

# *Our Community of Learning: A Strategic Plan for AUC at its Centennial*

**April 2015**

## **Preface**

The essential mission of all universities is to foster learning and, on the eve of its second century, the American University in Cairo is rededicating itself to this fundamental purpose. Just as our spectacular campus in New Cairo was intentionally designed as “a city for learning,” so too our aspirations for the University as a whole should intentionally reflect a constantly renewed commitment to facilitating learning in all dimensions of the University’s operation: for its students through its degree programs; for its faculty through its research; and for its community and world through its local civic engagement and global outreach. AUC is a community of learning.

In many ways, the American University in Cairo is blessed with exceptional resources with which to pursue this purpose. It is located in one of the most important cities in the world—and in the twenty-first century, locations which afford access to urban and global resources are increasingly important. It has a distinguished history of nearly a century of service to Egypt, the region and the world. It enjoys a loyal, appreciative and influential alumni community, a strong and rising global reputation, a robust applicant pool that includes many of the most talented young people in Egypt, and a diverse, skilled and dedicated faculty.

This strategic plan is designed to capitalize on those strengths as AUC approaches its centennial in 2019 to ensure that it sustains and enhances its quality and distinction in the fast-changing world of the twenty-first century.

## **Developing AUC's Strategic Plan 2014 - 2019**

During the five years that preceded this plan, the American University in Cairo confronted exceptional challenges—from the move of the entire University to the newly-built (and unfinished) 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, imagination and intelligence. But tactical success in navigating these extraordinarily complex circumstances, however admirable, did not afford time for developing a strategic vision for the University that reflects not only these changed circumstances but also the new and multifaceted imperatives of global higher education in the twenty-first century.

In the fall of 2013, and as the University's 2019 centennial approached, the University president and the chair of the Board of Trustees launched a comprehensive process to develop a new strategic plan to build on the University’s strengths, chart its course through 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. The steering committee established six task forces, with membership drawn from across the AUC community, which examined issues of strategic importance to the University.<sup>1</sup> These groups sponsored numerous community events, focus groups and other engagement activities during the spring 2014 semester to provide opportunities for all stakeholders to share their ideas. The Board of Trustees reviewed an interim report on the task force deliberations at their meeting in June 2014. A draft document was prepared over the summer, circulated and discussed on campus during the fall 2014 semester, and reviewed again by the Trustees at their October 2014 and March 2015 meetings. The result of this process is this statement.

AUC's new strategic plan is for the entire University community—trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, friends and employers. It is for everyone who wants to see AUC remain steadfast in its mission and values while responding to new challenges and opportunities. We believe this plan is true to the ambitions of the founders of the University in 1919 while reflecting the wisdom and resourcefulness needed to address the challenges and opportunities of higher education in the twenty-first century.

## The Starting Point: Where Are We Now?

Today AUC remains an independent, non-profit institution offering English language, American-style liberal arts and professional undergraduate and graduate education to students from Egypt, the region and around the world. AUC is accredited in the US by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and in Egypt by the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Education (NAQAAE). In addition, many of the University's academic programs have received

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<sup>1</sup> For a full description of the process, including reports from the task forces, see <http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/strategicplanning/Pages/default.aspx>

The planning process was convened by President Lisa Anderson and Board Chair Richard Bartlett. The **Steering Committee** was chaired by Mohamed Naguib Abou-Zeid '91, Professor of Construction Engineering and Chair, Department of Construction and Architectural Engineering, and included: **Faculty** Ehab Abdel Rahman, Associate Professor of Physics and Associate Provost for Research; Nathaniel Bowditch, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences; Aziza Ellozy, Professor of Practice and Director of the Center for Learning and Teaching; Hanan Kholoussy Associate Professor of History; Ted Purinton, Associate Professor of Education and Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives; Ahmed Tolba '97, '01, Associate Professor of Marketing and Chair of the Department of Management; **Students** Ahmed Atalla '14, Architectural Engineering major, and President, Student Union; Mohamed Bassiouny, '14, Physics and Mathematics double major and Speaker, Student Senate; Mohamed Mansoury, '14, Electronics Engineering major and Senior Justice, Student Court; **Trustees** Eva Bellin, Myra and Robert Kraft Professor of Arab Politics, Brandeis University; James Bond, President, Bond & Associates; Hisham El Khazindar '96 Co-Founder and Managing Director, Citadel Capital; Atef Eltokhy Chairman, Aurum Capital Management; Paul Lawler, Vice President for Investments and Chief Investment Officer (retired), The W. K. Kellogg Foundation and Trust; David Tirrell, Ross McCollum -- William H. Corcoran Professor of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, California Institute of Technology; **Administration** Amir Habib, Executive Director, Budget and Financial Planning; Sohair Saad, '81 Executive Director, Office of Student Financial Affairs and Scholarships; Ann Boudinot-Amin, '90 Executive Director, Office of Data Analytics and Institutional Support

The task forces were:

- From the Classroom to the Community: Enhancing the Student Experience at AUC
- Living Together, Learning Together: Utilizing the New Cairo Campus
- Discovery, Development, and Dissemination: Strengthening Research Networks, Cooperation and Dissemination
- Recruiting, Retaining and Rewarding Our Faculty: Sustaining a Community of Scholars and Scientists Committed to the Liberal Arts
- Constituents, Clients, Communities: Expanding Impact in Egypt, the Region and the World
- Ensuring Effectiveness: Building a Culture of Accountability and Strategic Investment

specialized accreditation from prominent national and international organizations. AUC now offers 36 bachelor's degrees, 45 master's degrees, and doctoral degrees in applied sciences and engineering in addition to a wide range of graduate diplomas in five schools:

Business,  
Global Affairs and Public Policy,  
Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Sciences and Engineering,  
and the Graduate School of Education.

The Academy for Liberal Arts is the foundation of AUC's unique commitment to liberal education and it supports academic achievement, lifelong learning and community engagement in undergraduate education throughout the university with its landmark Core Curriculum, English and Arabic language programs, and academic advising and other programs.

Academic program enrollments are reasonably stable at nearly 5,300 undergraduates and 1,265 graduate students (fall 2013). The University is selective, admitting 48 percent of applicants in Fall 2013, of whom 73 percent chose to enroll. Continuing education enrollments have dropped in recent years due to ongoing political turmoil, declining to about 16,600 in non-credit courses and contracted training programs offered through the School of Continuing Education. Similarly, non-degree (typically visiting study abroad) student enrollment has declined to 80 in Fall 2013 (a drop from nearly 500 in 2010) and international student enrollment has decreased to 7 percent of all academic students.

Since 2008, when the University moved its academic programs from the 9-acre downtown campus on Tahrir Square to a purpose-built 260-acre campus in the Cairo suburbs, the AUC community has worked hard to explore and take advantage of the possibilities offered by its new facilities, while considering the highest and best use and future of the conic downtown campus on the now famous Tahrir Square. Transitioning from a single downtown campus has presented many challenges, but those same challenges have fostered a nimbleness and flexibility that served us well during the upheaval of the past several years.

### **Our Vision for the Future: Where Are We Going?**

A successful strategic plan is designed around several fundamental components: first, a strong, compelling vision that provides context and identifies overall direction, and second, strategies to achieve that vision, as well as the capacity and will to execute those strategies.

In 2009, the University reviewed its mission statement and adopted the following text:

The American University in Cairo (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, it is an independent, not-

for-profit, equal-opportunity institution. AUC upholds the principles of academic freedom and is dedicated to excellence.

