



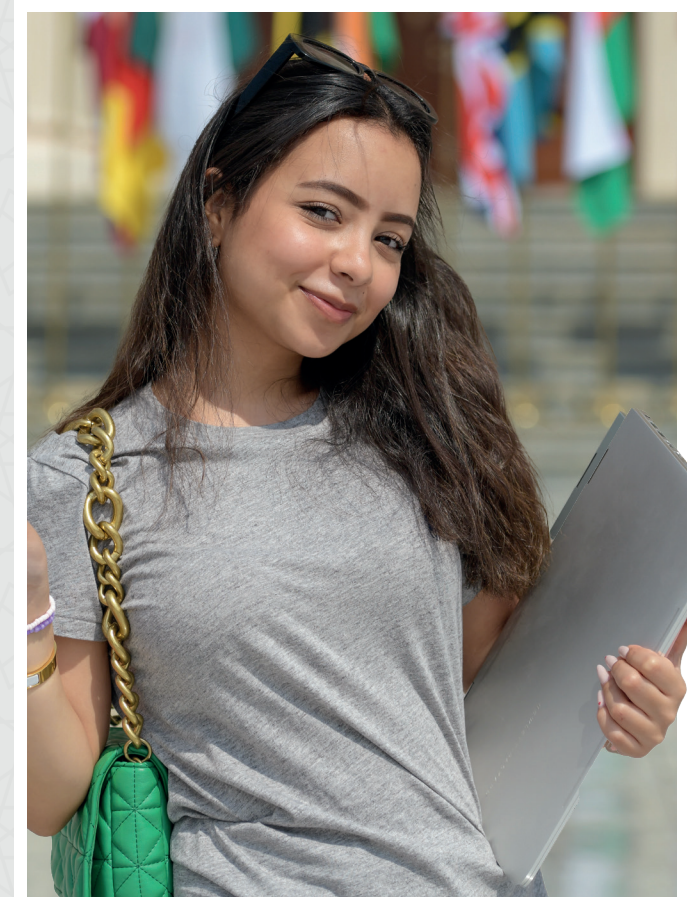
BEYOND BOUNDARIES

An integrated approach to education and community

Annual Report
2023-2024

BEYOND **BOUNDARIES**

An integrated approach to education and community



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MESSAGE

from the President

Her Excellency Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi



Welcome to a pivotal moment in the journey of American University of Sharjah. Under the visionary guidance of our founder, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, we turn the page on another academic year, celebrating the extraordinary milestones we have achieved and setting ambitious goals for the future.

This year marks the culmination of our strategic vision for 2020–2025, a period dedicated to enriching the AUS experience, enhancing our teaching and learning frameworks, improving research and creative endeavors, promoting stewardship, and expanding our engagement and impact. Our progress in these areas has created a solid foundation for our upcoming initiatives.

We pride ourselves on providing a transformative educational experience highlighted by a dynamic campus atmosphere, innovative academic programs and an unwavering commitment to sustainability. This year, we introduced several new degree programs designed to meet the current demands of industry and the changing needs of our student body. Our faculty's commitment to excellence in research continues to be recognized internationally, with many members ranked in the top two percent of researchers worldwide. Additionally, we are delighted to note a significant improvement in AUS' global and regional rankings this year. We remain dedicated to advancing further up these rankings to align with the ambitions of the Sharjah Government and the expectations of AUS stakeholders.

Our community engagement and sustainability efforts have been strengthened and reflect our deep commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility. Our active role in COP28 and various strategic partnerships, both locally and globally, underscore our commitment to tackling pressing global challenges.

Strategic leadership appointments have been instrumental in further developing our offering and increasing our institutional strength. The new AUS Board of Trustees brings fresh strategic direction and oversight. We also welcomed a new chancellor, who brings three decades of experience to enrich our research and academic programs.

As we look to the future, we are committed to continuing our mission of providing exceptional education and cultivating an inclusive, vibrant community that prepares students to be proactive, engaged global citizens. With the unwavering support of our founder, the AUS Board of Trustees, our faculty, staff and the broader community, we are poised to build on our successes and propel our strategic goals to new heights.

The future is incredibly bright, and AUS is uniquely positioned to shape and lead the next wave of academic excellence and innovation.

Her Excellency Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi

President and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of American University of Sharjah

INTRODUCTION

The American University of Sharjah (AUS) annual report provides a comprehensive performance overview of the university's operational activities, achievements and financial performance for the period spanning June 1, 2023 to May 30, 2024. This report comes at the conclusion of the university's Strategic Plan 2020–2025 and amid the university's preparations to define the scope, objectives and timelines for the next strategic plan. The data, metrics and insights found in this report will inform this next stage of planning.

Embracing a holistic approach, this report provides an overview of the university's collective work. Guided by the five strategic themes of the university's plan—enhancing the AUS experience, advancing teaching and learning, fostering research and creative work, promoting stewardship, and amplifying engagement and impact—the report delves into key areas of focus. It features student and alumni achievements, faculty research endeavors, case studies, innovative teaching methodologies, and impactful community engagement initiatives, both locally and globally, reflecting the attributes that distinguish AUS within the region.

EXCELLENCE is our mission



VISION

American University of Sharjah (AUS) aspires to be globally recognized for outstanding and innovative teaching, learning, research and creative work that have a positive and distinctive impact on the region and beyond.



MISSION

American University of Sharjah (AUS) is a comprehensive, independent, non-profit, coeducational institution of higher education that promotes excellence in teaching, learning, research and creative work.

Based on an American model of higher education, integrating liberal arts and professional programs, and grounded in the context of UAE culture, AUS prepares engaged and effective members of society who display mastery in their areas of specialization, communicate clearly, think critically and solve problems creatively.

AUS fosters a community that celebrates diversity, and whose members are committed to the ideals of open intellectual inquiry, ethical behavior and civic responsibility.



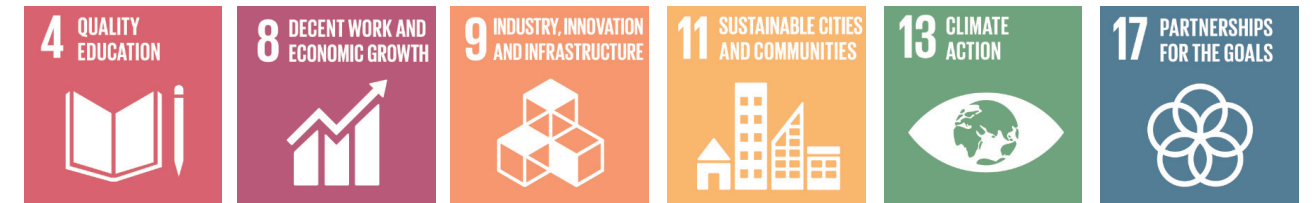
UAE

Strategic Initiatives

AUS is committed to regional excellence as well as global impact. Rooted in its vision and mission to be a leading force in higher education, AUS actively contributes to both local and global strategic initiatives. Locally, AUS plays a vital role in advancing the educational landscape of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), aligning with national objectives to foster innovation, knowledge exchange and workforce development. This includes **Vision 2021**, which outlines the country's long-term goals across education, economy, healthcare, infrastructure and social development; **UAE Centennial 2071**, a long-term development plan that outlines the country's aspirations for the next 50 years; the **UAE National Innovation Strategy** aiming to position the UAE as one of the most innovative countries in the world; the **UAE Energy Strategy 2050** targeting a sustainable and diversified energy mix for the UAE, with a focus on increasing the share of clean energy sources and improving energy efficiency; and the **UAE Artificial Intelligence Strategy**, among many others. Through partnerships with local industries, government agencies and community organizations, AUS actively addresses societal challenges and fosters economic growth, as illustrated throughout the report.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



At the global level, AUS is dedicated to extending its reach and influence, leveraging partnerships with international universities, research institutions and organizations to tackle pressing global issues and promote cross-cultural collaboration. As an institution that makes sustainability a priority, AUS is mindful of its role in helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

AUS faculty and students engage in joint research projects, exchange programs and academic conferences, fostering a vibrant intellectual exchange that transcends geographical boundaries. Further, AUS actively participates in global sustainability initiatives, promoting environmental stewardship and social responsibility on a global scale.

AUS' commitment to providing quality education (SDG 4) is evident in its accessible and inclusive programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels, which aim to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values needed to contribute to society and achieve their full potential. Approximately 72 percent of all undergraduate and graduate course offerings at AUS include sustainability as a component of the course. The university also promotes lifelong learning and professional development opportunities for students, faculty and staff.

AUS also plays a crucial role in contributing to economic growth by preparing a skilled workforce equipped to meet the needs of the labor market (SDG 8). Through its emphasis on interdisciplinary education, entrepreneurship programs and industry partnerships, AUS contributes to creating employment opportunities and promoting sustainable economic development in the region.

By prioritizing innovation and research across various disciplines, contributing to advancements in science, technology and engineering (SDG 9), the university's research centers and laboratories undertake research projects that aim to address societal challenges. Students at both the undergraduate and graduate level have opportunities to participate in important research, helping to develop the researchers and innovators essential for meeting future challenges. AUS also collaborates with industry partners to promote technology transfer and commercialization of research outcomes.

Through the university's community outreach programs, volunteer projects and sustainability initiatives, AUS has been contributing to building resilient, inclusive and sustainable communities in Sharjah and beyond (SDG 11). It has also been dedicated to mitigating climate change and promoting environmental sustainability (SDG 13) by implementing initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint, enhance energy efficiency and promote environmental conservation. It also conducts research on climate change adaptation and resilience, contributing to efforts to address this significant global challenge.

AUS recognizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration in addressing world challenges. To that endeavor, it collaborates with government agencies, non-profit organizations, industry partners and international institutions to advance sustainable development goals through joint projects, research initiatives and knowledge exchange programs (SDG 17).

By aligning our strategic priorities with both local and global agendas, we reaffirm our commitment to excellence, innovation and societal impact.



*By offering a vibrant and inclusive campus environment, as well as innovative educational programs and initiatives, we aim to prepare our students for **leadership and innovation on the world stage.***

”

Dr. Tod A. Laursen

Chancellor of AUS

INTERVIEW

with the Chancellor

Dr. Tod A. Laursen



Reflecting on the past academic year, what do you consider to be the university's most significant achievements?

I am proud of the significant strides American University of Sharjah (AUS) has taken in advancing its mission and vision during this academic year. In this time of transformative experiences, AUS has demonstrated exceptional growth and achievement across various areas of its operations.

With our leadership and academic appointments setting a strong foundation for the future, we have ushered in a new era of visionary leadership aimed at propelling the institution toward continued growth and excellence.

In terms of academic excellence, AUS has once again solidified its position as a leading institution regionally and globally. Our top regional and national academic rankings, including our ranking among the top 25 percent of universities worldwide according to QS World University Rankings 2024, underscore our commitment to academic excellence and innovation. We have also been ranked first in employer reputation, second in academic reputation and third in employment outcomes in the UAE, and among the top 10 Arab universities for the ninth consecutive year.

Our faculty members have made significant contributions to research, garnering global acclaim for their impactful endeavors. This has led to the recognition of 24 faculty members among the world's top two percent of researchers in a study led by Professor John Ioannidis from Stanford University and published by Elsevier BV. The QS World University Rankings 2024 further positioned AUS as second in the UAE for citations per faculty, highlighting the broad and influential scope of our faculty members' active engagement in research referenced by scholars worldwide.

The establishment of research centers such as the Energy, Water and Sustainable Environment Research Center in the College of Engineering (CEN); the Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainable Development in the School of Business Administration (SBA); and the Materials Research Center in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) further reinforced our dedication to advancing knowledge and addressing pressing global challenges.

The introduction of seven new degree programs starting Fall 2024 reflect our proactive approach to aligning with dynamic industry trends and offering cutting-edge learning opportunities to our students. AUS has introduced a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Supply Chain Management, Bachelor of Science in Chemical and Biological Engineering, Bachelor of Science in Digital Construction Engineering and Management, Bachelor of Science in Intelligent Systems and Mechatronics Engineering, Master of Science in Machine Learning, Master of Science in Economics and Policy, and PhD in Mathematics. With these new programs, AUS now offers 32 bachelor's degrees, 18 master's degrees and five PhD programs.

AUS also welcomed the highest number of new undergraduate students in 10 years and the highest enrollment record in seven years in Fall 2023, with more than 5,800 undergraduate and graduate students choosing to pursue their academic journeys at AUS.

Through various initiatives and partnerships, we have made significant strides in promoting sustainability, fostering community engagement and enriching the student experience both inside and outside the classroom. AUS marked the UAE Year of Sustainability with a series of events and activities culminating with co-hosting the largest youth conference focusing on UN climate processes, the Conference of Youth (COY18), and its active participation in COP28. AUS ranked third in the UAE and among

the world's top 600 universities in sustainability, according to QS World University Rankings: Sustainability (2024). The university has also raised more than AED 500,000 for Gaza as part of two donation drives organized by the Palestinian Cultural Club, Office of Student Affairs (OSA) and Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OAAA), in collaboration with the UAE Red Crescent and the Big Heart Foundation.

AUS has also opened a newly renovated Student Center that aligns with the community's needs and the university's sustainability goals. As part of its commitment to comprehensive support for students with disabilities, the university has implemented initiatives and established future plans to enhance accessibility for all students, ensuring they have the necessary accommodations to thrive academically.

In summary, the past year has been marked by significant achievements and milestones for AUS. As we look ahead, we remain steadfast in our commitment to excellence, innovation and service to society, striving to create a brighter future for our students, our community and the world at large.

Can you tell us about successful collaborations or partnerships the university has established to advance its strategic goals, both within the academic community and with external stakeholders?

We have forged partnerships with industry leaders, government agencies and international institutions to enrich our academic programs, provide experiential learning opportunities for students and address societal challenges through research and innovation.

As part of AUS' efforts to foster synergies with industry partners, the university's colleges/school have signed various memoranda of understanding encompassing a spectrum of endeavors, ranging from joint research projects to mutually beneficial exchange programs. These range from Sharakah Program agreements and the AUS Engineering Al Nukhba Program to SBA's agreement with Monitor Deloitte to equip students with in-demand consulting skills and CAS partnering with St. George's University (SGU) to offer AUS graduates in biology, chemistry and environmental sciences an automatic scholarship to SGU's Doctor of Medicine program.

As part of its strategic plans to bolster its international research collaboration, AUS has also signed strategic memoranda of understanding with the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology (SIAT), Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST), Seoul National University (SNU), AGH University of Krakow, Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA) and others.

Considering the global trends and developments in higher education, what opportunities does the university foresee in further advancing its strategic priorities and maintaining its position as a leader in academic excellence and innovation?

We recognize the increasing importance of digitalization and technology in education and we are investing in infrastructure and

resources to enhance online learning and virtual collaboration. AUS recently partnered with the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation (AGF) to expand access to its renowned MBA program, which is now available through a blended learning format, combining face-to-face and online components, reflecting AUS' commitment to innovative and accessible education.

Furthermore, we are strategically positioning ourselves to capitalize on emerging fields such as sustainability, artificial intelligence, and entrepreneurship, aligning our academic offerings and research initiatives with future workforce demands and societal needs.

Looking ahead, what are the key priorities and initiatives the university aims to focus on to further advance its mission and strategic objectives in the coming year?

As we look ahead to the coming year, AUS remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing its mission and strategic objectives while embracing the evolving landscape of higher education.

We are dedicated to expanding our academic portfolio to meet the demands of modern technological advancements and market needs. This includes the continued expansion of graduate offerings and the introduction of new programs that equip our students with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their respective fields.

Additionally, we are committed to enhancing the level of research intensity on our campus. This involves cultivating our research centers and fostering active partnerships with distinguished international partners to address society's most pressing challenges. Through collaborative research endeavors, we aim to contribute to the global body of knowledge while providing valuable opportunities for our students to engage in cutting-edge research initiatives.

Furthermore, we recognize the importance of enriching the student experience at AUS. Our goal is to not only benefit our current students but also to attract future learners who seek a transformative educational experience. By offering a vibrant and inclusive campus environment, as well as innovative educational programs and initiatives, we aim to prepare our students for leadership and innovation on the world stage.

We also recognize the critical role that higher education institutions play in shaping strategies and solutions to address global challenges. AUS remains deeply committed to addressing the most important societal issues of our time through our educational programs, campus activities and university initiatives.

Our focus in the coming year will be on advancing academic excellence, fostering research innovation and enriching the student experience. Through these efforts, we remain dedicated to fulfilling our mission of preparing future leaders who will contribute positively to society and make a meaningful impact on the world.

A YEAR at a glance

Leadership Appointments

- Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, President of AUS, appointed a new AUS Board of Trustees to provide strategic leadership, guidance and oversight to ensure that AUS' mission and goals are effectively fulfilled.
- The university also saw the appointment of Dr. Tod A. Laursen as its seventh Chancellor, leveraging his 30 years of experience to spearhead progress and growth in the university, focusing on the enhancement of research, degree programs and graduate preparation.
- AUS also named His Excellency Dr. Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Former Minister of Climate Change and Environment and Former Minister of Infrastructure Development in the UAE, its inaugural Senior Fellow in the College of Engineering (CEN).

Faculty Endeavors

- AUS faculty garnered global acclaim leading to the recognition of 24 faculty members among the world's top 2 percent of researchers in a study led by Professor John Ioannidis from Stanford University and published by Elsevier BV. The QS World University Rankings 2024 further positioned AUS as second in the UAE for citations per faculty, highlighting the broad and influential scope of its faculty's active engagement in research referenced by scholars worldwide.
- In support of AUS research endeavors, the AUS Board of Trustees in Fall 2023 approved the establishment of the Energy, Water and Sustainable Environment Research Center in the College of Engineering (CEN); the Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainable Development in the School of Business Administration (SBA); and the Materials Research Center in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

New Programs

- AUS strategically introduced new programs in 2023 to proactively align with dynamic industry trends, offering cutting-edge learning opportunities that incorporate contemporary innovations.

AUS introduced a blended learning format for its MBA program in partnership with the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation, and a Minor in Safety and Fire Protection Engineering in collaboration with Sharjah Civil Defence Authority.

Decade-High Student Enrollment

- AUS welcomed in Fall 2023 the highest number of new undergraduate students in 10 years and the highest enrollment record in seven years, with more than 5,700 undergraduate and graduate students choosing to pursue their academic journeys at AUS in Fall 2023.

Community Service

- AUS raised more than AED 500,000 for Gaza as part of two donation drives organized by student clubs, the Office of Student Affairs and Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs, in collaboration with the UAE Red Crescent and the Big Heart Foundation.
- The AUS Community Service and Outreach Office also implemented several initiatives including the Hand in Hand Initiative, used books sale, Al-Thiqa Sports Day, Toy Story Campaign, the Ramadan Care Package and many more. It also joined the Donate Your Own Device (DYOD) campaign by The Digital School, one of the Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, and signed an MoU with the Sharjah Social Services Department to foster a culture of volunteerism among students.

Select student and alumni achievements

- AUS students and alumni have been garnering global recognition. A team of seven students in the AUS Leadership Program secured the Distinguished Delegation Award at the National Model United Nations (NMUN) Conference in New York in April 2023. CAAD alumnus Arian Saghfafifar also earned the title of global winner in the visual arts category at the Global Undergraduate Awards 2023, while engineering alumnus Amjad Azmeer received the esteemed GreenBiz 30 Under 30 accolade for driving change in corporate sustainability roles.

External Collaboration and Outreach

- As part of AUS' efforts to foster synergies with industry partners, the university's colleges/school signed several memoranda of understanding encompassing a spectrum of endeavors, ranging from joint research projects to mutually beneficial exchange programs. These range from Sharakah Program agreements to SBA's agreement with Monitor Deloitte and CAS partnering with St. George's University (SGU) to offer AUS graduates in biology, chemistry and environmental sciences an automatic scholarship to SGU's Doctor of Medicine program. AUS also signed a strategic memorandum of understanding with the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology (SIAT) to foster exchange in research, academia, technology and innovation.
- AUS held its inaugural Advisory Council of Development and Outreach (ACDO) meeting chaired by Her Excellency Sheikha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, President of AUS, and celebrated the significant contributions of its corporate supporters at the AUS annual Corporate Appreciation Event.

Student Life

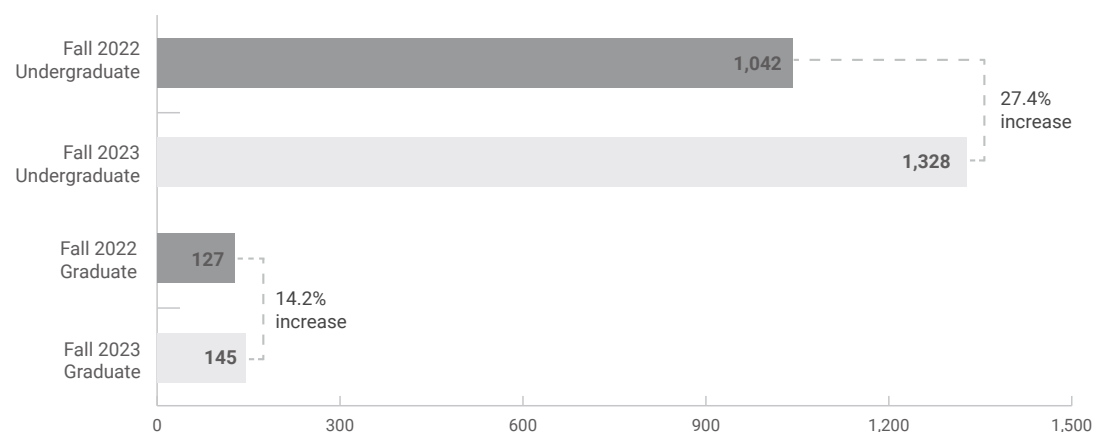
- AUS commemorated various international days by organizing a diverse array of activities, highlighting its commitment to global awareness and inclusivity. Among these initiatives were events dedicated to International Women's Day, breast cancer awareness and mental health advocacy. The university also held its most celebrated cultural event of the year, the AUS Global Day, as well as several cultural and student-focused events including its semi-annual Club Fair and eagerly anticipated Career Fair.
- With a focus on extracurricular activities, AUS awarded 32 students with scholarships for their outstanding contributions to co-curricular engagements and athletics.



