management in October 2016, to develop strategies to bridge these gaps. In addition, the Dean of Students initiated a separate office for “Diversity and Advocacy” in October 2016.

4.2 Admissions and Financial Support

4.2.1 Admission Process

Once students are recruited, they follow a clear admission process as per the guidelines on the website for both Undergraduate & Graduate Students (4.16, 4.17). The School of Sciences & Engineering (SSE) is the only school based on their scores in high school and the declaration criteria for each program.

In 2015, the University administration invited experts from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO Consulting to review the process, and they recommended integrating Admissions with Recruitment and Marketing. The decision to merge these offices has increased AUC’s competitive edge in the region because it has helped in synchronizing both offices’ core objectives. The offices work towards a new strategic vision under the direction of the new refined enrollment management model. While the admission process was effective, a couple of problems were identified, namely a lack of automation, and unclear communication of cut-off scores for high school degree.

41 [http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/undergraduate](http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/undergraduate) and [http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/graduate](http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/graduate)
First, the process was considered “semi-automated”, whereby students submit their application online, but should also submit all their documents in a hard copy format. In addition, the handling of the applications was manual, which required significant efforts. Moreover, as previously mentioned, an expert from AACRAO Consulting, spent more than six months on campus mapping the admission process and identifying the issues that should be modified, including the full automation of the process using the newly purchased Perceptive software. In 2016, the Admission and IT teams mapped the process and prepared it for automation and currently prospective students only apply online (4.43)\textsuperscript{42}.

Second, unclear communication with parents and students on the cut-off scores of the seven high-school degrees was another issue. Given the significant differences among the degrees’ scores, it is complicated to communicate a specific formula for selection. In 2016, a normalization exercise was developed and the scores of all degrees were adjusted to a score out of 100 to compare cut-off scores across all degrees. It is recommended to clearly communicate these scores to all stakeholders for transparency purposes. However, given that only one-third of the applicants are accepted, the cut-off scores should not be announced early on, given the maximum number that the University can admit. A key challenge in this process may arise if the University decides to increase the percentage of students from specific high-school degrees to increase diversity. The University is working on a communication plan to transparently announce cut-off scores for all degrees, which includes the use of a "minimum" score, but mention that the selection is "competitive" due to the limited spaces available. This issue needs to be analyzed and resolved.

The Student Service Center (SSC) was established in 2008 as a customer service center for newly admitted students. Since 2008, expansion has been ongoing to accommodate the increasing number of visitors by creating a quick functional inquiry station to reduce the waiting time of applicants, and monitor staff performance to identify needs at peak times. This allowed prospective and newly admitted students to obtain full and accurate information about the University and complete the application process in a timely and effective manner.

4.2.2 Tuition

In order to attract students, financial support for our prospective students is crucial. The AUC website clearly states and details the cost of tuition (2.16)\textsuperscript{43}. It also specifies tuition based on the catalog of admission for undergraduate, graduate and non-degree students. In addition, deferred payments allow eligible parents to pay tuition in installments. Detailed instructions on how to apply are also available. In addition, given that tuition for international students are significantly higher than that of Egyptian students, AUC offers international parents with special cases the opportunity to pay the Egyptian tuition. Special cases include parents residing in Egypt for 10+ years as well widowed or divorced mothers.

In November 2016, the Egyptian Pound (EGP) lost more than half of its value against the U.S. Dollar (USD). Fifty percent of tuition had been denominated in USD and paid in EGP, so tuition cost as stated in EGP increased by more than 25%. This sharp increase prompted protests from parents and students; the University Administration responded through several community forums and a Provost Lecture to explain the economic realities and listen to the community’s concerns. Based on these discussions, the University allocated approximately $6 million in emergency financial assistance based on demonstrated need. However, parents remain concerned about the tuition for the coming academic years. Effective fall 2017, the tuition fee for Egyptian students is stated entirely in EGP, without indexing to the USD. In this way, the University has assumed the full risk of FX fluctuations, in addition to the burdens of budgeting in the high-inflation environment of the national currency. AUC also increased the budget allocation for needs-based financial aid.

\textsuperscript{42} http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/undergraduate/how-apply
\textsuperscript{43} http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees
4.2.3 Financial Support

The Office of Financial Affairs and Scholarships manages three main methods of financial support: financial aid, scholarships, and fellowships (2.24). Financial aid awards are need-based and are evaluated using specific criteria, along with clear instructions on the application process, requirements and deadlines. It also offers over 90 merit and need-based externally funded scholarships for undergraduate students for academics, sports or arts (2.26)\(^\text{44}\). In addition, the University offers fellowships to graduate students, where the funds come from internal and external sources (2.27)\(^\text{45}\). In 2015, the University prioritized students with financial needs and canceled the achievement scholarship. The Office of Student Financial Affairs & Scholarships has realigned the financial aid application deadlines and now awards financial aid decisions along with admission decisions in an effort to increase recruitment of high-caliber lower income students.

In addition, the Office of Undergraduate Research increased its grants to support a larger number of students. The objective is to promote excellence by producing scholars who actively contribute to the socio-economic, scientific and, intellectual development of society. In 2012, it offered various grants to support participation of students in relevant conferences and publications in undergraduate research journals and newsletters in an attempt to boost students’ research and creative achievements. In 2016, the office expanded its grants to thesis support. In addition, graduate support grants offer graduate students the opportunity to attend and present their work at international conferences, to conduct research and to study abroad for a semester. The grants are awarded competitively following an evaluation of the submitted proposals at the graduate program level, the school level and the level of the Dean of Graduate Studies (4.19)\(^\text{46}\).

AUC employs multiple means to promote and communicate the available financial support opportunities, including the AUC website, the University Catalog, and emails using the Banner Student Self-Service Portal. To ensure that enrolled students are aware of tuitions fees, billing systems and refund policies, AUC sends regular email reminders of deadlines and upcoming financial support opportunities and posts tuition cost on the Portal.

4.3 Orientations and Student Support.

4.3.1. Orientation Programs

Newly admitted undergraduate students go through the First Year Experience (FYE), a 3-day orientation that introduces the concepts of a liberal arts education, academic integrity and others. It also offers information on the different services available on campus. The team working on the orientation consists of a student organization reporting to the Dean of Students. To ensure the effectiveness of the FYE outcomes, two surveys are conducted each semester: the FYE survey and the FYE mid-semester Survey (4.20). Results of the surveys indicated that the orientations have been consistently effective and satisfactory (4.21).

The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies also conducts an orientation for newly admitted graduate students to acquaint them with academic life at AUC. The goal of the graduate student orientation is to prepare incoming graduates, independent of their background, with the tools needed to succeed in a liberal arts education. Orientation sessions offer program specific information related to English placement, prerequisites, students changing discipline, course advising and registration, and other academic services. The office also conducts an orientation workshop for second-year graduate students to provide information for the thesis preparation stage, citation, library use and plagiarism. The office assesses the success and the

\(^{44}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/scholarships

\(^{45}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/financial-affairs/fellowships/fellowships-listings

\(^{46}\) http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/graduate-studies/support-grants
effectiveness of each orientation by consistently gathering recipients' feedback on every orientation, through the Orientation Satisfaction Survey, which launched in Fall 2016 (4.22).

4.3.2. Support of Underprepared Students

There are several types of underprepared students on campus. These include English language proficiency, mathematical knowledge and research skills. The decision of placing an undergraduate student in English preparatory courses is determined by their score on the standardized International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-Based Test (TOEFL-iBT). Based on the results of English placement exams, students are offered preparatory English courses in the Intensive English Program (IEP) or Academic English for freshmen (ENGL 0210). Once they pass these courses, they are allowed to enroll in the Freshman Level Core and major courses. Similarly, graduate students who did not complete their undergraduate degree at an English-only university must undergo either the IBT TOEFL or the new academic IELTS exams (which replaced the old ELPT exam in 2010) to determine their graduate English language requirements. The Academic English for Graduates Program, at the English Language Institute (ELI) provides the newly enrolled underprepared cohort with remedial English courses.

To underprepared undergraduate students in mathematics, an algebra and trigonometry course is offered as a prerequisite for undergraduate students who did not take the Egyptian National General Secondary Examination’s Math course or its equivalent. Similarly, students who have not taken the National Arabic test are required to sit for the Arabic language placement exam, which is administered by the Department of Arabic Language Instruction, to determine their Arabic language level. Based on the results of the Arabic language placement exam, students may be either exempted from Arabic language courses or required to take one or two Arabic language courses (3-6 credits). Similarly, pre-requisite courses are offered for graduate students, depending on their readiness for their selected field of study (4.23).

To ensure that no newly enrolled graduate student is unfamiliar with AUC’s academic values and standards, all admitted students are invited to complement the in-class learning experience with workshops on library research, proper citation methodologies, English writing, research methods and soft skills. In addition, compulsory academic integrity sessions have been offered since 2009 to encourage students to abide by the principles of fairness, accountability and transparency and develop the skills to improve their academic performance (4.24).

4.3 Student Retention and Success

4.4.1 Academic Advising & Mentoring

Undeclared students are advised by freshman advisors, while declared undergraduate students and graduate students are advised at the department of their major. In 2011, the Provost established a task force on Advising, Registration and Mentoring (ARM) in order to address the problems facing students in these critical areas that directly affect their success, satisfaction and retention. The first outcome of this task force was the launch of the Academic Advising Center (AAC) in 2012. Its mission is to support undeclared undergraduate students develop educational plans until they declare their major. The center immediately expanded its activities and appointed a Core Advising officer who reports to the Core Director as well as to the Director of AAC.

In 2015, a Progressive Advising Unit (PAU) was launched to advise double major and changing major students, and proactively support students at risk. Mandatory advising sessions are held twice per semester to allow students to spend more time with advisors in
order to build rapport and ensure effective advising. In 2014, Peer Advising Leader (PAL) was introduced as a student-led program, supervised by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, to increase academic awareness and social and cultural involvement through orienting undergraduate students throughout their first year for a lifelong learning experience. In 2016, the PAL team started to report to the Dean of Students. The above-mentioned activities have helped to improve the advising process, however, more effort is needed to further improve the system and ensure its effectiveness.

Advising for graduate students and declared undergraduate students is held at the departments of the students’ corresponding major. Unfortunately, there is no consistency among the departments in managing the advising process. Some departments rely on faculty advisors, while others rely on staff advisors. In addition, training and preparing advisors has been a continuous challenge. In order to enhance the advising process, the Office of Student Services Online introduced an in-house automated advising sheet in 2012. The sheet extracts from the system all courses completed by the student. It is simple and easy to read in order to facilitate the process for advisors and save them time offering quality-advising sessions. However, the operations were not standardized across departments and only few departments deployed it. In 2015, the University purchased Degree Works software, which includes an advanced advising module, which should be launched in the second phase of implementation in 2018/19. Given the urgency to implement a fully automated advising tool, the Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management contracted an external vendor in 2016 to develop an “Automated Study Plan” system for all majors in the form of interactive and documented flowcharts that are graphically represented in an automated web-based software.

First, AUC decided to implement phase 2 of Degree Works targeting March 2018. The decision was based on detailed sessions with the consultants, showing the importance of adding this tool to improve the process and quality of advising. Once implemented, focus groups will be conducted and surveys will be distributed to both students and advisors in order to evaluate the impact of the new tool on the advising process and quality. This also helps in forecasting demand regarding critical courses, and reporting deviations to spot potential problems and accordingly, take action in a timely manner.

In addition, a new Faculty Mentoring Program was launched in fall 2016 aiming to provide undergraduate students with both academic and personal support through individual mentorship by faculty. The project is led by the Office of Strategic Academic Services (OSAS), and aims to adopt and embrace a new cultural change that nurtures students’ academic and personal potential to create self-motivated, intentional, and inspirational graduates. A structured strategic framework was designed and the new Life Mentorship Program (LMP) was piloted in spring 2017 to promote students’ lifelong success by providing support through individual mentoring by faculty. This support makes a successful transition into and from higher education. An assessment mechanism was designed in spring 2017 in order to monitor and improve the program quality (4.25).

4.4.2 Assessment of Student Success

Undergraduate students must complete their degrees within 7 years (for non-science majors), and within 8 years (for science majors). Similarly, graduate students are required to complete their degrees within 5 years. The limits have been the same for the past years, based on peer institutions and common ranges of study duration. In 2014, the Dean of Graduate Studies enforced the implementation of the completion time in order to allow for recruiting new students.

The Progressive Advising Unit was introduced at the Academic Advising Center in fall 2015 to help undeclared continuing students who have a GPA 2.2 or below receives the support they need (4.26). Students attend two mandatory advising sessions during the semester. Advisors in the unit have strong connections with the Office of Student Support, the Writing Center, and several other offices/departments that might be of assistance to their students. An
exit survey is conducted to students who leave the unit to measure their satisfaction and how the unit helped them. Similarly, OSAS has spotted declared at-risk students and proactively worked on their cases to avoid negative academic repercussions. One important reason for dismissal of students is the expiry of residency rule, which is 7 years for non-science students and 8 years for science students. Hence, students who were approaching expiry of residency rule within two years were identified through a report and reported to their major departments along with the detailed analysis of each case for follow up and action. Furthermore, the Student Coaching for Learning and Success unit (formerly Student Mentoring) under the Support Office for Students (SOS) exerts efforts to increase AUC retention by supporting students, who are struggling or at risk academically, to achieve their potential in developing the required academic skills to succeed. The unit adheres to FERPA regulations regarding maintaining confidentiality of all students’ records, whether the sessions are conducted one-to-one, through workshops or the Peer Coaching Program.

4.4.3 Retention Management

Some academic policies and processes have been modified for supporting students on time degree completion such as the Repeat Policy, which was revamped in 2009-2010 to allow students to repeat up to 5 courses during their undergraduate years at AUC. The policy was up to 12 credits, the change was to limit on number of courses instead of credits to account for the credits variance of different programs. This had a great impact on increasing students’ satisfaction especially for those considering changing major. Furthermore, in 2008 the Drop Policy was modified to only allow dropping courses up until 8 weeks after start of classes, while the previous policy allowed students to drop at a later time in the semester. This resulted in limiting grade inflation; however, some professors do not give sound feedback before the drop deadline and students have difficulty in judging whether to drop the course or not.

A major problem facing students was the delay in declaring majors until junior and senior years, leading to a significant delay in their graduation and/or students’ reliance on overloads to graduate earlier, jeopardizing the quality of education. As a result, a critical policy was set in 2009 that requires all undergraduate students to declare a major when they reach 60 earned credit hours. In addition, students who earn more than 90 credit hours are required to complete their declared major, and if they opt to declare a new major, they must double major in this case. This policy was critical to avoid having students “park” in a major until they can declare their desired major. Despite the existence of the policy since 2009, its full implementation did not occur until 2014. The implementation of this policy ensures students are advised regarding the optimal path that would help them to declare and graduate on time (1.11).

Students also complained about difficulty to register courses. As a result, the Office of the Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management analyzed the root causes of the problem and identified three main reasons: (1) course offering was based on history not based on demand forecasting; (2) limited restrictions on high demand courses; and (3) the declaration timing was after registration, negatively affecting newly declared students and creating the “lost semester” (4.27). In order to address the first problem, a complete forecasting model was developed and verified in 2015/16 and was used as a guide to support course offering for most high-demand majors on campus. In order to solve the second problem, restrictions on specific courses were set for the prioritized groups of students to ensure that they enroll in these courses on time. Finally, the declaration and registration timing has changed, moving declaration prior to registration in January and June every year. Starting in June 2016, the declaration cycle is now conducted right after the final grades are recorded on the system. Then, the registration cycle takes place, considering the newly declared group. Student leaders confirmed that these initiatives significantly reduced registration problems. In addition, interviews with department staff members also
acknowledged the impact of these changes by reducing the number of petitions they received before and during the drop & add week.

Finally, a retention management team was established in 2016, led by the Office of Strategic Academic Services (OSAS) and supported by members from the Council for Advising, Registration and Enrollment (CARE). The mandate of this team is to analyze the number of students leaving AUC, the stage at which they leave, and the reasons behind their departure.

4.4.4. Counseling Services

The mission of the Student Counseling Center under the Office of Student Well-being (formerly the Support Office for Students) is to provide “quality, professional and effective behavioral care services for students” (4.28). Every semester campaigns to raise mental health awareness take place in which regular screening for simple well-being issues are checked of students visiting the booths, which are around 400 every semester, and counselors detect the students who need professional help.

Students who come to the Student Counseling Center with psychological needs are treated with confidentiality as they learn new coping techniques, whether one-to-one or in a group. In some cases, psychiatric services are offered. The Counseling Center conducts a regular assessment process to measure the outcomes of the unit through evaluation forms given to students after several sessions. The survey results showed that 87% of the students that come to the center learn more about themselves in a supportive environment, helping them better understand their needs and expectations and leading to better academic outcomes, thus, increasing retention rates.

