



The American University in Cairo
Office of Graduate Studies and Research

Results of the Questionnaire to Assess
Faculty Views on Their Research Effort at AUC

Report by the
Research Advisory Council

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Results of the Questionnaire to Assess Faculty Views on Their Research Effort at AUC

Introduction

Research and creative endeavors represent an important commitment of The American University in Cairo, which is reflected in its statement of mission: “*the university seeks to maintain a highly qualified faculty. Emphasis is placed on excellence in teaching as well as on research, creative work and faculty members’ intellectual contributions to their disciplines.*” Consequently, the University expects faculty to be involved in research and considers it as an important factor in promotion and tenure decisions. However, the importance of research is not only linked to promotion and tenure, faculty derive self-satisfaction from research, find it necessary for their credibility and being ahead in their field in addition to promoting their academic career. The research effort provides intellectual resources and contributes an intellectual rigor and discipline all of which impacts on instruction. Both teaching and research activities interact to strengthen each other rather than merely competing for faculty time. Research is also an important part of the services provided by the University to society.

This report is based on the results of a questionnaire that was designed by the Research Advisory Council in November 2002 and administered electronically by ACS in December 2002. The questionnaire is available at: <http://www.aucegypt.edu/survey/research.html> The main objective of the questionnaire is to canvas faculty opinion on how they view their research effort at AUC. This questionnaire follows a similar effort by the Research Advisory Council in 1997 and whenever possible the findings of the two questionnaires are compared here.

One of the questions in the present questionnaire asks: What incentives would promote research at AUC and typical answers are list here as recommendations for the Research Advisory Council to act on in 2003-2004.

For more information about the questionnaire and the results please contact Vice Provost Mahmoud Farag: mmfarag@aucegypt.edu.

Main Numerical Results

A total of 102 responses to the questionnaire were received, about two-thirds of those were from professorial-level and the rest were instructor-level faculty. Approximately 52% of the sample was from HUSS, 24% was from SCE, 14% from BEC, 8% from Library, and 2% from research centers. About two-thirds of the respondents were professorial-level and one-third instructor-level faculty.

Average research output per faculty member in past five years was as follows: about 1 book/book chapter, 0.6 scholarly articles, 3.3 conference papers, 2.3 creative projects, and 2 consultative projects. In themselves, these figures have little value unless compared with preset benchmarks and/or compared with research output in comparable institutions.

83% of the respondents indicated that they are expected to do research.

60% of the respondents indicated that the university adequately recognize the value of their research efforts (in 1997 this fraction was 33%).

About 80% indicated that the feedback from the Chair and/or the Dean about their annual faculty report provides them with an assessment of their research.

The results show that:

- 20% of the faculty spend less than 10% of their time on research, (this was 22.5% in 1997),
- about 60% spend 10-30% of their time on research (this was 55% in 1997),
- about 20% spend more than 30% on research (this was 22.5% in 1997).

60% of the respondents are satisfied with the results of their research efforts (in 1997 this fraction was 23.4%).

In the last five years, 55% of the respondents did not apply for a research grant and 29% did not apply for a conference grant. On the average, the respondents received 0.9 research grant and 2.2 conference grants in the past five years.

When asked for the reasons for not submitting proposals for research grants, 44% of the respondents indicated that the main reason is lack of time, 20% were not aware of available resources, and about 20% did not need external funding for their research.

In the opinion of the respondents, the main obstacles for research is lack of time (45%), lack of incentives (22%), and lack of facilities (12%).

Incentives that would promote research at AUC include rewarding faculty on the basis of excellence in research and publication record (28%), allowing faculty to use AUC research grants, as well as external grants, to buy out classes (27%), establishing guidelines for limiting the administrative responsibilities of junior faculty member (20%), assisting faculty by hiring research assistants (20%)

Selected Written Comments

The following are selected written comments in support of the above numerical results:

Have you received externally supported research grants, if no why not:

- ∄ There is little time to develop a full research agenda as a major concentration.
- ∄ External funding applications require a level of detail that is hard to achieve in the time left available after fulfilling teaching and administrative responsibilities.
- ∄ There are very few available external resources in the fields in which I do research.
- ∄ Consulting research jobs have provided sufficient funds

What are the greatest obstacles to doing research at AUC?