FACTS and Figures

STUDENTS AT AUS

New First-Time and Matriculated Students

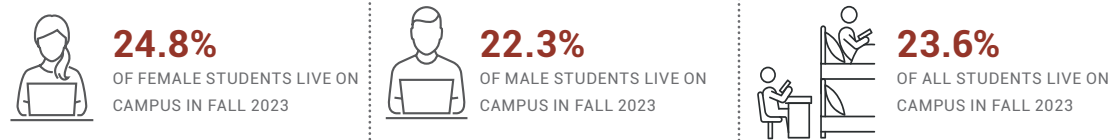


Gender of all Students



ON CAMPUS

Students Living on Campus



FACULTY

SEMESTER	FALL 2023	FALL 2022	FALL 2021	FALL 2020	FALL 2019
FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE/GRADUATE FACULTY	337	321	322	327	358
AABP TEACHING STAFF	9	10	11	11	10
PERCENTAGE OF FULL-TIME FACULTY WITH TERMINAL DEGREE	92.3%	92.1%	91.6%	91.4%	92%
PERCENTAGE OF FULL-TIME FACULTY WITH DOCTORAL DEGREE	83.1%	82.8%	82.6%	82.3%	82.4%
PERCENTAGE OF FULL-TIME FACULTY WHO ARE US OR CANADIAN CITIZENS	43.5%	45.3%	46%	45.9%	46.1%
PERCENTAGE OF FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE/GRADUATE TEACHING FACULTY	92.1%	93%	94.7%	94.5%	93.7%
TOTAL NUMBER OF FACULTY NATIONALITIES	49	46	46	47	49



ALUMNI

DEGREES AWARDED

AS OF FALL 2023,

AUS HAS AWARDED



AS OF FALL 2023,

AUS ALUMNI
COME FROM



118
NATIONALITIES

DISTRIBUTION OF ALUMNI RESIDENT IN THE UAE



73%
OF ALUMNI
LIVE IN THE UAE



RANKINGS

UAE Rankings

QS University World Rankings (2024)

FROM 2022-2023 TO 2023-2024, AUS REMAINS



#1
IN EMPLOYER
REPUTATION



#2
IN ACADEMIC
REPUTATION



#2
IN CITATIONS
PER FACULTY



#3
IN EMPLOYMENT
OUTCOMES



#3
IN NUMBER OF
INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

Regional Rankings

QS Arab Region University Rankings (2024)

AS OF FALL 2023, AUS IS



AMONG THE TOP 10
ARAB UNIVERSITIES EVERY
YEAR FOR THE PAST NINE
CONSECUTIVE YEARS



#2
IN THE RATIO FOR
INTERNATIONAL FACULTY IN
THE ARAB REGION

Maintained position from 2023



#3
IN THE RATIO FOR
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
IN THE ARAB REGION

Maintained position from 2023

Global Rankings

QS University World Rankings (2024)

FROM 2022-2023 TO 2023-2024, AUS REMAINS



#2
IN NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL
FACULTY MEMBERS

TOP 400
WORLD UNIVERSITIES



QS World University Rankings by Broad Subjects (2024)

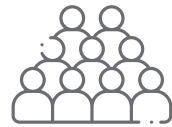
AUS IS



#1

IN THE UAE IN THE CATEGORY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Maintained position from 2023



TOP 5

IN THE UAE IN THE CATEGORY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND MANAGEMENT

Down from #2 in 2023



TOP 5

IN THE UAE IN THE CATEGORY OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

Down from #3 in 2023



TOP 5

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 450 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

Down from #3 and top 400 in 2023



TOP 5

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 300 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING

Down from #3 in 2023



TOP 10

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 450 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Down from #4 and top 200 in 2023



#1

IN THE UAE AND TOP 350 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY IN THE CATEGORY OF ECONOMICS AND ECONOMETRICS (NEW ENTRY)



AMONG THE TOP 550

UNIVERSITIES WORLDWIDE IN MATHEMATICS (NEW ENTRY)

QS World University Rankings by Narrow Subjects (2024)

AUS IS



#1

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE

Maintained position from 2023



#1

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR ARCHITECTURE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Maintained position from 2023



#1

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR CIVIL AND STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

Maintained position from 2023



#2

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 200 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR ART AND DESIGN

Down from #1 in 2023



#2

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 250 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Down from #1 in top 200 in 2023



TOP 3

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE TOP 300 UNIVERSITIES GLOBALLY FOR MECHANICAL, AERONAUTICAL AND MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING

Down from #2 in 2023

Top Choice for UAE Employers

*QS World University Rankings by Narrow Subjects (2024)



Accounting and Finance



Architecture and the Built Environment



Business and Management



Chemical Engineering



Civil and Structural Engineering



Economics and Econometrics



Electrical and Electronic Engineering



Mechanical Engineering

Sustainability

*QS World University Rankings (2024)



#3

IN THE UAE AND AMONG THE WORLD'S TOP 600 UNIVERSITIES IN SUSTAINABILITY

Up from Top 5 in 2023

The Times Higher Education Asia University Rankings 2024



TOP 150

UNIVERSITIES IN ASIA

Up from Top 250 in 2023

The Times Higher Education Young University Rankings 2024



TOP 125

UNIVERSITIES UNDER 50

Up from Top 250 in 2023



PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Themes of the AUS Strategic Plan

The report addresses the five themes outlined in the AUS Strategic Report 2020-2025:

Theme I: The AUS Experience

Theme II: Teaching and Learning

Theme III: Research and Creative Work

Theme IV: Stewardship

Theme V: Engagement and Impact

STRATEGIC THEME I

The AUS Experience

The AUS experience has focused on creating a versatile landscape that caters to the diverse needs of the university's students, faculty and staff. A transformative journey for students cannot be achieved without academic exploration, personal growth and a vibrant campus life. This holistic approach cultivates globally aware, socially responsible leaders equipped to tackle today's complex challenges, as well as those of the future. In support of its faculty, AUS believes in building a stimulating environment with access to cutting-edge resources and robust research facilities, offering a supportive academic community, where faculty members engage in interdisciplinary collaboration and pursue their research interests with freedom. For its staff members, access to comprehensive benefits packages and opportunities for career advancement and professional development within a culture of inclusivity and collaboration ensures high job satisfaction and a positive working environment.

To this endeavor, AUS aimed to achieve three main strategic goals: (i) offering a transformative student experience from their first interaction with university to life as alumni; (ii) delivery of the highest level of service to all stakeholders and align AUS with international best practice; and (iii) maintaining a healthy working and living environment to continue to attract and retain high-quality students, faculty and staff.

I.1 Transformative Student Experience

AUS has pursued three core strategies to enhance its student experience: (i) providing developmental opportunities; (ii) establishing robust advising and mentoring initiatives; and (iii) fostering active engagement of alumni within the university community.



CHECK OUT
AUS HIGHLIGHTS

- STUDENT EXPERIENCE
- ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY
- CASE STUDY
- STUDENT / ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT
- ACADEMIC PROGRAM
- SERVICE
- RESEARCH

1.1.1 Student Development

During the reporting period, AUS demonstrated its dedication to student development on local and global scales. This commitment was evident through the university's active involvement in significant events, particularly COP28, where it showcased its engagement in global affairs and sustainability initiatives. Every year, AUS Suitability appoints four students as EcoReps, whose mission is to educate their peers on sustainability issues and spearhead sustainability initiatives on campus to deepen students' understanding of sustainable living and empower them to advocate for environmental action. Notably this year, with COP28, EcoReps led numerous climate education initiatives on campus, represented the university on various panel discussions within COP28's Green Zone and gained firsthand experience in the official climate negotiations held in the COP28 Blue Zone, the formal conference and negotiation space managed by UN Climate Change.

AUS' global engagement for student development was also noted with the recognition of its Alpha Lambda Delta (ALD) chapter at the ALD Leadership Conference held in Colorado, USA, in October 2023. As part of the globally renowned national honor society, the AUS chapter distinguished itself by being the first in the MENA region to participate in the prestigious leadership conference, emphasizing AUS' commitment to fostering academic excellence among its first-year students and facilitating their holistic development. The chapter's exemplary performance and dedication of its more than 300 student members culminated in it winning the Alpha Bronze Award for Outstanding Activities during the 2022-2023 Academic Year at the ALD Leadership Conference. The AUS ALD Chapter is embedded in the university's First Year Experience (FYE) program, which is central to supporting first-year students and achieving student development.

The university's global student involvement extended further through initiatives by the International Exchange Office (IXO), which facilitated opportunities for 20 undergraduate students to study abroad and immerse themselves in diverse cultural experiences. Further, three

undergraduate students participated in the Stanford Summer Session, a collaborative endeavor between Stanford University and several international academic institutions, where they attended a range of courses and programs. During the reporting period, 10 faculty-led study tours were also attended by 253 AUS students. These tours provided invaluable experiential learning opportunities and enhanced students' understanding of various subjects and cultures.



"This is a momentous occasion for our institution as it signifies AUS' inaugural participation in this distinguished event. It's not just an opportunity for personal growth, but a chance to highlight the excellence that AUS stands for on an international scale. My primary focus in the conference was to strengthen our chapter's growth and impact. I also enjoyed attending the conference sessions and building meaningful connections with fellow attendees who share a deep commitment to academic excellence."

Siva Durga Adduri,

Computer engineering major and Secretary of the AUS ALD Chapter



At the university level, AUS focused on cultural literacy, student engagement and inclusivity through an array of academic and student life activities. Through the Performing Arts Program in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), students produced and participated in six major music and theatrical performances, including Arabic Music Ensemble concerts, two major theatre productions and Soiree Musicale Western concerts, allowing them to showcase their talents and refine their skills in public engagement, performance under pressure and artistic expression. Further, CAS launched a Korean Language Program in collaboration with the Korean Embassy and the Korean Foundation, providing students with valuable opportunities for cross-cultural learning. This new program was a direct response to the interest voiced by AUS students, pinpointed through an in-depth survey conducted by CAS, underscoring the university's dedication to actively engage with students.

With great emphasis also given to residential life and student well-being and development, the Student Residential Life Department under the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) launched the International Buddy Program (IBP) to foster a sense of community and promote inclusivity and mentorship, ensuring that all students feel supported in their academic journey. The IBP actively fosters connections between incoming international students and their peers, serving as a platform for meaningful cultural exchange and facilitating the transition to university life. The overwhelmingly positive feedback received from students illustrated the program's success in nurturing mentorship relationships, enriching the student experience and cultivating a welcoming environment at AUS.

OSA's Student Athletics and Recreation Department promoted holistic student development through physical health initiatives and sports events. By participating in tournaments and international competitions such as the AUS Battle of the Colleges Tournament, AUS Olympics and international major team and individual sports competitions in Athens, competing with other universities from the EU and the MENA provided students with invaluable opportunities for personal growth and skill development.



IXO facilitated the recruitment and processing of 45 undergraduate and graduate students for **Future17**, a multi-institutional experiential learning program. This initiative integrates career-focused skill development, SDG literacy and practical work experience through real-world projects for global companies, start-ups and charities. AUS students collaborated with students from partner universities worldwide, each guided by a mentor, on assigned projects such as combating climate change, deforestation, declining biodiversity and more.



The Department of Architecture ran **transformative semester abroad programs**. In Summer 2023, 16 students, taught by Dr. Igor Peraza Curiel, Professor of Practice, spent time in Milan, Verona, Vicenza, Venice, Bologna and Florence investigating the local cultural, historical and material impacts on contemporary design as part of a three-credit course. In Fall 2023, 16 students accompanied by Greg Spaw, Associate Professor, spent the semester in Barcelona in association with the world-renowned architecture practice EMBT. They completed 15 credit hours of coursework and visited important historic and contemporary architecture sites across Spain.

FALL 2023



33
SPORTS TEAMS

18 FOR MEN | 15 FOR WOMEN



385
STUDENTS WORKING
ON CAMPUS



109
ACTIVE STUDENT
CLUBS



33
CULTURAL
CLUBS



40
ACADEMIC
ASSOCIATIONS



36
INTEREST-
ORIENTED CLUBS



372
COMMUNITY SERVICE
& OUTREACH STUDENT
VOLUNTEERS



During the reporting period, AUS held its most eagerly anticipated event of the year, AUS **Global Day**, turning the campus into a vibrant tapestry of cultures, music, cuisine and dance.

The AUS Main Plaza buzzed with visitors who wandered among more than 29 cultural and student-interest club pavilions. They immersed themselves in the rhythmic melodies of folkloric music and dance, savored the enticing aromas and flavors of delicious traditional cuisine, and admired elaborate traditional fashion from various countries worldwide. This extracurricular event serves as an invaluable extension of education outside the classroom, offering students the opportunity to broaden their perspectives, embrace diversity and cultivate lifelong skills in communication, collaboration and cultural competence.



An AUS Exit Survey conducted in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 by the Office of Institutional Research and Analytics (OIRA) indicated a high level of satisfaction among graduates, with 93.3 percent reporting being satisfied or very satisfied with their overall AUS experience. This sentiment was reinforced by the graduates' positive assessment of the development of intellectual, personal and social skills, particularly in critical and analytical competencies, where graduates felt they had made good or very good progress. The survey was administered to 1,266 potential graduates yielding a 77.7 percent response rate.

Satisfaction with academic aspects was especially high, according to the survey, with the availability of faculty for office appointments and quality of instruction receiving the most commendation. However, the variety of courses offered, while still rated positively, was identified as a potential area for further improvement.

Graduates also expressed a high degree of satisfaction with administrative services, with library and IT resources/services being standout features. The course registration process was highlighted as an area needing attention due to its lower satisfaction rating.

Regarding campus life, graduates viewed the environment as safe, inclusive and conducive to engagement, reflecting a well-rounded campus experience.

In terms of future plans, most graduates aimed to enter the workforce, with a significant number actively seeking employment and a third of job seekers holding job offers at the time of survey completion. Additionally, over two-thirds of the graduates planned to pursue further education, either full-time or part-time.

CASE STUDY

INCLUSIVE ACCESS

AUS' support framework for disabilities



AUS is dedicated to fostering an inclusive learning environment where students with long-term disabilities can thrive academically.

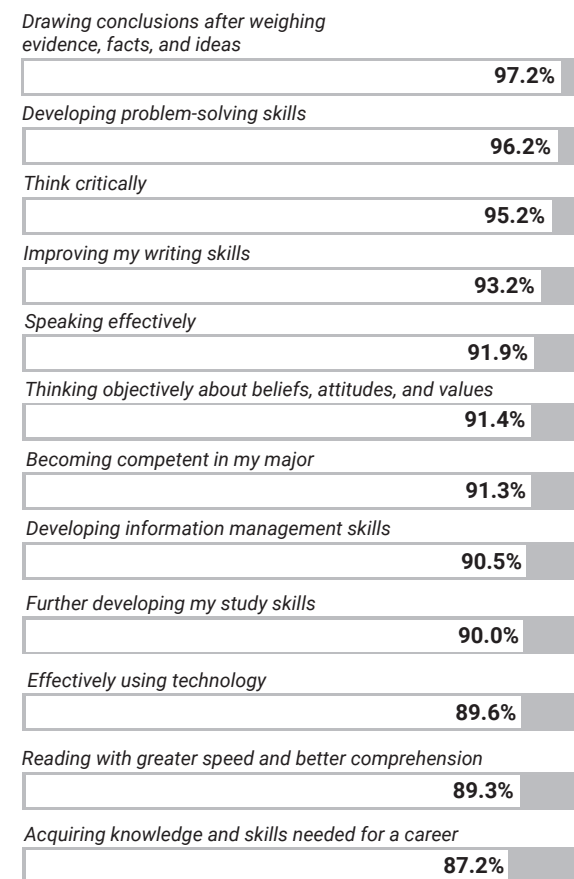
To help support students with long-term disabilities, AUS has developed a comprehensive framework that includes 25 approved accommodations, along with clear policies and guidelines to ensure equitable access to education. As part of this protocol, the university offers essential documents such as Academic Accommodations Contracts and Faculty Letters, providing clarity and transparency in the accommodation process. Additionally, AUS provides referral lists for various resources in the UAE that can also address the diverse needs of students with disabilities.

Through collaboration between the Academic Support Center, Student Affairs and Health Services, the university has also implemented a policy to address emergency short-term disabilities arising from sudden illnesses or injuries. Furthermore, AUS is enhancing its online platforms for accessibility, with plans to transform its website and integrate plug-ins into academic platforms like iLearn/Blackboard.

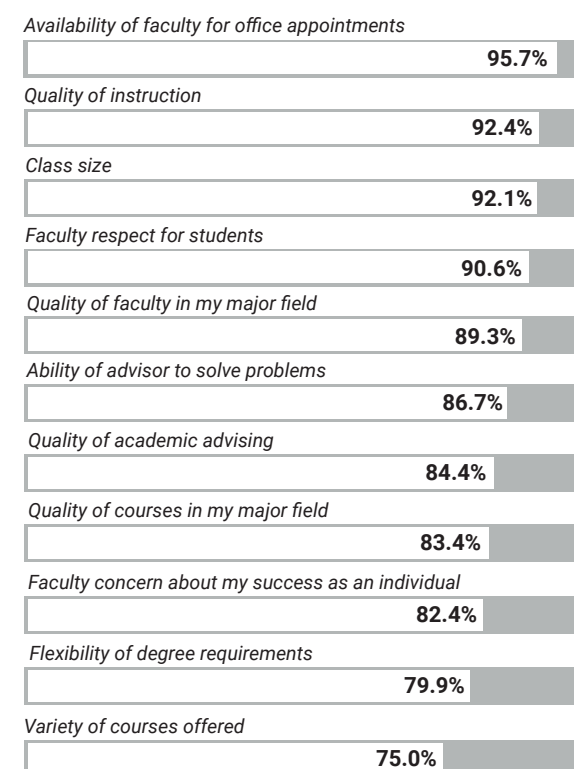
In addition to academic support, AUS has prioritized the safety and security of students with disabilities through various measures. The university is finalizing the acquisition of evacuation chairs and visual alerts to be strategically placed across campus, ensuring swift and effective evacuation during emergencies. AUS also recognizes the importance of accessible campus infrastructure in promoting inclusivity. Following a campus accessibility audit and adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the university has ensured that new and renovated buildings meet ADA requirements. While short-term improvements are underway based on feedback from stakeholders, AUS remains committed to long-term planning to address accessibility challenges comprehensively.

Furthermore, the AUS Library is actively working to enhance support for students with disabilities by establishing a task group to identify opportunities for improvement. By collaborating with the Academic Support Center and other campus stakeholders, the Library aims to implement innovative resources and facilities that cater to diverse learning requirements, fostering a more inclusive learning environment for all students.

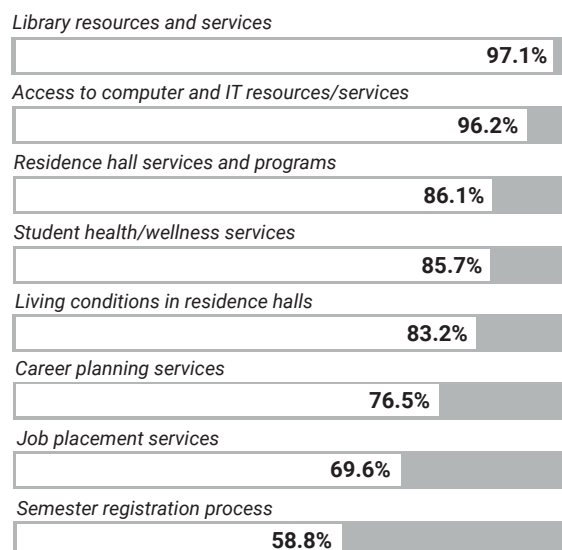
PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATING STUDENTS WHO RATED THEIR PROGRESS IN DEVELOPING SKILLS AS "GOOD" OR "VERY GOOD"



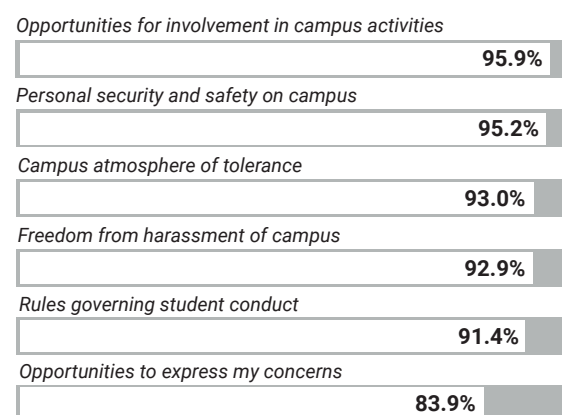
PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH ACADEMIC ASPECTS



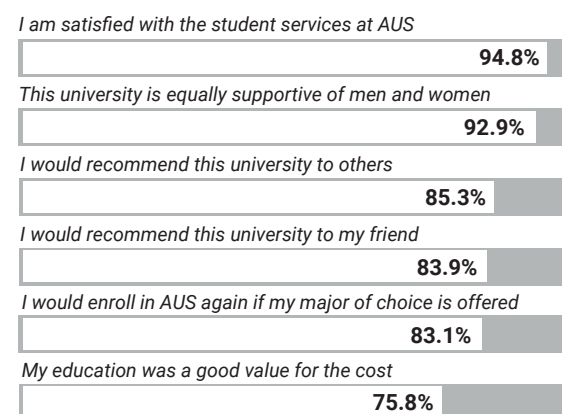
PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH ADMINISTRATION SERVICES



PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THE CAMPUS ATMOSPHERE



PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES WHO AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED TO HAVE HAD A POSITIVE AUS EXPERIENCE



I.1.2 Mentorship Initiatives


During the reporting period, mentorship initiatives across the university provided personalized guidance and support to students, enriching their academic journey and fostering their personal growth. Examples include mediation training offered by OSA's Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Department to empower students with conflict resolution skills, communication techniques and career-enhancing abilities such as problem-solving and life skills development. OSA's Student Athletics and Recreation Department went beyond traditional mentorship, providing students with transformative experiences through interactions with global sports and industry figures. From meetings with world-renowned athletes such as Andreas Iniesta at the Sharjah Entrepreneurship Center Summit to insights from industry experts like Murad Ghairi, President of Dubai FIFA Center, and Jaafar Ibrahim, General Secretary of the Asian Badminton Association, students gained invaluable lessons in leadership, teamwork and cultural inclusivity, preparing them for success both on and off the field.

Valuable mentorship opportunities were also offered at the college/school level. In the College of Architecture, Art and Design (CAAD) were initiatives such as CAAD Pals and Coffee with the Professor. CAAD Pals paired senior Art and Design students with incoming first-year students or those transitioning into new majors, offering personalized guidance to facilitate social integration and academic success. Similarly, Coffee with the Professor offered students personalized guidance and support, fostering their academic and social integration within the vibrant college community. The School of Business Administration (SBA) signed a three-year partnership with Monitor Deloitte, the strategy consulting arm of Deloitte Middle East, to provide students with exclusive access to the newly launched AUS SBA Consulting Skills Program. Students will benefit from specialized training sessions, industry expert talks, competitions, internships and opportunities for fresh graduates. CAS' Department of English Fellows program, advised by a faculty member, saw a group of six junior and senior students serving as mentors to younger students and helping develop programming in the department. Fellows were introduced to the processes of peer-review and web design, served as liaison between students and faculty, and organized department events such as the annual Open Mic Night and produced the online journal Asrar: Dialogues from the Diaspora.


The Engineering Learning Center (ELC) within the College of Engineering (CEN) serves as a central hub for fostering academic and professional support within the CEN community. Offering assistance across various engineering courses, the ELC is supported by student tutors who demonstrate proficiency in their respective subject areas, ensuring high-quality academic guidance for engineering students.

THE PEER LEADERS PROGRAM

THE PEER LEADERS PROGRAM
CONNECTED WITH

 **1,381**
NEW STUDENTS

DURING SPRING 2023 AND FALL 2024
ORIENTATION

REPRESENTING A
 **27.52%**
INCREASE
COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS
REPORTING PERIOD.

The Peer Leader Program trains students to serve as mentors for incoming first-year students, easing their transition into university life.



Architecture alumnus Arian Saghfafifar was named the global winner in the visual arts category of the **Global Undergraduate Awards** in Fall 2023. Influenced by his personal experience and the collective anguish of the world during the COVID-19 pandemic, Arian produced a graphic novel under the mentorship of Michael Hughes, Professor of Architecture, demonstrating the significant impact of mentorship on students' creative endeavors and global recognition.