The Counseling Center in coordination with the Coaching Unit, under the same office (Student Well-being), introduced Emotional Intelligence workshops. These workshops proved to be successful, as 65-70% of the students who were coached showed improvements in GPA, while those who did not attend the workshop did not show any GPA improvement. The success of the coaching process is measured by the overall GPA at the end of the semester, or other benefits observed by the coach or reported by the student.

In addition, the Student Disability Unit under the Student Well-being was established in line with Egyptian and U.S. laws and refers students for assessment, arranges for adjustments and academic accommodations, and provides confidential advice. It offers support services such as ADHD screening, study skills for students with intellectual disabilities (ID), non-medical personal help and orientation for the visually impaired. These services impact student retention by providing the highest degree of professional competence and commitment.

4.4.5 Co-curricular Activities

The Office of Residential Life provides the First-Year Residential Experience Program (FYRE) to facilitate new residents’ interaction with continuing residents. They provide the new residents with the support they need to become familiarized with their new living environment through unique programs and resources designed to meet their needs and interests. The Residential Life Office also initiated a Cross-Cultural Program (RCCP) in 2014 in order to create collaborative partnerships with international universities and promote Intercultural Living Learning Community engagement inside AUC campus residences. The Office of Residential Life collaborated with universities in Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, and South Africa. In addition, the RCCP allows residents to enjoy a cultural experience by joining

47 http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-counseling-center
such programs at a highly-subsidized cost. Local and international students who joined the program describe it as a great opportunity for cultural and self-exploration (4.29).  

Engaging students in extra and co-curricular activities by the Office of Student Engagement (OSE) fosters student development, social responsibility, appreciation for the arts, and citizenship. This strategy is applied through promoting an array of student organizations and activities. A total of 2597 students - almost half of the student body - participated in co-curricular activities in 2015-2016; representing 65 diverse academic, cultural and special interests’ clubs. In order to encourage students to engage in co-curricular activities, the allocated budget has increased by approximately LE 100,000 for the 2015/2016 academic year. The Clubs and Conferences Committee (CCC) allocated resources for about 1500 students engaged in leading activities and carefully monitored their spending. Having citizens who are competent leaders and who embrace lifelong learning approach is achieved through AUC students’ strong representation in international conferences.

Students have autonomy in decision-making, empowerment, and balance of powers in the governance through effective representation in various standing university committees. Three branches supervise each other: Union, Senate, and Court, in a self-correcting mechanism. In addition, a Constitutional Review Committee was formed to rewrite the constitution in spring 2016. A newly automated financial online system for student organizations was developed to encourage students to proceed with logistical arrangements in a more efficient and effective way. Moreover, an online manual was developed to increase transparency and help in documenting all procedures (4.30). Finally, a Monitoring and Evaluation Team (MET) was established for data collection and analysis (4.31, 4.32).

Given the significant number of clubs and associations, complaints regarding the quality of some activities have emerged. The OSE received several complaints regarding the performance of some clubs and conferences, in addition to the fact that high board members of several clubs were not affiliated with AUC. As a result, OSE capped the number of clubs, and closed organizations that were not operating effectively, according to established criteria.

This report has already noted AUC’s implementation of a pioneering co-curricular transcript for all students in December 2017 (4.33), following a deliberate, multi-party design process since 2015. The OSE is in phase one of the co-curricular transcript, which was launched in fall 2017.

4.4.6 Other Student Services

Due to the move to the New Campus in 2008, a vast facility expansion with more than 40,000 square meters became available for the Athletic Department to introduce new sporting activities and competitive, intercollegiate sports offerings as well as hosting national and international competitions. The department is dedicated to aligning academic and athletic excellence, promoting diversity, encouraging a balanced experience, teaching lifelong habits, and strengthening the campus through local, national, and global populations. In addition, the Attendance Policy was modified in spring 2016 to cater for special students who go on planned leaves to attend competitions. The policy stressed the importance of faculty accommodating students’ need for some flexibility to participate in athletic competitions, and represent their country and AUC in national and international competitions.

AUC outsourced its food services to an external company from 2008-2012. However, the operation was found inefficient in satisfying the University’s needs. In 2012 the Office of University Food Services was established to manage the operation and quality of food services. It ensures safety, hygiene, service excellence, integrity and transparency of operations, as well as the diversity of operations to satisfy the needs of the entire AUC

http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-life/residential-life
http://schools.aucegypt.edu/studentlife/involve/org/Pages/home.aspx
http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-life/get-involved/student-leaders-manual
community. In order to improve the quality of the services provided, a regular annual assessment via surveys is conducted to gauge satisfaction (4.34). In addition, a permanent Food Advisory Committee was formed, representing most concerned stakeholders. The committee meets monthly and conducts regular food safety and operation inspection through the internal food safety auditor following a well-defined checklist and collecting food samples for lab examination (4.35). Based on the 2015/16 assessment results, it was decided to discontinue services of one of the vendors, which received poor ratings in the food services annual survey (4.34). Finally, an end-of-year assessment is developed based on the monthly reports as well as the annual satisfaction survey. Accordingly, results help managers make informed decisions of either to continue with the same vendor or make changes.

Bus services have been offered since the move to the new campus in 2008. Transportation Services appointed a single vendor, which had a huge fleet of buses, to serve all the bus routes. The company was willing to cover the AUC operational schedule and had a strong prior experience in such operations. The internal transportation team assessed the quality of the service provided and identified various pitfalls, including poor bus conditions, increased number of breakdowns, tardiness, as well as a deteriorated service quality. The team exerted a lot of effort in monitoring and responding to daily complaints, and decided to terminate the vendor’s contract in 2014. As a result, multiple vendors were contracted; each serving specific routes, to diversify the risk and ensure quality through competition. Assessment surveys revealed that community is satisfied with the services, but there are still complaints related to quality and frequency that should be addressed (4.36, 4.37).

4.5 Transfer Credits and Protection of Student Records

4.5.1 Evaluation of Transfer Credits

The Registrar’s office exerted tremendous effort to enhance the quality of the transfer credit equivalency policy for admission applicants and AUC study abroad and exchange students. The key is to provide world-class service while following university policies to ensure transparency, in addition to achieving the learning outcomes and expected educational levels. Since 2008, some modifications have taken place to ensure facilitated and validated transfer credit processes to serve interrelated academic and non-academic offices. The migration to Banner in 2010 led to the use of an integrated electronic information system for documentation, which helped transfer information to be shared effectively with academic departments.

Transfer Course Equivalency (TCE) is an online tool that was developed by the Office of the Registrar in 2012 to ensure transparency and consistency in course equivalency. It is an online database accessible to current and prospective students and is clearly mentioned in the University online catalog (1.11, 4.38)51.

A ‘Transfer Guideline’ was developed in 2012 to specify the procedures followed in evaluating the transfer of credits. The Transfer credit policy has 2 main factors; the minimum grade accepted and the total of transfer credits allowed. Minimum grade is based on common practice among American education system peer institutions. Total credits allowed for transfer is in alignment with the AUC residency policy. In addition, to improve the service delivered to students, a new Student Scheduler system was developed in 2013 to schedule appointments online with a transfer credit affairs officer. As a result, the quality of service improved through clear and consistent communications (4.39)52. However, response time remained occasionally slow due to the detailed requirements/documents requested from certain academic departments. This gap was noted on the guidelines provided to students to be aware of the expected timeline.

51 http://www.aucegypt.edu/admissions/undergraduate/how-apply/transfer-credit
52 https://www3.aucegypt.edu/registrar/StudentLogin.aspx
4.5.2 Protection of Student Records

The Registrar’s Office maintains student records, credentials, transcripts and archives in accordance to the AUC policy for preserving privacy rights and safeguarding the confidentiality of student information and records. This is done in accordance with maintaining and operating records management standards and data integrity to ensure that the student privacy and confidentiality of records are secure and efficient in accordance with Family Educational Rights & Privacy Acts (FERPA) regulations. Some modifications have been implemented, including the integration of Documentum software in 2009, which enabled the Registrar to function efficiently by maintaining students’ credentials submitted during the admission process and expediting document retrieval services. Moreover, the introduction of Banner in 2010 allowed legitimate online access to student records for faculty, advisors and students, the automation of important forms as credential requests, transcripts and verification requests being submitted online, and the implementation of online credit card payment. Therefore, such efforts have contributed to an efficient flow of student information that enabled University officials to perform their tasks successfully and efficiently. Also, the availability of student records was crucial in improving the service level provided in a more secure system that contributed to overcoming storage space problems, and ensuring student data integrity and legitimate access to student records.

FERPA guidelines require awareness notifications to be sent annually even if FERPA training sessions are conducted. This is important to ensure that staff and faculty understand and comply to the terms and conditions of keeping the confidentiality of students’ educational histories, and are aware about what can be disclosed at their discretion regarding student information. AUC enforces safeguarding confidential material and compliance with governmental bodies such as U.S. federal code, government of Egypt, ministries, military, financial aid and best practices in the industry, as the objective is to control what would be in the best interest of students. Three offices monitor the protection of students’ privacy rights: the Registrar, IT, and Admissions. Risks related to record management are immediately brought to the attention of management and receive high priority in strategic and budget planning.

4.6 Career Support and Services

The Career Center serves and supports undergraduate and graduate students. It completes the students’ journey by discussing the services offered to equip AUC students with the skills and knowledge necessary to start their careers upon graduation. The knowledge gained, as well as the acquired career management tools and employability skills are transferable to the working world. In addition, graduates can continue to build on them throughout their career development process. This has been achieved by providing an array of career services that contribute to students’ self-awareness and provide them with the information and resources to empower them in making career decisions effectively and managing their career development. Services offered by the Career Center are classified into four categories: 1) self-awareness; 2) major and career exploration; 3) career planning and job search; and 4) access to career opportunities. This section describes the four services and their assessment (4.40, 4.41).

One of the critical self-awareness activities is the “Choice of Major”. In 2010, the center introduced it within its career advising services to help students identify their academic areas of interest. Seventy-five percent of students who attended and completed evaluations for making a “major” decision workshop rated its effectiveness in helping them identify a general study area as 3 and above (on a scale of 1-4, 4 being the highest). Moreover, 85% of them rated its effectiveness in helping them identify factors related to choosing a major as 3 and above.

Career Exploration includes various initiatives, such as job shadowing, career day, internships
and graduate study fair. Around 400 students in AY 2016/17 benefited from the Job Shadowing program through exploring 51 career fields within 36 companies in real-life format. The number of companies that hosted job-shadowing visits increased from 23 companies in 2013/14 to 36 companies in 2016/17, covering 51 career fields. Accordingly, the number of students who attended job-shadowing visits increased from 163 students in 2013/14 to 400 students in 2016/17. Ninety percent of job shadowing students who completed evaluations rated their experience as 3 and above in its effectiveness in helping them understand the career under exploration. The annual Career Day that was initiated in 1999 has been redesigned in 2013 to give the opportunity for students to explore more than 20 industries in addition to over 40 career fields. Seventy percent of students who participated in Career Day and completed evaluations rated its effectiveness in exploring career options as 3 and above. The center effective 2011 organized an annual Graduate Study Fair, which currently hosts an average of 25 universities and educational organizations from the U.S., Europe and Asia – including AUC. The event allows students and alumni to learn about graduate study options, understand the application process and learn about funding opportunities. Seventy percent of students/alumni who attended the Graduate Study Fair and completed evaluations rated its effectiveness as 3 and above in helping them learn about graduate study opportunities/programs. Moreover, the center launched a website page stating graduate study scholarship/fellowship opportunities in 2015 to create awareness about funding opportunities among students/alumni keen on graduate study (4.42)53.

Career Planning & Job Search includes career management, career modules, career conferences and career development workshops. In 2008, the center launched the online Career Management System – Career WEB – to facilitate employer announcements of career opportunities to students and alumni, and streamline the application process. The system allows the students/alumni to track their job/internship applications, and it helps the Career Center provide accurate data for reporting and assessment. In 2017, more than 8500 job opportunities and 1400 internship opportunities were announced on Career WEB. In addition, the center offered Career Modules within 12 Core, capstone and/or internship course in 2017. Eighty-seven percent of students who completed evaluations rated the effectiveness of the career modules in focusing their career goals as 3 and above. Furthermore, the Career Conference was introduced in 2007 to facilitate senior students’ transition to the employment world. In 2016, the conference was revamped into an Employability Skills Conference to equip the students with the employability skills needed for the job market. Eighty-nine percent of the employability skills camp participants who completed evaluations rated its effectiveness in preparing them for the transition to the world of work as 3 and above. Finally, starting 2015, the career center added more breadth to graduate study advising as a career planning option, and introduced workshops on writing personal statements and enhancing the graduate study application process. One hundred percent of students, who attended the Personal Statement Workshop and completed evaluations, rated its effectiveness in learning about the content of an effective personal statement as 3 and above. With respect to the Graduate Studies Conquer the Application Process workshop, 92% of participating students rated its effectiveness as 3 and above in understanding the graduate study application process.

Finally, access to Career Opportunities is achieved through employment fairs every semester along with online job postings and campus recruiting visits. A total of 162 companies participated in fall 2016 and spring 2017 employment fairs generating more than 3300 career opportunities to our graduates. As previously reported, AUC’s career counseling services represent such a unique and impactful practice that the Ministry of Higher Education of Egypt has adopted it as a best practice at a national level, and has invited AUC to establish its model across the national public university system, with substantial USAID funding.

53 https://caps.aucegypt.edu/scholarships/
5. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The move from Downtown to the New Cairo campus in 2008, Egypt’s popular revolution of 2011, and the forcible removal of the elected government in 2013, along with economic crises and ongoing national security threats, are among the external challenges to which AUC has been responding at both tactical and strategic levels. A particular strategic challenge is to attract international students and faculty, and to diversify the student body. Since 2008, the university has undertaken various modifications in its organization, administrative processes, deployed and assessment tools.

For example, in 2016, the new Administration assessed serious inadequacies in the oversight and operations of functions supporting the student experience. To reform these, AUC appointed a Dean of Students to manage student life and activities, and an Associate Provost for Strategic Enrollment Management to integrate enrollment offices from recruitment and admissions to graduation and career support. The Administration instituted other modifications to improve students’ experience, including automating the admission process, modifying repeat, drop and declaration policies, establishing an Academic Advising Center, changing the timing of declaration and registration, designing a new mentoring program, expanding the scope of counseling and support services, introducing a Transfer Course Equivalency tool for transfer courses, purchasing software packages for advising and record protection, and expanding career services. A new VP for Digital Innovation joined the cabinet in 2017. She is working integrally with students, faculty, and management to drive many of these changes and others, including the kind of comprehensive, multi-service “AUC App” that is standard among the best American universities; instating Egypt’s first “cashless campus;” further advances in “going paperless;” reducing the complexity and increasing the efficacy of business processes, with a focus on their results on student experience.

The Administration continues to identify and to address gaps and strategic requirements. These include the limited number of international students on campus, the insufficiently diverse student body, the unclear communication of admission scoring, the limited knowledge on the reasons for withdrawals, streamlining of student processes through technology, and increasing the quality of student clubs and associations and achieving the goal of near-universal student participation in co-curricular.

**Recommendations**

1. Continue to build on results of Edelman Intelligence report to effectively implement a targeted recruitment strategy and attract a diverse group of bright local and international students through a holistic admission process using multiple assessment criteria in the selection process including high-school scores, students’ abilities and competencies.

2. Continue to improve our retention management system through automated advising, faculty mentoring and usage of data to support students throughout their journey at AUC. It is specifically recommended to continuously offer formal training to PAL members by the AAC in order to sustain its success and effectiveness and to develop a tool to measure the impact of the registration forecast model on satisfaction and retention.

3. Embed assessment processes further in student service functions where more emphasis is needed such as: in Student Disability Unit, Student Organizations, Food Outlets and Bus services. While many assessment tools and surveys run regularly (Food Survey, Transportation Survey, NSSE), more efforts are needed.

4. Enhance the interaction between international and local students in order to maximize cultural exposure and benefit from diversity.
STANDARD V: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals with their program of study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.”