- ∄ The course load and administrative duties are too onerous to carry out research, which is already a challenge in Egypt due to library and governmental issues, as well as financial constraints.
- ∄ The teaching load is unreasonably heavy, in addition to committees and administration, these take away from my research
- ∄ Lack of qualified research assistants.
- ∄ Inadequate administrative support/unsupportive atmosphere
- ∄ The externally funded grant administrative and financial system is too complicated and unfriendly
- ∄ Need more support in finding grants for which AUC is eligible. The financial department is very difficult to deal with once you actually get the grant; one spends more time trying to convince them to write checks and do their jobs generally than actually doing research
- ∄ Difficulty of obtaining research permits from the ARE. Plus lack of time to devote to fieldwork.
- ∄ Unsupportive departmental atmosphere towards research
- ∄ Library resources are extremely limited, especially for those whose research area is outside the Middle East. Interlibrary loan and on-line databases are not the same as a full, complete library.

What incentives would promote research at AUC?

The following are suggestions made by the faculty who responded to the questionnaire:

1. Change the culture (mind-set) and set a research agenda for AUC
2. I do the research, and will continue to do it, for the following reasons: 1. It is extremely self-rewarding, and 2. It adds a great deal to my professional growth
3. Set an agenda for research (broadly stated) to focus faculty projects and to help create a viable and valid research agenda at AUC for faculty.

4. There is a balance between what type of research the university seeks. Research output on issues involving Egypt and the region can easily be increased, i.e. simple research that needs to be done and can be very helpful but that otherwise would not be accepted in high powered academic journals. And sophisticated research that can be accepted in top journals but otherwise provide very little contributions to current research needs in Egypt, North Africa and the Middle East.
5. In the present world context, AUC contribution to the world debate about "clash of civilizations", Islam, "terrorism".... is really sorely needed.
6. University and school administrators should be a good role model in being selected from among the productive faculty. They will then be more understanding and supportive to quality research.
7. Do not encourage teaching "overload." This will both motivate faculty to pursue research and give them the time to do it. Right now most are motivated to teach overload to make extra money. They cannot do research with the limited time left over.
8. One major problem is that AUC thinks of itself mainly as an undergraduate teaching institution. Despite "ritual" comments to the contrary, the graduate program does not figure prominently in AUC's self-view. AUC also does not have a core of faculty actively and creatively engaged in serious research on Egypt and the Arab World, although lip service is paid to this, and there are some individual exceptions. AUC's faculty recruitment procedures are relatively passive and the research area and expertise of an applicant are seldom a major factor in selection.
9. The position of the university on research is ambiguous. It seems that AUC is traditionally a teaching institution that now wants to raise its profile by emphasizing research. If this is to be the case, class loads need to be decreased and we should be paid according to our output, not according to the number of years we've been working here. Also, when it comes to promotion and tenure, although the guidelines say that teaching, research and service are all to be weighed equally, it seems the decision is almost always made based upon research, but this is not made clear to junior faculty as they are coming up through the system. The requirements need to be laid out clearly from the beginning.
10. Better recognition and encouragement
11. It is not clear whether a faculty's research is indeed rewarded in annual salary decisions. It appears that these are done across the board regardless of an individual's performance.
12. It seems that the publications of instructor-level faculty is not taken seriously, even if they are publishing as much as tenure-track faculty. Reward instructor-level faculty. This would boost morale.
13. Recognize that research can also be done by non-professorial faculty.
14. Improve the system for faculty assessment.
15. My chair is actually quite active in giving feedback on research, but this is on an informal basis. There seems to be no inbuilt structure through which either the Chair of the Dean are enabled to give feedback on any aspect of the Annual Report, whether positive or otherwise.
16. Post-tenure review. Move out the petrified wood.
17. Require certain guidelines of the type of published work that is expected to count as 'academic' research. Have comprehensive reviews after 3 or 5 years and make promotions and advancement functions of the minimum research requirements. But these research requirements must be perfectly outlined to prevent subjective evaluations of what constitutes academic research and what does not.
18. Provide more time for research.
19. AUC is research friendly in terms of making grants available, but not so research friendly in that it makes high demands in teaching and administration, which seem to increase by the year. If the University is serious about raising its research profile it must consider ways to reduce this load.
20. I would like to be spending more time on my research, but I find it difficult to find the time. I think the idea of buying out classes and less administrative work is a good one if we are to be judged on the amount of research we are accomplishing.