Held under the theme Together in Advancement, Stronger in Solidarity, the highly anticipated annual **Alumni Reunion Dinner** saw the launch of the AUS Alumni Solidarity Fund—part of the newly established AUS Alumni Annual Fund—to support and empower bright students facing social changes or emergencies within their communities, helping them receive quality education at AUS. This year's proceeds will go towards supporting outstanding students from Palestine with a special focus on those facing financial difficulties in Gaza.

The event featured a light show; an opening performance by CEN alumnus and artist Fadi Rifaai; an inspirational speech by SBA alumnus and motivational speaker and entrepreneur Moataz Mashal; and a captivating performance by CAAD alumna and Grand Prix Award-winning opera soprano vocalist Zeina Barhoum. The highlight of the event was two panel discussions featuring distinguished AUS alumni who reflected on their career trajectories and emphasized the power of the AUS alumni community.

The President of AUS also recognized Alumni Wall of Fame inductees who exemplified commitment and dedicated service to their community and alma mater.



I.1.3 Alumni Engagement

Engaging with alumni is a collaborative effort between the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OAAA) and the colleges/school. With several mentorship programs and networking events planned for the upcoming reporting period, OAAA has been highly active in identifying alumni to serve in advisory councils and participate in speaker series. It worked closely with SBA to establish the SBA Advisory Council and speaker series through which alumni had the opportunity to share their experiences and provide valuable guidance with students and faculty, enriching the university experience for all stakeholders. SBA also held regular in-person and virtual networking events during the reporting period, bringing together alumni, faculty and students from various disciplines. The College of Engineering (CEN) also brought alumni to campus to serve as judges in capstone design project competitions, speakers in discussion panels and specialized talks. Similarly, CAAD extended invitations to its alumni to participate in studio reviews, providing students with the valuable opportunity to receive feedback and insight drawn from professional design practices. CAS hosted its Alumni Event Series and alumni-led certificate programs, providing students with valuable insight, networking opportunities and career development advice.

I.2 Highest Level of Service

During the reporting period, AUS sought to boost the efficiency of its processes and systems through the implementation of effective technologies that enhance campus-wide operations and services, the delivery of academic programs and communication across the community.

Within the ICT and IT Security Department, collaborative efforts with stakeholders led to the optimization of university processes and systems. One notable achievement was the successful launch of an ERP solution—the Human Capital Management suite, designed to streamline the employee journey at AUS. Finance and Procurement models are also scheduled to be launched during the next reporting period. Furthermore, the ICT and IT Security Department completed the automation of the attestation process using UAE Ministry of Education (MoE) blockchain technology, exemplifying AUS' dedication to facilitating seamless connection between the university and the MoE. Additionally, a comprehensive vulnerability assessment was undertaken to identify and rectify any security vulnerabilities across the university's network infrastructure and systems, with a comprehensive report slated for completion by the end of this reporting period.

In collaboration with the ICT and IT Security Department, CAAD leveraged technological advancements to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of its various operational processes.

ALUMNI WHO HAVE BEEN ENGAGED AS STAFF MEMBERS, FULL-TIME FACULTY AND ADJUNCT/VISITING LECTURERS

YEAR	2022-2023	2023-2024
STAFF MEMBERS	13	14
FACULTY	10	12
ADJUNCT/VISITING LECTURERS	4	10



Harshita Lakhiani, an AUS alumna from the Class of 2015 and Associate Director for Digital Marketing at Careem, returned to SBA as a guest speaker and project client for the MKT 360 Digital Marketing course. Guided by Adjunct Professor Dr. Madhumita Banerjee and Lakhiani, students collaborated directly with Careem on a digital marketing project. This project provided students with **practical experience and networking opportunities**, bridging the gap between academia and industry.



CEN alumni have engaged in several panel discussions and talks on campus on topical industry issues such as AI and computer vision in the real world, and the P&G Supply Chain Alumni Panel. One notable engagement was the alumni-led workshop IChemE Process Safety, organized by chemical and biological engineering alumni from different industries in collaboration with the Institution of Chemical Engineering (IChemE) in the UK. The workshop was given in hybrid mode and attended by students at AUS and in the UK.



More than 10 psychology students completed an Applied Behavior Analysis Technician course offered by the Dubai Autism Center (DAC). This 40-hour course was designed for aspiring professionals and families of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder to provide them with fundamental core knowledge on autism, principles of applied behavior analysis, commonly used intervention strategies and ethics. Psychology alumnus Mohammad AlMalik and outreach coordinator for DAC facilitated the participation of current students and alumni in this **valuable training**.

Noteworthy initiatives included the automation of access control to labs and the implementation of online workflows using platforms like Monday.com and Google Forms, which streamlined communication and improved the user experience.

CAS also embraced digital platforms to improve student communication and streamlined administrative processes, utilizing tools such as jotforms for student advising and implementing online workflows for various procedures such as student work submissions. In addition, the integration of technological resources into the Performing Arts Program facilitated the augmentation of performance capabilities and provided students with personalized mentorship opportunities, fostering student engagement and skill development.

Meanwhile, CEN introduced the CEN2.0 Internship Portal, an in-house platform designed to digitize internship processes and provide students with a centralized platform for administrative operations. This initiative exemplifies CEN's commitment to enhancing the student experience through innovative technological solutions.

SBA sought to enhance the efficiency of its processes and improve its student experience by implementing a digital ticketing system to streamline student queues and minimize waiting times during course registration. Students can track their place in the queue and receive text messages when it's their turn to register.

The AUS Solution Center, commonly referred to as One Stop, also revolutionized its service delivery through strategic optimization initiatives. During the reporting period, it continued to consolidate all online application forms related to student accounts, residential halls, IT, medical insurance and financial aid into a single, accessible application at the One Stop iPad station, streamlining processes for students. Moreover, the transition to digital forms for student payments and bus ticket requests has not only enhanced efficiency but also significantly reduced paperwork, facilitating smoother coordination between students and relevant departments. Complementing these advancements, the introduction of a user-friendly live chat box on the One Stop web page has provided students with a convenient platform to seek assistance and information, further enriching their experience with the AUS Solution Center.

1.2.1 Healthy Working and Living Environment

During the reporting period, the university prioritized the enhancement of on-campus facilities and services to meet the evolving needs of its community, focusing on health, vitality and well-being. Various departments have collaborated on initiatives spanning sustainability, student engagement, campus development and employee services to foster a thriving environment. This included:



Opening of The Hub

The Hub serves as a focal point for residential students, fostering study sessions, peer interaction and community gatherings. This space, frequently used by Residential Hall Coordinators, aims to cultivate a strong sense of community within the residential halls. A café is conveniently located within The Hub.



Student Center Renovation

The Student Center holds a pivotal position in enriching the comprehensive student journey, functioning as the nucleus of student activities and offering a welcoming environment for relaxation. As part of the university's commitment to enhancing the student experience, the Student Center has undergone extensive renovations, introducing new furnishings and new food vendors. This transformation featured functional zones tailored to student requirements, with a particular focus on accessibility for individuals with disabilities.



Streamlining Security Services

Emphasizing sustainability, the Office of Protocol and Security prioritized alignment between security measures and health, safety, crisis management and environmental responsibility, including training and developing security guards' skills to conduct safety inspections during their work. It established an online portal to streamline access of the AUS community to security services. It also implemented advanced technologies such as CCTV and access control systems to facilitate efficient event management (e.g., implementing QR code scanning for major events such as the Career Fair to exclusively serve AUS students and alumni). The Office of Protocol and Security also transitioned to paperless systems and carried out regular safety audits and drills, promoting environmental responsibility and operational compliance.



Sustainable Development and Living

Embracing sustainability across various aspects of campus expansion and student life, AUS Campus Development ensured that campus construction projects during the reporting period, namely The Hub and the AUS Student Center, adopted sustainable practices that align with local regulations and industry standards while considering future spatial needs. The designs emphasized health and safety, integrating improved thermal performance and barrier-free accessibility. The department also invested in sustainable transportation infrastructure, such as electric bikes and scooters to promote eco-friendly commuting, reducing the campus carbon footprint.

In student engagement initiatives, collaboration between AUS Sustainability and the Student Residential Life Department yielded innovative workshops like Cooking for Change for first-year students. The cooking classes taught students budget-friendly meal preparation with locally sourced ingredients and fostered sustainable living practices and support for the local market. Complementing this, master chef competitions were held, providing students with opportunities to showcase their culinary skills in a fun and competitive environment.

Moreover, the weekly AUS Manbat Farmers Market, a partnership with Arada and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, offered fresh, locally grown produce to the campus community. This initiative promotes healthy eating habits, supports food security strategies, and fosters connections between consumers and local farmers.

Community Support

The Human Resources' Employee Services Department implemented a range of initiatives and workshops, including Diabetes Awareness Day, Weight Management Lectures and Cancer Prevention Presentations. The faculty and staff Wellness Program complemented these efforts by offering a variety of gym classes and community activities such as fun walks and hiking trips. The university's Mental Health Week in October offered a series of events to highlight the importance of self-care.

The on-campus Early Childhood Learning Center and Epicenter assisted AUS staff and faculty by providing a safe and nurturing environment for their children to stay while they work. The Early Childhood Learning Center provided educational and care services tailored to children up to age 4, supporting their physical and intellectual development. Older children benefited from the Epicenter, which provides an engaging after-school environment focused on fostering creativity and encouraging physical activity. These initiatives helped ensure the holistic growth and well-being of the AUS community's youngest members and supported families in finding a work-life balance.

Furthermore, the housing unit provided essential services to the AUS community, including unit allocation, maintenance and renovation plans.



Partnerships

OAAA undertook a series of strategic initiatives to secure sponsors for various programs aimed at enriching the overall experience on campus, including the furnishing of the AUS Student Center and collaborating with suppliers in supporting of the development and promotion of AUS merchandise, fostering a profound sense of pride and belonging among students, alumni and supporters.



Staff Professional Development

AUS implemented a range of appraisal processes to ensure an efficient and fair evaluation experience for all employees and provide continuous professional and academic development. The current appraisal system and tuition remission program demonstrate AUS commitment to fostering growth and development. During the reporting period, the HR Department collaborated closely with line managers to facilitate meaningful dialogues with their direct reports regarding objectives aimed at enhancing performance. In addition to assessing the previous year's performance and setting goals and KPIs for the upcoming year, these sessions served to identify training needs essential for improving employee performance. Soft-skills training was offered to all staff, covering accountability and agility training, mental health and wellness and the power of positive thinking.



AUS provides a comprehensive **tuition remission benefit** to its **full-time employees**, encompassing full coverage for undergraduate studies and a 50 percent discount on tuition fees for graduate studies at AUS. Dependents of full-time staff members also benefit from tuition remission/discounts. HR has implemented various initiatives to ensure thorough awareness of these benefits among staff members. This includes integrating detailed discussions on tuition remission benefits into the induction process for new hires and actively encouraging line managers to facilitate flexible work arrangements for staff members interested in pursuing educational opportunities at AUS.

STAFF WHO BENEFITED FROM TUITION REMISSION 2019-2024

YEAR	STAFF
2023-2024	7
2022-2023	6
2021-2022	8
2020-2021	11
2019-2020	7



The Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) offers **faculty professional development** through Certificate in Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) and Course Redesign and Certification (CRC) programs, enhancing teaching practices and technology integration. Further, the Best Practices in Teaching and Learning Conference, hosted by CITL, promotes research sharing and publishing. CTLE had 12 participants in 2022-2023 and eight this year. CRC had six participants in 2022-2023 and nine in 2023-2024.






STRATEGIC THEME II

Teaching and Learning

Recognizing that excellence in teaching and learning is critical to expanding its impact, AUS has sought to provide an enriching learning environment by continuing to attract the brightest and best-prepared students and a diverse international faculty, as well as providing state-of-the-art facilities. The university has focused on delivering responsive and relevant academic and extracurricular programs that prepare students to contribute to the development and betterment of society. AUS believes that providing a successful learning experience can be achieved by encouraging curiosity, critical and creative thinking, and agile approaches to problem solving.



**CHECK OUT
AUS HIGHLIGHTS**

-  STUDENT EXPERIENCE
-  ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY
-  CASE STUDY
-  STUDENT / ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT
-  ACADEMIC PROGRAM
-  SERVICE
-  RESEARCH

II.1 Responsive Academic and Extracurricular Programs

The university has introduced new undergraduate programs aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge to contribute meaningfully to societal development and improvement. During the reporting period, final approval was received for four new undergraduate degree programs that will welcome their first cohorts in Fall 2024. These are the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Supply Chain Management, the Bachelor of Science in Chemical and Biological Engineering, the Bachelor of Science in Digital Construction Engineering and Management, and the Bachelor of Science in Intelligent Systems and Mechatronics Engineering. With these new programs, AUS now offers 32 bachelor's degrees.

Two existing CAS undergraduate programs were enhanced to align with industry demands and improve educational quality. These are the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences and Sustainability, and the Bachelor of Science in Chemistry. CAS also introduced Korean language courses, with the assistance of the Korea Foundation, that are open to students from across the university.

CEN introduced a Minor in Safety and Fire Protection Engineering in collaboration with Sharjah Civil Defence Authority, bringing the number of undergraduate minors to 46.

The Department of Psychology was also established, moving the Bachelor of Psychology program from under the Department of International Studies where it was originally placed.

Further, AUS introduced several new graduate programs, expanding its academic portfolio to meet the demands of the changing market. For more information, refer to III.2.3 in this report. Additionally, the university entered into several agreements designed to help alumni pursue graduate studies. For more details, refer to sidebars in V.1.1.

The university also focused on enriching existing teaching methods and exploring innovative modes of course delivery. At the university-level, AUS maximized its existing resources while delving into innovative methods to elevate the educational experience. A collaboration between the Office of ICT and IT Security, the Office of the Provost, Council of Deans and the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL) saw the university upgrade to Blackboard Ultra, introducing modern interfaces, simplified navigation, AI-enabled features and a responsive design to enhance engagement and streamline workflows. Similarly, through Canvas LMS Proof of Concept (PoC), the Office of ICT and IT Security sought to assess the functionality, user experience and cost-effectiveness of the web-based learning management system Canvas LMS, potentially offering another advanced platform for teaching and learning. ICT and IT Security also supported in setting-up laboratories such as Artificial Intelligence, Ethical Hacking and Catch the Flag to support teaching and learning services while enhancing the student experience.

At the college level, CAAD's innovative design-build studios led by the Department of Architecture put the college at the forefront of instructional delivery. These studios offer students the opportunity to not only conceptualize designs but also fabricate and install them at full scale. By engaging in hands-on making, students deepen their understanding of materiality and craft, fostering a holistic learning experience. Additionally, faculty retreats in the Department of Art and Design have facilitated discussions on enhancing course delivery, particularly focusing on nurturing classrooms and feedback mechanisms.

CAS embraced innovation in course delivery within departments such as the Department of English, which explored the integration of AI assistance bots in a pilot project to supplement writing instruction, and the Department of International Studies, which championed virtual exchange initiatives through the Transformative

Sustainability Project with more than 250 students and four faculty members taking part during the reporting period. Moreover, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics adopted a multi-model content delivery approach, leveraging various formats to enhance understanding and learning. The Performing Arts Program upgraded its modes of delivery by incorporating cutting-edge software tools designed to improve music theory instruction and instrumental labs.

SBA introduced a blended master's degree program, combining face-to-face teaching with online components. It partnered with the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation (AGF) to expand access to its renowned Master of Business Administration (MBA) program through a blended learning format.

Instructors in the Achievement Academy (AA) also leveraged generative AI to create culturally relevant course materials, visuals and lexical banks for special topic Bridge Program elective courses and specialist English courses delivered to corporate clients such as the Port of Fujairah, Sharjah Broadcasting Authority and the Government of Sharjah-Department of Human Resources. Additionally, AI was utilized in academic literacy courses to adapt text complexity and facilitate personalized learning experiences. The adoption of various educational technologies not only empowered learners and enhanced their vocabulary acquisition, but also enabled instructors to identify individual development patterns.

AA also facilitated students' English learning and practice by involving them in active roles as activity guides during AUS events, implementing gamification and nano-learning methods, and participating in the Soliya Global Express Connect exchange program, initiating discussions on global and societal topics with peers from the United States, the Middle East and North Africa.

Acknowledging sustainability as a central focus in various UAE national agendas, AUS has been proactive in aligning with these initiatives. During the reporting period, sustainability education was further integrated into AUS' curricular and extracurricular activities.

The College of Architecture, Art and Design's (CAAD) focus on sustainable development in studio courses and seminars aligned with pressing societal needs. For example, a fifth-



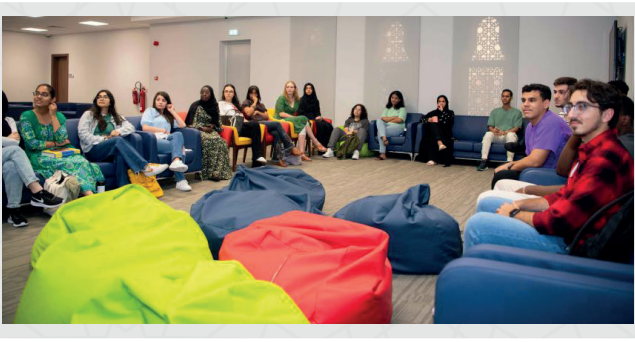
AUS partnered with the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation (AGF) to expand access to its renowned **Master of Business Administration (MBA) program**, offering a blended learning format. This comes as a result of a collaboration between AUS and the University Consortium for Quality Online Learning (UCQOL), spearheaded in 2021 by AGF in partnership with the UAE Ministry of Education and nine leading UAE universities. The program offers digital content customized to student needs, catering to different learning styles and supporting self-paced learning that is flexible—a major benefit for students who are geographically remote or who have significant work or family commitments. Dedicated instructional design staff from the AUS Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning help program faculty members prepare materials for online delivery.



CEN's IEEE Special Interest Group on Humanitarian Technology (SIGHT) AUS Chapter launched **hydroponic farming** on campus. The sustainable project enabled students to explore advancements in agricultural technology and benefit from the farm's nutritious food. Named Harvesting Hope, the project was conducted in collaboration with The Big Heart Educational Center in Sharjah.



CAAD's Department of Art and Design hosted **CAAD Kino**, a film screening and a film hackathon in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Music and Arts Foundation (ADMAF) under the theme Earthscape Chronicles. Multimedia students were challenged to produce short films within 48 hours under the guidance of faculty mentors, reflecting what they learned from the film screenings.



The **Green Living Learning Community (GLLC)** is a campus partnership coordinated by OSA, AUS Sustainability and Kristina Katsos, Lecturer in International Studies in CAS. GLLC offers an immersive environment for students to connect with like-minded peers who share interests in climate change and sustainable living.



AUS-Shams Media Day, a media competition organized by CAS in collaboration with the Sharjah Media City (Shams) under the theme of "Immediacy," saw entries from more than 65 high school and university students from across the UAE who created creative works that highlight the urgency of tackling climate change.

year architecture studio focused on sustainable development and co-dwelling in Abu Dhabi, and a seminar course taught in parallel with the Sharjah Architecture Triennial addressed the role of expositions and curatorship in shaping architectural development to climate change and the needs of the Global South. The College of Arts and Sciences' (CAS) Department of International Studies and Department of English facilitated the Transformative Sustainable Project, a virtual exchange program engaging students in projects centered on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, fostering critical analysis and constructive debate. The College of Engineering (CEN) introduced a general education course in sustainable development and initiated a hydroponic farming project, offering practical experiences in sustainable agriculture.

Leading up to the UAE hosting COP28 in 2023, AUS Sustainability organized the COP28 Speaker Series, providing students with timely insights from global climate action experts. Visits to COP28 zones alongside educational excursions to events, such as the World Environmental Education Congress and the Sharjah Waste to Energy Plant, facilitated hands-on learning experiences, underscoring the significance of environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. Notably, an AUS EcoRep-led visit to COP28's thematic day "Youth, Children, Education and Skills" enabled students to actively participate in the Green Skills Fair, where they interacted with industry representatives and explored career opportunities within the climate and sustainability sector.

Within the student residential halls, the Student Residential Life Department implemented a tailored educational framework focused on community engagement, personal development and academic success. Through educational resources (posters, digital platforms, bulletin boards and more), regular meaningful residential community conversations, residential events and programs, and campus partnerships, residents were exposed to sustainability principles and encouraged to adopt eco-friendly behaviors.

Similarly, leadership engagement initiatives such as

educational tours, AUS Model United Nations conferences and volunteering trips offered students opportunities to develop leadership skills while addressing global challenges such as sustainability and social responsibility.

Moreover, SBA organized events like the Pink October breast cancer awareness campaign, promoting community service and health education. It also organized extracurricular experiences allowing students to apply their knowledge to address real-world challenges and make a positive impact on society. Notably, a discussion with artist eL Seed and AUS alumna May Barber connected students with social entrepreneurs driving change through impactful projects in Nepal and Rwanda. These multifaceted academic and extracurricular approaches enriched students' academic experiences and empowered them to become socially responsible and environmentally conscious global citizens.

II.2 Successful Learning Experience

AUS focused on four main strategies to encourage curiosity, critical and creative thinking, and agile approaches to problem solving for a successful learning experience. These included: (i) valuing, promoting and acknowledging excellence in teaching and approaches that support creative and critical thinking; (ii) enhancing teaching and learning through actively engaging students in research and creative work; (iii) supporting and attaining educational goals through providing effective spaces, resources and digital learning tools; and (iv) continuing to develop strategies to attract, encourage and retain the best students to create an engaging culture of teaching and learning.



AUS students gained invaluable **international experiences** through various trips and engagements. The Student Council education tour to Rome facilitated connections with counterparts from John Cabot University and American University of Rome, offering insights into operational practices. Students also participated in the Georgetown Qatar Model United Nations in Doha and the National Model United Nations in New York. Students secured two Best Delegate Awards and two honorable mentions in the former, and enjoyed an immersive experience in the world's largest, most diverse and oldest ongoing university-level Model UN in the latter.



Throughout the year, AUS students carried out a series of **community engagement** and **volunteering activities** and events, most notably a trip to Cambodia where 14 students engaged in a school renovation and food outreach project in one of the impoverished communities. Further, organized by OSA's Community Service and Outreach in collaboration with Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation, the university's flagship Hand-in-Hand Project saw close to 80 students volunteering to renovate the houses of two underprivileged families in the UAE. AUS Students also raised more than AED 29,000 during a one-week campaign dedicated to aiding victims of the earthquakes and floods in Morocco and Libya in collaboration with the UAE Red Crescent.



AUS organized two charity drives in support of Gaza, raising more than AED 500,000. Several AUS clubs led by the Palestinian Cultural Club, in collaboration with the UAE Red Crescent and the Big Heart Foundation, launched a three-week Tarahum with Gaza Campaign on campus raising AED 400,000, feeding into the Tarahum campaign launched by the UAE Red Crescent and the Big Heart Foundation for people affected by the war in Gaza. OAAA also organized "From AUS to Gaza With Love" in collaboration with the Big Heart Foundation, raising more than AED 100,000.