2. SUMMARY

AUC has clear policies and procedures to document progress in student learning, and most departments and units are fully compliant in all assessment requirements. AUC also has clear assessment processes at different levels within the institution. This is clear at the program level, where all programs and units follow a six-year assessment cycle and are required to annually report their results, in addition to reporting how they have used the results to increase effectiveness of their programs. Linking planning, assessment and budget is a clear step forward that is in its early steps at AUC, and it began its implementation in 2016, where departments and units are required to link their strategic planning process to the budget. Moreover, an assessment process for strategic plans was developed, where departments have begun assessing the progress of their strategic plans annually in November 2017. Assessment has been particularly strengthened in certain departments as a result of specialized accreditations such as ABET Accreditation for engineering, Triple Crown Accreditation (EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA) for the Business school, the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) accreditation for the School of Continuing Education (SCE), Accrediting Council for Education and Training (ACCET) for Executive Education at the Business School and the MPA and MPP programs in GAPP are also Triple Crown Accredited (NASPAA, ICAPA, EAPAA), which is the first of its kind the world.

There has been clear progress in the development of a culture of assessment, and the community is aware of the benefits of assessment and how it can be used to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. Other methods of assessment are carried out with regularity and have provided the University with clear understandings of strengths and weaknesses regarding different aspects of institutional effectiveness. These methods of assessment include institutional surveys surveying alumni, faculty, students (e.g. NSSE, Freshman survey, Senior survey) and services provided on campus; institutional dashboards; outcomes-based ePortfolios; and student academic assessments. Furthermore, the University has a policy and process for internal quality reviews.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STANDARDS OR CRITERIA

The Work Group for Standard V worked closely with the Work Group for Standard III (Design & Delivery of the Student Learning Experience). The purpose of this collaboration was to ensure no overlaps in research occurred due to the commonalities existing in the charges of both groups especially within the criteria involving ensuring educational goals are clearly stated at the institution and degree/program levels, the presence of adequate and appropriate institutional reviews and periodic assessment of institutional effectiveness.

This collaboration involved sharing data collection activities for students, faculty members, departments, department chairs, deans, associate deans, adjunct instructors and programs. Focus groups and interviews were conducted by different members from both Work Groups, and data were shared with all members of both Work Groups. Additionally, documentation requested from departments and programs was shared with both Work Groups.

Link to AUC’s Mission: AUC requires regular assessment of teaching standards and student learning to uphold the University’s commitment to the “pursuit of excellence” and institutional effectiveness which are central to AUC's mission.
4. **Analysis**

4.1 *Clearly stated educational goals at the institution and degree/program levels, which are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experiences, and with the institution’s mission.*

AUC has made significant progress in the past ten years to ensure that all academic programs have clearly stated educational goals. Currently, nearly all departments in the University are on a regular cycle of assessment.

University-wide learning outcomes were rearticulated in 2008, organizing such features as the synthesis of discipline-based knowledge with a broad-based liberal arts education, adaptability, information literacy, the ability to work in groups, an appreciation of international interdependence and the importance of life-long learning under five basic categories: Professional Skills, Advanced Communication Skills, Critical Thinking, Cultural Competence, and Effective Citizenship (5.01). These learning outcomes have continued to evolve, influencing the development of department, program and school learning outcomes. Learning outcomes in the Freshman Program and the Core Curriculum are also directly linked to the university learning outcomes. The latter, taken together, presented a laddered, intentional progression in depth and sophistication of sought outcomes, organized around basic rubrics as critical thinking and reading, oral and written communications, teamwork, and ethics and civic engagement.

While the Core Curriculum goals are university-wide, at the undergraduate level, AUC still needs to connect specific goals from the majors to the Core Curriculum. What has occurred, however, is the implementation of various university-wide programs that have encouraged an institutional perspective on learning. For example, the Community Based Learning (CBL) initiative has allowed for a cross-departmental connection to AUC’s values (e.g., lifelong learning and social responsibility) (5.01). This program clearly links to one of the main institutional learning outcomes which is Effective Citizenship, however, students are not required to take CBL courses, as it is not yet compulsory or considered as an exit requirement. Another example is the Undergraduate Research Program, which also connects to AUC’s values of lifelong learning, and encourages students to integrate their classroom learning with national and international fora (5.01). This too, however, needs further institutional support and cross-campus promotion.

Direct and indirect assessment measures were developed to assess university learning outcomes. Capstone-level learning outcomes have been developed within the Core Curriculum that are directly linked to university learning outcomes to help assess the outcomes through a direct method (5.02). In addition, the senior survey was developed in 2016 as an indirect measure to support the assessment of university learning outcomes (5.03). However, this needs to be more clearly articulated at the institutional level, which would help in implementing a more sustainable assessment process of the institutional learning outcomes. Furthermore, departments and programs provide assessment of learning outcomes at the program level. Taken together, these assessment results, along with a range of indirect measures including institutional surveys such as NSSE, Senior survey, ECAR surveys, alumni and employer surveys, course evaluations and graduation and retention statistics, all provide the best indication that, university-wide, basic learning outcomes are being achieved (5.23, 5.24).

4.2 *Organized and systematic assessments conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and degree/program goals. Institutions should: (1) define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for*

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54 [http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/about-auc](http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/about-auc)

55 [http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/core-curriculum/core-curriculum-learning-outcomes](http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/core-curriculum/core-curriculum-learning-outcomes)
evaluating whether students are achieving those goals; (2) articulate how they prepare students in a manner consistent with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education. They should collect and provide data on the extent to which they are meeting these goals; (3) support and sustain assessment of student achievement and communicate the results of this assessment to stakeholders;

AUC’s commitment to systematic assessment of learning outcomes dates back many years, always under the guidance of a well-publicized, concise and evolving statement of its mission.

The University’s first assessment committee was established by the Provost in 1999 (5.04), initially as a subcommittee of the Long-Range Planning Committee. In its report in the year 2000, this group formulated a set of educational outcomes, written as core competencies and grouped into personal/interpersonal, cognitive, preparedness for successful careers, and attitude/citizenship outcomes. These would become the basis of an extensive system of periodic program reviews for all academic programs, involving a detailed self-study and an on-site visit of an international review team, alongside several successful applications for specialized accreditation, each with their own stringent assessment and review criteria.

Most AUC schools, departments, and programs currently have assessment plans (93%), which involve a mission statement, a detailed set of learning outcomes, realistic and defensible assessment measures for each learning outcome that include target levels and benchmarks, and an indication of how often and when assessment will be conducted (5.05).

### 4.2.1 Program level assessment

Assessment at this level is currently implemented within all programs, where they undergo a six-year assessment cycle. Program assessment is conducted annually over the first five years of the cycle ending with a self-study and a review of the program. All academic programs are required to submit a plan at the beginning of the six-year assessment cycle, and report on the findings of their assessment annually. The components of the assessment plans, assessment reports, self-study, and program review reports are available in the Planning and Assessment Guidelines (3.07). Ninety-three percent of academic programs now have an assessment plans in place and assess their learning outcomes annually (5.06). Workshops are provided annually to support programs in the assessment process.

### 4.2.2 Department/School Level Assessment

The University has been working hard towards implementing an effective assessment system at this level. This is reflected in its newly established Integrated Strategic Planning process, which integrates assessment, planning and budgeting. This integration has been recently implemented in both academic and administrative departments by linking the strategic planning process to the budgeting process, and requiring all departments to assess their strategic plan goals annually and report on their results. Departments are required to submit a three-year strategic plan, link their goals to their budget, and assess the achievement of these goals annually via an assessment report. AUC began this process by outlining a clear process and timeline and by conducting several workshops to help all departments understand the process. Ninety-eight percent of departments now have a strategic plan in place, linked to the budget and will be assessing their goals annually beginning in FY17 (5.07).

### 4.2.3 Institutional Level Assessment

The University has developed several methods to assess its institutional effectiveness. These methods include:
Institutional Surveys: AUC has an institutional assessment calendar where there is a clear plan of all institutional surveys that assess different constituents within the University (5.08). This plan is based on a cycle to ensure periodic assessment of the different constituents as follows:

- **Regular Annual Surveys:** these surveys are conducted annually and include the freshman, alumni, and senior surveys.
- **Cyclic Surveys (maximum 2 surveys per year):** these surveys alternate in cycles depending on key initiatives and institutional needs and include NSSE, faculty surveys, employer surveys, and satisfaction surveys of different services provided on campus.
- **Ad-hoc Surveys:** Several surveys are administered for specific purposes such as a collective satisfaction survey that was sent out in Fall 2016 to help the University evaluate every aspect of its programs and services, governing and supporting structures, resources, and educational outcomes in relation to the institution’s mission and goals (1.06, 1.07). In addition, different focus groups with different university constituents are also conducted (5.09). These surveys and focus groups will also provide opportunities for institutional improvement.

Institutional Dashboards: DAIR provides the community with different Institutional Dashboards that are used for assessment by different university constituents. Furthermore, AUC has invested in establishing a state of the art Business Intelligence system infrastructure to support institutional effectiveness. The objective is to avail data, information and knowledge in a timely and accurate manner to all constituents to report on KPIs and assessment measures and support informed-decision making (5.10, 5.11).

Standardized skills tests: AUC has administered the CAAP test to assess critical thinking, writing and reading skills of its students in spring 2015 and again in spring 2017. This test also enables AUC to compare its students’ academic skills to other students in the U.S. and evaluate the effectiveness of the learning process within the University (3.77). AUC plans on continuing to administer the CAAP test to assess the effectiveness of student learning and achievement of university outcomes and a plan is being developed on how to implement this periodically to allow for assessment of its core curriculum and university learning outcomes.

ePortfolios: AUC has started the implementation of outcomes-based ePortfolios as an assessment tool for student achievement of learning outcomes. A task force was established to standardize the process, promote the benefits, and establish a plan for implementation. A roadmap was developed to implement ePortfolios gradually at the course level, followed by the Freshman, Core, and finally institutional level. In addition, several workshops have been conducted over the past couple of years, through the Center of Teaching and Learning and other venues, to raise awareness and increase faculty buy-in. As a result, faculty buy-in has increased and more faculty members have begun implementing this tool on the course level and freshman program level. AUC is now starting to implement ePortfolios at the core level by having more faculty teaching these courses involved, but are still at the beginning stages (5.12, 5.13).

What is most salient is the steady development of a culture of assessment at AUC, at every level, and among students as well as faculty. It is in this environment that the e-portfolio is emerging as a newly relevant and powerful learning tool in the Freshman Program classes that have so far adopted its use. It is the students themselves, more and more, who are articulating and taking ownership for how Core learning outcomes are achieved, and making connections between different courses and co-curricular experiences, to integrate the knowledge and skills they are gaining.
4.3 Consideration and use of assessment results for the improvement of educational effectiveness, consistent with the institution’s mission, such uses include some combination of the following: (1) assisting students in improving their learning; (2) improving pedagogy and curriculum; (3) reviewing and revising academic programs and support services; (4) planning, conducting, and supporting a range of professional development activities; (5) planning and budgeting for the provision of academic programs and services.

There are several indicators that point to the use of assessment results for improvement of educational effectiveness at the program level, with some departments being stronger than others in closing the loop between assessment and learning.

The assessment process, which requires all academic programs to submit annual assessment reports, allows departments to reflect on their assessment results and the extent they are achieving their intended learning outcomes. The report also includes a section where departments are required to explain how these results will be used to make improvements within the program.

There seems to be some consensus that assessment results at AUC are regularly used to assist students in improving their learning, as 69% of responses from faculty to an institutional survey agreed that they use their assessment results this way (1.06). Most departments and programs have an assessment plan that requires them to identify learning outcomes of their courses, i.e. what behaviors students should perform at the end of their course study, and also requires them to report on their results. Many departments are required to collect syllabi for each course based on a senate-approved template, where faculty are required to identify learning outcomes (5.14). This focus on learning outcomes encourages faculty to link assessment to learning and instruction. Many departments and schools have assessment groups or committees, which look at student work and perform program learning outcomes assessments that are communicated to faculty with implications for instructional use.

Assessment results are used in most departments to plan for professional development sessions that educate faculty on innovative pedagogy and curriculum, and 73% of faculty responses to an institutional survey mentioned they strongly agreed or agreed that their assessment results were used in this way (1.06).

At an institutional level, several strategies are being used to contextualize assessment, such that its results are meaningful for students and faculty in classrooms, not just for accreditation and administrative purposes:

- Frequent communication about institutional assessment results with entire AUC community, where results from institutional surveys are shared on the AUC Institutional Surveys Website (5.15)\(^\text{56}\). In addition, surveys related to specific constituents are presented within specific committees.
- AUC’s Assessment and Planning Committee provides a vision for assessment, which is embedded in all institutional processes, and is linked to resource allocation.
- More faculty and stakeholders are becoming involved in assessment processes; this communicates a shared responsibility and ownership of assessment, and emphasizes the need to make it meaningful in how it impacts teaching and learning.

DAIR also offers a number of workshops to help faculty and others involved in the collection and interpretation of assessment data. In addition, the DAIR website has a wealth of resources, including templates, a planning and assessment guide, and sample assessment plans (5.16)\(^\text{57}\).

Programs and departments are also increasingly expanding data collection efforts to include

\(^{56}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/data-analytics-and-institutional-research/institutional-surveys
\(^{57}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/data-analytics-and-institutional-research/assessment
more stakeholders; SSE is a strong model, relying on input from industry advisors, alumni and students to continuously improve their program and course offerings. Primarily this is a result of ABET accreditation (5.17).

More ownership of and investment in the assessment process by programs and departments, and by individual faculty within programs and departments, is likely to increase, given that budgets are now tied to strategic plans and as a result of the efforts of DAIR to raise awareness of the importance of meaningful assessment among the AUC community. Faculty and staff are increasingly aware that assessment results must be employed for the improvement of programs, which necessarily involves resources, as indicated by the 2016 DAIR survey results (1.06).

4.4 If applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers; and periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes utilized by the institution for the improvement of educational effectiveness.

AUC has a systematic assessment process in place across different levels. This process includes program, department, school, and institution level assessment, and several examples of the engagement of external expertise for this purpose.

DAIR, in coordination with Planning and Assessment Committee, is responsible for monitoring this assessment process to ensure all academic programs and administrative service units have clear assessment plans in place to assess their programs and strategic goals (5.04). This process, which requires reflecting on results and using them to inform change, is mainly through both the Integrated Strategic Planning and the Academic Program Assessment processes. These processes are the same for assessing both strategic goals and learning outcomes. Individual programs and units are responsible for designing and implementing their own assessment processes and are monitored by DAIR and the Planning and Assessment Committee. The University’s planning and assessment requirements are clearly stated in the “Planning and Assessment Guidelines”, which explains the components and expectations of these processes (3.07). This document was originally created in 2007 as “Academic and Administrative Assessment Guides” and updated in 2014 and again in 2016 to reflect the modifications made to the processes (5.18, 5.19).

All academic programs and departments, and administrative units follow this cycle and enter their data periodically on the University’s planning and assessment software Compliance Assist (5.20). This software is the repository for all assessment plans, reports, and strategic plans and reports.

The purpose of the Planning and Assessment Committee is to provide a consultative forum for facilitating the process of continuous strategic planning, assessment and improvement at AUC. The primary mission of the committee is to support the development and institutionalization of a culture of planning and assessment at AUC to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. The renaming of the Assessment Committee to the Planning and Assessment Committee has also helped to reinforce the integration of assessment, planning and budgeting. This committee, along with DAIR, has made strong efforts to assist programs and departments in developing a “culture of continuous improvement” by providing feedback on submitted assessment plans and reports. The committee is divided into three sub-committees to ensure the effective implementation of the committee’s mandate as follows:

1. Integrated Planning and Assessment Sub-committee: the purpose of this sub-committee is to initiate and facilitate the process of continuous integrated planning and reporting of departments and schools. The sub-committee’s primary role is to
support the development of a culture of planning and assessment among AUC academic and administrative departments to improve institutional effectiveness. It also plays an advisory role to programs and departments in conducting and interpreting results of their reviews.

2. Academic Program Assessment Sub-committee: the purpose of this sub-committee is to facilitate the process of continuous assessment, reports, self-study and program reviews of academic programs. The sub-committee’s primary role is to support the development of a culture of assessment among AUC academic programs to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness.

3. Core Assessment and Assessment Awareness Sub-committee: the purpose of this sub-committee is to initiate and support the development and institutionalization of a culture of assessment at AUC through raising awareness of assessment and its importance within the AUC community. This sub-committee is also responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the Core Curriculum (5.21).

The Planning and Assessment Committee is also charged with the review of planning and assessment plans and reports. This process has been developed to assess the effectiveness of the assessment processes within the University, where the Academic Program Assessment sub-committee is responsible for reviewing assessment plans using previously developed rubrics, and giving feedback to programs and units on the quality of their plans (5.22). The review of the quality of strategic plans has also begun with the new integrated planning and assessment process shifting the focus from just ensuring that academic and administrative departments and units have strategic plans in place, have completed all required components, and have linked strategic goals to their budget to reviewing the details of the plan and provided feedback on how to improve their quality.