In many ways, AUC fulfills this mission in its deep and abiding dedication to learning in all its forms and expressions,<sup>2</sup> and is reflected in AUC's institutional priorities:

**Education for Citizenship and Service:** We believe 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 we expect our faculty and students to participate in scientific, scholarly or artistic production. We particularly emphasize 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:** We are 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, that profit from our convening power, 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:** We are committed to managing the operations of the University so as to reflect and foster the values we teach our students, expect in our faculty

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<sup>2</sup> This dedication is reflected in its core values, which are described thusly:

**Excellence:** We continually strive to be among the best in all we do: in teaching, research, creative expression, service to our communities and service to each other in our daily interactions.

**Diversity:** We seek to treat all individuals with dignity and fairness and to promote understanding and respect for diversity of perspectives, traditions and experiences.

**Social Responsibility:** We are committed to exploring the challenges that confront Egypt, the region and the world and to using our intellectual and creative capabilities to address these challenges, serve our communities and have a positive and sustainable impact on development, business, the environment and society.

**Integrity:** We believe that individuals are accountable for their actions, and, as members of a community, our individual actions have an impact on others. We are stronger as a community when we reflect on the consequences of our decisions and actions and when we uphold the principles of academic integrity, including fairness, accountability and honesty.

**Lifelong Learning:** We believe that the pursuit of knowledge, understanding and personal and professional development should continue throughout one's lifetime.

In 2009, with the adoption of a new mission statement, AUC also updated its vision statement to say:

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

and wish to exemplify in Egypt. Our institutional practices should exhibit a commitment to environmental, social and fiscal responsibility, and we should observe the highest standards of integrity in the workplace and in our dealings with vendors, clients and other constituents.

Although the intervening years have been tumultuous, these priorities continue to encapsulate the aspirations of the University. The purpose, then, of this Strategic Plan is to outline the steps we need to take in the next five years—given our local and global context, our internal challenges and our enduring strengths—to advance towards this vision of the American University in Cairo in the twenty-first century.

Realizing this mission, embodying these values and pursuing these priorities in our current circumstances is a complicated task. Our national and regional environment is unusually volatile; extraordinary levels of political upheaval have marked the last four years in Egypt and its neighbors. Our capacities have been challenged by the demands we have made on ourselves in building a world-class campus designed to anchor development in a new city of several million people, and in creating academic programs designed to serve national and global research and policy needs in public administration, education, sustainability, applied sciences and engineering, and other fields. Yet in that unusual complexity is an unusual opportunity to realize the aspirations of a generation of young people who aspire to live by the values embodied by AUC: excellence, diversity, social responsibility, integrity and the abiding search for knowledge.

To that end, the focus of this plan is *the student*—both literally, in making our highest priority the enhancement of the student experience, and figuratively, in reminding us all that, as a university, we embody a commitment to learning in all we do, from faculty research to staff training to community extension and outreach. This plan will permit us to enhance the conditions for learning, accent and celebrate life-long pursuit of knowledge and wisdom, and recognize that, particularly for today's young people, much of the growth and development in how they understand the world takes place outside the traditional classroom.

## **Context and Setting for the Strategic Plan: What are the Factors that will Affect Our Progress?**

### *What Environmental Issues Will Influence Our Progress?*

Three features of our context will shape our prospects for the next five to ten years: the national and regional political and economic setting in Egypt and the Middle East; the development of our local communities in downtown Cairo and in New Cairo; and US and global trends in higher education.

#### Egypt and the Middle East

Egypt is the largest country in the Arab world; the population is predicted to rise from nearly 84 million in 2012 to 103 million by 2030. Half of Egypt's population is now below the age of 25.<sup>3</sup> In many ways, this represents an enormous asset to AUC: we are in the capital of a large, important and influential country, and Cairo itself is an intellectual and commercial crossroads, in which the market for high-

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<sup>3</sup> Maarouf, Mohamed. "Expert: Egypt Population to Hit 103 Mn by 2030." Egypt Independent, 16 June 2012. <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/expert-egypt-population-hit-103-mn-2030>; *Youth Revolt In Egypt, A Country at the Turning Point*, Population Reference Bureau <http://www.prb.org/Articles/2011/youth-egypt-revolt.aspx?p=1>

quality education will only grow. Yet in 2014, projections for economic growth were only cautiously optimistic, and on a low base of nearly four years of economic and political turmoil in which the growth rate fell to under two percent, foreign investment dropped dramatically, inflation rose as the Egyptian pound depreciated, and electricity outages and water shortages grew increasingly common. As Egypt struggles to absorb its millions of new citizens and job seekers in the coming decades, the need to improve inadequate infrastructure, restructure misaligned fiscal policies, enhance health and education and increase job opportunities will all be imperatives of public policy.

These national priorities will not only have a significant impact on AUC's curriculum and research agenda, as we prepare our students for life in twenty-first century Egypt and serve the research and policy needs of the nation, but they will also shape the University's administrative and budget priorities. Increasing costs are likely not only as subsidies on basic commodities like fuel are lifted but also as we anticipate further pressure on already inadequate transportation and utilities infrastructure.

In addition, even if Egypt sees greater stability in the next several years, ongoing political unrest elsewhere in the region will guide international perceptions of AUC, both for good and for ill. The University will be seen simultaneously as an institution in an uncertain and potentially perilous environment and as a reliable and valued source of knowledge and expertise about that very environment for students, professional analysts and the concerned public alike. Responding to continued uncertainty within the region and persistent anxiety beyond it will require adroit management of AUC's administration, communications and reputation.

#### Downtown and New Cairo

At a more local level, we must contend with our own fast-changing neighborhoods. The most recent data from Egypt's statistical authority indicates that within the Cairo governorate (which includes both AUC's Tahrir and New Cairo campuses), the overall urban population density is 117,000 per square mile—more than 1.5 times the population density of Manhattan. In part because of that density, Egyptian authorities supported creation of suburban satellite cities; the move of AUC to a new purpose-built campus in New Cairo was intended to anchor one such development. In 2008, at the time of the move, New Cairo had fewer than 100,000 inhabitants; ultimately it is expected to have 4 million residents.<sup>4</sup>

Despite predictions that the political upheavals and economic trials of the last several years would slow development, in fact, construction proceeded briskly in New Cairo, and new housing, commercial and retail space opened at a remarkable pace. Already the New Cairo campus has confronted overtaxed public utilities and increasing traffic problems. In 2012, 80 percent of AUC's first-year students lived more than ten kilometers from the New Cairo campus, and they—along with many faculty and staff—faced increasingly lengthy, dangerous and expensive commutes on Cairo's traffic-clogged highways.<sup>5</sup> As a result, while much of New Cairo remains a construction site, many AUC affiliates—faculty, staff and families—are now beginning to develop properties they acquired at the time of the University's acquisition of its land while others are renting apartments in the neighborhood; AUCians are moving to New Cairo.

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Wendell Cox, "The Evolving Urban Form: Cairo," *New Geography*, 06/13/2012 <http://www.newgeography.com/content/002901-The-Evolving-Urban-Form-Cairo>

<sup>5</sup> 2012 Survey of First-Semester Freshmen. The American University in Cairo, September 2012.

Our Tahrir Square campus bore much of the burden of the years of turbulence in downtown Cairo. From the events of the January 25<sup>th</sup> revolution, to the violent clashes on Mohammed Mahmoud Street, to the demonstrations that accompanied the June 30<sup>th</sup> deposition of the then-president, Tahrir Square was the focal point of popular uprisings. As a result, public programming was difficult to sustain at the downtown campus and Continuing Education programs were frequently disrupted. Nonetheless, we concluded a lease of the Greek Campus to a developer intent on creating a Silicon Valley-like facility for technology companies and start-ups—a use very much consistent with the interests of a contiguous university—and there are ample opportunities for the development of continuing education and cultural, artistic and other programming on this campus when there is sustained calm.