21. Junior Faculty should receive a reduced teaching load during their second or third year -- have concentrated during the first years on preparing their course work -- to undertake their research projects.
22. Provide more support and funds.
23. Possibility of Academic/Research Cooperation with other institutions in Egypt and abroad.
24. Encourage Post-Doctoral Fellowships.
25. Increase the library budget in support of research and allow faculty to order books, subscribe to journals, etc, as part of their research projects
26. Provide additional assistance in research projects.
27. Mandate some kind of mentoring program for research issues. It is likely that some departments already do this well on an informal basis, but it should be formalized perhaps to insure that people are not left out. Such a program need not be dictated in fine detail; one might simply insist that a formal assignment of mentor and mentee be made for new faculty, and provide some guidelines for what that relationship might mean.

The above 27 suggestions will be treated as recommendations to promote research at AUC and will be placed on the agenda of the Research Advisory Council for discussion and possible implementation during 2003-2004. The Research Advisory Council would also welcome suggestions made by faculty in response to this report.

Appendix

Results of the Questionnaire to Assess Faculty Views on Their Research Effort at AUC

Respondents and Numerical Results

Respondents

A total of 102 responses to the questionnaire were received, about two-thirds of those were from professorial-level and the rest were instructor-level faculty. Approximately 52% of the sample was from HUSS, 24% was from SCE, 14% from BEC, 8% from Library, and 2% from research centers.

Research Output

The following table gives the approximate average number of publications or projects per faculty in the last five years. The average was calculated as follows: The center of the interval was considered as the number of publications, which was then multiplied times the number of faculty in this category, and then divide by the total number of faculty who filled the questionnaire in a given school, library or research center.

	Books and book chapters	Scholarly articles	Conference papers	Creative projects	Consultative projects
BEC	0.1	0.4	3.2	2.3	2.3
HUSS	0.4	1.1	3.3	2.2	1.3
SCE	0.2	0.8	4.9	1.3	2
Library	1.7	0.8	2	2	1.9
Research	3	0	3	3.5	3
Total/Average	1.08	0.62	3.28	2.26	2.1

Faculty Attitude Towards Research and University Recognition

1) Are you expected to do research?

School/Center	Yes	No	%
BEC	12	2	86
HUSS	42	12	78
SCE	24	0	100
Library	5	3	63
Research	2	0	100
Total/Average	85	17	83

2) Does the university adequately recognize the value of faculty research efforts?

School/Center	Yes	No	%
BEC	10	4	71
HUSS	22	32	41
SCE	18	6	75
Library	8	0	100
Research	2	0	100
Total/Average	60	42	59

3) The feedback from the Chair and/or the Dean of my annual faculty report provides me with an assessment of my research

School/Center	Agree	Disagree	%
BEC	11	3	79
HUSS	42	12	78
SCE	19	5	79
Library	6	2	75
Research	2	0	100
Total/Average	80	22	78

4) The fraction of my work time that I spend on research is:

School/Center	less than 10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	more than 50%
BEC	2	4	6	1	1	0
HUSS	13	15	12	6	8	0
SCE	3	6	9	3	3	0
Library	4	2	2	0	0	0
Research	0	1	0	0	1	0
Total	22	28	29	10	13	0

5) Are you satisfied with the results of your research efforts?

School/Center	Yes	No	%
BEC	9	5	64
HUSS	26	28	48
SCE	17	7	71
Library	6	2	75
Research	2	0	100
Total	60	42	59

AUC Research and Conference Grants

6) Number of AUC research grants I have received in the past five years

School/Center	None	1	2	3	4	5	6
BEC	10	1	2	1	0	0	0
HUSS	26	13	8	2	2	2	1
SCE	14	6	3	1	0	0	0
Library	3	4	1	0	0	0	0
Research	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	55	24	14	4	2	2	1

7) Number of AUC conference and teaching grants I have received in the past five years

School/Center	None	1	2	3	4	5	6
BEC	6	2	1	1	1	2	1
HUSS	12	6	10	9	4	8	5
SCE	8	2	6	5	1	2	0
Library	2	2	1	1	0	1	1
Research	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	29	13	18	16	6	13	7

External Funding

8) Have you received any external research grants in the past five years?