DAIR conducts periodic gap analyses at the pre-set deadlines in order to monitor these processes and then communicates the results to the Planning and Assessment Committee, area heads and the Provost (5.06, 3.05). If submissions are incomplete, departments are informed of what is missing and are provided with help and support to complete the missing items if needed.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AUC is structurally set up for productive assessment of student learning. The University has the components in place and has been increasing completion rates and quality of strategic and assessment plans and reports. Substantial progress has been made in improving AUC’s culture of assessment since the last Accreditation.

AUC also has a strong survey calendar that is used across all functions and areas to provide useful, tailored and/or international indirect assessment mechanisms. Among these are first-year surveys, NSSE, exit surveys, international student surveys and various AUC experience surveys. These are run in partnership with offices to support their assessment and continuous improvement efforts. Furthermore, the implementation of the Business Intelligence project, which was an initiative supported by Senior Management, supports informed-based decision making.

Annual assessment reports submitted by departments and programs provide evidence of the use of assessment results for the review and revision of academic programs and support services. This is further substantiated by the results of an institutional survey for faculty, in which 69% of faculty agreed that their program or department makes use of assessment results to improve student learning, 73% agreed that results are used to improve pedagogy and curriculum, 53% agreed that they use results to improve student success indicators and 52% agreed that they use results to plan and budget for improvement of programs and services within the University (1.06).

However, the effort to involve all faculty in this effort is ongoing, as the participation and awareness of faculty of annual assessment reports and how the results may be used is uneven across the University. Some departments report high awareness and participation; in many such
cases, the impetus is external departmental or school accreditation, rather than a simple attempt to comply with university requirements to submit annual assessment reports. Therefore, working on making these assessments more meaningful, in addition to having more incentives at that level would encourage productive and useful assessment. Furthermore, the support of university administration regarding the importance of teaching quality with more incentives given to motivate faculty would help enhance teaching quality at the University.

Challenges at the program level include embedding assessment practices into annual program reviews in such a way that all departments are required to view assessment results in the context of improving learning. In addition, departments need to focus more on developing more expertise in articulating learning outcomes and linking coursework to their assessment. Challenges at the institutional level include prioritizing assessment results in strategic planning such as providing adequate resources for supporting struggling students and increasing resources for faculty development.

**Recommendations**

1. Adopt a more uniform approach to university-wide assessment focusing on the assessment of university learning outcomes and the utilization of assessment results to inform decision-making. Furthermore, in order to guarantee that graduates achieve university learning outcomes, these outcomes need to be measured consistently across all programs. Efforts regarding this are clear and can be seen in the current assessment processes in place. In order to support these ongoing assessment efforts, we recommend the implementation of a structure to guide the Core Curriculum and the majors in tailoring teaching toward outcomes that are developmentally appropriate, broad in nature, and that reflect skills and knowledge anticipated by employers, such as the Lumina Foundation’s Degree Qualifications Profile. This profile provides explicit outcomes expected from any type of degree at the Associates, Bachelors, and Masters’ levels, which would allow AUC to have a more consistent and integrative approach to assessment across all programs.

2. More focus on school-level assessment including the process of six-year school and department reviews is needed, in addition to ensuring all departments are using assessment results to improve program effectiveness. These reviews have been conducted for several years, but have been inconsistent across schools. This is an essential component to the process of internal quality assurance.

3. The strategic planning process continue its implementation using an integrated approach on all levels within the University community. This means that there is equal responsibility for the administration to understand what units and departments have put in their strategic plans, and vice versa, which should then be discussed to ensure full commitment at all levels on the strategies we are working toward. Without this, AUC will have multiple different strategies, each being pursued in isolation. Specifically, it is recommended that:
   a. the University administration and management body work entirely within the framework of the strategic plan
   b. the assessment software makes connections across units, goals, or strategies, and provides assistance in mapping out complex plans (if not achieved in current software, then seek alternatives)
   c. budgeting for initiatives is transparent and tied to a clearly articulated strategic plan
   d. assessment planning emphasizes appropriate allocation of resources, in addition to strategies for linking assessment results to instructional practice.

4. Continue to encourage the use of data in planning, assessment and decision-making and making use of systems available such as the new Business Intelligence platform and Compliance Assist Software.

5. Have a robust plan to assess what happens to AUC graduates four to seven years after graduation so AUC can better gauge achievement of university outcomes and share them with the University community.

6. Demonstrate clearly what AUC provides in quality of its education that cannot be achieved
for lower cost at other private or public universities in Egypt.
7. Build more assessment mechanisms for students such as a CBL course exit requirement for undergraduates and periodic participation in NSSE and CAAP tests.
STANDARD VI: PLANNING, RESOURCES AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1. STANDARD & CHARGE

“The institution’s planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.”

2. SUMMARY

To proceed with an effective more structured methodology for the research, the Work Group was divided into eight subgroups. These subgroups were: University Assessment, Academic, Administrative and Operational Units Strategic Plans; Budget, Finance and Administration & Internal Audit; Sustainability Measures; Facilities & Operations; Human Resources; Information Technology; Supply Chain Management; and Funding and Development. A template for compiling information was developed to include the research questions for each subgroup, data repository, related documents, the structure of the unit with reference to its strategic plan, assessment methods, preliminary findings, and future steps for development.

Units within the University are well equipped with clear methodology of identifying their strategic goals and objectives, planning of procedures, and assessment methods regarding implementation and progress. The results of the assessment are used to inform decision-making and help units improve their operations. Further development is needed to cross-reference and disseminate the work of these units. All units have processes of assessment, although these processes are in part informal; however, periodic monitoring still needs to be enforced. Setting the priorities of the budget in relation to the strategic plan and the demands of the units was developed through several levels of assessment and decision-making. A bottom-up approach starts with the assessment within the units, the school and area level, the Senate budget committee and administration level, and then the cabinet recommendation and the Board of Trustees approval.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

As the process of planning, resources and institutional development relies heavily on information from various constituencies of the University, it relates directly to Standards I, IV, V and VII.

Link to AUC’s Mission: Standard VI examines how AUC’s planning processes, resources and structures are aligned with each other, and assesses if they are sufficient to help fulfill AUC’s mission and goals.

4. ANALYSIS

4.1 Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement in relation to AUC strategic plans and Governance

The institutional mission and goals directly impact planning, resources, and institutional development. Priorities are identified as they relate to the institutional goals and objectives and how it supports the university achieves its mission. The structure of governance and organization of the administration also plays a crucial role in defining, assessing and evaluating the planning system.

As AUC has encountered multiple major issues since 2011, it has undergone several thoughtful and rational processes of self-examination and planning to maintain, support, and improve its programs and services. Creative approaches, efficient planning and prioritization were key in order to fulfill its goals and expectations with limited resources. AUC considered internal and external forces affecting the institution, including trends and projections for
enrollment, resources and funding, employer expectations, market inflation and political pressures, competition for faculty and students, and other factors.

AUC had undergone several developments and phases in building its strategic plan. The desire for academic excellence as indicated by the Provost in 2011 outlined five strategic domains: academic excellence, research impact, global experience, community service and institutional quality “Transforming AUC: A Strategic Plan for Excellence 2011- 2013” (6.01). The objectives of this plan were key in shaping the roadmap of the planning process through 2013. In 2013, the five strategic goals were changed to four institutional priorities. The newly set institutional priorities were: education for citizenship and service, research reflecting innovation and impact, outreach enhancing engagement and access, and management with sustainability and integrity (5.01)\(^58\).

In 2014, AUC developed its strategic plan “Our Community of Learning: A Strategic Plan for AUC at its Centennial 2014 – 2019” (6.02). During the five years that preceded this plan, AUC confronted exceptional challenges—from the aftermath of the move of the entire University to the newly-built New Cairo campus in 2008 to the upheavals in the political landscape of Egypt and the region that began in 2011—and the University community met them with integrity, resourcefulness and intelligence. This plan outlined several objectives as follows:

- Objective I: Make Our Place in the World: Egypt’s Global University
- Objective II: Unleash Learning: Opening the AUC Classroom
- Objective III: Location, Location, Location: AUC as an Anchor and a Magnet
- Objective IV: Instilling Integrity, Accountability Sustainability: Managing Continuous Change

While working towards these strategic objectives, the efforts exerted in planning process and institutional improvement revealed the necessity of sustainable development and IT to become catalysts for change and means to facilitate the efficiency of operations within the University.

During these phases of development, the budget and planning process faced several challenges, the most critical of which was the delay period between the input and the decision-making as well as the fact that most inputs were not based on realistic strategic planning of each unit. In response to this, 2015, a bottom-up approach was introduced by the Provost to solicit visions, goals, resource requirements and mechanisms of assessment for academic and administrative units within the University. In 2016, the Provost requested that all units - academic or non-academic - submit their 2016-2019 strategic plans in alignment with the University mission and outlined strategic plan. Furthermore, in spring 2016, AUC revamped the planning and assessment processes for departments and merged them into one integrated strategic planning process.

In the autumn of 2016-2017, the new AUC President requested the Provost and Cabinet to develop and expedite a mid-term review of AUC’s institutional strategic plan, dating from 2014 and published in early 2015. They established a process under the outgoing VP for Information Management, charged to strengthening consensual governance and the AUC community as a whole by bringing its several distinct constituencies together in the planning process; and to produce an updated and practical strategic plan based on meaningful key performance indicators to enable rigorous performance assessment against the plan through the coming five years and beyond.

Furthermore, operational mechanisms for implementation of planning strategies were restructured to redefine responsibilities and create a better work flow. All strategic planning

\(^{58}\) http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/about-auc
and assessment processes of academic, administrative, and operational units are gathered under the Vice President for Digital Innovation. The Executive Vice President oversees operations, administration and finance controlling crucial domains related to budgeting and university finance (including collecting data for internal and external audits), facilities management, and operations, sustainability measures for AUC operations, human resources, as well as supply chain management. The Vice President for Advancement and Communication is responsible for outreach and alignment of development with University strategic planning. The Provost has added an Associate Provost for Assessment and Evaluation to ensure (among his responsibilities) the alignment of the strategic and assessment plans of the academic units (Schools, Departments, and Centers) with the University’s strategic plan.

4.2 Institutional Assessment and Strategic Plans

Institutional assessment at AUC is key for the continuous improvement process of all units within the University. Since the last accreditation visit AUC has undertaken an ongoing development process for its institutional assessment, in which administrative units began submitting their assessment plans annually on Compliance Assist. Surveys are also used as an assessment tool. Many surveys have been conducted on a periodic basis such as the food services survey, the transportation survey, ECAR surveys, employability survey, FYE survey, and the freshman survey. The results are being used to enhance and improve processes and procedures (5.15).

In spring 2016, AUC revamped the planning and assessment processes on the unit level and merged them into one integrated strategic planning process. This was communicated to AUC’s community. DAIR supported all units across campus in building capacities, all academic departments and administrative units were required to submit their strategic plans on Compliance Assist. The assessment component is part of the strategic planning process. Each department and unit is required to submit a 3-year strategic plan linking its goals to their budgets, and they are then required to report annually on the progress of their plans by providing analysis of their assessment results and actions taken for the improvement of its operations (3.07, 5.04).

Moreover, AUC developed a process to link unit budget to unit goals, where all units are required to identify the needed resources to achieve their goals. This is an initiative that was approved and communicated to AUC’s community in October 2016. This process should ensure the effective utilization of resources on the unit level and ensure the efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the University mission and goals. The Planning and Budgeting software (Planning Matrix) was customized to include the data required by the units in order to include the required links between budget and goals.

The strategic plans of units are key to coordination of all units within the University. This helps units identify all requirements including faculty, staff, space, operational budgets, labs, equipment, etc. that affect their budget. KPIs are also set to measure and assess accomplishment of the goals and specific objectives of each unit. This process allows for a transparent and accurate assessment of progress in relation to the University mission and objectives, as well as the creation of links between the different units. The Office of Data Analytics and Institutional Research (DAIR) is the hub for gathering and reporting on all strategic plans of all units (5.15, 5.16).

In addition, AUC has been working on improving the documentation of processes. Recently a task force for “Business Processes” was initiated, which aims to map all business processes, prioritize the ones that need improvement, work on reengineering the processes, and ultimately automating them with software. The work of the task force is ongoing. These

59 http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/data-analytics-and-institutional-research/institutional-surveys
and http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/data-analytics-and-institutional-research/assessment
processes are categorized under three groups: student-related, faculty-related, and internal operations. The task force is proceeding with a short-term plan selecting 3-5 ‘critical’ processes as samples to develop the processes flow charts through interviews with process owners and key users in order to identify the gaps in these current processes. A long-term plan will then be underway to implement this initiative on all domains (6.04).

In conclusion, the development of the integrated strategic planning process is a major step in creating realistic planning and improvement measures for the University, which link to its vision, objectives and values. It is important to emphasize the significance of completing the strategic plans from all units in due time with realistic measures and benchmarks. The Administration has kept the BoT informed of the planning process through 2017. The next steps are to advance the drafting process for executive-level presentation to the BoT for their deeper engagement and elaboration, and final promulgation as a living guide through the coming years. As always inherent in organizational strategic planning, key challenges include linking the strategic planning of units to budget assessment and projections; facilities management, and effective risk management.

4.3 Budget, Finance and Administration

4.3.1 Budget Planning and Resources Allocation

The principal mission of the University’s Office of Budget and Financial Planning is to develop annual and long-range University budgets, which are submitted for approval by the Board of Trustees, and administer the budgets throughout the fiscal year. In this role, the Office of Budget and Financial Planning formulates annual and long-term revenue models and integrates expenditure priorities that are expressed in the University strategic plan (6.05)60. The office also initiates research and analysis, and provides recommendations to senior management on a wide variety of academic and financial issues that have a major impact on the University budget.

The annual budget plan is developed to reflect choices, priorities, and tactics set forth as the result of intensive planning. The budget plan is reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Cabinet advises on revenue and expenditure assumptions, budget parameters, university-wide priorities relative to resource allocations, and institutional policies relating to finances. The undergraduate tuition rate is also approved annually by the Board of Trustees (6.06).

Until mid-2017, the Executive Vice President for Administration also served as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). At the recommendation of the BoT, in 2017, the University recruited a Chief Financial Officer in order to ensure full-time senior management attention to fiscal management. The separate CFO incumbent and structure have demonstrated excellent results. The President therefore has directed, again at the Trustees’ recommendation, that the CFO become a direct report to the President, effective with approval of the 2019 budget at the winter 2018 annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The budget is being developed by recognizing the resources needed by each unit to meet current deliverables and conforms to the University Budget. Over a period of six months, the budget preparation process passes through five phases in budget planning. The Budget and Financial Planning office is responsible to upload the base budget for each unit based on the approved budget assumptions by the administration. It starts at the unit level (Version 5), where each unit examines the resources available, ensures resources fulfill unit goals, and requests new resources needed to achieve new goals. Each unit assesses its stated goals and achievements of the past cycle and makes adjustments accordingly to the coming budget in light of their self-assessment. School level (Version 4) is the first review of the unit

60 http://in.aucegypt.edu/offices/office-budget-and-financial-planning

Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement
submission at the Dean’s level where they examine the unit’s submission and approve it to the Area head level (Version 3). The resources of the budget are then examined at the Administration level (Version 2) for discussion on issues related to tuition increase and compensations and benefits. Finally, the budget is submitted for the Board of Trustees’ approval (Version 1) (6.07).

The University’s budget planning and resource allocation process allows for input from several related constituencies of the University community at various stages in the process. For example, the University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC), which was established in 2011, is responsible for monitoring the planning and budgeting preparation and activities at AUC. The purpose of this committee is to provide the opportunity for students and their families to contribute by sharing their perspectives, insights, and proposals in the preparation of the annual and three-year rolling University budgets (6.08).

Additionally, budget operations are managed through an integrated information system that allows the University, from individual units and departments to senior administration, to control and manage resources. Moreover, following up with the results of the 2008 Self-Study, the Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance initiated a process to unify the budget processes within the University. The new process of linking unit budgets to unit goals should ensure the effective utilization of resources on the unit level (6.09). Furthermore, the Quarterly financial statement and year end forecast report are used to measure and assess the adequate and efficient utilization of instructional resources required to support the institution’s mission and goals (6.10). Finally, University financial records are reviewed and audited by the external auditor KPMG – Hazem Hassan, and the audited financial statement along with the management letter are available upon request (6.11).