Responding to the fast-changing demands of local opportunities and challenges in both downtown and New Cairo for faculty, staff and student housing, for transportation, and for community services and neighborhood amenities will require focused attention to community outreach and local partnerships.

### Higher Education

At the global level, the landscape of higher education is evolving rapidly. Online and digital access to information, emerging learning technologies, increasing student mobility, international competition and global ranking systems, changing patterns of research development and commercialization and new labor market demands all represent challenges to traditional university practices. Yet there are opportunities as well: agile, inventive institutions that are able to adapt the new technologies as a twenty-first century means to serve the enduring ends of accumulating and disseminating knowledge—of fostering learning—will benefit from the increasing scale, visibility, influence and impact of their work. Successful institutions are not necessarily the developers of such technologies or practices but they are both alert and nimble in assessing innovation in higher education and in selectively incorporating appropriate practices into their own operation.

Universities are fast adopting varieties of digital technologies to facilitate both administrative operations and learning. Online enrollments have risen to over 30 percent of all US college “seats,” and universities are moving quickly towards a combination of e-learning (digitized resources), hybrid learning combining face-to-face and online experiences, and fully online learning. Thirty-six percent of Egyptians have access to the Internet,<sup>6</sup> making online courses a plausible option for universities here, but they will need to ensure that systems offer ubiquitous coverage on multiple platforms and that staff and faculty have the skills to accommodate emerging technologies.

In addition, just as students and faculty expect to have instant and continuous access to a borderless digital universe, they also expect to learn by doing. Increasing emphasis on experiential learning is changing the way faculty teach, the way student affairs professionals define their responsibilities, the way employers assess job seekers, and the way universities allocate resources.<sup>7</sup> AUC has long been a pioneer in providing opportunities for internships, community-based learning, creative performance,

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<sup>6</sup> “Internet Usage Statistics for Africa.” Internet World Stats, <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>

<sup>7</sup> As one US university describes it: “Experiential learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside a traditional academic setting. Experiential learning encompasses a variety of activities including internships, service learning, undergraduate research, study abroad, and other creative and professional work experiences. Well-planned, supervised and assessed experiential learning programs can stimulate academic inquiry by promoting interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional and intellectual skills.”  
<http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/ExperientialLearning/about/Pages/WhatIsExperientialLearning.aspx>

civic engagement, undergraduate research, study abroad, and other outside-of-the-classroom learning experiences, and needs to build on that robust tradition to make the connection between experiential learning and the classroom intentional and deliberate.

Finally, of course, globalization of higher education itself is proceeding apace. From branch campuses, to various kinds of study and work opportunities outside students' home countries, to international recruitment of degree candidates, student mobility and intellectual collaboration across borders are increasingly watchwords in higher education around the world.<sup>8</sup> Obviously, in many ways AUC has also been a pioneer in ensuring intellectual cross-fertilization for US and Egyptian students and faculty alike, but in considering the AUC of the future, its role in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the rest of the world needs to be carefully weighed.

In the medium term, these opportunities often present financial challenges to all universities since incremental expectations are rarely accompanied by willingness to abandon proven and familiar ways. In the United States, this has meant that the cost of attending college has risen steeply in recent years. In 2010, the share of first-time full-time students receiving aid at four-year US colleges was 85 percent and average student loan debt was over \$25,000, an increase of 25 percent in the preceding decade. Despite the rise in tuition, institutional finances are precarious. A third of US colleges and universities expect net tuition revenue to either decline or grow at a rate below inflation, and tuition discounting is continuing to rise, cutting into net tuition revenue.<sup>9</sup>

In Egypt, AUC confronts an equally bewildering higher education landscape: public universities are in crisis—tuition rates are among the least of endemic problems in institutions facing unsustainable enrollment models, low faculty salaries, inadequate research support and allegations of political interference—while private universities—almost all of which are proprietary for-profit institutions—struggle to meet demands for educational programs of high quality. AUC's tuition remains the highest in the country, in spite of efforts to moderate tuition increases after student protests in 2012, but there are indications that the other private universities may be rapidly closing the gap; news reports in July 2014 suggested that tuition fees for private universities for the 2014-2015 academic year increased between 50 and 90 percent, and tuition for some programs, notably medicine, was beginning to approach AUC levels.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, even if the local competitive environment were to evolve in our favor, there is continuing concern about AUC's ability to provide the necessary resources to sustain high-quality international and Egyptian faculty and programs and also attract outstanding students from economically diverse backgrounds.

### *What Internal Challenges Must We Address?*

In order to succeed as an institution in the next decades, we also have to address the significant costs—financial, administrative and cultural—imposed by the aspirations of the University in recent years as

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, <http://www.insidehighered.com/content/globalization-higher-education#sthash.2JsntGWJ.dpbs> and the publications of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College: <http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/research/cihe.html>

<sup>9</sup> Grummon, Phyllis. "Trends to Watch in Higher Education." The Society for College and University Planning, volume 9 no. 1 Sara Osama Shoureap. "Private Universities Tuition Fees Increased Dramatically, *Cairo Post*, Jul. 17, 2014 <http://thecairopost.com/news/118805/news/private-universities-tuition-fees-increased-dramatically>



well as the exceptional circumstances in Egypt. Three features of our own operations will require our focused attention for the next five to ten years: the administrative demands posed by the larger scale and increased requirements of a University in a new and rapidly evolving suburban environment; the perceived need to revitalize and adapt AUC's distinctive culture and community to the requirements of a twenty-first century university; and the requirement that we not be complacent about the quality of our educational programs.

### Administrative Operations

The move to the New Cairo campus in 2008 took place before the campus was entirely completed, and before most of the campus was fully "commissioned," that is, before the performance of the campus facilities and operations systems were tested and verified. Staffing in a number of areas, including custodial, transportation and security, had been dramatically augmented. The first several years at the New Cairo campus were focused on the completion of construction, and by 2010-11, it was apparent that many administrative functions, from energy management to supply chain management and procurement, were simply overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of their responsibilities.

Efforts to correct these deficiencies have seen dramatic improvements. The Office of Sustainability, created in 2011, has led initiatives to manage the campus HVAC, utility plants, lighting, water and other systems, producing not only the Middle East's first University Carbon Footprint report but millions of dollars in savings. Similarly, new initiatives in Supply Chain Management, Transportation Services and elsewhere have seen improved procurement and better inventory control in supplies and services.

Nonetheless, and as a consequence of the imperatives of operating through the political turbulence since the events of January 2011, there remains much to be done. From Human Resources to Food Services, from Environmental Health and Safety to the Controller's Office, there are process improvements that would make the University more efficient, more economical and more responsive.

### University Culture

Creating a more responsive administration would also contribute to restoring and invigorating the distinctive culture and community of AUC. Many AUC alumni, staff and faculty recall with great affection the comfort and charm of campus life in the Tahrir Square campus, despite—and to some extent because of—the cramped and noisy quarters. While there is no desire to recreate a bygone era, the value in a common and constructive community culture is incalculable. Students learn more effectively if they enjoy being on campus; faculty members provide more and better advising and mentoring; staff members work with more energy and enthusiasm.

The distance of the New Cairo campus from the homes of most students, staff and faculty when it first opened contributed to a "commuter" ethos and the insecurity of the last several years often further discouraged AUCians from staying on campus after their business was accomplished. The Tahrir campus was frequently closed altogether, making even routine activity, much less relaxed interaction, especially difficult.

The rapid development of New Cairo will provide opportunities for AUC affiliates to live in the neighborhood and for new neighbors to enjoy the amenities associated with University life, from English classes to sports facilities, theatrical performances and evening lectures. Similarly, in Tahrir

Square, regular public programming will contribute to ensuring that AUC is seen as a good and welcome neighbor. As campus life is enlivened, so, too, the AUC community spirit should revive, and that revitalization can be promoted with deliberate attention to the way we communicate on campus, the kinds of services we provide, and the collegiality and reciprocity we exhibit in making decisions about the University and its future.