School/Center	Yes	No	%
BEC	8	6	57
HUSS	16	38	30
SCE	7	17	29
Library	2	6	25
Research	2	0	100
Total	35	67	34

9) If your answer to question 8 is No, Why?

School/Center	No time	Unaware of available resources	Not actively engaged in research	Not required to seek external funding	Other
BEC	2	3	0	2	2
HUSS	26	8	1	7	9
SCE	11	7	1	5	2
Library	2	0	2	3	0
Research	0	0	0	0	0
Total	41 (44%)	18 (19%)	4 (4%)	17 (17%)	13 (14%)

Reasons for not conducting Research

10) What are the greatest obstacles to doing research at AUC?

School/Center	Lack of time	Lack of incentives	Lack of funds	Lack of facilities	Other
BEC	8	8	5	2	4
HUSS	51	18	13	12	8
SCE	21	13	9	8	2
Library	8	4	2	0	0
Research	1	0	0	1	0
Total (%)	89 (45%)	43 (22%)	29 (15%)	23 (12%)	14 (7%)

Promoting Research at AUC

11) What incentives would promote research at AUC?

School/Center	Reward faculty on the basis of excellence in research and publication record	Allow faculty to use AUC research grants, as well as external grants, to buy out classes	Establish guidelines for limiting the administrative responsibilities of junior faculty members	Assist faculty by hiring research assistants	Others
BEC	11	7	8	6	2
HUSS	35	38	28	28	9
SCE	18	18	10	12	2
Library	6	4	3	3	0
Research	1	1	0	1	0
Total (%)	71 (28%)	68 (27%)	49 (20%)	50 (20%)	13 (5)

Written Comments

8, 9) Have you received any external research grants in the past five years? If your answer to question 8 is “No”, Why?

Time limitation:

No time to apply, the teaching load is much too heavy. Some release ought to be provided for productive scholars.

There is little time to develop a full research agenda as a major concentration.

I have not requested research grants because the process is time consuming.

External funding applications require a level of detail that is hard to achieve in the time left available after fulfilling teaching and administrative responsibilities.

Tried and still waiting/ failed:

This only my second year as a full time faculty member but I have applied for external funding this past year (waiting for the results) and I have applied for internal and external funding as a graduate student. I was more successful at receiving internal

Proposals were rejected. I applied but failed to receive such grants on three occasions.

Ineligible and lack of funds allocated for the discipline:

Citizenship-residency makes me ineligible for a number of awards.

I am not American and information that is circulated about research and funding opportunities is heavily biased towards those for US citizens.

I am ineligible for British grants working in an American University and to some lesser extent vice versa.

Little needed.

Very limited funds available for research in literature. There are not many available in my field

There are very few available external resources in the fields in which I do research. Diplomatic History does not easily attract grants

Other means to support research

I have received external grants and have only applied for AUC mini grants because it is easier to get larger grants from elsewhere.

Have been able to work effectively with ILL and with personal sources overseas.

Consulting research jobs have provided sufficient funds

10) What are the greatest obstacles to doing research at AUC?

Teaching load too heavy/not enough time for research:

The course load and administrative duties are too onerous to carry out research, which is already a challenge in Egypt due to library and governmental issues, as well as financial constraints.

The teaching load is unreasonably heavy, in addition to committees and administration, these take away from my research time.

A 3-3-course load in addition to administrative duties makes it extremely difficult to carry out research. I would be a better teacher if I had more time to do research that would compliment my teaching and enhance it.

Heavy teaching load, large classes, demanding students, noisy offices. Back to teaching load: teaching 9 hours a week, plus at least two office hours, plus preparation time, plus time taken to accommodate students who have classes during the office hours,

Not enough release time

Too many commitments with national institutions, which I find very difficult to reject if I want to serve and stay in touch with realities in my country

Lack of qualified research assistants:

Graduate students are of low quality, you have to look hard to get qualified research assistants

Lack of suitable research assistants to help with the "busy work" of copying and administering instruments. We all feel pressure to publish in "A" journals for tenure and promotion, yet we lack guidelines from the schools or department.