The current challenges for the budget are mainly related to the fluctuating exchange rate. This was addressed during budget preparation for FY15 when the University changed its tuition to 50% in EGP and 50% in dollars rather than completely denominated in EGP to protect against the pounds’ devaluation, as at the time each 25pt devaluation in the EGP pounds produced a deficit of approximately one million dollars. On November 3, 2016, the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) announced the floatation of the Egyptian Pound, which devaluated the EGP pound by 48% impacting the dollar portion of the tuition, in addition to the increase in the inflation rate to 19.4% in November 2016. To face this challenge and to assist parents and students with tuition, the University secured the Board approval to create an emergency tuition grant of $5 million for the Spring semester of 2017 to support students in financial need, in addition the BOT approved to modify the full tuition and fees to be only in EGP.

The effectiveness of the budget planning process and the subsequent resource allocation process is assessed against benchmarks for performance to identify challenges and areas needing improvement. For example, the performance of budget/actual operational results had a favorable variance of 2.1% in expenses and 2.5% in revenues for the year 2015/16. The budget is examined from a pure financial perspective on an accounting basis and should be reviewed in relation to other business mechanisms of evaluation and assessment.

4.3.2 Internal Audit

AUC’s Office of Internal Audit provides senior management and the Board of Trustees with reliable information to determine whether operations are functioning efficiently and effectively. The objectives of the internal audit office are to:

- manage and fulfill the University’s fundamental compliance and control objectives;
- deliver a robust and efficient audit, focusing on key issues and risks, with an appreciation of the overall environment in which the University operates;
- perform operational audits for the purpose of ensuring that university operations are conducted efficiently and in accordance with appropriate and adequately documented policies, plans, and procedures;
• provide senior management and the Board of Trustees with an independent, fair and objective appraisal of the effectiveness of the University's financial accountability systems and operational performance in accordance with the applicable standards and;
• provide management with constructive criticism and positive recommendations designed to strengthen and improve performance results and cost effectiveness of their operations.

The Internal Audit Office passed through many phases since the 1980s. In 2005 the University decided to re-establish the Internal Audit Office by hiring three auditors: a chief and two managers. This structure continued until 2009, which marked the adoption of a new approach complying with the best practices according to the Institute of Internal Auditors.

In 2015, a new Chief Audit Executive and two new managers were hired between October and November 2015. As a structural streamlining measure, the interim president in early 2016 removed the CAO from a direct report to the President (concurrently to the BoT Audit Committee Chair), to report to the EVP for Administration and Finance. In late 2016, as a governance measure, the new permanent President obtained Board endorsement to move the CAO back to a direct report to the President, maintaining the concurrent direct report authority to the BoT’s Audit Committee. The President also supported the CAO in hiring two new audit managers, one each for auditing IT and overall compliance; and in taking other measures to strengthen the audit function. Since then, the work of the Internal Audit Office has improved its efficiency, effectiveness, and the value of services rendered to the University. More detailed information regarding the internal audit organization, responsibilities, tasks and procedures are noted in the Internal Audit Office Brief (6.12). Due to the confidentiality of the information the internal audit report is available only upon request by members of the MSCHE group.

The internal audit unit continues to expand its tasks and develop better mechanisms for assessment, in addition to maintaining an adequate number of qualified employees, which will allow for more effective assessments in reasonable time frames improving the planning and budgeting processes.

4.4 Sustainability Measures and Policies

In recent years, AUC realized the significant impact of adopting sustainability measures and environmental control in relation to operational budget. Since 2012, there has been a great shift towards addressing sustainability measures to all operational systems and facilities within the University. In addition to supporting the financial deficit and the surrounding scarcity of resources, this also led to a growing campus community awareness regarding to the importance of the environment. The achievements have surpassed expectations due to increased awareness within the AUC community of its benefits, and the scientific efforts and highly technical approaches utilized in this domain.

AUC’s Office of Sustainability was established in September 2011 as a division of the Office of the Associate Vice President of Campus Services. In the fall of 2011, AUC faced persistent campus-wide budget deficits that were aggravated by rapidly rising energy consumption and costs. To address these challenges, the Office formed internal task forces for Energy and Resource Conservation and Efficiency Task Force (ERCE) to track utility (energy and water) consumptions, pilot various projects, and disseminate information to create a culture of sustainability on campus. These collective efforts led to an overall reduction in energy usage of 35% since 2011.

One primary category of the Office’s work is energy, water, and waste management. Monthly meetings are organized with representatives from Facilities and Operations, the
Budget Office, and the faculty to track AUC’s energy consumption and oversee energy efficiency initiatives, water reduction plans as well as waste management (6.13, 6.14, 6.15).

The Office of Sustainability’s goals and objectives are revised periodically to guarantee the alignment of the department’s strategic plan with AUC’s overall strategic goals and objectives (6.16). It provides a policy and procedures manual to streamline the integration of sustainability in all aspects of the University operations, which takes place in many initiatives such as energy and emission reduction ongoing efforts, awareness campaigns, collaboration with schools and centers on mutual projects like the School of Sciences and Engineering and RISE. While success in energy and emission reduction is measured and communicated, additional efforts should be done to reach out to the campus community with educational events and training in order to achieve higher levels of energy and emission reductions (6.17).

AUC is the first higher education institution in the Middle East and North Africa to conduct a comprehensive study of its own impact on climate change. AUC is committed to tracking and ultimately reducing its carbon emissions, and help convince others to do so in order to contribute to sustaining the long-term viability of the Egyptian society. A university carbon footprint is the annual total of carbon dioxide (CO2) and other significant greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere as a result of daily activities and campus operations. In April 2015, AUC published the new carbon footprint report showing trends for the past three years. An updated report was published early 2017 to project the effect of carbon footprint on AUC budget requirements and present alternative solutions to minimize this effect (6.18).

AUC also continues to engage in the UN Global Compact. The UN Global Compact is the world’s largest sustainability initiative, and it calls on global organizations to align their operations with 10 principles on human rights, labor, the environment, and anti-corruption. The Office of Sustainability submitted AUC’s first Communication on Engagement to the United Nations Global Compact headquarters in New York City. The report is an inclusive status of the operations of the office and future initiatives (6.19). Further details on the work of the Office of Sustainability to integrate environmental and social sustainability into the culture and structure of the University is referenced on its website (6.20).61

Considerable effort has been undertaken to reduce energy consumption and upgrade operational performance for sustainability and environmental measures. With the development of the 2017 Carbon Footprint report, there is a need to further refine the KPI’s to improve the assessment process. Furthermore, activating additional self-assessment tools per unit are to be considered in order to track progress, identify deficiencies, support the department’s strategic plan and involve third party reviews regarding office documentation.

4.5 Facilities and Operations (F&O)

Facilities and Operations unit provides comprehensive planning and management strategies to preserve, enhance, and develop the facilities needed to support the University’s mission and strategy. The team supports the advancement of university excellence by planning, constructing, and improving current assets consistent with the University’s status as one of the region’s leading academic and research institutions. The F&O goals and objectives are updated periodically to guarantee the alignment of the department’s strategic plan with AUC’s overall strategic goals and objectives (6.21).

The unit operates under the administrative stream of Finance and Administration. In September 2016, an AVP for facilities and operations was appointed to oversee the various tasks of the unit. These operations constitute of the following: hostel building administration, campus planning and construction services, New Cairo operations, and downtown operations and utilities (6.22). Periodic reports are generated and analyzed to guide the assessment of the

61 http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/sustainable-auc
department’s effectiveness and the identification of deficiencies, which leads to applying appropriate corrective actions. F&O links its operations to the University operating and policy and procedures manuals.

F&O holds periodic meetings with several related constituencies in the university and with senior administration, and sometimes relies on external consultants. This results in a list of improved projects, which is submitted for evaluation and approval. F&O department strengths include availability of a variety of specialized software (Computerized Maintenance Management Software "CMMS", Building Management System "BMS", Lighting Control Software "Lutron" & "OVA", Fire Alarm System, SALTO Access Control System), up-to-date equipment, and committed and experienced technicians, engineers, and staff with different specializations.

Since 2009, moving to New Campus has been a challenge for the F&O department, as the University faced a number of disruptions in terms of utility unsteadiness such as water and electricity cuts, campus inauguration with partially completed systems such as HVAC system, lightning protection system, fire alarm system, master key access control system, automated lighting control (LUTRON), and building management system (BMS), etc. Despite these challenges, F&O succeeded to work on getting the half-finished systems work with full capacity. This was achieved through continuous coordination with the Financial and Administration department, in compliance with the strategic plan requirements. Several projects and upgrades of facilities are being undertaken. The projects are studied based on needs, and budgets are proposed to senior administration for prioritizing and approval (6.23).

Linking the strategic planning of units to facilities management remains a delayed process. Time is crucial, not only for budget and planning purpose, but for execution. A considerable effort has been undertaken to continuously develop and improve projects in response to strategic plan requirements. However, as mentioned, there is still a need to further refine the KPI’s to improve the assessment process and activate additional self-assessment tools to track progress and identify deficiencies.

4.6 Human Resources

The Human Resources Office (HRO), as a strategic partner with the University’s senior management, is responsible for developing and implementing human resource programs and services to support the mission of AUC. The core services and competencies of HRO include recruitment and staffing, staff relations, talent management, compensation, and benefits.

The HRO updated the Policies and Procedures Manual in 2013 with online availability of the English version on the HR website (6.24). In 2016, the HRO updated the online policies and is in the process of issuing the Arabic version.

The Human Resources Office has a process-mapping document that governs every process handled by the office, which is updated whenever there is a change or addition of a process. This document is available for key personnel within the HRO.

The following outlines some of the accomplishments of the HRO:

- Introducing a short-term voluntary retirement program from March to May 31, 2013 in line with the University’s strategy for improving organizational efficiency, productivity and competitiveness.
- Updating the compensation policy in 2014 and linking it to the online policies and procedures manual.
- Introducing the Shukran (“Thank You”) rewarding program in November 2015 in order to recognize high performance employees.

Implementing the drug-free workplace policy, introducing the policy to the community, implementing staff community random drug test inspection and including the drug test in the hiring procedure medical checkup.

The administration announced the implementation of a three-year staffing plan starting FY15 to improve efficiency, in addition to announcing the reallocation of staff after closure of Zamalek building and the transition of South Tahrir farm. The administration announced a change in attendance and working hours for staff members and the change is being amended in the policy.

The performance appraisal system went through changes and amendments starting 2012, based on feedback from trade unions and focus groups. The HRO implemented changes in the system and provided training and orientation sessions. The changes continued on an annual basis until the decision to suspend the system was made in April 2015. The evaluation and assessment of performance was suspended in April 2015, to be reviewed and aligned with competencies evaluation. During this period of suspension evaluation occurred by providing a short description of performance in the contract renewal forms (6.25, 6.26, 6.27, 6.28, 6.29).

In 2016, the new President directed the establishment of a comprehensive audit and review of HR policies, plans, and procedures spanning the academic area as well as administrative employees. One result was the engagement of outside expert consultants to inventory and define existing positions in their functions and required knowledge, skills, and abilities; to match these to market for purposes of setting competitive compensation and benefits vs. data on recruitment and retention of quality talent; and to establish and implement rigorous, credible performance evaluation systems.

As one result, AUC introduce in January, 2018, My Performance Journey, as the new performance appraisal system for AUC staff. The new system builds on the unit strategic plans, linking personal performance requirements and development goals to unit goals. The objectives of the system are to:

- Create an efficient, performance based community focused on performance, values and competencies
- Focus on development of our employees (e.g., leadership program, mentorship, coaching)
- Hold constructive review sessions to support our employees in meeting their objectives
- Formal semi-annual reviews (mid-year to be developmental, not evaluative)
- Evaluate our employee performance holistically
- Ensure consistency in performance assessment across the University (Clear, consistent robust performance objectives to align with the University strategic objective)

4.6.1. Assessment of Administrative Staff within the Academic Area

Guided by the policies and procedures developed by HR, the compensation policy and the three-year staffing plan, a detailed staff restructuring was launched. The main objective of this restructuring was to address the inadequate pay scale and job levels not reflecting the actual work conducted by staff, which included the identification of all challenges associated with staff affairs. An action plan has been adopted and many pressing issues were resolved.

The Provost office took the lead to identify the major challenges related to staffing in the academic area. After extensive meetings with HR, the leadership of the different constituents of the academic area that are represented in the Provost Council - as documented in the Provost Council meetings held on August 27, 2015 and September 10, 2015 - a major project
for restructuring the staff of the academic area was proposed with an action plan presented (6.30, 6.31, 6.32).

On September 10, 2015, the Provost Office launched the staff-restructuring project in coordination with HR and the various units within the academic area. The first phase of this project was concluded in January 1, 2016 with the outcomes: new and accurate job levels with fair pay scale, new transparent organizational structure, and clear job descriptions (6.33).

4.6.2 Full-time and Adjunct Faculty

In 2011, a Faculty Handbook was developed, in consultation with the appropriate committees, principally the Faculty Affairs Committee of the University Senate and was approved by the University Senate and President. However, the Handbook did not receive the approval of the Board of Trustees. Many faculty members consider that the Faculty Handbook provides clear and accessible information about the principles and procedures that govern faculty life at AUC. This includes academic freedom; faculty appointment; criteria for promotions and leaves of absence; instructional, research, and service responsibilities; and other policies. However, the Administration and Board of Trustees have found numerous ambiguities, inconsistencies, and serious legal questions in the document as accepted by the previous administration in 2011. As a result, in 2015 the Trustees, Administration, and faculty members established a collaborative process to review and revise the Handbook. The process has continued episodically through the transitions from the President who concluded her tenure in December 2015, through the interim presidency of early 2016, the new Administration and Board of Trustees leadership changes of mid- and late 2016, and appointment of a new Provost in 2017. The process has accelerated following the resolution through 2017 of some overhanging issues and the engagement of a leading expert consultant in the field.

A new tool called E-Repertoire was introduced that enables the online creation of annual faculty reports (AFRs), as well as historical storage of faculty activity for personal reporting and tracking purposes. This tool allowed instantaneous assessment of faculty activities, which is crucial for annual evaluation and midterm tenure evaluation.

Following the guidelines of the Faculty Handbook and to have objective criteria for tenure and promotion, every academic department developed, in consultation with the faculty of the department, specific benchmarks for teaching and research for each discipline (6.34).

Some challenges faced by faculty have been addressed by the administration, in consultation with faculty and other stakeholders in the community. One major challenge was that the faculty distribution among schools and departments did not meet student demand, as some departments were overstaffed while others were understaffed. This was in some cases with a high percentage of adjunct faculty. In addition, the screening process and the pay scale for adjunct faculty was not suitable for recruiting high caliber adjunct faculty. To face these challenges, the Provost led an initiative to restructure both the full-time and adjunct faculty body to meet student demand and to ensure high quality education. The process involved consultations with the Deans, leadership of the academic area, and faculty on campus through several meetings with the departments, school councils, and the Provost Council (6.35). The outcome of this restructuring is redistributing all faculty lines among all departments in such a way that fulfills student demand and the administrative obligation of faculty, while keeping the percentage of full-time faculty to adjunct faculty at a minimum ratio of 3 to 1. Furthermore, rigorous hiring and evaluation procedures have been adopted in hiring adjunct faculty (6.36). The procedure has been implemented as of Spring 2016, and the Faculty Handbook has been updated to include this procedure.
Moreover, an important area of improvement was implemented in academic training and continuous development for teaching practices conducted by the CLT. Both adjunct and full-time faculty are required to attend CLT sessions for enhancing teaching mechanisms, introducing technology and varied methods of assessment, and communication in the classroom. Mandatory sessions for all TA’s have been implemented as well.

There has been considerable restructuring in the HRO to respond to the requirements of the AUC strategic plan. Several mechanisms and processes were established to assess, evaluate and recruit highly qualified personnel at all levels of administration, faculty, and adjunct faculty. A redistribution of human resources based on qualifications, job-descriptions, and balanced distribution was conducted during 2015 and remains ongoing. At the academic level, several initiatives are being enforced for professional development such as those developed by the CLT.

4.7 Information Technology (IT)

AUC invests significantly in technology deployment, as the availability of data is key for informed decision-making. To upgrade overall “data-driven” management performance, in 2017 AUC established and recruited a new cabinet position as VP for Digital Innovation. One of her key responsibilities and lines of operations is to continuously upgrade AUC’s IT technology, infrastructure and software, as had been begun in insufficiently integrated fashion in the previous three years. IT hence has developed an updated mission statement that reflects both current practice and strategic goals. As one example of results: by late 2017, this unit had substantially advanced new registration, tracking and advising software DegreeWorks for students.

The IT department has been revamping major projects since 2011. Major projects remain in line. The infrastructure scope includes the support of 275 classrooms and halls, 90 physical servers and 450 virtual servers, almost 18,000 network nodes supported, over 5000 desktops, 3000 VOIP phones and 6 open access labs as well as an average of 2000 hours of events supported per semester (6.37).