### Academic Quality

In supporting University culture, we must always keep uppermost that we are fundamentally an academic institution, dedicated to the education of the next generation of leaders of Egypt and the world, to research that enhances the lives of people everywhere and to outreach that brings the fruits of our work to a wider public. We cannot do any of that if we do not attend first and foremost to ensuring that our academic programs are of the highest quality and respond to the demand in both the local and international employment market.

This does not simply necessitate hiring first-rate faculty, although it surely requires that. Likewise, it is not simply about curricular reform and innovation, although it will certainly reflect that. We know that much learning takes place outside the classroom, and we need to ensure that from the moment our students encounter the University at admissions through their first-year orientation, choosing classes, selecting a major, securing an internship, joining a club or athletic team, celebrating graduation and anticipating alumni homecoming, every AUCian is treated with respect and understanding. Academic integrity is not simply a refusal to plagiarize, but a comprehensive approach to personal responsibility that faculty and staff must value for themselves and demonstrate to others if we want our students to learn and practice it.

### *What Strengths Can We Draw On?*

In spite of the many challenges—both external and internal—AUC embarks on the 2014-2019 planning cycle from a position of enormous strength, and its many assets can be leveraged to take advantage of the opportunities and overcome the challenges we confront.

### Our Liberal Arts Educational Philosophy

Probably the most important of our strengths is the fundamental philosophy of our education—that is, our commitment to learning in all its aspects. As a liberal arts institution, we not only provide knowledge and skills in particular fields but preparation for a life that reflects critical thinking, ethical principles and self-directed, lifelong learning. We do this not only—and perhaps not even principally—in the classroom but also in the wide array of co-curricular activities in which we encourage our students to participate. We are committed to educating the “whole person” and to contributing to lives that are well-examined and well-lived.

This educational philosophy is a hallmark of American higher education and it is one of the distinctive strengths of American society. In Egypt, where it is uniquely associated with AUC, it accounts for the disproportionate success of our graduates, many of whom have played leading roles in their communities and nations. The recent creation of the Academy of the Liberal Arts, led by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, represents a renewal of our commitment to this philosophy, but, as we expect our students to do, we must constantly evaluate and assess our performance. This is one of the many

reasons why we value institutional accreditation in Egypt and the US as well as recognition by specialized accrediting agencies in the US, Europe and Egypt.

### Tradition, History and Reputation

The successes of our graduates and our longstanding commitment to outreach and service have contributed to AUC's reputation for excellence in Egypt and around the world. Its nearly 100-year history as a leader in higher education in Egypt and in the region has produced an alumni community of uncommon distinction and influence in many fields. So too, for many decades we have contributed to the education of American specialists on the Middle East through our unparalleled Arabic and area studies programs. We are trusted as an institution that is steadfast in its commitment to contribute to the development of Egypt, the promotion of understanding and the dissemination of knowledge and skills throughout the world.

### Location

Universities are increasingly coming to realize that location is a crucial determinant of the prospects for success. As a recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* observed, "even in today's virtual world of online course and teleconferences, a college's location might be more important than ever to its long-term prosperity... That's because students need access to off-campus opportunities to apply their classroom learning in the real world during the academic year, through internships or research projects. Those hands-on opportunities, which increasingly differentiate colleges from one another, require a vibrant local economy with a diversity of employers and non-profit organizations."<sup>11</sup>

AUC's location in one of the most interesting and important cities in the world, at the nexus of Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe and at the center of events of the Arab world, is an unparalleled asset. Whether as the headquarters of the Arab League or the home of one of the liveliest arts scenes in the region, on the banks of the fabled Nile or representing one of the largest urban agglomerations in the world, Cairo offers opportunities to study and learn about regional politics, urban sustainability, ancient Egypt, contemporary street art, medieval Arabic literature, finance and business in emerging markets, desert construction methods, Red Sea marine biology and myriad other fields—hands on, in real time. Even in the face of regional turmoil, Cairo's diversity, resilience and centrality to the Arab world stands us in good stead.

### Facilities

AUC has the best of two worlds. Its purpose-built, world-class campus in New Cairo provides students, faculty and researchers with classroom, library, and laboratory facilities and communications technologies that are widely recognized as not only unmatched in Egypt but meeting the highest global standards. At the same time, the historic Tahrir campus provides a hub for continuing and professional education and cultural activities in downtown Cairo. Thanks to these remarkable resources, AUC is equipped to build and sustain education programs of matchless variety and quality.

### Research and scholarship

In recent years, increasingly ambitious research and scholarly programs have developed in a number of disciplines, often in conjunction with providing undergraduate and graduate research experience. From

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<sup>11</sup> Jeffrey Selingo, "Location, Location, Location. Urban Hot Spots Are the Place to Be," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 28, 2014, <http://chronicle.com/article/Location-Location-Location-/147931/>

the biology department's discovery of previously unknown organisms in the Red Sea to the chemistry department's development of a diagnostic technique for hepatitis C, to award-winning literary translations by faculty in the humanities and widely-cited commentary on contemporary developments in the Middle East by our social scientists, our students and faculty are having an impact in discovering, disseminating and shaping knowledge.

### People

But AUC's most important asset is its people. In many ways, the stresses and strains of life at AUC since 2008 have distracted us from the remarkable community AUC represents; its indomitable spirit and enduring affection for AUC is the foundation for everything we seek to achieve.

A dedicated and diverse faculty, many of whom are internationally recognized in their disciplines, elect to live in Cairo and work at AUC because they are committed to the mission of the institution, and rewarded by working with talented, ambitious and engaged students.

Similarly, talented and committed administrators and staff—many of whom have self-consciously shown their devotion to the University through the trials of the last few years—work to create an environment that accentuates the importance of quality, continuous improvement, innovation and adaptability.

More than 35,000 influential and committed alumni represent a resource as models of success, boosters for our teams, employers of our graduates and supporters of our programs. Increasingly strong community engagement, from the Parents' Association to the Business School's Strategic Advisory Board, and linkages with local and international institutions from universities to hospitals and research centers also contribute to enlivening AUC's intellectual life, strengthening our community and enhancing our capacities.

Most importantly, we have the good fortune to draw from among the best young people in Egypt today. It is an enormous talent pool and we get many of the brightest and most ambitious of Egypt's youth. In Fall 2013, our undergraduate admissions yield was 73 percent, our first-to-second year retention rate was 92 percent, and our six-year graduation rate was 82 percent. In recent years, we have faced some new competition—almost entirely outside of Egypt, principally Canada—and much of that can be attributed to anxiety about Egypt as well as interest among families in ensuring international exposure for their children. Families value AUC, however, for our educational philosophy, our international diversity, our integrity and our track record of producing distinguished graduates who are successful in their chosen fields.

### **Strategies and Initiatives: How Will We Get There?**

Four clusters of initiatives recommend themselves as multifaceted responses to our needs, our challenges, our opportunities and our aspirations. In all, once again, we focus our efforts on students—

in the first instance, on our degree candidates, and more generally, on all of our efforts to promote learning for everyone, and to better understand and improve our world.

In each of these, we emphasize the priority we place on enhancing the student experience. To that end, we also focus on sustaining a strong and vibrant faculty and the institutional capacity to serve our community of learning effectively.

It should be said that although these are the critical foci of our efforts in the next five years, we expect to be making continuous improvement in all aspects of the University's operations and the service it provides to its students, its community and its world. There is much that cannot be anticipated about the next decades but we intend to provide a solid platform for further enhancement in the years to come.