Instructors within the **Achievement Academy (AA)** teaching Academic Literacy courses aligned learning outcomes with key sustainability themes such as waste management, innovation, sustainable urban development, gender equality and health promotion. AA students have taken proactive roles through the AABP student club, organizing extracurricular awareness-raising events focused on health and well-being. These events encompass musical hours, craft activities, and guest speaker sessions, fostering a holistic learning environment.

II.2.1 Excellence in Teaching

AUS faculty have adopted a multifaceted approach to education excellence, engaging in innovative teaching methodologies, incorporating cutting-edge technologies and active learning strategies to enhance student comprehension and engagement. Notable this year were CAS' Transformative Sustainability Project; SBA's integration of LEGO sets and accounting activity games in courses; CAAD's emphasis on teaching excellence in its studio-based pedagogy, exemplified by its award-winning Design Build Initiative (DBI); and CEN's Innovation Program, which serves as a catalyst for fostering entrepreneurial spirit and driving technological innovation within the academic community and beyond.

During the reporting period, AUS acknowledged a number of individual faculty members for excellence. CAS recognized Dr. Fatin Samara, Professor in Biology, Chemistry and Environmental Sciences, through its annual Excellence in Teaching Awards, celebrating her excellent teaching skills and innovative instructional approaches. CAS also recognized Dr. Jeffery King, Professor of International Studies, for excellence in research. Lab Instructor Mazhar Iqbal was also recognized for outstanding contributions to laboratory instruction. Further, Dr. Suheil Dahdal, Professor and Head of the Department of Media Communication, received recognition from the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) for his completion of the CAA Certified Reviewer Project.

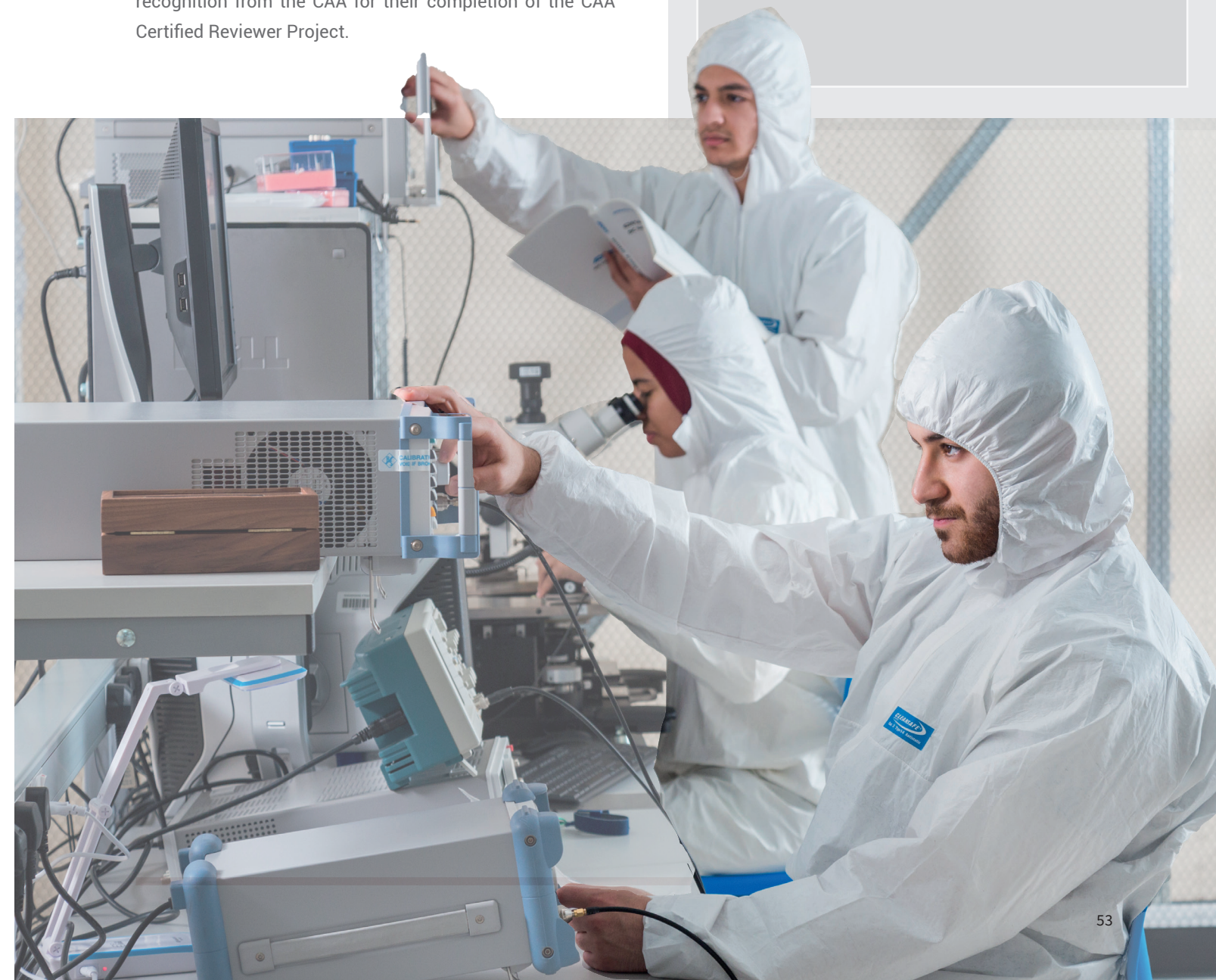
Meanwhile, CAAD spotlighted faculty members who demonstrated unwavering commitment, highlighting their dedication to student learning. These efforts culminated in the Best Faculty Award, conferred upon three deserving faculty members from the college's departments and the Foundation Year program. Recognized faculty are Dr. Christopher Kaltenbach, Associate Professor of Art and Design; Camilo Cerro, Associate Professor of Architecture; and Patrick Rhodes, Associate Professor of Architecture.

In CEN, the pursuit of teaching excellence was celebrated through the Excellence in Teaching Award, bestowed upon Dr. Mahmoud Awad, Associate Professor of Industrial Engineering, for his exemplary instructional practices. Outstanding contributions of laboratory instruction were also recognized under this award, honoring Wasil El Taher, Senior Laboratory Instructor. Professors of civil engineering Dr. Jamal Abdalla and Dr. Tarig Ali were also awarded the Roderick French Distinguished Service Award and the Earle J. Fennell Award by the US National Society of Professional Surveyors respectively in recognition of their work.

Similarly, SBA recognized five faculty with the Research of the Year Award, two faculty members with the Teaching and Innovation Award, and one with the Excellence Service Award. Further, Dr. Mohsen Saad, Professor of Finance, and Dr. Samer Kherfi, Professor of Economics, received recognition from the CAA for their completion of the CAA Certified Reviewer Project.



Twenty-four AUS faculty were named among the **world's top 2 percent** of researchers for 2022 in a study led by Professor John Ioannidis from Stanford University and published by Elsevier BV. The study features two lists: 17 AUS faculty members were named to the list of researchers who have had a career-long impact; 19 were featured on the list for research impact over a single recent year. Eleven AUS faculty appeared on both lists.



Design Build Initiative (DBI)



CAAD's DBI has garnered global recognition, having been awarded this year's Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture's Collaborative Practice Award for its distinguished approach to design-build education. The decade-long DBI serves as a successful alternative teaching model to conventional practices and embodies CAAD's collective approach to hands-on education that is integrated into all levels of its curriculum.

The AUS DBI empowers students to directly engage in the creation process, fostering agency in the civic, social and environmental development of the region. The initiative was designed to address and avoid shortcomings in the academic design-build model common in North America. It also addresses the conventional approach to education and professional practice in the region, which typically separates design from construction, often perceiving architecture as surface decoration.

"In a traditional design build-pedagogical model, a single faculty member leads 12 to 15 students while managing responsibility for all aspects related to client engagement, logistics, liability, accounting, construction supervision and turn-key delivery. These are extraordinary tasks and entail considerable physical and mental strain, which ultimately leads to a disconnect between the teaching workload and project responsibilities, jeopardizing the program's long-term viability. Meanwhile, the AUS DBI foregrounds a team-based approach, shared responsibility, curricular integration and fluid teaching assignments that eschew individual entitlement or course ownership. Individual faculty members do not teach the same fabrication courses or design-build studios repeatedly. This relatively large pool of engaged faculty allows for a platoon system that keeps everyone fresh," said Michael Hughes, Professor in Architecture and DBI program founder.

Led by the DBI Collaborative Faculty Team Michael Hughes, Bill Sarnecky, Ammar Kalo, Patrick Rhodes, Ken Tracy, Marcus Farr, Greg Spaw, Juan Roldan, Camilo Cerro, Jason Carlow and George Newlands and former CAAD faculty members Emily Baker, Daniel Chavez and Matt Trimble, the initiative is built on community engagement. Over the past 12 years, DBI faculty have led hands-on studios and elective seminars whose completed projects have won three ACSA Design-Build awards, appeared in three *Journal of Architecture Education* publications and received eight regional American Institute of Architects design awards.

Supported by a host of new fabrication labs, the initiative also receives annual financial support from the AUS Provost's Special Initiative Funding. This year's projects included the continued repurposing of a shipping container as a mobile design fabrication of metal construction details and complex wood furniture.

CASE STUDY

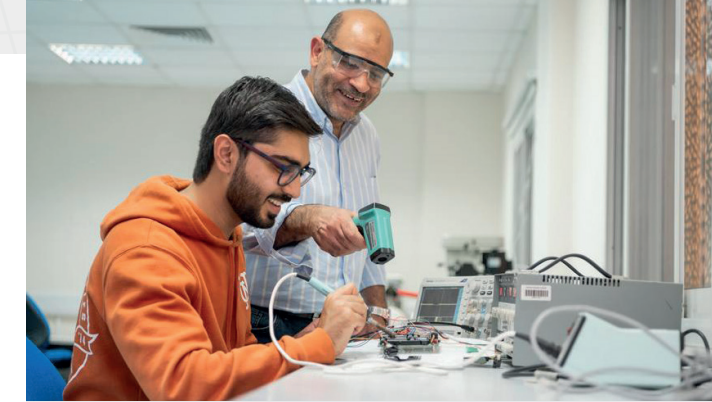


CAS enabled faculty members to expand their educational reach beyond campus through a conference/workshop travel grant, supporting travel to conduct lectures and workshops, which allowed faculty members to share and gain expertise with a broader audience and foster international collaborations. SBA has also shown a commitment to supporting its faculty members in their professional development in pursuit of education excellence.

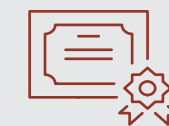
Internally, the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CITL), continued to offer faculty members who excel in teaching the opportunity to become faculty fellows and engage in advanced higher education fellowship programs. As faculty fellows, individuals receive recognition and support from their respective schools/colleges, enriching their university service.

An AUS Achievement Academy (AA) instructor, now bearing the post-nominal letters FHEA (Fellow of the Higher Education Academy), has garnered approval from the Advance Higher Education (Advance HE) Fellowship Panel, a UK Professional Standards for Teaching and Learning, and another is currently in the process of applying for the prestigious Senior Fellowship awarded by Advance HE. An AA senior instructor has also achieved a Doctorate in Musical Arts in Music Education from Boston University. Throughout the doctoral journey, this individual demonstrated commitment to honing research skills, refining teaching methodologies and crafting a dissertation of high quality.

In addition to personal academic achievements, AA instructors have actively contributed to regional education conferences such as GESS, Best Practices in Teaching and Learning as well as TESOL Arabia, where they shared innovative pedagogical practices with fellow professionals. Furthermore, they have enriched their teaching practices by participating in international conferences dedicated to higher education and English language teaching and testing, including the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL), the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) and TESOL International (online), ensuring alignment with global best practices. Notably, a senior instructor has also conducted IELTS Teacher Training courses for educators in the region, further exemplifying AUS' commitment to excellence in teaching and professional development.



The **CEN Innovation Program** continues to demonstrate its impact through the launch of two new initiatives during the reporting period. Initiated under the leadership of Dr. Fadi Aloul, Dean of CEN, the program endeavors to enrich the educational journey of engineering students and foster deeper community involvement by leveraging the wealth of expertise and commitment to excellence among faculty members. The program launched the CEN Makerspace, a dedicated laboratory equipped with essential tools for students to undertake various projects related to their college studies, and the NextGen Innovators Hub, a student-led center for interdisciplinary innovation to empower students from all engineering majors to collaborate in addressing real-life challenges encountered by the community through the introduction of novel ideas, inventive processes, revolutionary products or pioneering business models.



Aligning with the UAE National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (AI) 2031, CITL held AI Week, marking the launch of an **AI Hub** dedicated to enhancing the educational environment. The AI Hub is a digital space dedicated to advancing AI education within the AUS community. It supports projects that incorporate AI into teaching and learning, fostering personalized educational experiences and promoting collaborative engagement among educators, students and researchers. It also encourages AI-focused research to continually push the boundaries of educational innovation at AUS.

II.2.2

Engaging Students in Research and Creative Work

AUS believes in enhancing students' educational experience by actively engaging them in research and creative work, at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

Through its Undergraduate Research Funding Program, CEN funded projects for 106 undergraduate students in Fall 2023, with an additional 25 students funded in Spring 2024. This program encourages CEN students to submit individual or group research proposals, under faculty supervision, for funding each fall and spring semester. Students can use this funding to acquire materials for experimental setups or subscribe to advanced computing platforms, fostering hands-on research experiences. Notably, many of these projects culminate in joint conference publications co-authored by undergraduate students, reflecting CEN's commitment to enriching the curriculum and enhancing the educational journey of its students. Concurrently, graduate students also received support, with a total of 84 students funded in Fall 2023 and an additional 81 in Spring 2024, further emphasizing the college's dedication to student involvement in scholarly endeavors.

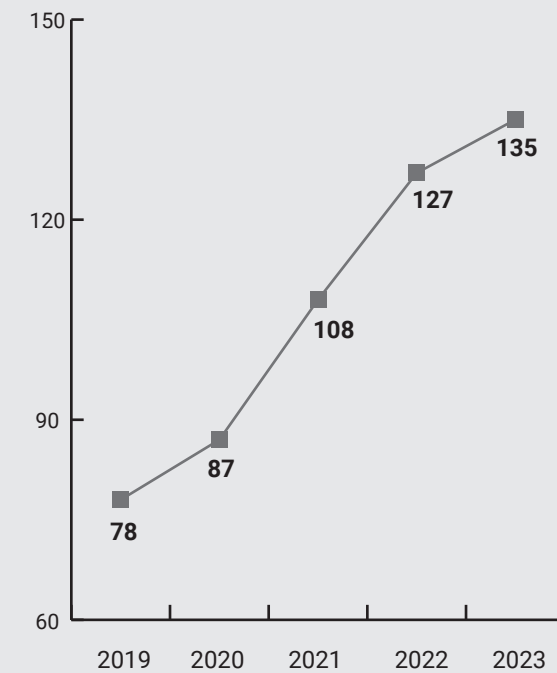
Meanwhile, CAAD integrated research into all studio courses, emphasizing its pivotal role in driving creative work. Embracing an iterative approach, students were tasked with tackling challenges, engaging in extensive research to inform their design processes. For instance, during the reporting period, an architecture studio course delved into human-scale design within Gulf cities, encouraging students to explore interventions that cater to diverse socio-economic demographics. Student projects, developed into academic papers, have been accepted for presentation at the prestigious international Architecture, Media, Politics, Society (AMPS) conference, "Urban Futures, Cultural Pasts," scheduled for July 2024 in Barcelona. Similarly, the Master of Urban Planning (MUP) program capstone workshop emphasized research as a foundational phase preceding plan development. This dual-phase approach empowered students to produce scholarly papers for potential journal submission and devise innovative urban policies and strategies that shape urban

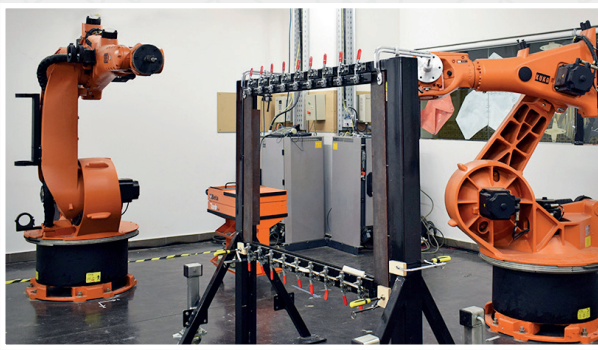
landscapes. Three MUP students are collaborating with a faculty member on a Faculty Research Grant, further immersing them in scholarly pursuits and practical urban planning endeavors.

Moreover, CAS celebrated and supported undergraduate research achievements through its annual CAS Undergraduate Research Day and the CAS Undergraduate Grants Program. Managed by the Office of Dean of CAS, this program invites full-time undergraduate students to engage in independent research, guided by professors within the college. During the reporting period, 112 undergraduate and 52 graduate students were involved in faculty research projects.

SBA actively fosters a culture of student research through tailored initiatives within its departments. In the Department of Economics, the senior graduation project offers students the opportunity to conduct high-quality research under faculty supervision, resulting in work that is of publishing quality. During the reporting period, 13 students engaged in such research in comparison to eight last year. Similarly, the Department of Finance engages graduate students through activities like the "abstract clinic," where participants refine research abstracts collaboratively, enhancing their originality, significance and rigor. SBA had seven graduate students involved in faculty research projects in this reporting period.

NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS WITH AUS GRADUATE STUDENTS.





CAAD's state-of-the-art facilities have **attracted global scholarly collaboration**. Notably, Lee Su Huang, a faculty member of the University of Florida, collaborated with Gregory Spaw, a faculty member in CAAD's Department of Architecture, on a pioneering project involving robotically formed metal pipes. The work was featured in a conference paper titled "Exo-Skeleton: A Micro Design Build," presented at the prestigious 2024 Annual Meeting of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Conference in Vancouver, Canada. Additionally, CAAD's Printmaking Lab hosted a workshop led by Lars Harmsen of Dortmund University, with assistance from designer Marian Misiak from Poland, with the resulting work exhibited in CAAD.



Fall 2023 saw the highest ever occupancy numbers in the **AUS Library**, as the renovation of the Student Center meant students sought alternative space on campus for study and social activities. Peak occupancy was recorded as 573 people in week five with an overall 59 percent increase on average weekly headcounts compared to Fall 2022.

A Library Art Trail concept was launched in April 2024, featuring over 20 pieces by local and regional artists with support from Barjeel Art Foundation, transforming the space into a more creative environment.

Newly subscribed ebook collections include expanded Taylor and Francis collections for social science and humanities, Brill Publishing and American Chemical Society EBA. In addition, an Elgar AI & Disruptive Technology collection, Bloomsbury Drama Online National Theatre and Video Library Collections and a new AI add-on for the Scopus database were added.

II.2.3 Effective Spaces, Resources and Digital Learning Tools

AUS worked towards meeting its educational objectives by offering conducive environments, comprehensive resources and advanced digital learning aids. During the reporting period, the university prioritized infrastructure enhancements to optimize teaching and research capabilities.

The Office of ICT and IT Security focused on upgrading network and wireless infrastructure in the renovated Student Center, enhancing connectivity and robust security measures. It also provided various technologies and tools to advance educational objectives, including Blackboard Ultra, collaboration tools, campus-wide wireless connectivity, application virtualization tools for remote access, and advanced infrastructure to enhance classroom delivery.

A series of technological and facility upgrades took place at the college level. CAAD's interior design students, under the guidance of a faculty instructor, transformed a studio classroom to facilitate collaborative learning. Departing from traditional setups, the redesigned space now supports team-based activities, small-group discussions and efficient storage solutions. A post-occupancy assessment is also currently underway to inform the renovation project scheduled for all studio classrooms in CAAD during Summer 2024.

CEN's general computing labs were upgraded to include the installation of approximately 70 new PCs, while the Department of Computer Science and Engineering installed an A100 cluster, featuring NVIDIA's groundbreaking A100 Tensor Core GPU. This technology delivers acceleration, powering high-performance elastic data centers for AI, data analytics and high-performance computing. Leveraging the NVIDIA Ampere Architecture, the A100 serves as the backbone of NVIDIA's data center platform.

Similarly, SBA upgraded Refinitiv, a trade software, to include student licenses, which now allows graduate students access to Refinitiv's financial data and analytics tools, empowering them with valuable resources to conduct comprehensive research and analysis. SBA also upgraded STATA, a general-purpose statistical software, to a site license, providing faculty and graduate students with unrestricted access to the full software suite. This guarantees continuous availability of STATA's latest tools and features for data analysis and research. The school also refurbished the graduate lounges by integrating high-performance computers, offering students access to computing resources tailored to their academic and research requirements. Equipped with the latest software and tools pertinent to their fields of study, these computers enable students to efficiently conduct intricate data analysis, simulations and other computationally intensive tasks.

In CAS, key initiatives included the conversion of existing spaces into specialized facilities. Notable were the transformation of a physics classroom into a physics teaching laboratory, and repurposing of teaching Physics Lab P019 into a research facility. The upgrades aimed to provide a conducive environment for practical learning experiences, as well as dedicate the basement of the Physics Building for graduate students. Moreover, the AUS Language Lab continued to serve as a collaborative hub for faculty and graduate and undergraduate research assistants from various CAS disciplines, including biology, psychology, mathematics, and Arabic and translation studies. In addition, CAS' in-house innovative writing feedback software, Auto-Peer, continues to be utilized at AUS as well as internationally, garnering interest from EdTech companies.

On a broader scale, AUS has opened three state-of-the-art research centers, underscoring the university's commitment to research excellence. These include the Energy, Water and Sustainable Environment Research Center; the Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainable Development; and the Materials Research Center. Comprehensive information on these centers can be found in Theme III.



CAS' innovative **writing feedback software Auto-Peer** transforms writing-related challenges into solutions through computational means. Dr. Philip McCarthy, Associate Professor in English, and AUS alumni Ayah Al-Harthy and Anuja Thomas developed the program to assist students in identifying and rectifying writing errors.



CEN and Schneider Electric partnered to offer students access to Schneider Electric University's **online learning courses**. Schneider Electric University, renowned for its expertise in digital transformation in energy management and automation, provides AUS students with free, vendor-neutral online courses and the ability to pursue certification exams.

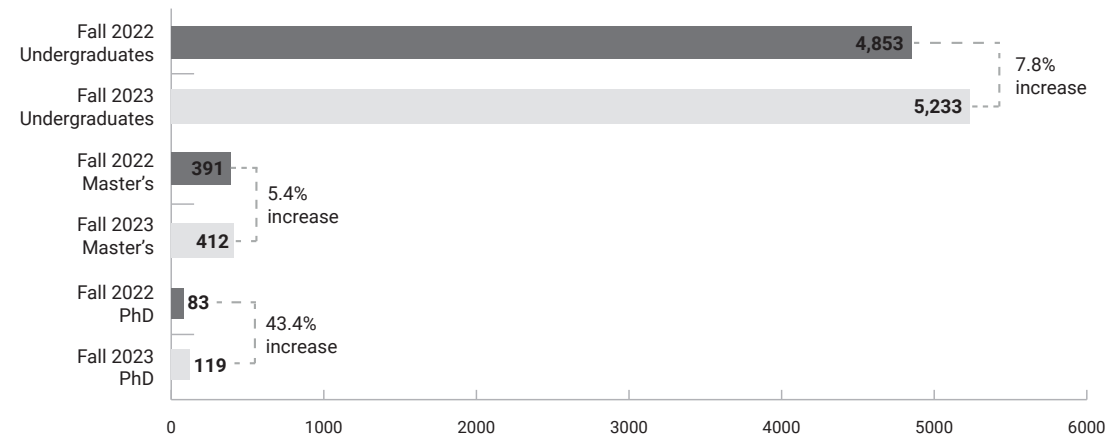
II.2.4

Attract, Encourage and Retain the Best Students

Throughout the reporting period, AUS demonstrated a steadfast commitment to attracting, encouraging and retaining top-tier students, fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning community.