Under the Chief Technology Officer, who reports to VP/DI, there are four main domains: IT operations (university information systems, technology infrastructure, academic technologies); classroom technologies and media services; financial and administrative management; and Office Aid and Innovation and Solutions Unit (6.38).

The IT Planning Committee (ITPC) was established in 2010 as an IT governance body. It included members of the University Cabinet, in addition to representatives from faculty and staff. Its role included the review of IT strategic plans, assessment of new IT projects and follow up on the status of current projects. IT policies were also discussed in this committee (6.39). A University structural reorganization was introduced in December 2015, and a new area was formed under the leadership of a Vice President for Information Management.

In 2016, the ITPC was replaced with a university-wide Council for Information Management (CIM) that included different stakeholders on campus. CIM serves as a think tank for data and technology related issues and acts as a governance platform. The main role of the CIM is developing frameworks, soliciting input from different constituents, evaluating, reaching decisions, and proposing solutions, in addition to focusing on policies, procedures and processes. Members of the council are required to disseminate decisions made and enforce rules and initiatives agreed upon in the meetings. The CIM is now the primary platform for deliberations and discussions for all IT related decisions on campus (6.40). CIM has monthly meetings. It is crucial that all constituencies try to attend all meetings (4 per semester), as well as have consistent representatives for each area, in order to maintain the information chain and allow the CIM to function effectively. Furthermore, a number of committees were formulated to follow up on topics and issues discussed at the CIM. The focus was on
engagement and governance.

Another advisory committee for IT is the Council for Advising, Registration, and Enrollment (CARE). It includes advisors from all schools, representatives from Enrollment, Admissions, Registrars, Core, IT, Student Services, and student representatives. The council discusses policies, processes, and student experience. Sub-committees have been formulated to target specific areas of interest. Some of the recommendations emerging from this council include the purchase and implementation of Degree Works. Another recommendation materialized into a system for workflow automation, approval cycles, e-forms and document imaging by using Perceptive software (Lexmark).

Furthermore, an advisory board for information management was established in 2016 to engage the community, solicit their interest to support the University and to create the platform for financial and in-kind contributions for the office of IT.

As an outcome of the mechanisms listed above, several projects were accomplished by IT in response to requirements of the University strategic plan’s objectives and goals, and as assessed by the IT Steering Committee in coordination with university, academic and administrative requirements (6.41).

Updating programs and infrastructure of the IT is constantly underway despite the rapid updates and demand in these domains. However, strategic plans in departments can sometimes include automation plans that are not communicated with IT early enough to synchronize their plans with those of the IT department. The recent changes in the planning process work towards overcoming this deficiency, and ensuring a more integrated planning process with realistic deadlines that meet expectations.

4.8 Supply Chain Management (SCM)

The mission of the Office of Supply Chain Management (SCM) is to “provide optimum-quality services by aligning resources to define and satisfy the diverse needs of AUC students, faculty, and staff through the acquisition and management of materials, services and resources, in accordance with the University’s mission and its highest standards of ethics and integrity. The overall goal of Supply Chain Management is to impact the university bottom-line in a positive way while delivering the best service to customers at the lowest possible cost.” (6.42)

In 2008, SCM was divided into six units; Local Purchasing; International Purchasing (international, IT and grant); Purchasing Accounts; Property Inventory and Warehouse Control (property inventory, receiving & distribution, and warehouses); Business Support (import/export, international students’ visas, relocated faculty, work permits and residence visas); and Copying Services (6.43, 6.44, 6.45, 6.46).

In order to enhance and streamline the SCM operations several processes and usage of software including using SAP were developed and adopted from 2008 till 2016, and major restructure took place in 2016. One Department is added and two units are newly created. The Office is now divided into Procurement Services, Travel and Business Support Services, Material Management (Grants Admin, MM Master Data & CRM, Demand planning, receiving and Property Inventory & Warehouse Control) and Copying Services.

Several new initiatives have been implemented to facilitate and better manage the processes of SCM. The termination of the USA purchasing agent contract and utilizing SCM manpower in dealing with U.S. vendors has saved AUC approximately $60K annually. Another initiative is the IT bidding new procedures on quarterly/semi-annually basis using the volume leverage of all cost centers across the University helped streamline the process, in addition to reducing costs and expediting the process. Furthermore, the Governmental/Non-governmental rendered services, which do not require SCM’s services of negotiations or
market research, are processed directly by Controller’s office to efficiently and effectively utilize the buying manpower.

In addition, a Material Management (MM) function was created and a new strategy was set to change the methodology across campus from current requirement to future forecasting through the newly created unit of demand planning. To further facilitate operations and for better management purposes, merging the demand planning, warehouse and receiving and distribution units is recommended to develop the newly created logistics management department (6.47, 6.48, 6.49).

To better manage and document these processes, 11 SAP customized management reports were developed to give a complete dashboard on all SCM operations related to procurement and MM logistics. Furthermore, several platforms were updated to allow AUC community to communicate with SCM (6.50, 6.51)63,64. Finally, the Chief Audit Executive in 2017 undertook an audit and investigation of complaints regarding the SCM function, resulting in several functional and systems control improvements.

4.9 Funding and Development

The VP for Advancement and Communication oversees the process of fundraising and development. The office mission is to secure philanthropic support to the University in areas that are aligned with its strategic plan. For example, the University is seeking funds from supporters who wish to contribute to establish scholarships and fellowships for students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, and areas within Egypt, and from other parts of the world in order to align with the University strategic objective of increasing the diversification of the student body.

These goals are assessed by measuring progress against pre-set targets, which include dollar figures, number of new donors, number of donor meetings, and proposals submitted. These goals are established at the beginning of the academic year and are consequently approved by higher administration and the BoT. Progress towards the financial goals is reported to the VP of Advancement and Communication and then reported to the President and BoT.

The most significant challenges for fundraising in the region are the external economic environment and a culture that is more supportive of charity rather than institutional philanthropy. Inside Egypt, the economic conditions have made people more reluctant to donate, in addition to the perception of AUC as an expensive institution. The main efforts in dealing with these challenges are to continue to demonstrate the important impact AUC has on Egypt, the region, and the world. The Office of Advancement and Communications seeks individuals and corporations who believe in the power of education and are therefore willing to support AUC. There have been some new efforts to identify potential donors outside Cairo, through the appointment of regional representatives. Furthermore, considerable effort is being conducted to increase involvement of alumni in event sponsoring, mentoring of students or facilitating contacts for students and graduates.

The office has taken important and effective measures to improve donor stewardship, attract new donors, and improve overall results. It has recruited additional staff, including at the management level; engaged and effectively exploited outside expertise; and instituted training for all staff. In addition, by 2017, VP had instituted effective performance evaluation, winning her unit the authority and additional budget to institute merit pay increases. Through 2016-2017, the VP also restructured and recruited new executive talent. The new structure includes Executive Directors for: Alumni Engagement & Annual Fund; Development; Communications, Development for North America & New York Office; as well as Directors for Donor relations and Media relations.

64 http://in.aucegypt.edu/offices/office-supply-chain-management-and-business-support/forms
5. **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Every unit researched is well equipped with clear methodology of identifying goals and objectives, planning of procedures and assessment methods of implementation and monitoring. Further development is needed to cross-reference and disseminate the work of these units. All units have processes of assessment although these processes are in part informal. In addition, the priorities of the budget are set in relation to the University strategic plan and the demands of the units are developed through several levels of assessment and decision-making. A bottom-up approach begins with the assessment within the units, the school and area level, the Senate budget committee and administration level, followed by cabinet recommendations and the BoT’s approval. At the same time, since mid-2016, the new Administration, including a new President and substantially renewed and restructured Cabinet, has driven top-down institutional reforms in both management and academic assessment, planning, and operations.

The concept of long-range planning has been well established at AUC, integrating planning and budgeting. A significant effort has been made to effectively balance general institutional planning with operational resource allocation planning, and to continuously assess results on the basis of established KPIs. However, there is a need to encourage further communication between the units and departments to reduce redundancy and achieve integration, which will facilitate the implementation of planning strategies and help the institution better assess feasible goals and objectives.

Furthermore, the Planning and Assessment Committee provides a consultative forum for facilitating the process of continuous strategic planning, assessment and improvement at AUC. The committee is also charged with the review of planning and assessment plans and reports, a process that ensures the effectiveness of the assessment processes within the University.

**Recommendations**

1. Broaden the final decision-making process by ensuring that cabinet officers appropriately draw on the expertise of representatives from all subordinate units. This will allow a more transparent process and better understanding of the distribution of budget, recommended actions and priority setting.

2. Review and institutionalize proper HR practices in performance management, evaluation and talent management, on the basis of results of the ongoing detailed evaluation by internal management, academic executives and outside experts.

3. Continuously update the IT components of the strategic plan to reflect AUC strategic priorities; to sustain and update existing systems and infrastructure; and to ensure continuous management improvement and innovation, including exploitation of evolving digital tools. The role of the new VP for Digital Innovation should prove critically important in exploiting IT as a source of innovation and strategic competitive advantage.

4. Improve communication between supply chain management and its internal AUC clients, in order to improve the demand planning and purchasing process within the AUC community through assessment and KPI dashboards.
STANDARD VII: GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

1. STANDARD AND CHARGE

“The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.”

2. SUMMARY

The institution that meets the standard possesses and demonstrates a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision-making by each constituency, including governing body, administration, faculty, staff, and students. The institution also ensures periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.

The principal constituencies of the University community are the BoT, the Administration, the Faculty, the University support staff and the student body. The new Administration has also identified both the Parents Association and the Alumni as critically important stakeholders in the success of AUC’s enterprise. Documents regarding AUC’s structures and mechanisms for governance generally well define and clarify the roles and responsibilities for the administration, BoT, and faculty. The bylaws registered in the State of Delaware are the constitutional documents, which establish the BoT of AUC as the institution’s governing body. The BoT is the ultimate authority in all the affairs of the University and has the power to govern all such affairs, including controlling all property and funds of the University, as this is consistent with the laws of the State of Delaware and with the bylaws of the University. AUC's leadership team is composed of a knowledgeable, diverse, group of individuals who are dedicated to creating a University environment that promotes excellence in teaching, research, creative expression and service. The University Senate plays a major role in ensuring the participation of faculty, staff and students in governance of the University.

AUC’s policies that govern its operations and constituents are available through the University’s website. These include policies related to academic integrity, freedom of expression, and conflict of interest, among many others. While sound and clear policies exist for grievance matters, the implementation of these policies can be further improved for all AUC constituencies, particularly for staff. There is a need to establish a university-wide conflict resolution policy with clear identification of channels for resolving conflicts and grievances for all constituencies.

The University is embarking on a new important initiative to develop the full potential of the leadership and management skills of department and associate chairs. The Department Chairs Leadership and Management Workshop series developed by the Provost Office – with the first workshop delivered in March 2017 – is a new initiative that will help faculty through the transition from being an academic contributor to a leader addressing continuing challenges. Workshops are also attended by school deans. Similarly to training sessions offered to deans, chairs, and associate chairs, more training should be offered for all levels of management and leadership in both the academic and management areas.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Standard VII establishes criteria to assess the effectiveness of the institution’s organizational structure and system of governance. The standard relates clearly to all other standards, as having an effective governance structure allows the institution to govern its operations and constituents fairly and efficiently. As the institution places education as its primary purpose, having an
effective governance structure allows it to operate as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

**Link to AUC’s Mission:** The governance structure allows the institution to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves.

4. **Analysis**

The following definitions are used in this section of the report

- **Governing Body:** This is the Board of Trustees (BoT). The BoT has collective ownership and responsibility for the University. It sets the mission and strategic priorities of the institution and holds fiduciary responsibility over its operations.
- **Leadership:** This includes the senior executives: President as CEO, and cabinet members including Executive Vice President, Provost, Vice Presidents, and University Counselor, and they are responsible for managing the University.
- **Administration:** This includes both faculty and non-faculty employees managing administrative units of the University.
- **Governance and constituency bodies outside the administrative structure:** This includes university bodies and entities that do not manage or administer the institution per se but contribute to establishing a check-and-balance system that ensures accountability, fairness, and transparency in the University’s relationship with its constituencies.

4.1 **Structure and System of Governance**

AUC’s governance structure and the various constituents of its leadership and governing body are publicly available on AUC’s website (7.01). It is communicated through AUC’s annual factbook and is required for reporting for tax purposes in the U.S. through form 990. Information regarding leadership of the various governing bodies is also publicly available. The University’s policies, which govern its operations and constituents, are available through the University’s website (7.02). This includes policies related to academic integrity, freedom of expression, and conflict of interest, among many others.

In rare cases, AUC’s organizational chart displays the administrative structure, especially chain of command and budgetary relationships, rather than the governance structure of the University. For example, it may not accurately represent the full autonomy of the University Senate budget. The University Senate works autonomously, but holds that its recommendations have to be either endorsed or rejected by the President. The University should produce a chart showing the roles and relationships of the various governing bodies. The overall organizational chart of AUC as well as detailed internal organizational charts for academic and administrative units is not made available in a unified manner. For example, organization charts for some schools are available through their strategic plans and accreditation documents, but not publicly available on AUC’s website (7.03, 7.04). In an interview with the former AUC Provost, he highlighted the significant effort he had undertaken in restructuring academic units, which resulted in the unification of the organizational charts for staff in terms of titles and staffing requirements in departments, centers and other academic units.

One important aspect of the governance structure of AUC is the clear outline of the roles and responsibilities of the various constituents to ensure roles and responsibilities are carried out effectively. AUC’s leadership is composed of the: Board of Trustees, President, Cabinet (including the Provost, the Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance, Vice President for Advancement and Communication, Vice President for Digital Innovation, and

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65 [http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/leadership](http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/leadership)
66 [http://in.aucegypt.edu/about/university-policies](http://in.aucegypt.edu/about/university-policies)
the Counselor), Provost Council (Provost, Associate Provost, and Deans) and University Senate. The University Senate is the representative council of the University faculty, with the participation of students, staff, and administration. The Senate provides a forum for considering matters directly related to the wellbeing of the AUC community. Its resolutions are conveyed to the President of the University for final decision and appropriate action. The University Senate has seven student senators who are members of various senate committees with voting power. The University Senate and the administration engage faculty, students, and staff in general open forums where matters of wide impact/concern on the University community at large are discussed.

The roles and responsibilities of the senior officers of the University are also outlined in the University bylaws (7.05). The governing structure and role of the Senate is available through its published bylaws on AUC’s website (7.06). The roles and responsibilities of students are available through their handbook and Bill of Rights and academic programs available through the University catalog (4.33, 1.11). Faculty activities are assessed and outlined through the Faculty Handbooks (one for full-time and another for adjunct faculty), which are publicly available (2.02, 2.03). A Staff Manual is also available (7.07). In addition, schools have bylaws and governance documents that guide their strategies.

4.2 Board of Trustees

AUC’s bylaws outline the roles and responsibilities of the BoT and is rooted in the AUC mission (7.05). The bylaws outline the Board structure as well as its responsibilities that are carried out through its various committees. AUC’s trustees constitute a governing board that is responsible for the overall direction of the University. The Board is the ultimate authority in all affairs and has the power to govern all such affairs, including controlling all property and funds of the University. These powers, as stated in AUC’s bylaws include, but are not limited to, the powers to take the following actions:

- Appoint or remove the President, determine the salary and benefits of the President, and review the compensation of officers of the University;
- After consideration of the President’s recommendation, award tenure, and confer degrees and certifications of educational or other achievement;
- Approve and adopt all major changes or innovations in the education and other programs of the University and all changes or innovations which significantly impact the resources of the University;
- Review and take appropriate action with respect to the budget, which is submitted to the Board upon recommendation of the President;
- Concur in the appointment of the President, the Provost and the Chief Financial Officer of the University;
- Authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings;
- Authorize the sale and purchase of land or buildings for the use of the University;
- Institute and promote major fund-raising efforts of the University;
- Authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the University;
- Adopt appropriate policies and procedures concerning the acceptance of gifts and authorize the President or the Chief Financial Officer to accept gifts on behalf of the University;
- Authorize any borrowing or incursion of debt by the University, or the securing of such borrowing by mortgage or pledge of real or personal property, tangible or intangible, owned or to be after-acquired by the University; and
- Take and authorize any and all other actions that the Board, in its discretion, deems to be in the best interests of the University.

[67] http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/leadership/senate/laws-auc-university-senate
The BoT is self-perpetuating, and identifies, nominates, and elects its own membership. According to AUC bylaws, Trustees serve staggered three-year terms. Each year the terms of approximately one-third of the Trustees expire. To accomplish this goal, the initial term of new Trustees may be fixed by the Board for a period shorter than three years. Furthermore, any member of the Board who reaches the age of seventy-five ceases to serve as a Trustee and thereupon become an Advisory Trustee without voting rights.