### ***Strategic Objective I: Make Our Place in the World: Egypt's Global University***

We must realize our 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 our student body and our faculty.

To this end, we will undertake the following initiatives:

#### **A. We will utilize student recruitment and enrollment strategies that more intentionally identify and develop the character and “shape” of the student body we want at AUC.**

Such a comprehensive strategy includes specification of the proportion of the total student body that should be made up of Egyptian and international students as well as the mix of graduates and undergraduates and the disciplines, majors and degree programs in which we expect to see our students focus.

Led by representatives of the Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs, our enrollment management planning efforts have identified rough targets in a variety of categories of student (e.g., graduate and undergraduate; Egyptian and international, etc.) . Obviously, the majority of our students, are, should be and will remain undergraduates; 80% of our students are undergraduates today and this as it should be for at least the next five years. Of those, the vast majority are Egyptians and again, this is as it should be. Still there is more we need to do to achieve the economic, social and national diversity to which we aspire.

1. We will deliberately focus attention on our enrollment strategy and admissions process to “build a class” that is diverse not only in nationality and socio-economic background but also in skills, talents and interests. This will require that we supplement our quantitative admissions criteria (high school GPAs, SAT and Thanawiyya Amma scores, etc.) with additional indicators such as essays, art portfolios or athletic accomplishments that will permit more nuanced assessment of the contribution each student will make to the culture and climate of the University. In AY15-16 Admissions will develop and pilot additional questions for our applications and work with

Student Affairs to assess how our admissions staff can administer such a system most effectively and how well students admitted using these criteria fare in the following years.

2. Among our Egyptian undergraduates, we believe a modest increase in enrollments of students from outside greater Cairo would enhance our diversity and better serve Egypt. We are targeting an increase of students from public schools and/or governorates outside Cairo, Giza and Alexandria to 10% of the total Egyptian undergraduate complement—approximately doubling the (non-LEAD) proportion of such students today.
3. We also believe our students should have more opportunities to live and study outside Egypt over the course of their undergraduate careers. Today about a quarter of our undergraduates study abroad over the course of their careers; we believe that the number of our students who undertake international study, whether in conventional year, semester or summer study abroad programs, or work-study programs like internships, research opportunities, etc. outside Egypt should rise over the next five years to 500 a year—or about half of each class. Ideally, this will involve a combination of 40% exchange (the AUC student pays AUC tuition in exchange for a partner institution student paying partner tuition and attending AUC), 30% study abroad (direct pay), and 30% summer study abroad (direct pay, typically through one of our 15 targeted summer programs). Our current tally is 20% exchange, 20% study abroad, 60% summer. The exchange number will be easily enhanced with the expected revival of incoming exchange students.
4. We believe that graduate students should also be afforded opportunities to study abroad, particularly in exchange programs that will bring international students in the same fields to our campus. Given the life exigencies of our graduate students, many of whom work and have families, we do not have a specific target for graduate study abroad opportunities, but we believe such experiences should be encouraged when possible, and in AY15-16 we will develop appropriate support programs to that end.
5. In addition the on-campus international diversity of our student body should increase. For the duration of this plan, incoming non-degree candidates should be limited to numbers we believe we can serve effectively with current resources. That number is estimated to be about 200-250 on campus at any given time, comprised of approximately 50-60 intensive Arabic study students, 125 or so undergraduate non-degree students, and 25-50 graduate non-degree students. (This is compared to the height in 2010 of about 500 study abroad students on campus at any given time—a number that was larger than we could provide a high quality educational experience.) For the sake of our AUC outgoing students, we should aim for about 40% of this to represent exchange students (whose home institutions will host comparable numbers of AUC students) and 60% conventional fee-paying study abroad students.
6. As for international degree candidates, there are now around 300 international undergraduate degree-seeking students at AUC; we believe that this number should rise to about 500 and that it is both feasible and desirable to target communities outside our traditional study abroad catchment area in Europe and the United States. We propose a targeted approach to areas in which we think we have a particularly powerful “value proposition.” This includes Arab countries, Africa, Malaysia and China (particularly for Arabic language and business programs).

For graduate programs, we are already recruiting competitive graduate students who want to focus on Middle East Studies, Global Affairs and Migration Studies from the US, Europe and Africa; we should systematically expand recruitment of international students to such programs.

Thus we intend to plan for 250 undergraduate degree-seeking students from sub-Saharan Africa—about 5% of the undergraduate population—plus 100 graduate students from sub-Saharan Africa; 25% percent of these would be eligible for financial aid. From Arab countries, we currently have about 150 or so students, almost all fee-paying; this number should increase to about 200, and we should offer financial aid to an additional 50 Arab international students. For graduate studies, increased international enrollments in key programs such as Global Affairs, Middle East Studies, Political Science, Migration, Law, and International & Comparative Education would produce a graduate population that is approximately 20% international (currently it is about 10%).

In sum, when we reach 200-250 incoming international study abroad students on campus at any one time, we will review whether we can increase such enrollments, assess the impact of any increase on our curricular offerings and consider whether we should maintain or grow our study abroad populations during the rest of the five year period. We will aim to increase our international degree-seeking undergraduates from 300 to 500 and diversify their countries of origin. Similarly, we expect to increase international degree-seeking graduate students to about 20% of the total, or about 300; this is double our current number and, like our undergraduates, it would be a more diverse group.

7. To achieve these targets, we need to re-examine financial aid, housing and other ancillary aspects of student life to ensure our policies support these strategic objectives. The VP for Student Affairs has already begun restructuring our financial aid policies to ensure that they better reflect University priorities, including our commitment to diversity and access for talented Egyptian students of limited means, international students from regions without substantial government funding for international study, and international study abroad experiences for our own local degree candidates. Thus, by 2019, all University-funded achievement awards will have been phased out (no such awards have been made for the incoming class in fall 2015); as students with achievement awards graduate, the funds will be reallocated to ensure that the University lives within a sustainable financial aid budget and provides aid only to those whom the University deems qualified.
8. If we recruit more students from outside greater Cairo, whether from within Egypt or abroad, we need to be able to ensure they are properly housed. During AY15-16, a team led by the EVP for Administration and Finance and the VP for Student Affairs will review our housing facilities in Zamalek and New Cairo to identify demand trends among both international students and local students who elect to live in University-sponsored housing, and explore opportunities for collaboration with private developers in New Cairo interested in providing housing for students and other University affiliates. This will permit a decision in AY17-18 on whether to build more on-campus student housing.

At the same time, one of the major elements of future fundraising will be to raise scholarships and fellowships, and many of these can be targeted at recruiting and retaining students with exceptional

talent or achievement. Among the scholarship and fellowship opportunities identified for highlighting in our fundraising are:

- Undergraduate scholarships for students from the Egyptian governorates
- Undergraduate Public Schools Scholarships
- Undergraduate outgoing study-abroad scholarships
- Undergraduate Achievement Scholarships
- MA/MSc fellowships for students from the Arab world and Africa
- African PhD fellowships in Applied Sciences & Engineering
- Diversity PhD fellowships for students from outside of Cairo
- MA/MSc fellowships in areas of particular strength at AUC, including Middle East Studies and Egyptology
- Graduate Research Support Funds

In addition, support will be sought for the Office of International Students and Study Abroad, which supports both incoming international students and outgoing study abroad students.

**B. We will include in faculty planning an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining the appropriate mix of US, Egyptian and international faculty so as to ensure the continued international and multicultural character of the faculty and of the faculty culture.**

The planning underway reflects the current composition of the faculty, expected retirement patterns, and the distribution of international faculty across various fields and disciplines. In guaranteeing that we replenish our faculty ranks with the variety and quality of faculty we want, we need to examine salary and benefit patterns, teaching, research and service expectations, and other quality-of-life issues.