A. ATTRACT

In Fall 2023, AUS achieved remarkable milestones by welcoming the highest number of new undergraduate students in 10 years. This achievement also coincided with AUS marking its highest enrollment record in seven years, with more than 5,700 undergraduate and graduate students choosing to pursue their academic journeys at AUS this semester.



531

TOTAL GRADUATE STUDENTS
(MASTER'S + PHD)
12% increase since Fall 2022



5,764

TOTAL STUDENTS
IN FALL 2023
8.2% increase since Fall 2022

During the reporting period, the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM) worked in collaboration with the Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) and the colleges/school to attract prospective students through tailored recruitment activities and strategic communications. OEM conducted 620 recruitment activities during the reporting period, ranging from school fairs and presentations, Sharakah Program activities, education exhibitions and counselor meetings to campus visits and open days. SCM supported these activities by developing a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy tailored to prospective students and parents, spanning from initial interest to admission.

The Campus Visits Program, including the Pre-University Enrichment Program, offered prospective students an immersive experience with hands-on activities in collaboration with AUS' colleges/school. OEM facilitated close to 50 school visits, engaging with well over 1,000 students. Feedback from school counselors has been highly positive, with many expressing interest in additional sessions after their initial visit.

OEM's Public Schools Initiative, in collaboration with the Emirates Schools Establishment, further expanded AUS' outreach efforts, particularly targeting UAE nationals and promoting AUS as a premier destination for higher education. During the reporting period, AUS visited 40 schools and engaged with over 1,000 students.

SCM worked closely with OEM and the colleges/school to increase leads and enrollment for undergraduate and graduate programs. For undergraduate programs, during the reporting period, SCM generated over 6,900 leads and ran 135 paid advertising campaigns across various platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and YouTube. Pay-Per-Click (PPC) advertising contributed significantly to lead generation, with over 6,294 leads generated through PPC, and CRM messages were sent to 146 prospective parents, students and school counselors.

For graduate programs, SCM generated over 950 leads and ran 71 paid advertising campaigns across various platforms, including Meta and LinkedIn. PPC advertising generated 210 graduate leads and CRM messages were sent to 31 students.

Further, SCM produced high-quality and engaging content across the website, social media and promotional materials to showcase AUS' vibrant culture, student life and academic opportunities.

SCM supported AUS' presence at three major educational exhibitions, which are Najah Dubai, Najah Abu Dhabi and the International Education Show, Sharjah. Additionally, SCM supported seven physical and 15 virtual open days, offering prospective students and their families firsthand experiences of university life.

Further, SCM has also been active in supporting and enhancing the visibility of research and creative activity at AUS through the dissemination and promotion of new knowledge and ideas. This included 227 web releases on the AUS website with a total viewership of 74,223 and 108 press releases. Top countries included UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Bahrain and Pakistan. SCM has also taken part in 13 supplements on English and Arabic newspapers, such as *Khaleej Times*, *Gulf News*, *Al Khaleej*, *Al Ittihad* and *Al Bayan*. A total of 21 digital ads and 30 social media ads were run across these platforms.

Moreover, social media played a vital role in AUS' endeavors to draw in potential students. During the reporting period, AUS experienced notable growth in audience across its social media channels, with Instagram witnessing an increase of 27.88 percent, followed by LinkedIn at 18.27 percent. TikTok saw a rise of 720.05 percent.

In addition to audience growth, AUS witnessed improvement in engagement rates, indicating a heightened level of interaction and connection with its audience. Facebook engagement increased by 5.5 percent, while Instagram experienced a notable increase of 74.12 percent. Similarly, platforms like X and TikTok saw an increase in engagement rates, with a rise of 12.46 percent and 775.01 percent, respectively.

For prospective students, these platforms offer a window into campus life by highlighting student achievements, extracurricular activities and dynamic campus events. Further, sharing alumni success stories demonstrated the potential outcomes of an AUS education, inspiring prospective students to envision their own paths to success.

Scholarships and financial grants have also been instrumental in attracting and retaining students, offering them the chance to pursue their academic ambitions while easing the financial burden, thereby creating a welcoming and diverse environment where students can thrive. For more information on AUS scholarships and grants, refer to IV.2.1.

At the college level, CAAD bolstered its presence at design-specific events attended by prospective students, prompting high schools to request workshops for their students to experience CAAD's exceptional facilities and faculty caliber.



This initiative evolved into the Designer for a Day program, allowing high schoolers to collaborate with faculty in a creative environment. Consequently, there was a remarkable 100 percent increase in applications to degree programs offered by the Department of Art and Design and a 60 percent rise in first-semester enrollments. Additionally, the Department of Art and Design enriched its website with comprehensive content and captivating videos showcasing each major, providing prospective students with insights into programs, faculty expertise, student projects and alumni accomplishments.

Meanwhile, CEN departments organized 45 boot camps, competitions, workshops and enrichment programs under its Discover Engineering initiative, which offers insights into the many fields of engineering to help high school students make informed decisions about their future. The college's third edition of the Shadow Program also welcomed high school students in grades 11 and 12 to experience a day in the life of an AUS engineering student. CEN worked in collaboration with SCM to promote these events to the public and to high school counselors, ensuring strong participation and interest.

In parallel, CAS partnered with OEM and organized several significant high-impact events and competitions for high school students from Sharakah Schools, including Environmental Day, Physics Day, MathFest, AUS-Shams Media Day, English Day and Model United Nations (AUSMUN), attracting 4,000 attendees overall.

B. ENCOURAGE

As part of the admissions cycle, AUS ensured that prospective students received informative and persuasive communications detailing the benefits of joining AUS, captivating videos illustrating the AUS experience, a virtual tour, application guidance and other relevant information.

Upon admission, applicants also receive regular correspondence from university leadership as part of a collaboration between OEM and SCM. These emails feature updates from the Chancellor, insights from the dean of their respective college, and perspectives from department heads regarding the strengths of their chosen major. Furthermore, the OEM team conducted proactive phone calls to applicants at each stage of the admission process, providing encouragement and support along applicants' journey.

To optimize service delivery, OEM continued to utilize Customer Relations Management (CRM) systems, inquiry systems and monitoring tools, facilitating the efficient management of enrollment operations, applications and inquiries while maintaining a personalized approach. It also provided support through various channels, including online meetings, chats, calls, emails, webinars and Infodesk, ensuring constituents could connect through their preferred method. OEM registered 47,914 inquiries during the reporting period with a first resolution time median of 2.3 hours and a full resolution time median of 3.1 hours. OEM also activated its Whatsapp messaging system during peak periods (June-August 2023).

RECRUIT CRM STATISTICS 2023–2024

YEAR	FALL 2023	SPRING 2024	FALL 2024 (AS OF MAY 12, 2024)
Inquiries	44,067	3,341	16,334
Started Applications	14,668	1,757	9,777
Submitted Applications	3,685	714	2,304
Marked Complete Applications	3,350	614	1,823

The university also actively prepares students for their university journey even before they step foot on campus. The AUS Orientation process serves as a crucial bridge for students transitioning from high school to university, offering support and resources to ease this important life change. In the lead-up to orientation, SCM in collaboration with OEM, begins communicating with students to keep them informed about the upcoming schedule and to help them prepare for the transition. This early engagement provides students with an understanding of what to expect, from academic requirements to campus life, and helps them feel more confident about the path ahead.

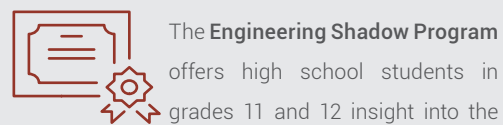
Once orientation begins, students are welcomed into an environment designed to spark excitement and build connections. Through various orientation activities, students have the chance to explore the campus, participate in information sessions and engage with peer leaders who guide them through university life. More than 1,700 students attended the orientation during the reporting period.

Further, social media served as a vital tool in AUS' effort to engage and support current students. Through strategic use of various platforms, AUS leveraged social media to showcase its unique offerings and maintain a strong connection with its students.

Through targeted promotional campaigns, AUS highlighted academic programs, open days and recruitment events, directly reaching prospective students and their parents and encouraging them to take the next step in their educational journey.

Once students were enrolled, social media continued to be a key channel for communicating important campus news, ensuring students stay informed and connected. AUS fostered a sense of belonging by sharing student achievements, clubs and events, as well as by providing spaces for students to share their own experiences.

At the college level, CAS implemented a range of initiatives aimed at showcasing academic excellence and fostering a sense of community. For example, the Department of English's Sigma Tau Delta program provided avenues for students to engage in volunteer opportunities, such as collaborating with local bookstores and secondary schools to deliver creative writing programs. This offered students valuable extracurricular experiences and encouraged active participation within the wider community. Similarly, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics organized workshops



The **Engineering Shadow Program** offers high school students in grades 11 and 12 insight into the life of an AUS engineering student. As a shadow, a school student spends a day with an engineering student mentor majoring in their area of interest. Through this experience, shadows attend classes, interact with professors and engage with college administrators, gaining comprehensive and practical knowledge about the diverse opportunities in engineering. Seventy-four school students benefited from the Shadow Program in Academic Year 2023-2024 in comparison to 59 in the previous year.

to showcase the relevance and applicability of mathematics, inspiring graduate students to pursue further studies in the field. CAS also celebrated student achievements through events like the Honor Ceremony, which recognized academic excellence and instilled a sense of pride and belonging among students. Additionally, the Performing Arts Program actively engaged students through events and auditions, promoting involvement in theatre and music groups and encouraging minors in music for those with demonstrated excellence. These efforts collectively aimed to attract and encourage students by highlighting the vibrant academic and extracurricular opportunities available within CAS.

CEN demonstrated its commitment to fostering student success and innovation by offering a diverse range of initiatives aimed at encouraging, supporting and inspiring students. Each year, at its awards ceremony, CEN celebrates the achievements of students who have demonstrated exceptional academic performance, research excellence, leadership qualities and impactful community service. In this year's awards ceremony, seven students received CEN Undergraduate Academic Excellence Award, 10 students were awarded CEN Graduate Academic Excellence Awards, one student received the CEN Undergraduate Research Excellence Award, and another received the Graduate Research Excellence Award. CEN also honored two students who demonstrated exceptional leadership and community service.

In line with its dedication to student development, CEN also launched the CEN Career Hub, a personalized platform offering tailored career support and guidance. Through one-on-one advising, career workshops, internships, job placement assistance and access to invaluable resources, the Career Hub equips students with the tools and knowledge necessary for a seamless transition into the professional world. Approximately 1,500 students have benefited from this.

CEN also introduced professional certifications, providing students with access to comprehensive training sessions and development courses led by industry experts. These courses, offered free of charge, cover a wide range of technical topics and culminate in official certifications, thereby enhancing students' skill sets and employability across various fields including safety, project management, CAD/CAM, and more. During the reporting period, 313 students acquired certifications across 13 courses.

Recognizing the importance of hands-on learning and collaboration, the college established makerspaces, providing students with open workspaces to explore, research and collaborate on innovative projects.

In addition to academic excellence, CEN celebrated student innovation through its annual Senior Design Projects competition, providing a platform for final-year students to showcase their technical expertise and creative problem-solving abilities. In this year's event, CEN students presented 110 projects, with the top three from each of the college's six departments being recognized as winners.

In Fall 2023, CEN launched the Technology and Engineering Product Design Program (PDP), offering students the opportunity to develop marketable solutions for real-world challenges. Through mentorship, workshops and financial planning training, students can conceptualize, prototype and pitch innovative ideas. Three student projects were approved.

Further, in Spring 2024, the college launched the NextGen Innovators Hub, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration among junior students to address pressing issues in their communities. By empowering students to think critically and creatively, the NextGen Innovators Hub aims to cultivate the next generation of socially conscious leaders and change-makers. Thirty students have taken part in this.

CAAD also promoted creativity and innovation among its students. Throughout the reporting period, CAAD organized a series of impactful initiatives aimed at encouraging and enhancing the educational journey of both prospective and current students. Student work was exhibited in several venues. CAAD's Proto-Pieces exhibition showcased the remarkable furniture designs crafted by its students, highlighting their skills in both design and fabrication. In an exhibition in the university library, nine structural models created by architecture students illustrated how typical compounds in the UAE can be transformed by removing walls and using nature to create privacy. In June 2023, CAAD will be hosting its annual *Six Degrees* exhibition at the Sharjah Research, Technology and Innovation Park, where more than 100 of its graduating students will showcase their senior projects in architecture, interior design, design management, multimedia design, visual communication and urban planning. The exhibit will be attended by industry professionals, alumni, family and supporters to celebrate the outstanding achievements of the graduates.

CAAD also continued to highlight and celebrate students who demonstrated excellence on the local and global stage, securing accolades in various prestigious competitions, such as the architecture students who received international



acclaim at the World Architecture Awards for their innovative Library in Ajman project, a multimedia student who won the First Frame Student Film Festival award for her compelling documentary short titled Abooya, and the architecture students who excelled in the EtWE Legacy Lounge Competition, securing a top-two finish and a prize of AED 15,000 for their culturally resonant design that honors the elderly.

Beyond academic rigor, CAAD continued to encourage student engagement through various creative outlets. The AIAS t-shirt competition was one such initiative that fostered a sense of community and creative expression among students. A recent study trip to Istanbul, Turkey, allowed students to explore urban complexities and pedestrian interactions under the guidance of their professor. Additionally, design management students visited BEEAH Headquarters and Waste Management Centre as part of their ongoing project on design sustainability and circularity.

These highlights represent some of CAAD's initiatives aimed at nurturing the next generation of designers and architects. Through these initiatives, CAAD remains dedicated to encouraging prospective and current students to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation, ensuring they are well-prepared to make significant contributions to the fields of architecture, art and design.

Dedicated to fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among its students, SBA collaborated with Sheraa to provide mentorship opportunities. Through this initiative, approximately 50 students enrolled in the MGT 403 Entrepreneurship course had the chance to engage with experienced mentors during the spring of 2023. This collaboration provided students with valuable guidance and insights from seasoned professionals and offered them a practical and hands-on approach to learning about entrepreneurship.

Facilitating academic progression for all students, the Academic Support Center (ASC) provided opportunities for advising, skills enhancement, personal resilience and connections to AUS resources and services. In Fall 2023, ASC offered 45 Student Success Workshops, which served a total of 783 students (14.9 percent of AUS students attending). Following this rate, ASC offered 51 workshops with 468 student attendees at the time of reporting. In Fall 2023, 84.21 percent of students who accessed ASC services—such as one-on-one advising, peer mentor advising, and workshops—felt that their motivation increased.



C. RETAIN

AUS has prioritized student retention through a comprehensive set of initiatives.

Rich Campus Life

By offering students a rich and diverse campus life with opportunities to participate in clubs, sports, community service, student leadership and other extracurricular activities (refer to Theme I), the university fosters a sense of belonging and connection to the university community. During the reporting period, a total of 766 student-led activities were conducted.

SCM supports the colleges/school and departments across the university in promoting their internal events for current students and alumni, such as Global Day, AUS commencements, the Alumni Reunion Dinner and more, ensuring that it gets effective exposure, attendance and media coverage. SCM provided support to 543 in-person and virtual events in Academic Year 2023–2024, in comparison to 388 events in Academic Year 2022–2023.

Financial Support

AUS offers students financial assistance through scholarships, grants and work-study programs to alleviate financial burdens and help students stay enrolled. AUS offers 14 different types of scholarships and three grants for undergraduate students. It also offers assistantships and employment opportunities for graduate students. Refer to section IV.2.1 for more information on AUS scholarships and grants.



60%

OF ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS RECEIVED A GRANT AND /OR SCHOLARSHIP IN FALL 2023



67%

OF NEW FIRST-TIME UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS RECEIVED A GRANT AND /OR SCHOLARSHIP IN FALL 2023

Career Services

Through career counseling, internship placements, resume workshops and networking events, AUS offers students the opportunity to explore career paths and develop the skills needed for future employment, increasing their motivation to stay in university. Prior to the annual Career Fair, OAAA organized AUS Career Prep Week where students engaged in workshops, panel discussions and networking events to equip them with valuable skills, ranging from resume crafting to networking strategies, providing practical insights to help them transition from university to the workforce.



During the reporting period, the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OAAA) organized its annual **Career Fair**, which saw more than 1,800 students and alumni registered to meet with recruiters and industry representatives. This year saw an increase in the number of represented companies and industries. Following the event, close to 900 opportunities were identified that included internships and full-time job offers from 63 participating companies. A survey of employers that participated in the AUS Career Fair showed that 95 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with AUS graduate's performance, 87 percent reported that AUS graduates were better compared to graduates from other universities, and 100 percent rated AUS's reputation within their industry as "good" or "excellent." The survey was administered to 79 employers who participated in the career fair, with 84 percent response rate.

Eager to expand their professional knowledge	98.4%
Display mastery in their areas of specialization	98.4%
Communicate clearly	96.8%
Demonstrate competency in teamwork	96.8%
Solve problems creatively	95.2%
Think critically	95.2%
Appreciate and understand diversity	95.2%
Recognize the critical role of ethical standards and practices	93.7%
Demonstrate sense of environmental responsibility	92.1%
Comprehend the dynamism and complexity of global issues	87.3%

Support Services

In Fall 2023, ASC developed a seven-tier at-risk student classification identifying more than 400 students-at-risk in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. It also developed a robust communication plan to retain first-year students and targeted workshops that contributed to an average decrease of 7.8 percent in the number of students on probation. The First Year Experience (FYE) Program also helped students engage meaningfully with the AUS community and learn skills that promote academic success. As part of the program, FYE Connect offers first-year students a mid-semester check-in. Students connect with AUS faculty, staff administrators as well as meet with an FYE Ambassador (an experienced student) to reflect on their experience at AUS. Results of two FYE surveys conducted in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 showed that 88 percent of first-year students felt connected to campus, 90.77 percent of first-year students learned something new about AUS through FYE, and 73 percent of first year students accessed one or more AUS resources because of ASC/FYE support. In total, ASC achieved a total of 4,159 touch points with students throughout all student ASC activities during the academic year.

At the college level, CAS' Psychology Program implemented a peer advising program to help students adjust to university. The college has well-established learning centers that provide free tutoring service to all AUS students. These include the Writing Center, the Math Learning Center, the Psychology Learning Center and the Biology, Chemistry and Environmental Sciences Learning Center. These centers offer one-on-one and group tutoring sessions on a drop-in basis. CEN used its student-run Engineering Learning Center to help students academically and professionally. Similarly, SBA offers personalized support to students and one-on-one tutoring through its Business Learning Center for first- and second-year courses. The tutoring services have been positively received, evidenced by the high demand for sessions. For example, QBA 201 and ECO 201 tutoring sessions were booked for 14 and 7.5 hours, respectively, in February 2024.

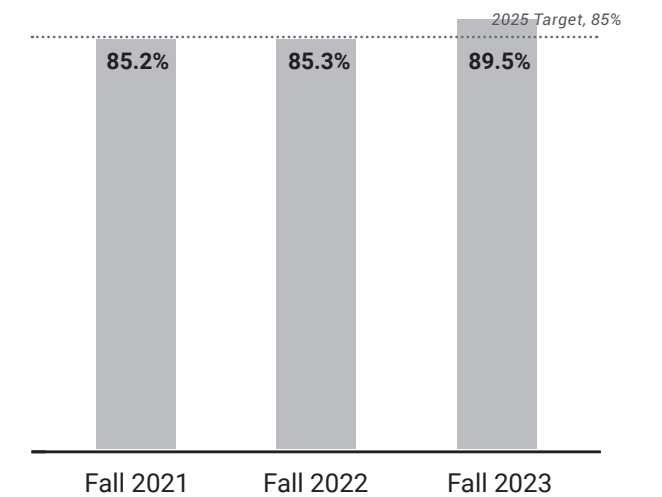
In CAAD, the Director of the Foundation Year program played a pivotal role in aiding first-year students' transition from high school to university, offering alternative pathways if CAAD isn't the right fit. The college took two steps to help students better adjust to the type of assessment used in the foundation course DES 121 Introduction to Architecture, Art and Design History. First, students were offered low-stakes assessments to help them make the adjustment, and second, senior students were able to work with those who expressed difficulty with the course. The approach is being evaluated for possible further adjustments next year.

In the AABP, there is a strong commitment to each student's individual learning journey, supported by instructors and a dedicated team focused on student success and a positive learning experience. AA students have a post-midterm reflection protocol, which helps identify and support at-risk students, with intervention increasing matriculation/passing rates by 45 percent during Fall 2023. Additionally, a dedicated mentoring program, sponsored by the Kuwaiti Consulate, was established to offer off-campus students sponsored by the consulate weekly wellbeing conversations and personalized support. Engagement in campus-wide activities further fosters student retention, helping them integrate into the AUS culture of holistic learning and growth.

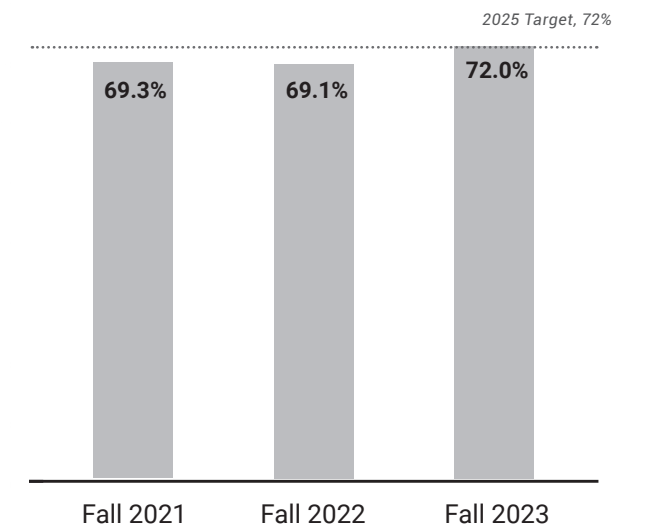
Flexible Learning Options

AUS provides graduate online and hybrid courses and evening classes to accommodate students' diverse needs and responsibilities, such as work or family commitments. The blended Master of Business Administration program is one example.

AUS FIRST-TO-SECOND YEAR UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION



AUS SIX-YEAR GRADUATION RATES



AUS has focused on cultivating a robust agenda for research and creative work that empowers faculty to deliver high productivity and quality, as well as continued development and excellence in graduate education, with the aim of becoming globally recognized for outstanding and innovative research and creative activity.

STRATEGIC THEME III

Research and Creative Work

- CHECK OUT AUS HIGHLIGHTS
- STUDENT EXPERIENCE
- ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY
- CASE STUDY
- STUDENT / ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT
- ACADEMIC PROGRAM
- SERVICE
- RESEARCH



III.1 Robust Agenda for Research and Creative Work

In order to foster a dynamic framework for research and creative endeavors, AUS has focused on achieving the following:

- (i) strategic use of internal research funds and initiatives that support faculty in their efforts to obtain external funding;
- (ii) development of a support administrative structure and operational services for research and creative activity;
- (iii) establishment of an infrastructure that enables internal and external dissemination and promotion of knowledge and visibility; and
- (iv) encouragement to explore interdisciplinary research opportunities through collaborations with international academia and industry.