AUC does not have an MA in my field; therefore there are no qualified research assistants. This term, my "research assistant" doesn't even know how to conduct a search on Google, let alone a professional database.

Inadequate administrative support/unsupportive atmosphere

The externally funded grant administrative and financial system is too complicated and unfriendly

Need more support in finding grants for which AUC is eligible. The financial department is very difficult to deal with once you actually get the grant; one spends more time trying to convince them to write checks and do their jobs generally than actually doing research

Difficulty of obtaining research permits from the ARE. Plus lack of time to devote to fieldwork.

Most faculty members are not involved in academic research so little competition and little cooperation among faculty members.

I receive absolutely NO feedback on my research from anyone.

Unsupportive departmental atmosphere towards research

Lack of Incentives

Reward system for promotion/tenure clearly ignores research among the favored.

Negative attitude of colleagues and administrators in BEC towards research and researchers, lack of recognition, lack of commitment, lack of tangible support, entrenched practices that undermine research productivity.

Part of my research is in a different field than my department, so it is completely unrecognized and unsupported by AUC, although since I present it at conferences and in publications it does represent AUC in this field, as does the research I do

I am actively involved in research and I have written several books and many articles. This is all DESPITE not because of AUC. I feel I have never received credit from the university for this work, that I am 'just' a writing teacher and thus completely incapable of doing anything other than telling a student how to write a sentence. I am getting increasingly fed up with this especially as I see other colleagues at instructor level similarly discouraged. There seems to be mental blinkers that research, thorough and good research stops below professor. It is not true.

At instructor level in the WP any research is simply ignored. E.g. when the Dean sent round a memo requesting a list of publications from each HUSS Faculty member the WP was ignored and I was told by the admin assistant that she did not think instructors

Inadequate library facilities:

Library resources are extremely limited, especially for those whose research area is outside the Middle East. Interlibrary loan and on-line databases are not the same as a full, complete library.

Inadequate library resources

Library resources are abysmal. Interlibrary loan and Internet databases do not substitute for a robust research library -- especially if one's field of research is not the Middle East.

11) What incentives would promote research at AUC?

Change the culture (mind-set) and set a research agenda for AUC:

A truly fine university is one in which most of its faculty conduct research. And with this high teaching load at AUC, it becomes extremely difficult to do both research and teach. Given these limitations, doing fine research work is usually at other costs, primarily at the cost of not spending enough time with one's family (by being too busy).

If AUC is really serious about being on the international map of scholarly research, there is a need for restructuring its mind-set.

I do the research, and will continue to do it, for the following reasons: 1. It is extremely self-rewarding, and 2. It adds a great deal to my professional growth

The lack of concern for research at AUC is shocking.

Set an agenda for research (broadly stated) to focus faculty projects and to help create a viable and valid research agenda at AUC for faculty.

There is a balance between what type of research the university seeks. Research output on issues involving Egypt and the region can easily be increased, i.e. simple research that needs to be done and can be very helpful but that otherwise would not be accepted in high powered academic journals. And sophisticated research that can be accepted in top journals but otherwise provide very little contributions to current research needs in Egypt, North Africa and the Middle East.

In the present world context, AUC contribution to the world debate about "clash of civilizations", Islam, "terrorism".... is really sorely needed.

University and school administrators should be a good role model in being selected from among the productive faculty. They will then be more understanding and supportive to quality research.

Do not encourage teaching "overload." This will both motivate faculty to pursue research and give them the time to do it. Right now most are motivated to teach overload to make extra money. They cannot do research with the limited time left over.

There is a continual contradiction between being a teaching institution and doing research. The staff of AUC sometime appears to see their job in terms of the teaching requirements, never remaining in Cairo during breaks, the only time anyone has for research in an institution, which has such a heavy teaching load.

I would repeat that means must be found to urge ALL AUC faculty to continue active research. Those who don't begin to stagnate intellectually, and their teaching suffers as a result. Furthermore, those who do not do research are generally the ones with the most time on their hands for pointless power-trips and small-minded shenanigans aimed at productive younger faculty, much of it apparently invisible to administrators.