Historically AUC was noted for the high proportion of American faculty teaching at the University. Today, although it remains one of the principal “destinations of choice” for American academics interested in teaching in the Arab world, increasing competition from high-paying institutions in the Gulf, the growth of academic programs in pre-professional fields, like Business and Engineering, in which Egyptian faculty are quite competitive, and the political instability of recent years have all contributed to a challenging environment in which to sustain the most desirable mix of Egyptian, American and international faculty. As it stands now, we are underweight in our allocation of American faculty and overweight in international and Egyptian faculty; faculty compensation should be examined to ensure it meets modern standards and reflects the imperatives of merit and market.

1. We will be examining patterns of salaries and benefits, so as to design programs that best facilitate recruitment, retention and retirement of the best faculty at the appropriate stages of their careers. Starting in AY14-15, the Provost has examined faculty costs, distribution of teaching, use of adjuncts and part-time faculty, etc., to establish a base line from which to more effectively deploy and reward faculty as the critical resources for the academic and intellectual enterprises of the University. In the following years, examination of policies like retirement will further enhance the clarity—including the rights and responsibilities entailed—of faculty careers at AUC.



2. In addition, the faculty strategic plan aims to build a revitalized Distinguished Visiting Professors program, to allow us to attract semester or year-long visitors in the fields where American faculty are under-represented (particularly Sciences and Engineering and Business), as well as in areas in which we want to make strategic intellectual investments. Because overall attrition rates of faculty are low, this restructuring of available funds will be a multi-year project. By 2019, however, the target is to have 20 to 30 additional American faculty at AUC in any given semester as Distinguished Visiting Professors, each of whom will spend at least a full semester, enriching our intellectual and educational missions both directly and indirectly (by broadening our existing scholarly networks of our faculty and students). These faculty will normally be tenured at highly-ranked universities, and ordinarily would be difficult to recruit for a regular position at AUC but may be prepared to entertain a joint appointment between their home institutions and AUC, or other continuing arrangements, once they have spent time at the University.
3. Over the next several years, we also will support pedagogical innovation and experiment with different ways of mounting our curricula. More effective use of our graduate students as teaching assistants, more deliberate deployment of adjuncts in upper-level rather than introductory courses, more recognition of the multiple media and mechanisms for teaching (described in section B.5 of Strategic Objective II, Unleashing Learning) will also inform how we most effectively recruit, retain and reward our faculty.

In the meantime, among the major emphases of fundraising will be to raise endowed professorships and research support for faculty. Among the opportunities to be highlighted are at least 20 endowed professorships in fields ranging from Accounting to Graphic Design, Egyptology to Retail Banking.

**C. As we consider our place in the world, and particularly as we make investments in curriculum and research, we will decide in which fields and disciplines we should make special investments so as to ensure student success, provide graduates with twenty-first century skills that are prized in both the local and international market, and ensure faculty retention and global competitiveness.**

Working with the deans, the Provost has identified a limited number of academic priorities for the coming year, AY15-16. These do not preclude further developments in other areas as the Strategic Plan is implemented, but they are indicative of the kind of investments that should be made because we have opportunities to build foci of excellence in multidisciplinary areas in which we have traditional or potential comparative advantage.

1. One of these areas is the nexus between Energy, Environmental, and Resource Engineering (EERE). Building on our new Sustainable Development programs, we will restructure our small Petroleum and Energy Engineering Department, progressively supplementing the petroleum component to include enhanced focus on other energy sources. Fruitful research areas as well as employment opportunities for our students are certain to shift away from traditional oil-and-gas fields and progressively towards clean and renewable energy, environmental engineering, and the like. To begin the transition, we can utilize existing distinguished groups in other areas of

engineering, especially in Mechanical Engineering, Construction and Architectural Engineering, and Physics, whose research and teaching are clearly complementary. Over the period 2015–17, we will restructure the existing department, starting immediately by seeding the department with joint appointments of distinguished faculty in various SSE departments, and relying on them to recruit others in these fields.

2. Another area is Middle East Studies, for which Cairo is an obvious asset and in which AUC has had a traditional comparative advantage. From Arabic language and literature, to social science and public policy, to Islamic art and architecture, to business and economics, we have unparalleled opportunities to build and expand vibrant intellectual communities. We may start by recruiting distinguished senior visiting faculty to help us build greater capacity in our junior faculty ranks, enhance our interdisciplinary collaborations on campus and strengthen our international research collaborations (see B.2 in Strategic Objective I, Egypt’s Global University). Such faculty, who may be eager to spend anything from a semester to two years at AUC, perhaps together with their graduate students, will further to enrich our research and educational missions.
3. Although the focus of the five years of this plan will primarily be on consolidating and improving existing programs, in AY16-17 additional programs—from Global Affairs to Health Sciences—may be authorized to conduct feasibility studies that might justify incremental resources.

We also expect to solicit support for Post-Doctoral Fellows in the Core Curriculum, a Research and Development Fund, a Provost’s Strategic Initiatives Fund and Dean’s Opportunity Funds and Center and Department Research Support Funds.

### ***Strategic Objective II: Unleash Learning: Opening the AUC Classroom***

To create “an ethically engaged, diverse community of scholars” in the twenty-first century, we need to embrace and adopt new pedagogies that emphasize learning-by-doing and so prepare our young people with skills and confidence that not only build on but also transcend their particular major or graduate discipline.

How we foster learning must be much more broadly conceived 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 are restricted in space to desks, classrooms and a campus is clearly over. To that end, we should utilize the campus as a classroom, recognize extra-classroom experiences like service-learning, internships, research or study abroad experience in designing graduation requirements, and better monitor, recognize and reward extracurricular involvement.

All of these will require refashioning the links between the Provost’s academic programs and the Vice President for Student Affairs’ functions, redesigning everything from majors to transcripts, courses to clubs. Four specific initiatives recommend themselves as catalysts for such restructuring of how we foster learning:

**A. We will develop and implement a “co-curricular transcript” that reflects student involvement in extra-curricular activities.**

Working in a team that draws on the Career Center, the Office of Student Development, the Center for Learning and Teaching, and the Information Technology group, the Dean of Students has developed models of monitoring and assessment that will permit the University to attest to the learning outcomes associated with student involvement in work-study programs, clubs and conferences, student government, athletic teams, etc.

1. In AY15-16, co-curricular activities will be recorded for all freshmen (and any other students who wish to participate); by 2019 all students will have been trained to utilize the co-curricular transcript. The incremented roll-out allows for statistics on each class to be followed for completion rates and there will be reviews throughout the process—concentrating on the first two years—to ensure a quality transcript that serves students, AUC and employers.

**B. By 2019, all undergraduates will be expected to have participated in some sort of credit-bearing experiential learning opportunity, whether through a supervised internship, study abroad, community-based service learning coursework or other experience.** To begin this process, several initiatives are already underway.