CEN

An AUS research team led by Dr. Ghaleb Husseini and including Dr. Mohammad Al-Sayah (CAS) and graduate student Amal Elsadig secured a patent from the United States Patent and Trademark Office for an innovative chemotherapy therapy model. Their platform uses Herceptin-targeted nanocarriers to deliver multiple anticancer drugs directly to breast cancer tissues via ultrasound activation.



CAS

Dr. Nidhal Guessoum and students delved into cosmic mysteries, advancing understanding of gamma-ray bursts, supernovae and gravitational waves in their research. Dr. Guessoum and his team researched the colossal energy of gamma-ray bursts, supernova explosions, hypernovae and kilonovae, all intertwined with the study of gravitational waves.



CAAD

One of CAAD's globally impactful endeavors was at the UAE National Pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale in Fall 2023 curated by Associate Dean Faysal Tabbarah. Titled *Aridly Abundant*, the exhibition highlighted often-overlooked environmental resources in the UAE, presenting an intellectually and visually compelling narrative. Notably, the exhibition was researched, designed and installed by a group of CAAD alumni, showcasing the college's enduring impact on the global stage.



SBA

Dr. Kimberly Gleason, Professor of Finance, published the research paper "Space Transition and the Vulnerabilities of the NFT Market to Financial Crime" in collaboration with AUS graduate student Mohammed Al Shamsi and Dr. Deborah Smith, Associate Professor of Accounting at Cleveland State University, USA. Published in the *Journal of Financial Crime*, the paper addressed the use of NFTs in the commission of financial crime, including money laundering and crypto-fraud schemes, using the framework of the Space Transition Theory.

III.1.1 Internal and External Funding

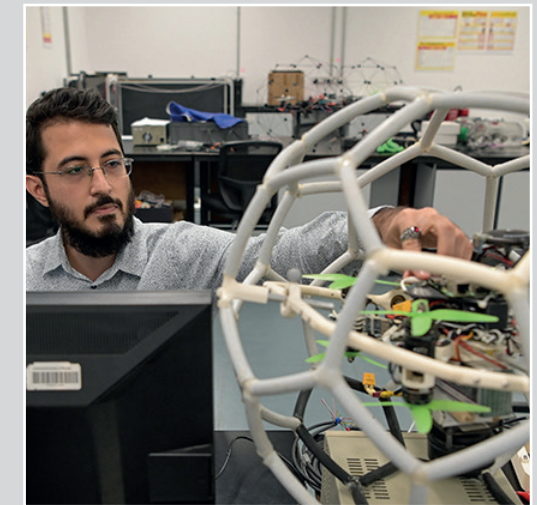
The Office of Research and Graduate Studies' (ORGS) Research Service Unit is currently managing a total of 211 active grants, out of which 28 are external funds and 183 are AUS-sponsored. In Academic Year 2023–2024, a total of 57 submissions out of 99 were funded, establishing a success rate of 56.43. In comparison, a total of 65 Faculty Research Grants (FRGs) were awarded in the previous year. AUS faculty received 10 research grants from external sponsors in Academic Year 2023–2024.

Having utilized the Research Professional database to identify funding opportunities for AUS faculty in the past, the Research Services Unit now leverages ScientifyResearch, an open and curated research grant database, to expand faculty access to funding opportunities.

Additionally, the Technology Transfer Office (TTO) has collaborated with faculty to identify technologies with commercial potential. TTO has proactively engaged with industrial partners, including Sharjah Research Technology and Innovation Park (SRTIP) and Sheraa, to secure external funding. With discussions for funding in the early stages, TTO has facilitated meetings with several leading UAE-based companies.

Further, the Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OAAA) has partnered with colleges to help secure external research funding. For example, OAAA worked closely with the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) to secure funding for the project "Ultrafast Laser-Based Manufacturing of Electrocatalysts for Selective CO₂ Reduction and Efficient Green Hydrogen Production." For this project, OAAA obtained external funding totaling AED 200,000 from the Sharjah National Oil Corporation (SNOC).

At the college level, faculty of the College of Engineering (CEN) were encouraged to tackle real-world issues in their applications for AUS FRGs. Numerous FRG initiatives have resulted in externally funded projects. For example, Dr. Sameh El-Sayegh, Professor and Head of the Department of Civil Engineering, led an FRG project titled "Developing



AUS and SNOC joined forces to accelerate research responsive to dynamic market demands.

SNOC is funding six CEN projects and one from CAS, with a focus on sustainability, aligning the colleges' academic pursuits with real-world needs for a more impactful outcome.

These projects are:

- **Fuel cell electric vehicles**, which utilize hydrogen as a power source, promoting sustainable transportation in the UAE and the adoption of low- or zero-emission vehicles, aligning with the UAE's hydrogen strategy, which aims to produce 1.4 million tons annually by 2031.

Researchers: Dr. Mostafa Shaaban, Associate Professor and Interim Head of the Department of Electrical Engineering, and Dr. Akmal Abdelfatah, Professor of Civil Engineering, in collaboration with Dr. Abdelfatah Ali, Assistant Professor at South Valley University.

- An investigation of the challenges of utilizing current infrastructure designed for the transportation of natural gas (methane) to **transport and store hydrogen**, with specific focus on the existing pipeline network in Sharjah and the UAE.

Researchers: Dr. Maen Al-Khader, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and Dr. Mohammad Hamdan, Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

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- **Produced water treatment** using local waste material to develop a technology that treats heavy-metal contaminated water generated from petroleum operations using seashell and date palm waste.

Researchers: Dr. Maruf Mortula, Professor of Civil Engineering, and Dr. Sameer Al-Asheh, Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering.

- An AI-based decision-making system to aid in the selection of contractors for oil and gas projects: a **novel sustainability index** prediction model that assesses contractors' prequalification and their sustainability potential prior to competitive tendering.

Researchers: Dr. Sameh El-Sayegh, Professor and Head of the Department of Civil Engineering.

- **Ultrasonic testing** to accurately measure the thickness of heavily used pipe walls in the petroleum industry that typically experience various loading conditions while in use, leading to changes in their properties overtime.

Researchers: Dr. Bassam Abu-Nabah, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, and Dr. Basil Darras, Professor of Mechanical Engineering.

- **Microwave non-destructive testing** to assess pipeline structural integrity in the petroleum industry

Researchers: Dr. Nasser Qaddoumi, Professor of Electrical Engineering; Dr. Amer Zakaria, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering' and Dr. Sherif Yehia, Professor of Civil Engineering.

- Ultrafast lasers to make catalysts more effective at turning CO₂ into **environmentally friendly fuels**.

Lead researcher: Dr. Ali Alnaser, Professor of Physics and PhD Material Science Engineering Program Academic Coordinator.

a Decision-Support Model for Selecting the Appropriate Project Delivery Method for Sustainable Construction Projects," which concluded last year. Building on the outcomes of this project, Dr. El-Sayegh received one year of funding, with potential for extension, from SNOG, for the project "AI-Based Decision Support Model for Sustainable Contractor Selection in Oil and Gas Projects." In total, SNOG awarded funding to six CEN projects.

In CAS, consistent monitoring of the progress of select innovative and highly promising research projects funded through internal FRGs led to identifying several initiatives with significant potential. CAS facilitated connections between principal researchers and potential sponsors. Funding was secured from several industry partners including SNOG, Emirates Global Aluminium, Sharjah Research Academy, The Patients Friend's Committee and the Sheikh Hamdan Award for Medical Sciences. A project by Dr. Ali Alnaser, Professor of Physics and PhD Material Science Engineering Program Academic Coordinator, titled "Preparing Catalysts with Ultrafast Lasers for Electrochemical and Photochemical Reduction of CO₂ to Carbon-Neutral Fuels" received FRG funding and positive initial findings which led to securing external funding from SNOG.

Meanwhile, CAS faculty's collaborative efforts resulted in a notable AED 1 million grant for the "Transformative Sustainability Project," a virtual exchange program coordinated by Kristina Katsos, Lecturer in International Studies. Funded by the Stevens Initiative, it fostered collaboration across departments and offered invaluable virtual exchange opportunities for AUS students and their peers in prestigious US liberal arts colleges.

Sponsorship of student work in studio courses leading to award-winning outcomes has been CAAD's primary mode of attracting external funding for creative work. For example, MAF Properties funded a design management studio in which students analyzed, assessed and designed services delivered at a community co-working facility at one of their malls. The ideas generated by the students opened up new insights for MAF.

This reporting period was also the first time after the

disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that CAAD had submitted proposals to the AUS FRG program, involving about 20 percent of its faculty. All five submitted proposals received FRGs.

Further, the collaborative work between Lee Su Huang, a faculty member at the University of Florida, and AUS architecture faculty member Gregory Spaw on a structure built with robotically formed metal pipes (highlighted in II.2.1) was initially funded by a Skillset Development Grant by the Design-Build Initiative (DBI) then by two FRGs. DBI studios leveraged community investment in the course through successful appeals for contributions of materials and services.

III.1.2 Research Administrative Structure

ORGS's Research Services Unit has grown during the reporting period. While budget oversight remains within the colleges, post-award verification and controls were reintegrated into ORGS and Post-Award Grant Specialists were appointed to ensure adherence to approved budgets and compliance with the terms and conditions outlined in the FRGs upon award issuance.

Awards for research publication have been facilitated through the Open Access Funding program. In Academic Year 2023–2024, 158 applications were funded under the Open Access Funding Program in comparison to 153 applications in 2022–2023. Ninety-nine percent of these were published in Q1 publications.

Additionally, during this reporting period, ORGS initiated the process to increase the number of postdoctoral fellows at AUS, a step not taken in the previous year. This initiative aims to incentivize faculty to maintain and boost research productivity while enhancing the impact of AUS' research endeavors. A total of 60 proposals were received of which 11 were funded.



The **Transformative Sustainability Project**, a AED 1 million grant-funded virtual exchange program with four US-based institutions, saw the participation of 12 faculty members and more than 800 students spanning various departments in CAS. AUS classes were linked with counterparts in the United States for project-based learning and sustainability education. Students worked on transforming their local and global contexts into more sustainable communities, starting from the classroom, promoting critical examination of societal challenges, potential solutions as well as cultivating a culture of constructive discourse.

Advancing Research Excellence: AUS Launched Three Dynamic Research Centers

The AUS Board of Trustees endorsed the establishment of three research centers at AUS, creating an environment conducive to innovation and discovery, encouraging faculty and students to engage in research activities. This investment signals a commitment to supporting research excellence, attracting talented researchers, and fostering a culture of curiosity and exploration, ultimately driving increased research output and impact.

Energy, Water and Sustainable Environment Research Center (EWSERC)

Hosted in the CEN, EWSERC will develop world-class research, making a significant impact globally and enabling AUS to support several UAE strategic plans, such as UAE Net Zero 2050, Sustainable Environment and Infrastructure (Vision 2021), the National Water and Energy Demand Management Program, the UAE Environment Policy, the UAE Circular Economy Policy, the UAE Energy Strategy 2050, the National Climate Change Plan of the UAE 2017–2050 and the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036.

Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Sustainable Development (CEISD)

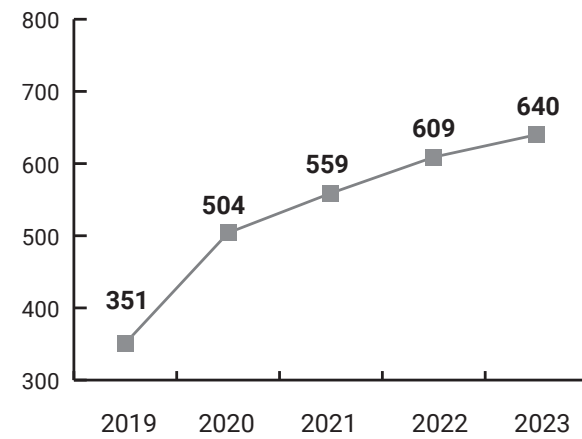
A multidisciplinary research center hosted in SBA, it will work in close collaboration with strategic partners in Sharjah to serve the entire AUS academic community in bringing the research innovations and promising ideas of students and faculty members to the marketplace, tapping into the innovation ecosystem of Sharjah and the country.

Materials Research Center (MRC)

Hosted in CAS, the center will nurture and promote interdisciplinary research and education activities in the field of advanced materials and sustainable structures with the main objective of providing novel solutions and developing highly skilled human resources that are critical to the UAE's economic growth, particularly as it transitions from a petroleum-based economy to a diversified knowledge-based economy.

Further, a category for interdisciplinary proposals has been added to this year's requests for proposals. This strategic move by ORGS aims to foster inter-college collaborations and bolster the reputation of AUS' research solutions in real-world contexts.

NUMBER OF AUS SCOPUS JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS



	QUARTILE 1 JOURNALS	QUARTILE 2 JOURNALS	QUARTILE 3 JOURNALS	QUARTILE 4 JOURNALS	
2019	182	104	43	22	351
2020	290	122	66	26	504
2021	349	129	51	30	559
2022	370	132	60	47	609
2023	401	141	63	35	640
INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR	8.4%	6.8%	5.0%	-25.5%	5.1%
FIVE YEAR INCREASE	38.3%	15.6%	-4.5%	34.6%	27%

III.1.3 Dissemination and Promotion of Knowledge

Throughout the year, AUS reached both internal and external audiences to share knowledge and enhance the visibility of its research and creative activity.

FRGs supported knowledge dissemination by allocating funds to promoting research outcomes from internally funded projects at various stages of development. Further, and as previously noted, ORGS had earmarked resources for faculty to publish in Open Access Journals. Moreover, AUS Innovation Expo held on campus in May 2024 spotlighted research strengths to an exclusive audience of industry and government leaders. Further, ORGS is in the process of establishing a dedicated LinkedIn account to provide regular updates on its activities.

Meanwhile, the TTO had been actively engaging with industries to commercialize technologies. Productive discussions had led to the sharing of term sheets with both local and international companies. Also, through collaboration with SRTIP on a research project, AUS constructed a precast building made of conductive concrete used for shielding, with discussions ongoing with an Abu Dhabi-based company for technology licensing.

The AUS Library also played a pivotal role in intellectual exchange and collaboration across disciplines. It served as a dynamic platform for hosting the Author Talk Series (ED Talks), facilitating engaging discussions between AUS authors and student and faculty audiences. Through this initiative, the library promotes the scholarly works of AUS faculty and fosters a culture of knowledge sharing and dissemination within the university community. In the past year, six AUS authors had spoken to student and faculty audiences about their work and the writing process on topics such as the Arab Spring, breast cancer treatment, family business management, creative nonfiction chronicling the 2020 blast at Beirut's port and more.



After 16 years of extensive exploration and testing, an AUS research team and the Sharjah Research, Technology and Innovation Park (SRTIP) unveiled a precast building made of **conductive concrete** that offers **protection against electronic pulses**. The concrete used in this building, located at the SRTIP, can be used to prevent electronic sabotage aimed at vital civilian and military infrastructure. Two patents have already been filed with the United States Patent and Trademark Office for the technology, which is the brainchild of two lead researchers: Dr. Sherif Yehia from the AUS Department of Civil Engineering and Dr. Nasser Qaddoumi from the AUS Department of Electrical Engineering.



Sustainable digital transformation was the focus of discussion by more than 200 researchers from 34 countries at the **50th International Conference on Computers and Industrial Engineering** at AUS. Organized by CEN in collaboration with San Jose State University in the USA as part of a series sponsored by Computers and Industrial Engineering: An International Journal, published by Elsevier, the global conference underscored the pivotal role of sustainable practices in tandem with technological innovations, providing a dynamic platform for experts to harness the potential of digital transformation within industries to become more optimal, productive, innovative and competitive while preserving the core principles of sustainability through a series of sessions and dialogues.

The Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) also played a proactive role in promoting the research work of faculty members and students, amplifying their impact both locally and globally. Through a range of strategic initiatives, SCM ensured that research conducted at AUS receives the recognition it deserves.

During the reporting period, SCM published a total of 45 articles highlighting various research projects undertaken by faculty members and students. These press releases garnered significant attention, reaching a total viewership of 16,268, thereby increasing awareness about the innovative research happening at AUS.

In addition to press releases, SCM facilitated numerous media engagements to showcase AUS' research achievements. This included 35 TV interviews and three radio interviews, providing platforms for faculty members and students to discuss their research findings with a broader audience. SCM also utilized social media to amplify the reach of AUS research. Over the reporting period, 45 social media posts were dedicated to showcasing research work on various platforms.

Research achievements were prominently featured on the university website. Throughout the reporting period, SCM continuously placed home page banners that directed traffic to articles, spotlighting AUS research initiatives across various disciplines. Recognizing the importance of centralizing research resources, SCM created a dedicated page for the research centers under the Research and Graduate Studies section of the AUS website. Additionally, these pages were accessible from each college's page, providing easy access to information about research centers and their respective initiatives.

SCM also worked with ORGS on producing the ORGS newsletter, highlighting research achievements, alongside individual faculty accomplishments.

A comprehensive internal chancellor's newsletter was also launched during the reporting period, encompassing AUS updates, cutting-edge research highlights, student and alumni achievements and faculty accomplishments.

III.1.4 Interdisciplinary Research Opportunities

AUS fostered international academia and industry collaborations through strategic partnerships with institutions worldwide, facilitating exchange programs and joint research initiatives. By hosting conferences and workshops that attract scholars and professionals from around the world, AUS successfully created platforms for knowledge exchange and innovation, enriching both academic discourse and practical applications across diverse fields.

An interdisciplinary team comprising faculty members from CAS and CEN and two international universities collaborated to develop research plans aimed at securing funding for SNOC's Cluster for Computational Intelligence project, which will support multiple projects.

At the college level, CAS and the Materials Research Center hosted the Frontiers in Materials Science and Engineering Conference for three days, attracting over 250 scientists and engineers from 40 universities and companies worldwide, aiming to foster interdisciplinary collaborations among academics and relevant government and industry stakeholders. Covering diverse topics such as materials synthesis, energy and environmental applications, the conference provided a platform for knowledge exchange and networking.

CAS also promoted cultural exchange and language learning through events like Korean Horizons: Exploring Korean Language and Culture in the World, which brought experts from Korean institutions to explore Korean language and culture globally, with a specific focus on language learning in the UAE and Gulf region, facilitating collaborations with AUS faculty.

CEN actively promoted interdisciplinary collaboration through initiatives such as the Provost's Interdisciplinary Challenge research grants. During the reporting period, the college successfully secured funding for one out of two submitted research proposals. CEN also instituted an Outstanding Interdisciplinary Research Award, recognizing faculty teams whose collaborative efforts have significantly contributed to academia and society. CEN also introduced the CEN-International Research Visits Program (CEN-IRV) to bolster international research partnerships by enabling AUS faculty to engage with and visit universities and research centers across the globe.

During the reporting period, SBA faculty members actively engaged in research collaborations across a spectrum of projects. Notably, Dr. Abdelkader Daghfous from the Department of Marketing, Dr. Kimberly Gleason from the Department of Finance, Dr. Ashraf Khallaf from the Department of Accounting, and Dr. Marie-France Waxin from the Department of Management, Strategy and Entrepreneurship, engaged in research drawing upon expertise in engineering, business and humanities. The school also invited Dr. Arman Eshgari to collaborate with faculty members on interdisciplinary research projects. Dr. Eshgari, Chair of Finance and Investment in Cardiff University, UK, is now a visiting professor at AUS in the Department of Finance. He has contributed significantly to the academic community through his research, teaching and consulting activities.

CAAD's collaborative research efforts, as mentioned earlier, included the partnership between CAAD faculty member Gregory Spaw and Lee Su Huang of the University of Florida, which led to innovative projects on structures made from robotically formed metal pipes, funded initially by the college and later supported by FRG grants.



The Sixth International Family Business Research Forum

was held in October 2023 to foster an enriching platform for research in family businesses, facilitating

valuable connections between key stakeholders. One of many significant components of the event was the Family Business and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Day held at Sharjah Entrepreneurship Center (Sheraa) in Sharjah, which focused on linkages between family businesses and entrepreneurship in the local ecosystem. Key figures such as His Excellency Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri from the Ministry of Economy; Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg, CEO of Al Gurg; and Najla Al Midfa, CEO of Sheraa; took part in the discussions.



AUS is home to 10 **professorships and chairs** dedicated to fostering research and collaborations. These include:

- Ahmed Siddiqui Chair in Gulf and Middle Eastern Studies
- Riad T. Sadik Chair in Civil Engineering
- Petrofac Research Chair in Renewable Energy
- Bank of Sharjah Chair in Finance
- Sheikh Saoud Bin Khalid Bin Khalid Al Qassimi Chair in Family Business
- Dana Gas Chair in Engineering
- Said T. Khoury Chair of Leadership Studies
- Chalhoub Group Professorship in Luxury Brand Management
- Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg Professorship in International Studies
- Sheikha Nama Majid AlQassimi Endowed Chair in Education Across Disciplines



CAS expanded its collaborative initiatives beyond campus borders. The AUS **Performing Arts** faculty and students demonstrated their skills at renowned locations including the Dubai Opera, Carnegie Hall and several universities throughout the United States.



Moreover, this year's FRG funding has supported another collaborative endeavor involving CAAD faculty Dr. Zinka Bejtac, Mohammed Mamdouh, Ali Matay; CAS faculty member Reem Khalil; and neurologist Dr. Ahmed Takhesam from Abu Dhabi Hospital. The project explored the application of Virtual Reality technology to provide cognitive, emotional and social benefits for individuals living with dementia.

Additionally, the Master of Urban Planning (MUP) program's capstone workshop in Spring 2024 was conducted in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT). Through this collaboration, MUP students conducted research with input and support from DMT, significantly enhancing DMT's understanding of the challenges associated with the transformation of the waterfront in the Mussafah industrial area. The students' work addressed issues that may not have been identified by consultants, adding substantial value to the project.

III.2 Excellence in Graduate Education

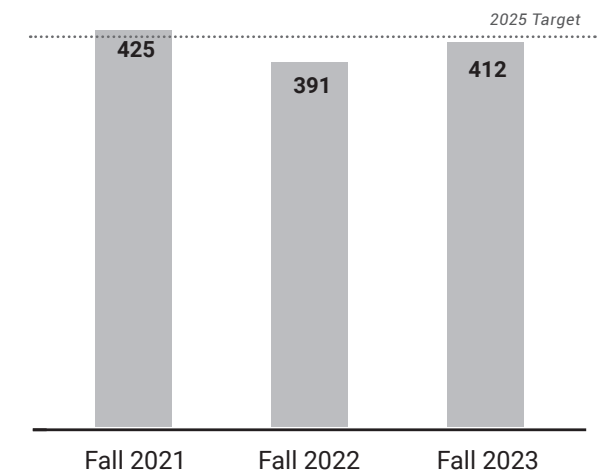
With the aim of sustaining and advancing excellence in graduate education, AUS focused on attracting highly qualified students to its programs, securing internal and external funding to support them, and introducing new academic graduate programs and facilities that adapt to the changing needs of students and industries and address emerging trends and demands.