One major problem is that AUC thinks of itself mainly as an undergraduate teaching institution. Despite "ritual" comments to the contrary, the graduate program does not figure prominently in AUC's self-view. AUC also does not have a core of faculty actively and creatively engaged in serious research on Egypt and the Arab World, although lip service is paid to this, and there are some individual exceptions. AUC's faculty recruitment procedures are relatively passive and the research area and expertise of an applicant are seldom a major factor in selection.

The position of the university on research is ambiguous. It seems that AUC is traditionally a teaching institution that now wants to raise its profile by emphasizing research. If this is to be the case, class loads need to be decreased and we should be paid according to our output, not according to the number of years we've been working here. Also, when it comes to promotion and tenure, although the guidelines say that teaching, research and service are all to be weighed equally, it seems the decision is almost always made based upon research, but this is not made clear to junior faculty as they are coming up through the system. The requirements need to be laid out clearly from the beginning.

Better recognition and encouragement:

Recognition of research. In very few quality institutions in America are faculty (especially new faculty) expected to teach a 3-3 load AND research extensively. Most Universities accommodate 1) first year teaching load reduction 2) teaching reduction for productive faculty

More encouragement by the dean and department chairs. Perhaps more mentoring of junior faculty by senior faculty researchers as well.

If AUC wants to retain outstanding researchers among junior faculty, it should send them the message that retaining them is a priority. This message needs to come from administrators, such as the Provost and the Deans, since it is they who are meant to promote faculty research. This is not the case with all department chairs, who are often more wrapped up in the political factions of their department, and might not have much to gain from promoting the work of a junior colleague. The Provost and Deans are in better position to be high-minded. If retaining quality junior faculty is the goal, we cannot count on the various Chairs to always promote this aim. (A few of these Chairs are known to use the tenure cap and renewal issues as disciplinary threats. The Provost and Deans could easily eliminate this tactic by letting it be known that they think quite favorably of active researchers at the junior level, and welcome them to remain at AUC.)

It is not clear whether a faculty's research is indeed rewarded in annual salary decisions. It appears that these are done across the board regardless of an individual's performance.

It seems that the publications of instructor-level faculty is not taken seriously, even if they are publishing as much as tenure-track faculty. Reward instructor-level faculty. This would boost morale.

Recognize that research can be done by non-professorial faculty, that instructor level faculty do research and valuable research.

In the English Language Institute, attending conferences and presenting papers and workshops are more relevant to the instructors' professional development than doing research. Therefore, allotting more funds for conference grants is more important than research grants.

Improve the system for faculty assessment:

My chair is actually quite active in giving feedback on research, but this is on an informal basis. There seems to be no inbuilt structure through which either the Chair or the Dean are enabled to give feedback on any aspect of the Annual Report, whether positive or otherwise.

Make tenure decisions more related to research than personal favoritism

The stick must be used no less than the carrot. One very important thing to do is to set very clear minimum research standards for anyone even to apply for tenure. What seems to happen now is that pretty much anyone who is nominated for tenure will get it.

Post-tenure review. Move out the petrified wood.

One possible way of encouraging experienced faculty to continue researching is to insist on the most rigorous possible standards for promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor. Currently this looks almost automatic for any tenured faculty who has been around a few extra years and done enough glad-handing and assorted committee work. But these are precisely the people who live for extra increments of political power, and who feel most threatened by productive newcomers. If AUC wants to attract and keep these productive newcomers, it should make this desire very clear, and not allow a few minor local departmental tyrants to hold the bargaining chips, or claim to do so.

Require certain guidelines of the type of published work that is expected to count as 'academic' research. Have comprehensive reviews after 3 or 5 years and make promotions and advancement functions of the minimum research requirements. But these research requirements must be perfectly outlined to prevent subjective evaluations of what constitutes academic research and what does not.

Provide more time for research:

AUC is research friendly in terms of making grants available, but not so research friendly in that it makes high demands in teaching and administration, which seem to increase by the year. If the University is serious about raising its research profile it must consider ways to reduce this load.

I would like to be spending more time on my research, but I find it difficult to find the time. I think the idea of buying out classes and less administrative work is a good one if we are to be judged on the amount of research we are accomplishing.

The heavy administrative and committee work load which all faculty members have, and which seems just to be added to with increasing use of ICT, leaves little time for either improving teaching materials and methods or doing research. Faculty need more time free to both improve teaching and do research (the latter ultimately enhances teaching as well).