The Board is composed of a variety of top caliber academics and professionals from the U.S., Egypt, and the region. This ensures a good understanding of the requirements to effectively manage an academic institution in connection with the market and community needs, in addition to a good understanding of the local context. Various committees within the BoT are formed to assist the Board in fulfilling its oversight of matters concerning the mission of the University. These committees are on: Academic Affairs; Audit; Finance; Institutional Advancement; Investment; Governance and Trusteeship; Student Affairs; and Management, Facilities, and Security. The Executive Committee consists principally of the Chairs of each of those committees, presided by the full Board Chair and Vice-Chair, and has the authority to act in lieu of the full BoT with certain exceptions specified in the bylaws. For specific responsibilities of each committee and membership see BOT Committee Charters (7.08).

The BoT holds three main meetings in November, February and May of every year. The February meeting is held in Cairo, while the other two are held in New York, USA. These meetings allow the BoT to remain updated and aware of many important issues regarding the university’s operations (7.09, 7.10). Between general board meetings, the various Board committees meet regularly and additionally as needed to address emergent issues either in person or via teleconference (7.11, 7.12). They report regularly to the full Board Chair and Vice Chair, both at the three annual meetings and in between. To enhance effective communication and facilitate sharing of documentation critical to effective governance, the BoT recently implemented an electronic board portal, which allows two-way communication in real time and secure records generation and retrieval among other features. The implementation of this portal aims at capitalizing on technology to overcome the geographic distance between AUC administration and most members of the BoT. Regular meetings and ad hoc communications between the AUC leadership and the five Cairo-based Trustees provide an additional level of ongoing connectivity.

The BoT undertook a self-assessment survey on board governance in 2015. In February 2017, the BoT revised the charter and the name of its former Trusteeship Committee specifically to include governance. It engaged a top outside consultant throughout 2017 to ensure continuous benchmarking against best practices in American higher education. As one result, the Board formed a working group under the Trusteeship and Governance Committee, assisted by an expert consultant in university governance, to review the bylaws and all key governance policy issues. Their review included: 1) Bylaws – as revised and approved by the Board in March 2016; 2) Committee Charters - written and approved 2014-2015, and again in February 2017, with Student Affairs revised Nov. 2017; 3) Conflict of Interest Policy – revised and approved June 2016; 4) Trustee Responsibilities policy statement - adopted in March 2015; 5) Considerations for Selecting Trustees Policy statement - October 2016; 6) Process for Proposing and Selecting New Trustees policy statement - adopted March 2015; and 7) 2015 Self-Evaluation Results. As a result of these conversations, the group recommended a regular schedule of Board policy review, and recommended that the Trusteeship and Governance committee take up certain policies and prioritize planning a Board self-evaluation and timeline for implementation.
4.3 President and Executive Leadership

4.3.1 Leadership team

AUC’s leadership team is composed of a knowledgeable, diverse, group of individuals who are dedicated to creating a University environment that promotes excellence in teaching, research, creative expression, and service.

AUC’s President is the Chief Executive Officer of the University and is in charge of the general management, administration and operation of the University and of its officers, subject to the supervision and control of the BoT. The duties of the President include, preparing and recommending to the BoT appropriate committees for the annual budget of the University and any material departures from the budget; keeping the BoT informed of the operations and conditions of the University in all fields, including the academic, personnel, fiscal, facilities, and public relations; managing the overall academic and administrative operations; promoting University’s external relations; raising financial contributions from all sources; and providing educational leadership, all to the extent consistent with the BoT’s authority as set forth in AUC’s bylaws. The President has power to sign for the University all contracts and other formal agreements, except as otherwise provided by these bylaws, or by resolution duly adopted by the BoT, in accordance with any restrictions placed on such authority by the BoT.

The Provost is the Chief Academic Officer of the University, responsible for shaping and implementing the University’s academic vision, building the size and quality of its faculty, and ensuring that the quality of research and education is at par with the University’s mission and goals. According to AUC bylaws, in the absence or disability of the President, the Provost shall exercise all powers and duties of the President. The Provost’s council plays an important role in aligning the school’s activities with the University vision and mission. All deans are represented in the Provost Council and regular meetings are held to ensure two-way communication and alignment between the schools and the University activities and initiatives.

For several years, the EVP had also served as the University's Chief Financial Officer, until the Administration appointed an additional senior officer to this special function in mid-2017. The EVP thereupon has supported the transition of the CFO function to report directly to the President, effective with the BoT’s approval in February, 2018, of the 2019 annual budget. The CFO’s responsibilities include oversight and effective allocation and use of the financial and human resources of the University, along with facilities and related support services in both the Cairo and New York Offices. The EVP has, and will retain also after separation of CFO responsibilities, the authority to execute contracts in the name of and on behalf of the University, except as otherwise provided by the bylaws, or by resolution duly adopted by the BoT, in accordance with any restrictions placed on such authority by the BoT. The CFO supports the Chief Audit Executive in organizing the annual audit of all financial records and the submission to the Audit Committee of a certified annual report by independent public accountants approved by the BoT. The CFO is also responsible for providing any other financial statements as required by the President or the BoT.

The Vice President for Advancement and Communications is responsible for the design and execution of the University’s global positioning, alumni engagement and fundraising strategy, in particular as AUC prepares for its centennial in 2019.

The Vice President for Digital Innovation provides leadership in creating a service-oriented and innovative environment for information and knowledge management, and technology infrastructure support for the learning, and teaching, scholarly and administrative needs of students, faculty, and staff.

The Administration consulted with US legal counsel in 2017 to ensure compliance with US law, and with the Egyptian Minister of Higher Education to ensure compliance with Egyptian law, in redefining and documenting the unique position of the Counselor, as established in the
1975 Protocol between the Government of Egypt and AUC. S/he is now clearly an AUC employee, appointed by the President and BoT, at the nomination and of the Government of Egypt, by mutual concurrence. The Counselor's responsibilities include liaising between the Egyptian authorities and the University. He maintains contacts with national universities and the Supreme Council of Universities to develop good relations with AUC and help implement the accreditation process for all academic degrees. He contributes very substantially to communications with the national media and private business sector.

4.3.2 Recruiting and evaluating University leadership

The BoT recruits and evaluates the President. For recruitment of the President, the Board forms a committee comprised primarily of Trustees and selected faculty representatives. This committee works with an executive search firm to recruit from a global pool. The Board compensation committee annually evaluates the President’s performance. The President recruits and appoints the Cabinet in consultation with the BoT. More details on the presidential search process, which includes the composition of the presidential search committee, the presidential search firm, the screening process and the announcement of the president are available (7.15, 7.16). According to the bylaws, the President of the University is subject to removal at any time by the affirmative vote of a majority of the total number of Trustees in office at the time.

Interviews with faculty members on the presidential search committee confirmed that the search committee carefully solicited the participation of all stakeholders in the 2015/2016 presidential search (7.17). Members of the search committee visited the campus at the start of the process and hosted open forums with each of the constituents and circulated a questionnaire to faculty, staff, students, and alumni to ask what their priorities/concerns were in a new president. Criteria used to select the appropriate candidate were established and documented, which include: being a U.S. citizen as per University Bylaws, having leadership experience inside or outside of academia, having capability and experience in fund raising, having international exposure and preferably knowledge of the Middle East and Egypt, having strong communication skills, and the ability to represent the University to the external environment (7.15). On preparing the terms of reference and the job description for the presidential candidates, leadership requirements in peer institutions were considered (7.18). After the finalists were selected, short-listed candidates visited the campus and met with representatives from all stakeholder groups. After the visit, the committee sent another online questionnaire to solicit feedback on the candidates before the search committee made their final recommendation.

According to the Board, the contract of the previous president was terminated effective at the end of December 2015. A senior member of the BoT moved back to Cairo in January, 2016, to serve as interim President, keeping the Board closely involved in key issues through normal mechanisms. The incumbent President took office on July 1st, 2016. Before arriving on campus, he consulted widely with the Trustees, donors, USG officials, senior AUC officers, and other stakeholders in the US, and undertook formal specialized training at Harvard's Seminar for New University Presidents.

When asked about the mechanism of assessment of the credentials and experiences of the President and cabinet members and the process for evaluating their performance, the BoT clarified that the credentials and experiences of the new President are assessed during the search, in consultation with an executive search firm. The firm conducts interviews, background checks and reference checks, and shares the information with the search committee. The compensation committee of the Board reviews the President’s performance annually and the President assesses the cabinet members on an annual basis (7.19).

There have been changes in the size and titles of the cabinet members since 2009. Previously, there were nine cabinet officers, but now there are five. With the exception of the Provost and
Counselor, the positions currently in the cabinet did not exist in 2009 and the ones in 2009 have been either eliminated or merged. Furthermore, the cabinet recently reviewed the definition of its role using the guidance of consultant services in order to ensure clarity and effectiveness of their efforts (7.20)

In general, the University is reducing its number of executive officers and consolidating executive functions into fewer positions. The major increases in scope of responsibility and authority have been in the positions of Provost, EVP Administration and Finance (until the recent re-separation of the CFO as described above), and VP of Communications and Advancement. The Provost, principally through the re-establishment of the Dean of Students, has shared with EVP the functions of the former office of the VP for Student Affairs, dis-established in a re-structuring at the end of 2016.

The recruitment and selection of the President follows a structured search process that ensures transparency as well as inclusive and meaningful stakeholder participation. The selection of provosts under the previous Administration had been less regular and transparent. Upon resignation of the former Provost in February, 2017, the new President appointed a search committee composed of a cross-section of distinguished faculty members. The Acting Provost and the Chair of the University Senate selected and nominated the members of the search committee. The President approved all their nominations, resulting in a more regular and transparent process to recruit and select the current Provost, and strong faculty support. The President accepted that committee’s recommendation by strong majority vote, and the BoT unanimously endorsed the appointment of the new Provost in May, 2017. The selection and appointment of the incumbent of AUC’s unique Counselor position, described above, is now based on a newly-documented process agreed between the Government of Egypt and the President and BoT.

4.3.3 Decision-Making Autonomy

In the Work Group interview, EVP expressed his high level of satisfaction with the authority/autonomy he has and his independence in decision making to ensure that resources are well utilized (7.21). He expressed his high level of satisfaction with the level of involvement of the BoT as well as the frequency and depth of communication between him and the BoT, where he had been acting, at that time, as the contact person for both the finance and facilities committees within the BoT. The Chief Investment Officer at AUC reports to the EVP, and the Chief Audit Executive, responsible for internal auditing at AUC, had reported both to the EVP, during the brief interim presidency of 2016, and to the chair of the Board Audit Committee. With the endorsement of the BoT, the new President restored the CAO’s direct access to the President, as well as the Audit Committee, to ensure appropriate autonomy and management controls.

With regards to his relationship with the President and the cabinet, the EVP declared that he has ongoing communication with the President on a daily basis; they meet with the Provost biweekly and with the rest of the cabinet once a week. While responsibility is shared, with regards to accountability, he confirmed that he is the person that ensures reporting occurs to the BoT and to other reporting agencies, and that issues are raised and formally submitted to the institution at the management level in a timely manner. The stewardship of the financial resources is validated by KPMG as external auditors.

Former Provost also expressed his ultimate satisfaction with the degree of autonomy and authority he was given by the BoT and the President, the support he received and their means of communication, which allowed him to manage all academic matters effectively. He stated that he had full autonomy on preparing a plan for faculty restructuring, hiring, release time,

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68 Referring to former Provost, Sherif Sedky.
restructuring of student affairs, student tuition and other academic matters. He had direct access to the BoT and to the Academic Affairs and the Financial Affairs Committees of the BoT. The Provost also expressed his satisfaction with the extent by which the BoT is involved in maintaining sufficient financial oversight and ensuring the appropriate allocation of resources in the University. The Provost meets with the BoT three times a year with several conference calls carried out during the year. The new President has established the practice of inviting the Provost, and other Cabinet officers as appropriate, to join meetings of the various committees of the BoT. The Provost has weekly meetings with the President in which he updates him about the major developments in the academic area (7.22).

The concentration of executive responsibility and authority in fewer hands during a period of growth in size and complexity could represent a potential risk to executive-level accountability and successful implementation of University policies and plans. Moreover, the reduction in numbers of individuals exercising executive authority across the wide range of university business and academic processes could threaten the system of checks and balances and the principles of accountability, transparency, and participation that underlie the University’s system of governance. On the other hand, the previous dispersion and in some cases confusion of responsibility had opened serious gaps in management controls and challenges to effective oversight. In many cases, the proliferation of senior officers evidently was driven as much by personality factors as by institutional requirements or precepts of good governance. The new Administration has established more rigorous definitions of responsibilities and other controls to improve administrative governance.

4.3.4 Transparency and sharing governance

The first criterion for accreditation under Standard VII states that “An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities and accountability for decision-making by each constituency, including governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students.”

The results of the survey conducted by DAIR in coordination with the MSCHE Accreditation Steering Committee show that 35.5% of faculty participants agree that AUC demonstrates a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure, 31.0% of participants were neutral and 33.5% of participants disagree with this statement. The results of the survey also show that 29.9% of faculty participants agree that the present governance structure strengthens accountability, fairness, and transparency across the institution, 31.8% of participants were neutral and 38.3% of participants disagree with this statement (1.06). The results of the survey can be interpreted as follows: although AUC possesses a well-articulated governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision-making, it may be lacking a shared vision for the internal governance of the University that incorporates meaningful participation of all stakeholders. While stakeholders of AUC seem to be involved in various advisory committees and discussion forums, the institution can do better to establish a shared vision for the internal governance of the University. A collegial/shared governance document that incorporates the relationships and responsibilities among all its constituent bodies should be prepared to serve as a constitutional guideline for the participation of these bodies in the life of the university.

The University Budget Committee has representatives from the Senate Budget Review Committee, Parent Association Board, Student Union Senate, and administrators. According to the EVP, the committee is an advisory committee that is used to help inform the constituents of various pressure points on the institution. For example, the introduction of a flat-fee credit hour for the tuition of incoming students as of fall 2016 evolved from such discussions (7.21). As part of the mandate of the Senate Budget Committee, the committee makes recommendations on budget related issues and brings these recommendations to the Senate for discussion.
The Administration and Trustees recognize The University Senate, as a vitally important advisory body and integral part of the governance of the University. Administrators have seen the Senate as partners within the scope of the mandate of the Senate. Senators have strongly expressed that the Senate’s role needs to be strengthened through shared governance (7.23).

The Administration, as well as the Senate, holds forums to discuss issues of vital importance meriting wider representation from the community. The Senate is also a channel for faculty, staff, and students to share ideas, express concerns and explore feasible solutions. Faculty members in their departmental meetings (unit meetings in case of staff or students in their own meetings) share views about issues that should be addressed at the Senate. They make sure their senator is present during these meetings to express and voice their views. Senators are elected by their academic departments or non-teaching units and are present at the Senate floor to represent their constituents and not their own personal views. However, Senators sometimes fail to communicate with their constituents about issues before the Senate meetings, do not attend or do not report back at their departmental meetings. Strengthening communication between the Senate and departments is one of the points that needs to be addressed, as it can affect the performance of the Senate and the respect and endorsement it receives from the community. The culture and institutional effectiveness survey (Define AUC) administered in fall 2017, also indicates that staff and faculty do not feel well-represented by the senate or feel it ensures their participation in a shared governance structure (7.23, 0.03).

According to Article 1.2 of the University Senate bylaws: "Full-time faculty members of each academic department, non-teaching academic unit, and SCE shall return two senators. Departments with nine or fewer full-time faculty members and the office of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies shall return one senator. Faculty members must have served a minimum of two consecutive years at AUC before election. At least one of the faculty members returned by departments that are eligible to return two senators, and have faculty with tenure or who are senior instructors, must be tenured or at one of the two senior instructor ranks. Otherwise, such departments shall return only one senator. Senate membership includes one Senator elected at-large from each of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Science and Engineering, the School of Business, the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, the Graduate School of Education, the School of Continuing Education and the Academy of Liberal Arts. At-large Senators are elected at the last general faculty meeting of the academic year, with nominees restricted to their respective schools, but with all full-time faculty members eligible to vote.” (7.06)89

The Senate has a mechanism for self-assessment, which is a self-assessment survey sent to all senators that started years ago and is implemented annually on a regular basis (7.23). Methods of election of students, staff, and faculty to the Senate are clear. However, methods of selection of stakeholders on university committees and task forces is an issue that should be addressed to allow for meaningful and fair participation by all constituents. Ideally, members should be elected in order to allow all stakeholders the chance to participate in governance.