III.2.1 Increase Graduate Enrollments

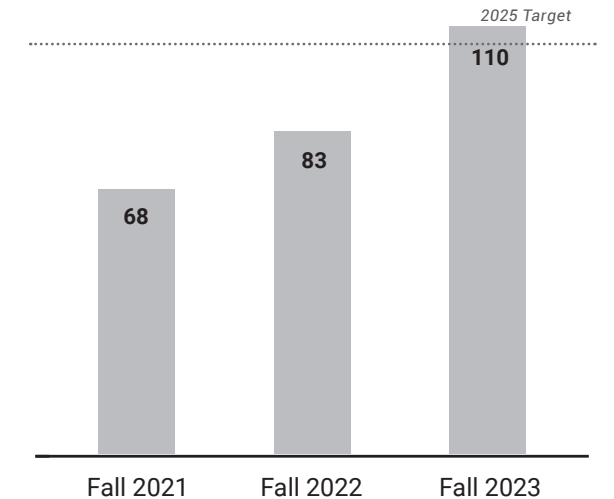
During the reporting period, a collaborative effort between the Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS), the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM) and the Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) focused on attracting talented students to the university's graduate programs. Four virtual information sessions were organized to target prospective students, complemented by participation in two major education fairs in Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. There was also focus on enhancing graduate enrollment through intensified targeted social media campaigns and conducting informational sessions and open days to attract prospective students. Notably, 10 percent of the incoming Fall 2023 class was successfully enrolled with external sponsorship. There was an emphasis on the importance of targeting AUS senior students to encourage their enrollment in the university's master's programs. However, a significant challenge lies in the fact that many AUS graduates prioritize job-seeking over pursuing further education after graduation. Additionally, financial constraints, including the cost of graduate studies, pose another challenge compounded by the limited budget available for graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs).

However, there was a remarkable surge in enrollment across various graduate programs during the reporting period. Specifically, the number of PhD students experienced a notable 43 percent increase, surpassing the targeted expectations for 2025. Additionally, there was a 5 percent increase in the number of master's students, contributing to an overall 12 percent increase in graduate student enrollment, combining both master's and PhD candidates.

ENROLLMENTS IN MASTER'S PROGRAMS



ENROLLMENTS IN PHD PROGRAMS



III.2.2 Funding for Graduate Students

The TTO initiated the industry design project to foster collaboration between industries and students on senior design projects. The program already received three proposals and effectively partnered with a company located at SRTIP. While no external funding was secured, students were afforded the chance to directly engage with industry professionals to address real-world challenges, utilize laboratory facilities and gain firsthand experience in an industrial environment. This initiative also signified a valuable research collaboration opportunity with SRTIP.

At the college level, CAS' new Master of Arts in International Studies program enrolled a total of 17 students, with six students joining the Fall 2023 and 11 in Spring 2024. Notably, in Fall 2023, four students received either full or partial funding through FRGs administered by Dr. Bethany Shockley and Dr. Yuting Wang. In Spring 2024, funding support continued with two students fully funded through Dr. Shockley's FRG and one student partially funded by Dr. Wang's FRG and OGRS. Dr. Shockley's ongoing receipt of a new FRG for the Academic Year 2024–2025 ensured continued funding support for graduate students.

Additionally, the college's PhD in Materials Science and Engineering program currently boasts more than 41 students, predominantly supported through FRGs secured by faculty members from the CAS' Department of Physics and Department of Biology, Chemistry and Environmental Science as well as CEN. The Master of Science in Mathematics program's commitment to research involvement and student support through FRGs was pivotal in motivating current students, with direct engagement in funded research projects under the mentorship of Dr. Hana Sulieman and Dr. Youssef Belhamadia from the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. In the MATESOL program, nine students were funded either fully or partially by FRGs of several faculty members including Dr. Phillip McCarthy, Dr. Ji Shim and Dr. Ozgur Parlak.

CEN encouraged students to reach out to local institutions such as the Al Hamriya Free Zone, DEWA and SEWA for research support. Some students, particularly Emirati, were successful in securing sponsorships from these external entities through direct outreach. Internally, the majority of FRGs have resources available to sponsor either a master's or a PhD student, covering tuition fees and occasionally providing a stipend. Each semester, around 80 graduate engineering students benefit from FRG sponsorships, relieving them from teaching responsibilities so they can collaborate with faculty members on research projects.

In CAAD, three MUP students out of 24 were supported by FRG funding. These students are working with Dr. Tarig Ali, member of the MUP program faculty. The project with input and support from the Abu Dhabi Department of Municipalities and Transport (DMT), assisted DMT's understanding of the challenge facing the transformation they are seeking to the waterfront of the Mussafah industrial area. The work by students is addressing issues that would not have been raised by consultants.

During the reporting period, a total of five graduate students from SBA received funding by FRGs. The FRG of Dr. Feras Salama, Professor of Accounting, supported two students over the course of the last two academic years. A graduate student of accounting is also receiving support from a separate FRG support during the current academic year. Dr. Mona Mrad, Assistant Professor of Marketing and Information Systems, received an FRG that spanned both the current and preceding academic years. Two MBA students were also beneficiaries of this FRG.

III.2.3 New Programs

Two new graduate programs welcomed their first cohort in Fall 2023: the Master of Arts in International Studies and the PhD in Biosciences and Bioengineering.

During the reporting period, final approval was received for three new graduate degree programs that will welcome their first cohorts in Fall 2024. These are the Master of Science in Machine Master of Science in Economics and Policy, and PhD in Mathematics. With these new programs, AUS now offers 18 master's degrees and five PhD programs.

AUS also introduced a blended learning format for its MBA program in partnership with the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation.










STRATEGIC THEME IV

Stewardship

As the university expands its scope, the significance of the AUS experience and the influence of its education, research and achievements inspire the community to support its forthcoming endeavors. In support of this, AUS focused on two strategic goals: (1) ensuring the continuous development of AUS by engaging alumni, friends of the university and other stakeholders to support initiatives that provide current and future opportunities for students and faculty; and (ii) ensuring that the management of resources is aligned with the strategic priorities of the university.

CHECK OUT
AUS HIGHLIGHTS

-  STUDENT EXPERIENCE
-  ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY
-  CASE STUDY
-  STUDENT / ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT
-  ACADEMIC PROGRAM
-  SERVICE
-  RESEARCH

IV.1 Engagement to Support Students and Faculty

AUS focused on expanding current student recruitment activities and exploring new markets, as well as developing alternative revenue streams, including expanding its endowment to support university initiatives.

IV.1.1 Expand Student Recruitment

With plans to increase international student recruitment, AUS increased its recruitment activities in Asia, particularly in Pakistan and India. The university registered a 70 percent increase in recruitment activities in countries outside the Middle East during the reporting period in comparison to last year. Expanding on this strategy, plans are underway to have “country representatives” active throughout the year in countries such as China, India and Pakistan. These representatives will be natives of those countries and responsible for marketing, in-person recruitment, consulting potential applicants, and communicating with leads. Closer to home, the university's Sharakah Program further grew its outreach to local and regional high schools, signing MoUs with eight schools in Jordan during the reporting period, and participating in many school visits, education fairs and meetings with high school counselors.



8%

INCREASE

STUDENT POPULATION
(UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE)
FROM FALL 2022 TO FALL 2023

- **8%** increase undergraduate students
- **5%** increase master's students
- **43%** increase PhD students



26%

INCREASE

IN FIRST-TIME NEW AND
MATRICULATED UNDERGRADUATE AND
GRADUATE STUDENTS

- **27%** increase new and matriculated undergraduate students
- **14%** increase new and matriculated graduate (master's and PhD) students

IV.1.2 Develop Alternative Revenue Streams

To support university initiatives and to provide current and future opportunities for faculty and students, AUS has strategically focused on cultivating alternative revenue streams, including the expansion of its endowment.

Collaborating closely with the ORGS, Office of Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OAAA) established new endowed scholarships such as the Silver Jubilee Scholarship (25for25) and the Bybit Scholarship, and was part of the selection and disbursement process of these two new scholarships for the Academic Years 2023-20224 and 2024-2025.

The university also established the new AUS Giving website, a platform designed to empower excellence through community support and engagement. This initiative underscores the university's commitment to fostering a culture of philanthropy and collaboration, where every member of our community has the opportunity to contribute to the continued success and growth of our university.

IV.2 Sustainable Resource Management

AUS ensured sustainable resource management through a combination of financial stewardship and environmental conservation efforts. It maintained accessibility for students of limited means by securing external funding for scholarships and grants, while also implementing energy-saving and waste reduction initiatives to minimize its environmental impact.

IV.2.1 Provide Access to Students of Limited Means

AUS aimed to ensure that financial means do not become a hindrance for qualified students to get the best education they deserve. Notably, during Fall 2023 and Spring 2024, 36 students were awarded the Bybit Scholarship, while 22 students received the Silver Jubilee Scholarship 25 for 25. Alongside these newly introduced scholarships during the reporting period, a significant number of students benefited from other endowed scholarships, with 151 students receiving support in the Fall 2023 semester and 135 students in the Spring 2024 semester.



ALL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

CATEGORY	FALL 2023 - ACTUAL NO. OF STUDENTS	SPRING 2024 - ACTUAL NO. OF STUDENTS
Abdul Jalil Darwish Scholarship	3	3
Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank Scholarship	4	4
Ahmed Seddiqi Scholarship	4	4
Asfari Foundation	3	3
AUS Alumni Pioneer Scholarship	2	1
Dr. Aisha Al Sayyar Scholarship	3	2
Sir Easa Saleh Al Gurg	2	1
Eng. Fathi Afana E.Schp	4	4
Exceptional Student Fund	3	3
GE Scholarship	1	0
Sheikh Khalifa Scholarship	4	4
Hamid Jafar Scholarship	13	10
Haseeb Rasoul Scholarship	4	4
Maroun Semaan Scholarship	10	9
Patrick Chalhoub Scholarship	7	7
Peter Heath Abraaj Group Scholarship	5	5
Petrofac Scholarship	17	12
Rashid Al Nuaimi Scholarship	3	3
Riad Alsadek Scholarship	5	4
Riad Kamal Scholarship	2	2
Shabana & Faizal Scholarship	11	11
Sheikh Mohammad Faisal Al Qassimi Scholarship	9	9
The Du Scholarship	6	6
The Jerry M. Smith Scholarship	2	2
Wasfi Ataya Scholarship	6	6
Yusri Al Dwaik Scholarship	17	15
Dr. Ibrahim Sadek Endowed Scholarship	1	1
#25for25 Scholarship Fund	22	22
Bybit Scholarship Fund	36	28
Grand Total	209	185

AUS also continued to offer a variety of merit-based and need-based scholarships to support students in pursuing their academic goals and fostering a diverse and inclusive learning environment.

In Fall 2023, AUS extended scholarships or grants to 60 percent of its student body, a slight increase from the 58 percent recorded in Fall 2022. The Office of Financial Grants and Scholarships (OFGS) also actively participated in recruitment events across the country, showcasing opportunities for prospective students to access financial support. In Fall 2023, the university offered a total of 3,862 offers for financial, merit and family tuition grants, while in Spring 2024, it extended 3,772 offers. Moreover, various other scholarships were also awarded to new and currently enrolled students totaling 1,036 in Fall 2023 and 875 in Spring 2024.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS 2023-2024



Financial Grants:
676



Merit Scholarships:
2,873



Merit Scholarships:
2,873



Financial Grants:
674



Merit Scholarships:
2, 2824



Family Tuition Grants:
274

***A student may have more than one scholarship/grant.**

Starting Fall 2024, AUS will introduce new undergraduate scholarship schemes to attract and retain academically qualified and talented students from outside and within the UAE. The university will offer three new merit-based scholarship categories: the President's Scholarship, the Chancellor's Scholarship and the Outstanding Academic Performance Scholarship.



THREE NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

The President's Scholarship

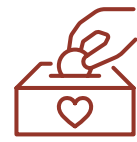
Open to first-time, first-year students from outside the UAE and covers 100 percent of tuition and lab fees and an application fee waiver, offers a monthly stipend for the duration of the scholarship, includes on-campus housing, three round-trip tickets for awardees during their years of study, and student medical insurance.

The Chancellor's Scholarship

Open to first-time, first-year students in the UAE. It includes full coverage of tuition and lab fees, application fee waiver, on-campus housing and student medical insurance.

Outstanding Academic Performance Scholarship

Open to second year students in their first semester. It will cover 100 percent of tuition and lab fees with the selection process based on nominations by AUS' colleges/school.



The **AUS Alumni Solidarity Fund**—part of the newly established AUS Alumni Annual Fund—was launched to support and empower bright students facing social changes or emergencies within their communities, helping them receive quality education at AUS. This year's proceeds will go towards supporting outstanding students from Palestine with a special focus on those facing financial difficulties in Gaza. Several initiatives involving alumni and corporate partners raised support for this fund including the AUS Inaugural Benefit Suhoor, Get Active for Education and AUS Giving Day. Additionally, the new Green Legacy initiative, an exclusive tree-planting campaign in collaboration with Alef Group that promoted sustainability and campus greening, provided support to Palestinian students facing financial difficulties. Donors to the Green Legacy initiative have a palm tree planted in their name upon donating AED 100,000, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of the campus and the lives of students they are supporting.

IV.2.2 Energy Saving and Waste Reduction

AUS demonstrated a commitment to environmental sustainability in managing its resources through the implementation of energy-saving and waste-reduction initiatives, guided by its Climate Action Plan launched in 2022.

Under the guidance of AUS Sustainability, the university continued to refine its measurement and tracking of carbon emissions across various scopes, adhering to internationally recognized standards outlined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol. It did not only track electricity, water and waste, but also extended its work to all AUS activities across its value chain. Having established a relevant, complete, consistent, transparent and accurate emissions inventory, AUS has become widely recognized as a leader in campus carbon emissions tracking in the region.

In alignment with the university's sustainability goals, AUS Campus Development also spearheaded projects focused on energy and cost efficiency. These initiatives prioritized the use of green building materials to minimize environmental impact while implementing energy-efficient design principles to reduce consumption and enhance indoor comfort. From improving building thermal efficiency to upgrading cooling and water systems and implementing efficient air distribution controls, AUS has integrated eco-friendly upgrades across its infrastructure.

The tangible outcomes of these efforts are reflected in significant annual energy savings and reductions in CO2 emissions. Notably, the Student Center saw a remarkable reduction in building cooling capacity, resulting in substantial energy savings and a corresponding decrease in CO2 emissions.

ESTIMATED ANNUAL SAVINGS FIGURES FOR STUDENT CENTER



Building cooling capacity reduced: 400 tons (i.e. by 48% AC size reduction)



Energy savings: 1,374,860 kwh (approximately AED 600,000.00)



Reduction of CO2 emissions: 647,560 kg



Reduction of CO2 emissions (from refrigerant leak): 117,650 kg



STRATEGIC THEME V








Engagement and Impact

AUS remains deeply involved with stakeholders, ensuring its educational endeavors are as effective as possible. Its alumni play a pivotal role in driving the advancement and prosperity of their respective communities, making them one of the university's most significant contributions. Further, the university's extensive research and scholarly contributions offer fresh insights into discipline-specific scholarship and innovative solutions to contemporary issues, including AUS' commitment to environmental stewardship. Sharing the accomplishments of its students, faculty, staff and alumni with a global audience serves to bolster the university's standing and sets it as a frontrunner in education.

To achieve that, AUS focused on (i) maintaining meaningful engagement with external stakeholders to maximize opportunities for students, alumni and the wider AUS community; (ii) adding value to relationships with stakeholders through mutually beneficial initiatives that are aligned with the university's mission and result in positive impact; and (iii) committing to its responsibility and care for the environment.



CHECK OUT
AUS HIGHLIGHTS

-  STUDENT EXPERIENCE
-  ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITY
-  CASE STUDY
-  STUDENT / ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT
-  ACADEMIC PROGRAM
-  SERVICE
-  RESEARCH



Her Excellency Sheikhha Bodour bint Sultan Al Qasimi, President of AUS, chaired the inaugural meeting of the **Advisory Council of Development and Outreach (ACDO)** in November 2023. The voluntary body was established following the approval of the AUS Board of Trustees in January 2023 on the recommendation of the board's Resource Development Committee. It serves in an advisory capacity as part of the university's efforts to increase its contribution to Sharjah's socio-economic, workforce and innovation priorities while deepening its commitment to excellence in teaching, learning, research and creative work. It focuses on partnership and resource development, as well as local, regional and international outreach. The council comprises 20 members, including prominent alumni and distinguished global and community leaders.

v.1 Meaningful Engagement with External Stakeholders

AUS actively collaborated with industry, businesses and organizations to cultivate relevant and sustainable career opportunities for its graduates, facilitating their success in any field of their choosing. It also strived to elevate its profile by highlighting its distinctive features and the meaningful achievements of its students, alumni, faculty and staff. Through effective communication strategies, AUS shared its impactful outcomes of faculty-driven research and scholarship, further asserting its reputation as a leading academic institution.

v.1.1 Industry Collaborations

During the reporting period, AUS forged 13 academic collaborations and 212 institutional advancement industry-based collaborations across diverse sectors, underscoring its commitment to fostering academic excellence, research collaboration and community engagement.

Its MoU with the University of Sharjah laid the groundwork for fruitful academic and research exchange programs, enabling faculty and student exchanges, joint academic initiatives and collaborative research endeavors.

AUS also expanded its national and global presence through partnerships with several prestigious institutions like Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, and AGH University of Krakow, facilitating academic and research exchanges, joint projects, and cultural understanding, thereby fostering an environment of international collaboration and excellence. It also forged collaborations with industry partners such as Sharjah Municipality, Sharjah Driving Institute, Sui and the Balsillie School of International Affairs, encompassing

initiatives ranging from infrastructure development to scholarships and specialized programs. Furthermore, AUS entered into a strategic agreement with the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Shenzhen Institute of Advanced Technology (SIAT) to foster exchange and collaboration in research, academia, technology and innovation.

Demonstrating a strong commitment to community service, AUS also engaged in a partnership with the Sharjah Social Services Department to cultivate a culture of volunteerism among students, encouraging civic engagement and social responsibility.

The AUS Career Fair, organized by OAAA, continued to be a cornerstone event in fostering collaboration between academia and industry. This year's fair featured participation from 80 companies across various sectors, attracting over 1,800 students and alumni seeking internships and full-time employment opportunities. There was a significant increase in represented industries, with a total of 900 opportunities identified, ranging from internships to full-time positions. These opportunities spanned diverse fields such as technology, finance, sustainability, hospitality and more, providing students with a wide array of career paths to explore.

The success of the fair underscores AUS' commitment to preparing students for the workforce, with the university's strong reputation reflected in its top rankings for employer reputation and employment outcomes in the UAE.

OAAA was also heavily involved in securing funding for research endeavors. Refer to III.1.1. It also works closely with alumni, donors and other stakeholders to cultivate relationships and solicit contributions to the university's endowment fund. These endowment funds are crucial to support various initiatives such as scholarships, research and infrastructure development.



OAAA celebrated the significant contributions of its corporate supporters at its annual **Corporate Appreciation Event**, a gathering dedicated to acknowledging the vital role of corporate engagement in the university's mission. The event welcomed over 70 business leaders and senior executives from top international regional and local corporations. This event recognized substantial support provided by these entities in advancing AUS' goals during Academic Year 2022–2023. The event featured a series of awards acknowledging the diverse and impactful ways in which these partnerships have contributed to the university's institutional advancement endeavors.

v.1.2 Collaborate to Ensure Relevant Career Pathways for Students

The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) actively fostered partnerships with employers, enriching students' learning experiences and bolstering their career prospects through its comprehensive career services office. Noteworthy initiatives include the Meet the Employer Event held in Fall 2023, facilitating connections between students and prominent companies such as Al Arabiya News, Al Khayat Investment Group and Twofour54, offering internships, full-time positions and graduate programs. Further, it launched the Career Explorer Program, developed in collaboration with Sharjah Government Media and Club Apparel Group, providing students with valuable workshops and job shadowing opportunities across diverse industries.



During the reporting period, CAS announced that its graduates in biology, chemistry and environmental sciences accepted to the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program at St. George's University (SGU), Grenada, can now receive an **automatic USD 30,000 scholarship**. Students have to enroll in the four-year MD program at either of SGU's campuses, which are located in Grenada, West Indies, and Northumbria, Newcastle, UK. AUS alumni will also have the opportunity to apply for a further International Peace Bursary prior to enrolling, which will be awarded based on financial need.



CEN entered into agreements with Lawrence Technological University (LTU), USA, and University of Edinburgh (UoE) School of Engineering facilitating engineering students' graduate studies through a **4+1 program**. Based on the agreement, AUS engineering students who have completed four years of their undergraduate engineering studies at AUS can earn a master's degree from LTU or UoE in just one year and benefit from an expedited admission process provided that they meet LTU and UoE standard entry requirements. Successful candidates will also benefit from a partial scholarship of USD 10,000 to attend LTU and GBP 3,000 to attend UoE. AUS also signed an agreement with the University of Michigan-Flint's College of Innovation and Technology (UM-Flint), for a dual master's degree program. Upon completing the first year of their master's degree program at AUS, engineering students are eligible to apply for admission to UM-Flint and complete their second year there. Through the mutual transfer of credits and upon the successful fulfillment of program requirements at both AUS and UM-Flint, AUS students will be conferred with two master's degrees: one by AUS and the other by UM-Flint.

CAS also entered into several agreements and partnerships, including with AIESEC to host the YouthX Insight Expo to showcase educational initiatives and facilitate interactions between students, industry experts and motivational speakers. It also partnered with Goumbook, enabling students to engage in volunteer activities such as beach clean-up days and the Ramadan Campaign, alongside participation in the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Moreover, CAS played a pivotal role in hosting the Sharjah Education Academy, introducing the Postgraduate Diploma in Education to students aspiring for careers in education, thus fostering connections within the education sector.

Further, the Department of Psychology established informal collaborations with institutions like the Dubai Autism Center and Kids First Medical Center, providing students with opportunities for Applied Behavioral Analysis Technician training, data collection mechanisms, internships, and employment prospects.

Additionally, research collaborations with institutions such as Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi have contributed to validating a pain index in both English and Arabic languages, showcasing CAS's commitment to academic excellence and practical engagement.

A prime example of collaboration with industry is the College of Engineering's (CEN) AUS Engineering Al Nukhba Program, which signed eight partnership agreements during the reporting period. Agreements forged through the program focus on research, development, training programs, internships, information exchange, personnel interchange, joint supervision of students' capstone projects and immersive field trip experiences. The program enables students to gain invaluable practical experience, while industry partners stand to gain from the expertise and dedication of AUS talent. For example, AUS' partnership with Petrofac, a global leader in energy services, signals a concerted effort to shape the future of technology and empower the next generation of IT professionals, with Petrofac committing to offer internships to a minimum of 15 AUS students within its IT division. Similarly, the MoU signed with the Dubai Police Academy emphasized the program's commitment to

nurturing local engineering talent, with annual internships for four AUS students. Starlink Corporation and Nokia also joined the Al Nukhba Program this year.