1. Develop 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. Whether examining the contemporary street art scene, looking at bridge and road construction, studying Islamic art and architecture, visiting ancient Egyptian archeological sites, investigating the business start-up scene, analyzing the politics and policy of solid waste, or exploring musical genres in performance, Cairo is a text, a laboratory, a field site of unparalleled richness and we should ensure that our students are exposed to it. In the first instance, these need not be courses required for the major, but they should count towards the new civic engagement core requirement (see 4 below). In AY14-15, we have sent a call for proposals to receive course-development grants for integrating Cairo in the Curriculum. Some courses, for example in ARIC, have an obvious Cairo component through field trips to old Cairo, and the like. Moreover, numerous courses include a community-based learning component, which already integrates Cairo in the curriculum. Innovative ideas for integrating Cairo in the curriculum of courses in Engineering, for example through student projects, or in Business through utilization of our extraordinary collection of oral histories of the mid-twentieth century Egyptian business community, may also be introduced as a result of the call for proposals. Few courses are likely to focus exclusively on integrating the city in every aspect of the course, but our goal by 2019 is to have no less than 10% of all courses include Cairo-related components. We should expect every student at the time of graduation with a bachelor’s degree to have experienced at least two courses with Cairo-related components.
2. Expand the “Sustainable AUC” theme across campus. Encourage 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 incentivize schools, departments, staff and student groups to develop and implement student and faculty research and collaborations that relate to sustainability. We anticipate introducing or revising 10 courses in various disciplines that include substantial content related to sustainability in the next three years. Over the five years of the Plan, more than 100 graduate and undergraduate students as well as 20 faculty will participate in substantive research collaborations related to sustainability in disciplines as diverse as Environmental Engineering (see initiative C.1 in Strategic Objective I, Egypt's Global University), Sociology/Anthropology, and Psychology. Many hundreds more will participate in co-curricular activities to raise community awareness of sustainability issues, such as more efficient use of resources (e.g. water, energy, etc, solid waste separation, and enhanced reliance on renewable energy). The Center for Sustainable Development, the Research Institute for a Sustainable Environment and the Office of Sustainability will serve as the focal points for the design and implementation of this program.

3. Adopt a civic engagement requirement in the Core Curriculum. Building on the “Cairo in the Curriculum” and “Sustainable AUC” initiatives, as well as existing internship requirements in both the Schools of Business and Sciences and Engineering, we will institute a requirement that all undergraduates must take at least one course that entails substantial engagement with the community, whether on campus or off, and includes reflective assessment of the value of civic engagement and its contribution to learning. ACE (Academic Community Engagement) and the various academic community engagement programs, including our current community-based learning (CBL) initiatives, will be consolidated and dedicated to overseeing and managing on- and off-campus civic engagement and service learning programs and working with faculty to develop and evaluate service learning courses, academic service learning internships, faculty-sponsored public service research projects, and public service-based international study abroad programs.
  - a. The ACE Board will work with the Gerhart Center to strengthen and develop links between AUC programs, graduate and undergraduate, and local, regional and international businesses and industries to further align programs and research activities with social and market needs and leverage our partnerships and programs with other Egyptian universities and with hospitals, NGOs and business firms. To that end, an academic management committee has been established (the Academic Community Engagement Board) under the auspices of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies; it meets regularly to evaluate civic engagement course proposals and to review ACE activities. This will allow AUC to maintain and further strengthen its role in closing the gap between academic research and societal needs. The ACE Board will periodically review the internship opportunities required of Business and Engineering students to ensure they meet the same high and comparable standards of quality and utility to both the student and the host organization.
  - b. Over the last six years, approximately 26% of all students participated in a community-based course; in addition, all Engineering and Business majors are now required to have an internship or other work-related experience. By 2019, we expect that all graduates will have a work-related or other experiential component on the transcript, of which 40% will be a community-based learning experience.

4. In addition, the Deans of both Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, working with the Career Center, will enhance the Capstone requirements of the Core Curriculum for undergraduates and the final project and thesis requirements of the graduate programs to ensure that students who are about to graduate from AUC have not merely technical knowledge in their major or discipline but also appropriate workplace English proficiency and presentation skills. During AY15-16, new programs will be developed to be piloted in AY 16-17.
5. Finally, we will need to incentivize, train and reward faculty to teach in novel ways. Initiatives to take students out of the classroom, while reflecting contemporary pedagogical research, do not necessarily reflect how our faculty were taught to teach. Taking students into the community, supervising internships, managing student consultancies, overseeing student research dissemination, and utilizing web-enhanced and multimedia platforms are all skills faculty may themselves need to learn, partly intentionally through training and professional development and partly, like their students, by doing. In AY15-16, we will review and refresh our rubrics for faculty reporting on their teaching as well as their research and service to ensure that they are recognized for agility and innovation in teaching as well as in their own research, scholarship and creative expression. New appraisal measures as well as new training programs will be introduced through the Center for Learning and Teaching in AY16-17, along with the new experiential learning courses and programs to be introduced that year.

Fundraising efforts will invite sponsors to support these opportunities beyond the classroom. Among the opportunities to be emphasized are:

- A Center for Academic Community Engagement
- Various Lecture Series (e.g. Meet the CEO in the Business School)
- Various Funds linked to Experiential Learning Opportunities (e.g. an Egyptian Art and Architecture Fund to support students spending time on archaeological digs)

### ***Strategic Objective 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. We need to ensure that we build on these assets to strengthen our campus culture, our community engagement, our national reputation and our international standing. AUC, particularly with the facilities afforded by the New Cairo campus, could provide unparalleled attractions, whether for students, research programs, or community engagement. The challenge here is the abundance of opportunities and the need to make thoughtful choices.

We need to enliven our New Cairo campus, matching the remarkable physical facilities with a comparably vibrant culture of activity and community. Short of unexpected opportunities, we do not expect to invest in new academic buildings in this planning period; the next five to seven years should see adjustments and enhancements for the utilization of existing facilities rather than ambitious new building programs.

**A. The following initiatives will focus our attention on our New Cairo campus:**

1. In the spring of 2015, the EVP for Administration and Finance will lead an initiative to create a New Cairo Community Council to develop regular consultation and information-sharing with local developers, retailers and residents in New Cairo in order to keep abreast of developments and to ascertain the kinds of services and programming that would be most appreciated by our neighbors. We will promote our cultural programming, our sports facilities and our other amenities as assets to which access is both welcoming and secure. In all of these efforts, the rhythm of our own initiatives will necessarily be shaped by what happens around us. With two major malls slated to open across from Gates 4 and 5 on AUC Avenue in the next eighteen months, we will be regularly reviewing everything from our own food service and operating hours, to our safety and security measures. Investing in safe ways to cross what are increasingly busy streets and insuring a pedestrian neighbourhood will be a high priority.
2. With the Provost and VP for Student Affairs, the EVP will also examine how we can improve the experience of both faculty and students who live and work at the University in New Cairo. This will include considering how, and how much, we provide food, housing, transportation and pedestrian access to and around the campus, as well as promoting policies and a campus culture that discourage smoking and littering and instead see the campus as an opportunity to enhance the health and fitness of the community. We need to review the rhythm and schedule of work on campus—like the rest of the world, AUC is now a 365/24/7 operation and we need to have appropriate staffing and service. By 2019, we will be taking full advantage of the services, retail outlets and other opportunities afforded by the growing and vibrant city life around us.
3. In addition, we will explore whether some of our New Cairo facilities may represent new revenue streams, through initiatives like special summer programs for adult learners, summer institutes for professionals and study abroad students, and weekend programs for intensive professional courses, as well as bridge programs for BSc and BA holders from national universities to prepare them for graduate studies at AUC or internationally, and ensure the campus is utilized effectively during periods of relatively low academic use.