In a focus group conducted with selected representatives of department chairs, the majority declared that AUC does not have a clear articulated and transparent governance structure. Several chairs raised concerns about administration not honoring the Faculty Handbook and that the handbook has not been approved by the BoT (7.24). AUC has witnessed periods of great consternation among faculty and tensions between them and University administration because of contractual obligations in the Faculty Handbook which they charge are not honored. The University Senate asserts that it is its duty to safeguard the handbook and hence the integrity of each individual faculty member's contract. It is the mandate of the Faculty Affairs Committee of the Senate to ensure that the review of any part of the Handbook - as may be dictated by circumstances perceived by the majority to be of pressing nature - be

89 http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/leadership/senate/laws-auc-university-senate
conducted following proper procedure, i.e. the Senate debate leading to approved resolutions. There was a strong agreement among department chairs during the focus group that the present governance structure does not strengthen accountability, fairness, and transparency across the institution and that top-down decisions are continuously made (7.24). For its part, the Administration and Trustees look to the faculty to exert expert leadership in advancing the University’s academic rigor and excellence, and its global reputation for a unique, high-quality educational experience, in its published “student-centered, faculty-led, staff-enabled” management philosophy.

While stakeholders of AUC seem to be involved in various advisory committees and discussion forums, many felt that they were not part of the decision-making process.

The Administration assessed that such concerns stemmed principally from controversies rooted in the Faculty Handbook’s problems. Several controversies distracted and interrupted the consultative process between the Administration and Senate regarding revision of the Handbook, until the new Administration and new Senate leadership, supported by a jointly-approved outside expert in governance, renewed intensive and methodical work on the Handbook in the fall of 2017. As previously reported, to address specific faculty concerns, following intense and extended consultation with the Senate leadership through late 2017, the Administration sought, and received, the BoT’s reassurance on its contractual obligations through the Trustees’ resolution adopted on January 9, 2018.

4.3.5 Dispute Settlement

There is no single overarching dispute settlement policy at AUC. Different channels have been set up for different constituents. If faculty members wish to appeal against tenure and/or promotion decisions, procedural grievance goes through the Senate Grievance Committee. Student disputes or concerns are handled by the Dean of Students. In addition, the student government represents the AUC student community and acts as the liaison with the administration. It is composed of the Student Union, Student Senate, Student Court, and Student Organizational Council. The staff handbook advises staff to go to the Human Resources in case of dispute, but does not specify the procedure to follow. Many staff members feel that the competing and relatively dysfunctional Egyptian national employee syndicates might not be the best representation for them; however, they are reluctant to go to the director of staff affairs (7.21) to voice confidential information because they do not see this person as a neutral and independent entity. EVP and AVP for HR have met with the syndicate leaders and have taken measures also to strengthen confidence in the director of staff affairs. The EVP on an ongoing basis encourages staff to bring forward concerns. However, the administration recognizes the inadequacies in the recourse mechanisms available to non-academic employees, and is working on addressing them.

The Senate Grievance Committee addresses issues regarding violations of university policy that are harmful to university employees. The committee provides recommendations to the Senate Chair and the administration regarding resolution of specific cases. However, Senate Chair opined that there appears to be some lack of transparency as to whether or not the committee’s recommendations are acted upon. Beyond cases brought by individuals, the Senate body also addresses issues of global concern to faculty and staff. In addition, the Senate deals with issues regarding student tuition, student participation in governance, academic performance, and other issues of major concern to the student body (7.21).

4.3.6 Alignment of Schools with the strategic plan of the University

The former Provost of AUC, Sherif Sedky (July 1st, 2015 - February 11th, 2017)\textsuperscript{70}, met regularly with deans through the Provost Council as well as individually to discuss the

\textsuperscript{70} Former Provosts of AUC include: Mahmoud El-Gammal (July 1, 2014- June 30, 2015), Medhat Haroun (January 1, 2011
strategic plan, faculty hiring, and allocation of resources at the school level. Sedky identified some challenges in the flow of communication between the Provost Council and various departments. Visits were carried out to all departments in an attempt to resolve these issues, to clearly communicate his academic vision, to engage the community, to listen to faculty concerns, and resolve issues in communication with school deans (7.22). Provost Abdel-Rahman continues to meet regularly with the deans and associate provosts to discuss all issues related to the operation of academic area and school strategic plans.

The link between academia and the community was a challenge identified by the former Provost. A more active role and a higher level of engagement are expected from the school advisory boards. According to Sedky, schools should put more efforts in reforming the curriculum to better cope with the latest developments and to bring education to the community (7.22).

The Provost also emphasized the need for leadership development. Faculty members, who are good scholars and educators, may be lacking the leadership capabilities and the managerial skills needed to manage a department or a school. Faculty in leadership positions very often relinquish their decision-making authority, and push decisions to the higher level to be centered at the Provost Office. Before his term was terminated, Sedky was working on introducing some professional training programs for leadership to be deployed in spring 2017, programs that would empower leaders and make them more responsible for their decisions (7.22). During his term as Interim Provost, Abdel-Rahman followed up on the implementation of this new initiative. The Department Chairs Leadership and Management Workshop took place in spring 2017.

The former Provost in spring 2016 re-instated a formal search process for appointing and assessing deans. A committee is formed with a representative from the Senate, faculty members of the school and faculty from outside the school. The position is internationally advertised and a very rigorous process is implemented until the appointment is made. Once the appointment is made, key performance indicators are used to assess the performance of the Dean. The procedures were used in 2016 in the appointment of the Dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering (7.22). Searches for deans were conducted in the past. However, from 2011-2015, Deans were appointed by the previous Provost and President without a public search, with the exception of the Dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering.

The former Provost also worked on determining the optimal faculty body for all departments based on course offerings, student demand, standard faculty load of 9 credits per semester, and the teaching load of adjuncts, which should not exceed 33% of the load of full-time faculty. In 2015, AUC Provost set a competitive pay scale to attract high caliber adjunct faculty after establishing a strict hiring procedure that guarantees high selectivity. The new procedures allowed for establishing a pool of high caliber adjunct faculty who can be called upon whenever the need arises. Adjunct faculty members are also required to participate in teaching enhancement workshops organized by the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT) (7.22).

Extensive efforts have been implemented by the former Provost to ensure that schools are aligned with the University in terms of vision, mission and activities. However, more efforts are needed to reach an adequate level of coordination (7.22).

### 4.3.7 Freedom of Expression

AUC values freedoms of speech, thought, expression and assembly. It is part of the core educational and intellectual mission of all members of AUC. Freedom of expression

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- October 18, 2012 (his death)), Lisa Anderson (Approximately July 1, 2008- December 31, 2010 (She became president on January 1, 2011)
represents one of the core components of a liberal education and the identity of this institution on the national, regional, and international levels. The University is committed to freedom of speech, inquiry, and debate. However, restrictions might be imposed in clear cases of law violation, serious threat or when there is apparent impediment to the educational process (2.07).

In addition, the Student's' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities enforces and supplements the Freedom of Expression Procedure. The document enforces students’ rights to voice their positions, their rights to free inquiry and speech, and freedom of expression of opposing views on all subjects, including the obligation of students to respect the rights of all and refrain from behavior that violates the rights of other AUC members (4.33).

### 4.3.8 Conflict of Interest

As evidence that the BoT does not allow political, financial, or other influences to interfere with its governing responsibilities, the BoT has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy (updated and approved in June 2016) to govern its actions. The Trustees annually fill out a conflict of interest form collected by the Secretary of the Board, which the Board Audit Committee then reviews for potential conflicts (7.24).

According to the EVP, the Conflict of Interest Policy was adopted October 23, 2009 and amended on June 24, 2016. All AUC employees subject to this policy (including faculty, staff and administrators) must disclose any conflict of interest. The policy is published in both Arabic and English languages on the website with a defined list of what activities are classified as conflict of interest and a description of the composition of the Disclosure Review Committee. All members of the BoT and Cabinet members are obliged to sign the Conflict of Interest Disclosure form. The Office of the AUC Legal Advisor administers the implementation of this policy and reports to the EVP on these matters. The EVP in turn passes them up to the President and to the Board Audit Committee (7.21).

In the former Vice Provost’s interview (currently Provost), it was mentioned that the process was not clear, as it needs revision and expansion. He added that the current policy focuses only on the financial aspect and does not refer to any conflict of commitment. However, in 2010, AUC adopted a policy on hiring of relatives that follows clear guidelines posted online. He also added there is no clear form to be filled out by a claimant. According to the policy, the following disclosures are mandatory: annual disclosures by faculty, annual disclosures by administrative staff and the President’s disclosure that should be made to the Audit Committee of the University Board of Trustees (7.26). However, they were never implemented.

### 4.4 Administration

#### 4.4.1 Categories of employment for non-faculty support staff

The University’s Organizational Chart clearly defines hierarchies and reporting relationships (7.03, 7.04). Most schools and departments have governance documents (3.27). These documents identify the role and functions of different administrative entities and the manner in which decision-making authority is allocated between the various administrative structures. The organizational chart for each department/unit of the University contains the hierarchical reporting relationships among regular faculty and staff appointments in that department/unit. These charts are updated as needed.

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The following categories of employment of support staff are clearly defined on AUC’s organizational charts:

- **Senior Administrators.** Senior administrators report to the President or to their respective area heads (cabinet level officers). They are accountable for policy formulation, recommendations and policy management. The focus of the position is strategic and provides leadership for an operating area.

- **Faculty in Administrative Positions.** There are several administrative positions filled by faculty members, which may be full-time or part-time assignments.

- **Administrative Directors.** These positions are at upper management level (levels 12 to 16) and are accountable for the development and implementation of functional policies, in addition to the leadership of a major unit reporting to the area head. The incumbents operate at a policy level through consultation with one or more senior administrators.

- **Managerial Positions.** Managerial positions are at levels 10 and 11 which are accountable for the short or mid-term execution of policy and the supervision of a unit that is generally homogeneous in scope; or accountable for the delivery of services either independently or through guiding the work of subordinates.

- **Support Positions.** These positions are in different administrative and academic operating units, and include positions in the following categories: professional, technical/paraprofessional, administrative support, office support, security and safety, skilled, semi-skilled labor, and services.

For more details on employment policies and procedures, recruitment and selection process see Staff Manual (7.07).

The new President in 2016 directed the EVP and Provost to ensure more coherent and integrated administration and operations of HR policies and practices between the academic and administrative staff categories, with clearly identified and enforced controls including position definition, market comparisons for compensation and benefits, and performance evaluation. During the past two years, the Office of the Provost has designed and implemented a large project to reorganize AUC’s academic area administration. With regards to Academic Units, this involved re-assessments of the teaching needs of departments and the establishment of discipline-based tenure standards. With regards to administrative staff, it involved: (1) a thorough mapping of all administrative positions; (2) re-descriptions of existing position titles and responsibilities; (3) evaluation of all current appointments; (4) re-adjustments of job descriptions or re-positioning of staff to different positions; (5) and harmonization of titles and functions across the board. This included positions in the entire hierarchy of AUC administration, from secretarial and assistant positions to directors and associate deans. With regards to faculty, this resulted in the following: careful assessment of current faculty and positions; re-evaluations of departmental needs; the downsizing or expansion of departments; temporary freezes of positions; and progressive return to a normal rate of hiring as a corrective measure. Despite the usual difficulties of the process of re-organization, much progress has been achieved and the process is now nearly complete (7.22).

According to the Executive Director of Human Resources, annual manpower planning based on approved organizational charts for each unit, job descriptions, and assigned responsibilities are used to determine the minimum staff requirements that provide assurance that a sufficient number of qualified workers are available to perform the responsibilities authorized to the unit. When a change in the size of staff requirement is needed, the area head, department head, and HR review the organizational chart, tasks, and responsibilities and assigned job descriptions to ensure that the potential for adverse effects on operations is minimized (7.27).

To ensure that no contracts are renewed unless the candidate is qualified to carry on the duties and responsibilities authorized to him/her efficiently and effectively, employee evaluation is
embedded in the contract renewal procedure (7.27). However, the new President found that evaluation processes in many cases either had lapsed, or even had been explicitly suspended, in both the academic and administrative areas. As reported throughout this self-study, the Administration has taken strong measures to redress these lapses.

The University has sufficient administrative staff to carry out its functions. Whereas as a consequence of the re-organization and (temporary or permanent) freezes in hiring, some units might require additional staffing; the Administration is aware of the problems and acting to ameliorate them.

With regards to continuing professional development for staff and how the professional development budget is calculated, the AVP of Human Resources stated that the Human Resources Office is responsible for joint professional development plans of staff, covering soft skills and systems. As for technical knowledge, it is the responsibility of the administrative director of the employee. The professional development budget is calculated based on planned courses for the fiscal year and on the number of participants of previous fiscal year (7.27).

4.4.2 Hiring and evaluation procedures for administrative units and staff

The University ensures that self-assessments/evaluations are conducted at various levels of the institution. For example, the Student Services area hired consultants, at the request of Senior Administration, for benchmarking and reporting on performance with recommendations for improvements. Self-assessments are manifested in the strategic plans set by administrative units and the KPIs those units set to evaluate their performance. These plans are entered into the University Planning and Assessment software (Compliance Assist) with reports submitted annually.

For all staff, there is an annual performance appraisal system overseen by the Area Heads and Office of Human Resources. Compensation is linked to performance, as assessed through these procedures.

Performance appraisals were not carried out as assigned and on time the past two years. According to the Executive Director of Human Resources, “Performance appraisal is currently under review to be aligned with competencies evaluation.” She identified and acted upon the need to re-think the traditional approach to employee appraisal, and received full support from the Administration and Trustees in designing and beginning to implement the needed reforms not only for performance appraisal and recognition of high performance, but also other fundamental HR practices as described elsewhere in this report. Six outstanding AUC staff members and administrators were honored with the President’s Catalyst for Change Awards during the University Forum in October 2014 in recognition of their contributions to the AUC community. The Catalyst for Change awards were given in three categories: Citizenship and Service, Innovation and Impact, and Management with Sustainability and Integrity (7.27).

To ensure appointments are based on merit and that the recruitment process ensures fairness, credibility and equal employment opportunity, the Executive Director of Human Resources confirmed, “Fair and equal opportunities are given to all applicants, since all applications are grouped at the Human Resources Office to be screened, classified into separate folders and sent finally to the hiring department. Screening of applicants is based on comparing their profiles versus the announced job descriptions to ensure that shortlisted applicants are the ones with relevant potential for fitting the vacancy... The department’s administrative director prepares the job description of the vacancy to include the details regarding the responsibilities, educational backgrounds and experience. Job descriptions are submitted to the Human Resources Office for evaluation of position level before advertisement. Vacancies are open for external applicants only in the case of no potential candidates available internally. In order to ensure the selection of high-caliber candidates for open positions at the
University, the University uses application screening, reference checks, interviews and various relevant tests administered by or through the human resources office." (7.27)

To ensure that all new staff undergo a structured induction and successfully complete a probationary period, induction is carried out by the Human Resources office on the first day of employment followed by department orientations from their respective supervisors. Probation procedure is followed in line with labor law 12 of 2003 (7.27).

5. **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The principal internal constituencies are the Board of Trustees, Administration, Faculty, Support Staff, and Student Body. The new Administration also has reached out methodically to increase the substantive contributions and other input of the Parents Association and the Alumni body. While the documents reviewed demonstrate a clearly articulated governance structure, efforts to further clarify these roles have been underway starting with the cabinet’s review of the definition of its role. The institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. The institution can improve with regards to updating a shared vision for the internal governance of the University and ensure periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, faculty and staff performance, and administration.

**Recommendations**

1. Foster continuous assessment of the effectiveness of institutional leadership and governance structure. This involves better role definition and communication at various levels and for various individuals and entities. Steps and actions have been initiated in collaboration with stakeholders towards the fulfillment of this role.

2. While stakeholders of AUC seem to be involved in various advisory committees and discussion forums, the institution can work on establishing a better shared vision for the internal governance of the University.

3. The University should continue its course since 2016 of consistently using formal, public recruitment processes for all vacant leadership and senior administrator positions, with the exception of the unique position of the Counselor, who is nominated by the Egyptian Government and appointed by concurrence of the President and BoT.

4. Organizational charts should be carefully reviewed for any inconsistencies or misleading reporting relationships.

5. Methods of selection and election of stakeholders on university committees and task forces should allow for meaningful and fair participation by all constituents.

6. Establish university-wide conflict resolution policies and clear identification of channels for resolving conflicts and grievances for different constituencies. The channels should be both integral and when necessary, outside the normal hierarchical administrative chains of command.

7. Increase training for all levels of management and leadership in both the academic and management areas.