Time is a huge problem. I spend all my summers and semester break doing research but then find I have little time to write it up. In my department there are few senior faculty and junior faculty are expected to spend a lot of time on service

Provide release time from teaching to do research. Faculty should teach only two courses per semester.

Distribute administrative responsibilities among faculty more fairly, especially in some departments.

Course Reductions -- class sizes are too large, and the requirement for teaching 3 courses per semester is unreasonable; it should be no more than 2

Consider moving from a 3 & 3 course load to a 2 & 2, or at least a 3 & 2 courses load. Perhaps this could be limited to those staff that demonstrably do research, that is produce publications, or other relevant products.

Junior Faculty should receive a reduced teaching load during their second or third year -- have concentrated during the first years on preparing their course work -- to undertake their research projects.

Allow faculty at all levels to have reduced teaching loads from time to time so they can engage in research and provide research assistants for all faculty who wish to do research (not everyone does). Instructor-level faculty should also be allowed to do research.

Provide more support and funds

Research assistance would help enormously. Give more relief to senior faculty - the young have plenty of time left to develop and publish. It is senior faculty that most universities honor by granting release time and support.

Provide more funds for conference grants and fund faculty to attend more than one international conference per year.

Possibility of Academic/Research Cooperation with other institutions in Egypt and abroad.

Encourage Post-Doctoral Fellowships.

Increase the library budget in support of research and allow faculty to order books, subscribe to journals, etc, as part of their research projects

Increase library budgets for faculty requisitions. In humanities research the important factors are simply time and materials. With these two things a motivated scholar can create knowledge. Unlike the sciences we do not need much special equipment, but books, books, books, are absolutely essential. Our library is good, and is improving all the time. But it is clear that the Change the name of the university since it is clearly not American.

Provide additional assistance in research projects.

Mandate some kind of mentoring program for research issues. It is likely that some departments already do this well on an informal basis, but it should be formalized perhaps to insure that people are not left out. Such a program need not be dictated in fine detail; one might simply insist that a formal assignment of mentor and mentee be made for new faculty, and provide some guidelines for what that relationship might mean.

Satisfied faculty:

I find myself that AUC is an excellent place at which to do research. No complaints.

Summer research grants are helpful. It has been hard to do any research during the semester; so most research gets completed during the breaks.

For most American academics Egypt is a "target rich" environment, and it can be an exciting place to do research.

Thank you for caring about research at AUC

Additional points or comments

If I taught less, I would be able to focus my energy and attention on a research agenda. Also, I seem to be groping for a focus in my department's and the university's vision and plans for the future (both long and short term). It seems that political science and Arabic studies related topics are a priority. English language teaching (particularly the teaching of writing) are very important; I have 20 years of experience in this area and am consulted daily (it seems!) informally for guidance in areas of curriculum design (Arabic) and addressing change and innovation in English language teaching. These are informal, chance meetings. Maybe this is the way the academic culture at AUC works; but at this time, it seems that financial concerns (new campus), leadership (new president) and the surge in technology based opportunities in education in general and English language education, specifically, would indicate a better use of my expertise and experience. At the same time, I feel, at times somewhat badgered to produce research. There is a disconnect and lack of awareness, at times, about faculty's overwhelming teaching-related responsibilities and how those eat away the days and weeks of classes. I teach classes, work individually with the many poorly prepared and struggling students (this is extremely gratifying most of the time, by the way), read thesis pre-proposals and proposals; I support colleagues in their efforts to grow professionally as much as I can; I serve the university's many and diverse needs (programming, community service and other projects) while maintaining a substantial role in my professional field of interest (through service at the local, regional, and international levels; and teaching). WHEN am I supposed to do research? Research assistance is extremely limited, if one considers the significant pressure from the administration to PRODUCE RESEARCH! I am trying to develop ways to keep myself from being over-taxed work wise and it may mean working less hard on teaching (also, of course, not an option with the load one carries). Having said all this, there is no problem with encouraging faculty to produce research; but at AUC, it seems to be done somewhat "in a vacuum" -- lacking awareness of the challenges created by the ongoing turn-over of faculty and subsequent inevitable lack of continuity in graduate teaching (this, of course, adds to the teaching load of those who are teaching here), as well as without the necessary time and services and equipment support one needs to do research. Administration