**B. With the expected revitalization of Tahrir Square, we will also work to make use of our downtown campus.**

1. In the spring of 2015, the EVP and the Dean of the School of Continuing Education will convene a Tahrir Campus Community Council to promote neighborhood interest in, and opportunities for, programming ranging from educational and training programs offered by SCE to cultural and community interest programming. The Provost and the Dean of the School of Continuing Education will examine proposals to restructure and extend the offerings of the School and develop post-secondary, pre-baccalaureate professional diploma, certificate or degree programs in select fields. By AY16-17, we expect 20,000 enrollments, up from 17,000 today, distributed between New Cairo and the Falaki Building.
2. We will examine how the facilities of the Tahrir Square campus will be repurposed as a downtown cultural center, illustrating the catalytic role universities can play in invigorating

cultural life in their communities and neighborhoods. Three Schools within AUC—Business, Continuing Education, and Humanities and Social Sciences, which houses the Department of the Arts—will be involved in the design, development and delivery of the programmatic content in the Tahrir Square campus, including music and theatrical performances and art exhibitions by both our own student and faculty and by community theatre troupes, musical ensembles, artists and others. Performance and exhibition spaces such as Oriental Hall, Ewart Hall and Falaki Theater, the AUC Bookstore, the exhibitions spaces and galleries in the Palace Building and the outdoor gardens should be refurbished. Planning for this work will begin in the spring of 2015 in the expectation that the creation of an AUC Cultural Center that will contribute to the revitalization of cultural and community life in the heart of the city will find significant financial support.

**C. In our focus on our real estate, we must not forget that for much of the world, we represent access to Egypt. As we bring the world to Egypt as its global university, we must attend deliberately on how we bring Egypt to the world.**

Led by the Associate Provost for Strategic Initiatives and the Director of the New York Office, we will focus on utilizing the extraordinary advantage of our location in Cairo to highlight and promote our role as an gateway into and out of the Middle East.

1. We will leverage AUC’s strong reputation to expand academic and research linkages and cooperation agreements with institutions in Egypt and with North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. These linkages include joint graduate degrees, research cooperation, faculty and student exchanges and other forms of agreements.
2. To this end we will also utilize AUC’s New York Office more strategically as a location for disseminating not only knowledge about AUC itself, but about Egypt, the region and its culture and politics. During AY 15-16, this will include developing a New York lecture series showcasing faculty and alumni, working more closely with AUC Press in its North American marketing efforts, and exploring whether we should offer credit and non-credit courses that include elements of blended learning or travel to Cairo as features that only AUC could offer.

**D. We also need to become more sophisticated in our use of new information and communication technologies.**

We are blessed with the best university library in the region, strong interest in and proficiency with information and communication technology among our faculty and students, first-rate physical facilities, and an additional asset many universities do not have: our AUC Press. In order to ensure that we deploy this remarkable institutional infrastructure most effectively to meet the changing opportunities and demands for the acquisition, development, discovery, curation and dissemination of information, we will restructure and streamline our administration of information technology to better foster innovation, reduce redundancy and develop synergies in the way we process information and develop knowledge across the University.

1. We will create a new position, Vice President for Information Services, and make an appointment in AY15-16. The Vice President for Information Services will oversee campus Libraries and IT governance, as well as the AUC Press and the Office of Data Analytics and Institutional Research, and will undertake strategic planning around information services and infrastructure. This position will also own and maintain the University's technology roadmap, and will design and document practices, standards and policies concerning information production, exchange, storage, use, and preservation. The information services provided by and through this Vice President will be designed not only for undergraduate and graduate students, but also to support the work of faculty and staff, including administrative operations. Once the Vice President is hired, the next 12 months will be spent building the leadership team and putting in place a variety of organizational and governance structures. The first two years will culminate in a formal evaluation in AY 18-19, with the possibility of further revisions to the organizational structure or the governance process, based on experience.
2. During that time, the Center for Teaching and Learning will also supervise and support the introduction of blended and online courses in a limited and careful way (perhaps in conjunction with initiatives at the New York Office), ensuring that we maintain our quality standards and use appropriate analytics to track student success, developing and implementing an online graduate program within the 5 year period of this strategic plan. Similarly, CLT and AUC Press will collaborate on exploring the use of e-textbooks and open source class materials.

Among the opportunities to be showcased in fundraising are:

- “The AUC Cultural Center” in Tahrir Square
- Rare Books and Special Collections Library
- An Academic Bridge Program to prepare both high school students and national university graduates for further education in American or American-style universities
- A Program for Online and Blended Education, E-content, Mobile Apps, Digital Textbooks
- The Tahrir Dialogues and other sponsored lecture, show and performance series
- Development of a Cultural Resource Management/Heritage Studies Program

#### ***Strategic Objective IV: Instilling Integrity, Accountability and Sustainability: Managing Continuous Change***

Perhaps the most striking element of our self-reflection and deliberation is how often we have acknowledged a need to improve our processes and procedures. Whether in looking at how we allocate scholarships and fellowships, recruit faculty, assess teaching, hire employees, reward teaching, manage enrolment, promote research, or govern ourselves, there is far more confidence that we know *what* we want to do than *how* it should be accomplished.

In many ways, this institutional priority crosses and supports all the others: without a strong, well-trained and dedicated administration, much of the effort in meeting our other substantive goals will be dissipated. But it is important in itself, since a culture of continuous improvement is a reflection of a commitment to life-long learning.



To ensure a continuous focus on quality assurance and process improvement at AUC, each administrative area will be asked to review policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they reflect a service orientation that privileges, in the first instance, our students, but in the end, everyone who is involved with AUC. They will also be asked to examine their staffing complement and operational needs; this effort will produce a more professional, restructured and “right-sized” administration, smaller than it is now, but more effective and efficient.

**A. The following initiatives will ensure that we focus our resources and attention on key areas:**

1. We will manage our human capital more effectively.
  - a. The Office of Human Resources will develop work force needs assessment tools for managers and clearer, more flexible mechanisms to assess, recognize and reward excellent performance during AY15-16. The reform of the recruitment, training, skills development and assessment of administrative staff will accompany staff planning initiatives to ensure that well before the end of this plan.
  - b. AUC will have a smaller, better managed, more effectively trained and more nimble work force. By AY 16-17 we will have reduced our total workforce to 2200.
2. Particular attention will be paid to the following offices, as critical interaction points with students, faculty and staff.
  - a. During AY 15-16, the Dean of Students will review and restructure the components of our Student Life operation—the Offices of Student Development, Counselling and Mentoring, Athletics and Residential Life—to ensure that students are well served by simple, transparent and comprehensible practices.
  - b. A new Registrar will be hired in AY14-15, and during the following year the Office of the Registrar will review all its policies and procedures to ensure they are consistent with best US practice, use information technologies effectively and meet the needs of today’s students.
  - c. The Office of Legal Affairs will enhance its capacity to provide legal advice on US law and regulation, compliance and risk management, starting with a new hire in AY14-15 who has US legal experience.
  - d. The Office of Supply Chain Management will examine our procurement policies to ensure they reflect the values of the University, including service, economy, integrity and social responsibility.
  - e. The already strong Office of Sponsored Programs will get additional resources to ensure that faculty are able to secure external funding for research and other activities.

**B. The AUC workforce will routinely be encouraged to take advantage of appropriate professional development and staff training opportunities.**

Starting in AY15-16, and in conjunction with the restructure of the Office of Human Resources, we will draw on our substantial in-house expertise to develop training programs for our own staff, from negotiation and conflict resolution skills to English proficiency, operational protocol, SAP certification, basic accounting and much more.

**C. The Office of Institutional Advancement will develop and launch a capital campaign for the University Centennial.**

Some of what we wish to accomplish by our Centennial in 2019 can be realized through more efficient use of our existing resources and, obviously, we intend to make the best use of what we have. In addition however, we will need to secure incremental resources to do some of what we wish. In FY15, we will move forward on the planning for a centennial campaign, testing our goals, developing the timeline, refining our case for support and our funding priorities in connection to the strategic plan, all with the expectation that we will link the campaign with the celebration of the Centennial in October 2019.

As we approach our hundredth year, we at AUC have much to be proud of—but out of that pride also grows our aspiration to sustain the University’s tradition of excellence and to ensure that our successors have reason to be as honored as we to be associated with the American University in Cairo.