The College of Architecture, Art and Design (CAAD) had been actively fostering career opportunities for its graduates through multifaceted engagement with external partners. One avenue is the midterm and final reviews of student work, where practitioners and alumni assess students' strengths and weaknesses, sometimes leading to job offers. Furthermore, CAAD's visiting scholar program brings leading academics to campus, fostering connections with students and enhancing recognition of CAAD graduates in prestigious design programs worldwide. CAAD also held its third edition of the Athath Fellowship, a collaboration between AUS and MAKE, that aims to redefine design paradigms and foster entrepreneurship. The 16-week program was held at MAKE's studios in Al Zeina, Abu Dhabi, providing access to professional-grade tools, fostering innovation. Further, the selection of Dr. Christianna Bonin, Assistant Professor of Art History and Theory, to curate the Art Dubai Modern section as part of this year's Art Dubai was testament to the close collaboration between the college and the design and art scene in the UAE.

The School of Business Administration (SBA) through its SBA Career Design Lab (CDL) implemented a comprehensive strategy to actively engage with employers throughout the year. This proactive approach included initiatives such as inquiring about the recruitment plans of employer partners in advance and assisting them in aligning their timelines with the academic calendar to maximize candidate availability.

Furthermore, ongoing collaborations with companies like P&G and Amazon/AWS had resulted in targeted initiatives aimed at identifying talent for internships and graduate recruitment programs, such as advising on logistics, organizing communication and application processes, and facilitating on-campus challenges. These endeavors asserted the CDL's commitment to bridging the gap between academia and industry, while providing students with valuable opportunities to explore and excel in their chosen fields.



Graduating students from CAAD showcase their impressive collection of work every year at the college's annual graduate show and industry night, **Six Degrees**. The exhibition is open to an audience of representatives from the design industry and the cultural community in the UAE. This convergence of industry professionals and students creates opportunities for direct interactions and networking, enabling industry representatives to view firsthand the talent and creativity of CAAD graduates. On this night, awards are presented to students and faculty who are recognized for their outstanding achievement and contribution at CAAD, which highlights the caliber of talent nurtured by the college.



SBA's Career Design Lab (CDL) facilitated various engagement opportunities between employers and students, ranging from competitions to site visits at employer premises. Notably, the CDL successfully brought the **Monitor Deloitte Global Challenge competition** exclusively to AUS students for two consecutive years, providing them with the opportunity to work on real-world case studies and participate in both the UAE and Global Finals hosted by Deloitte. This international strategy competition challenges student teams to solve real business cases, allowing participants to gain an insight into what strategy consulting entails.

v.1.3

Enhance the University's Profile

Elevating AUS' visibility by showcasing the university's distinct attributes, achievements of its students, alumni, faculty and staff, as well as the outcomes of faculty-led research and scholarship, the Office of Strategic Communications and Marketing (SCM) employed several communication strategies. SCM focuses on key functions, notably the AUS brand management, marketing campaigns, media relations, digital marketing, publications and event management. By collaborating with colleges, schools and other departments, the office reaches key audiences with precise messaging that sets the university apart in both national and international markets.

To learn more about SCM's role in raising the university's profile by promoting university achievements, showcasing student work, publicizing faculty research, highlighting alumni profiles, and fostering student recruitment, engagement and retention, refer to II.2.4 and III.1.3.



v.2

Mission-Aligned Initiatives

AUS' commitment to initiatives that align with its mission entailed the implementation of strategic efforts aimed at fostering beneficial relationships and driving positive outcomes for stakeholders, which notably included alumni engagement. Through these efforts, the university ensured that its activities resonated with its core mission and created a lasting impact within its community.

v.2.1

Relationship with Alumni

AUS cultivated connections with alumni, leveraging their expertise, insights and resources to enrich the growth of the AUS community.

OAAA partnered closely with academic units to involve alumni in university activities, including mentorship and networking programs. A series of upcoming events are scheduled to take place in the next reporting period. Further, OAAA has been also actively identifying alumni for advisory councils and speaker series, as well as engaging them in fundraising events.

OAAA also cultivates relationships with alumni through regular communication channels such as newsletters, emails and social media updates. These platforms keep alumni informed about university news, events, and achievements, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their affiliation with AUS. Additionally, it organized alumni events, providing opportunities for alumni to reconnect with former classmates, professors, and staff members. The Annual Alumni Dinner is case in point.

In CAS' Department of Media Communication, the recurring event First Monday served as a platform for alumni to address students, held on the first Monday of every month. The department also appointed three alumni to its advisory board, further strengthening ties between the department and its graduates.



AUS launched the **AUS Alumni CEO Club**, a dynamic platform that empowers meaningful connections among accomplished business leaders who are AUS alumni. With more than 30 founding members, it serves as a source of inspiration, showcasing the remarkable achievements of AUS graduates in various industries.

Alumni who were actively involved in Performing Arts during their tenure at AUS were warmly welcomed back to contribute to various student activities alongside faculty and students. During the reporting period, the department welcomed back an alumnus to its faculty, who, after minoring in theatre at AUS, pursued advanced degrees in theatre at other institutions.

In the Department of Psychology, an AUS business alumnus became a member of the department's advisory board, while AUS alumni contributed to the program's newsletter and participated in events and panels organized by the department.

In CEN, and as highlighted earlier in this report, alumni engagement played a pivotal role within the college's academic community. Across departments, alumni were actively involved, whether through delivering talks, participating in panel discussions, or serving on advisory boards, thereby infusing real-world perspectives into curriculum development and career guidance. Notably, the college's internship coordinators leveraged alumni networks to facilitate valuable internship opportunities for current students, amplifying their professional growth. Further, during accreditation visits, alumni engaged with program evaluators to offer firsthand insights into program efficacy and outcomes.

CAAD engaged alumni practicing design in the region routinely. Alumni are frequently invited to serve as critics of student work in studio course reviews, providing iterative feedback and practical advice based on their professional expertise. In the Department of Art and Design, for example, Loyal Mooti from Electriclime and Ahmed Four from MBC served in this capacity, offering invaluable expertise and support to the next generation of multimedia designers.

CAAD had also been proactive in involving alumni as visiting lecturers, adjunct professors and speakers. Notable among these are architecture alumni, including award-winning architects and designers such as Pallavi Dean, Hend Almatrouk and Saad Boujane, as well as design management alumni Dina Barakat, Product Marketing Manager at Google MENA; Inas Dabdaub, Senior Social Media Executive at Dubai Future Foundation; and Farah Al Ayedi, Senior Marketing Executive at Dubai Holding.

Placing strong emphasis on fostering enduring connections with its graduates, SBA engaged with senior students before graduation at the Career Development Lab (CDL), supporting their transition into the workforce and encouraging them to share their internship experiences with younger peers. SBA maintained active engagement with students and alumni via social media platforms, particularly LinkedIn and Instagram, providing guidance on crafting professional posts through career preparation workshops.

Additionally, SBA facilitated alumni involvement during campus visits by employers, encouraging them to share insights and experiences with current students. Furthermore, SBA collaborated with alumni to address internship and career needs, fostering a symbiotic relationship where alumni can potentially recruit from the SBA talent pool. Notably, the Navigating the Workplace Workshop organized in conjunction with SBA alumni underscores the commitment to equipping graduates with the skills and insights necessary for success in the professional world.



In Spring 2024, CEN's Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering hosted **Career Night** where alumni and students bridged the gap between academic studies and real-world chemical sciences applications. The event fostered meaningful interactions, enabling students to gain insights from alumni who have successfully carved out careers in various chemical-related fields.

V.3 Responsibility and Care for the Environment

AUS implemented initiatives and programs that engaged the community in addressing the critical environmental challenges of today.

The efforts spanned across various departments and disciplines within the university. For instance, the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) Student Residential Life division spearheaded the introduction of the Green Living Learning Community (GLLC) in Fall 2023, in collaboration with AUS Sustainability and select AUS faculty members. This initiative empowered students to apply sustainability principles within their living communities, fostering discussions and activities aimed at increasing understanding of environmental impacts, aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants engaged in sessions, completed community service hours and collaborated on final projects covering various sustainability topics.

Similarly, within OSA's Student Athletics and Recreation Department, a commitment to sustainability was evident through initiatives such as recycling programs and the discontinuation of plastic cup distribution. The department actively encouraged the use of reusable water bottles to minimize plastic waste and promoted healthy lifestyle choices through nutrition and fitness presentations by certified coaches, thereby highlighting their dedication to overall wellness and empowerment within the university community.

Moreover, the Student Engagement and Leadership division showcased their dedication to sustainability through initiatives like the Best Sustainable Global Day Pavilion, where students actively participated in events while advocating for eco-friendly designs and practices.

This reporting period was particularly important for AUS Sustainability as the UAE celebrated the Year of Sustainability and hosted COP28. AUS organized several related initiatives, working closely with AUS EcoReps and university departments and faculty. AUS was actively

involved in the Conference of Youth (COY18), Student Energy Summit, COP28 and other preparatory events throughout the year.

AUS also hosted the fifth annual Higher Education Climate Dialogues (HECD) under the theme "Collaborating for Climate Resilience: Sustaining the Legacy of COP28." Organized in partnership with New York University Abu Dhabi, the HECD provided a platform for university students from across the UAE to engage in discussions surrounding climate resilience. A highlight was a debrief by the Youth Climate Champion (YCC) Team on the "UAE Consensus," an important outcome of COP28 aimed at transitioning away from fossil fuels. The YCC team, which connects youth stakeholders with governments and international bodies like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, also conducted a workshop offering practical insights and actionable steps for youth involvement in climate advocacy.

In March 2024, AUS re-launched its Green Office Program, advocating for eco-friendly practices within the workplaces. Under this initiative, designated department representatives undergo comprehensive training sessions led by AUS Sustainability, covering program details, engagement opportunities and strategies for inspiring peers and colleagues to embrace sustainable habits within their respective department. AUS Sustainability also honored the profound cultural significance of the ghaf tree by hosting a Ghaf Seed Planting Workshop on campus during the spring semester. The workshop was organized in partnership with Goumbook, Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation and UAE Ministry of Education. The event was also part of the Greening Communities Program, the fourth pillar of the UAE's Green Education Partnership Roadmap.

AUS: A Sustainability Frontrunner in Higher Education



AUS continued to be at the forefront of climate action, actively promoting change through knowledge and research. Recognized among the top five institutions for community engagement in sustainability worldwide by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's 2022 Sustainable Campus Index, AUS has aligned its sustainability efforts with the UAE's 2050 Net Zero strategic plan. The university also holds a silver award from the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) for sustainability in higher education from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). AUS ranks third in the UAE and among the world's top 600 universities in sustainability, according to QS World University Rankings: Sustainability (2024).

During the reporting period, AUS marked the UAE Year of Sustainability with a range of educational programs, community projects, and awareness campaigns aimed at fostering a culture of sustainability and environmental responsibility among its students, faculty and staff.

AUS prominently contributed to sustainability initiatives as a member of the Universities Climate Network (UCN), a network comprising UAE-based universities and higher education institutions facilitating dialogues, workshops, public events and youth participation in the lead up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) and beyond. AUS also became a member of the UAE Alliance for Climate Action (UACA), a domestic alliance of stakeholders led by Emirates Nature-WWF and the flagship non-state actor program for the UAE, aiming to increase momentum towards achieving net zero targets in line with science and the Paris Agreement.

Through AUS Sustainability, the university played an active role in three prominent international sustainability events. These were:

CONFERENCE OF YOUTH

AUS co-hosted COY18, the largest youth conference focusing on UN climate processes, from November 26 to 28, 2023. Held at Expo City Dubai, this event empowered youth by offering capacity-building and policy training for their involvement in COP28. It served as a platform to amplify youth voices, directly influencing international climate policies within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) framework. COY, as the official gathering of engaged youth and YOUNGO members (the UNFCCC's youth constituency), contributed a dedicated youth policy paper to climate negotiations.

STUDENT ENERGY SUMMIT

Held under the theme "Reimagining the Future" from November 29 to December 1, 2023, the summit created a sustainable outlook for energy transition by connecting the youth of today to leaders of the energy sector to educate the leaders of tomorrow. With the support of AUS Sustainability and the Sharakah Schools Program, AUS' summit ambassadors organized a Climate Action Awareness Day for Sharakah high-school students to educate future generations on the significance of shifting to sustainable energy.

CASE STUDY



COP28

AUS had a significant presence at COP28, which took place from November 30 to December 12, 2023 at Expo City in Dubai. Focusing on youth participation and the pivotal role of education in accelerating progress to achieve global climate ambitions, AUS students, faculty and staff engaged in a myriad of events and activities in hubs located in COP28.

At the Greening Education Hub-(Erth), Legacy from the Land of Zayed, hosted by the UAE Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Greening Education Partnership and UNESCO, AUS faculty showcased their expertise in embedding sustainability into curricula. AUS has demonstrated notable success in integrating sustainability across its curriculum, with approximately 72 percent of all undergraduate and graduate courses incorporating some sustainability-related components.

AUS Sustainability also led a joint panel discussion with sustainability professionals from New York University Abu Dhabi and Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi on the progress made in measuring and tracking greenhouse gas emissions in higher education institutions in the UAE.

Further, visitors to the Greening Education Hub had the opportunity to learn about the sustainability-focused research of AUS students and faculty, including the prominent work of the university's Dana Gas Chair in Chemical and Biological Engineering, Petrofac Research Chair in Renewable Energy and Riad T. Sadek Chair in Civil Engineering.

AUS students were active in tackling some of the issues closest to the hearts of the youth at the conference, from youth ambitions for climate action, climate impact on culture and national identity, eco-anxiety and eco-grief in a climate crisis, to smart cities and UAE youth perspectives on learnings from COP.

AUS also was present at COP28's exclusive Blue Zone, the formal conference and negotiation space managed by the UNFCCC. Julia Carlow, Acting Head of AUS Sustainability, represented AUS in an UAE Alliance for Climate Action (UACA) event.

ON-CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

AUS held a series of activities to engage its community. Most prominent of these programs were the launch of a Green Living and Learning Community for students in its residential halls, the Expo City Climate Ambassador Program, the Shams Media Day on Climate Immediacy as well as a Climate Action Awareness Day for Sharakah School students. Notable also is the Manbat Market, which brings locally grown produce and locally sourced prepared foods to campus each week, offering the campus community sustainable food in a convivial farmer's market setting. Read more about Manbat Market in I.2.



CEN's **Careers in Sustainability** Seminar introduced students and community members to diverse career opportunities within the fields of sustainability. Organized in collaboration with the AUS Women in Engineering Committee, the seminar delved deeper into the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reflected on the UAE's vision to diversify and enhance the quality of its labor market by encouraging youth to pursue careers in sustainability, leading to green jobs and a greener economy.

At the college level, CAS' Department of Media Communication, under the leadership of Dr. Sohail Dahdal, showcased a climate action Virtual Reality (VR) project at COP28 and presented it at the Museum of the Future as part of TEDxCDA talks. This project, along with other engagements such as recording podcasts related to COP28, highlighted the department's commitment to leveraging immersive media to engage youth in climate action.

Furthermore, the Department of Biology, Chemistry and Environmental Sciences held its annual Environmental Day, drawing in 265 students and educators from 17 schools across the UAE. The event not only educates participants about pressing environmental issues but also introduces secondary students in the UAE to potential careers in the sciences.

Additionally, CEN organized seminars and symposia aimed at inspiring the next generation to pursue careers in sustainability, aligning with the UAE's goal of achieving a greener economy and net-zero emissions by 2050. Collaborations with industry partners like Schneider Electric facilitated professional training on energy concepts for students. Students also gained access to Schneider Electric's e-learning Energy University website, offering the latest information and training on energy efficiency concepts.

Furthermore, CEN graduate students participated in sessions at the 50th International Conference on Computers and Industrial Engineering, contributing to discussions on sustainable digital transformation alongside over 200 researchers from 34 countries. Moreover, CEN hosted its inaugural Engineering Endowed Chairs Symposium on Building Sustainable Solutions Towards Net Zero Emissions, drawing over 150 participants from academia, industry and government, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration.

CAAD's focus on sustainability was reflected in its student work from advanced architecture studios, which garnered recognition in prestigious exhibitions and competitions. For instance, projects from two studios were showcased in an exhibition on sustainability hosted by the Royal Institute of British Architects in Dubai, coinciding with Dubai Design Week and COP28. Additionally, a student team's work won the 2024 ADMAF Total Energies Design Sustainability Award, further amplifying CAAD's contributions to sustainable design practices.

CAAD also inculcates a strong sustainability ethic in its practices. For example, at the end of each semester during design studio cleanup, CAAD Labs proactively gathers usable material within the college so that it can be used rather than discarded. This includes sheet materials, wood and other materials that can be broken down and reused as scrap.

Other initiatives like the Professional Clothing Closet launched by SBA also support sustainability and students but through fashion. It endorses the reuse and repurposing of clothing items to aid in professional appearance, and takes a firm stand against fashion waste.

Furthermore, SBA's student achievements, such as finance student Iryn Tony's first place win in the Future Business Leader competition by First Abu Dhabi Bank, highlighted the intersection of finance and sustainability, emphasizing the importance of education in green finance and climate finance and was featured at COP28. During a panel session at the climate conference, Tony reflected on the critical need for enhanced education in green finance and climate finance. She particularly emphasized the importance of understanding the legal frameworks within the UAE, a key aspect of driving sustainable practices in the region.



The AUS Library is the first university library in the Middle East to join the Green Libraries initiative. The Green Library Manifesto represents a crucial step forward in promoting sustainable practices in library environments. By signing this manifesto, libraries commit to integrating sustainability principles into their operations, collections, services and facilities. It serves as a guiding framework for libraries worldwide to adopt environmentally responsible practices, reduce their carbon footprint and advocate for environmental awareness and action within their communities.



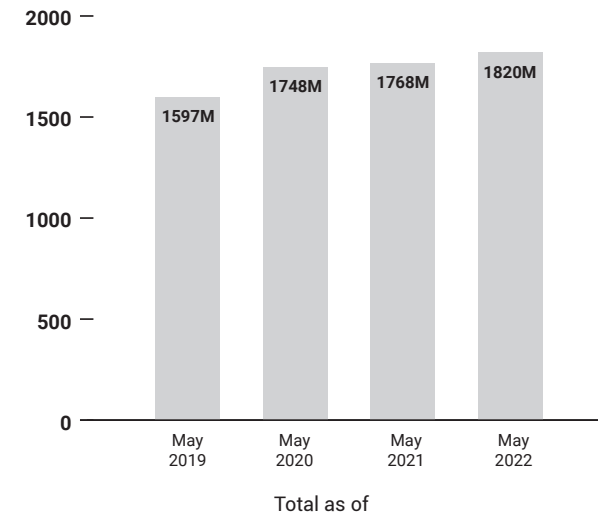
AUS FINANCIAL REVIEW

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF AUS FOR FY 2021 - 2022

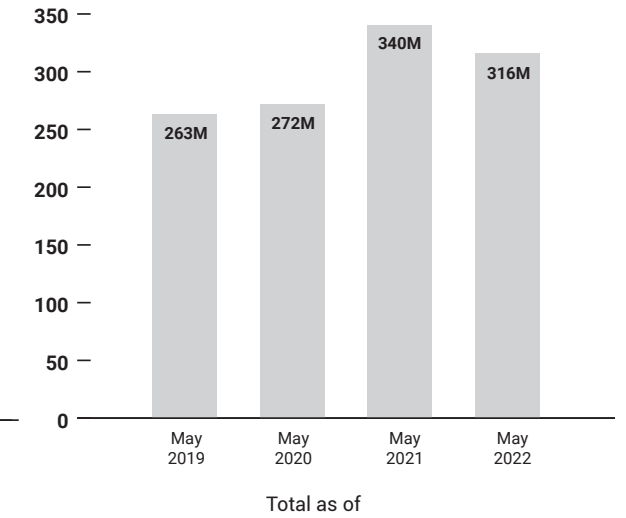
DETAILS	FISCAL YEAR	FISCAL YEAR	CHANGE %	CHANGE AED
	2021-2022 AED	2020-2021 AED		
Tuition and other fees	573,423,495	544,827,414	5%	28,596,081
Income from government grants	122,750,823	129,567,398	-5%	-6,816,575
Income from non-government grants	10,985,830	5,303,462	107%	5,682,368
Other income	16,739,563	12,880,908	30%	3,858,655
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	723,899,711	692,579,182	5%	31,320,529
Scholarships and fellowships	-135,885,023	-128,772,036	-6%	-7,112,987
General and administrative expenses	-547,093,514	-551,917,649	1%	4,824,135
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	-682,978,537	-680,689,685	0%	-2,288,852
OPERATING SURPLUS/DEFICIT	40,921,174	11,889,497	244%	29,031,677
Other items*	-16,548,793	97,972,721	-117%	-114,521,514
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	24,372,381	109,862,218	-78%	-85,489,837

*Other items include realized and unrealized gains/losses on investments in securities and fixed deposits.

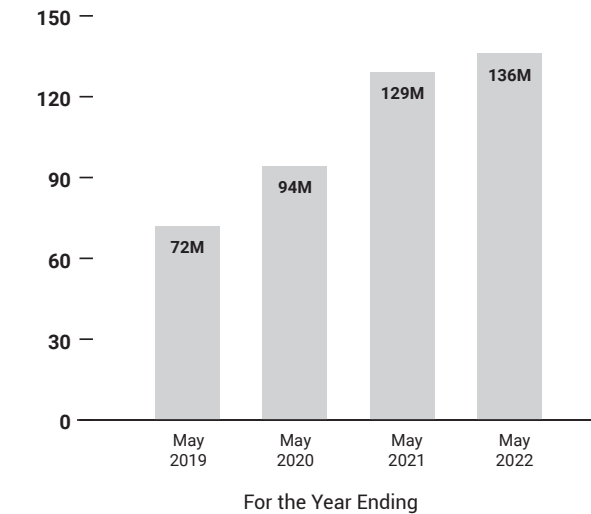
TOTAL ASSETS (IN AED)



TOTAL ENDOWMENTS (IN AED)

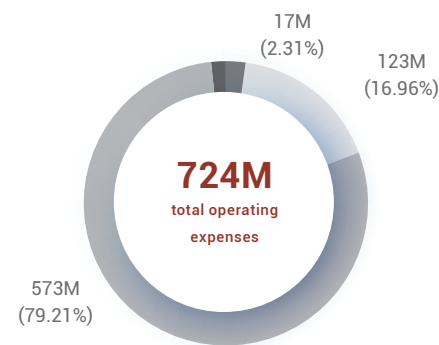


TOTAL SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS (IN AED)



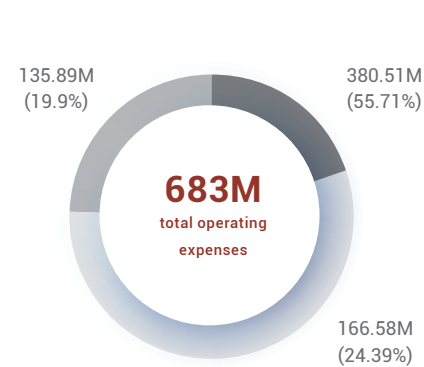
As Fiscal Year 2023–2024 has not concluded, AUS is currently unable to report on the corresponding figures. Additionally, for Fiscal Year 2022–2023, the external audit of the financial statements remains underway with no final approval from the Board of Trustees. As such, the report does not provide these figures.

OPERATING REVENUE - Y/3 31 MAY 2022



- Description**
- Tuition and other fees
 - Government grants income
 - Other income
 - Non-government grants income

OPERATING REVENUE - Y/3 31 MAY 2022



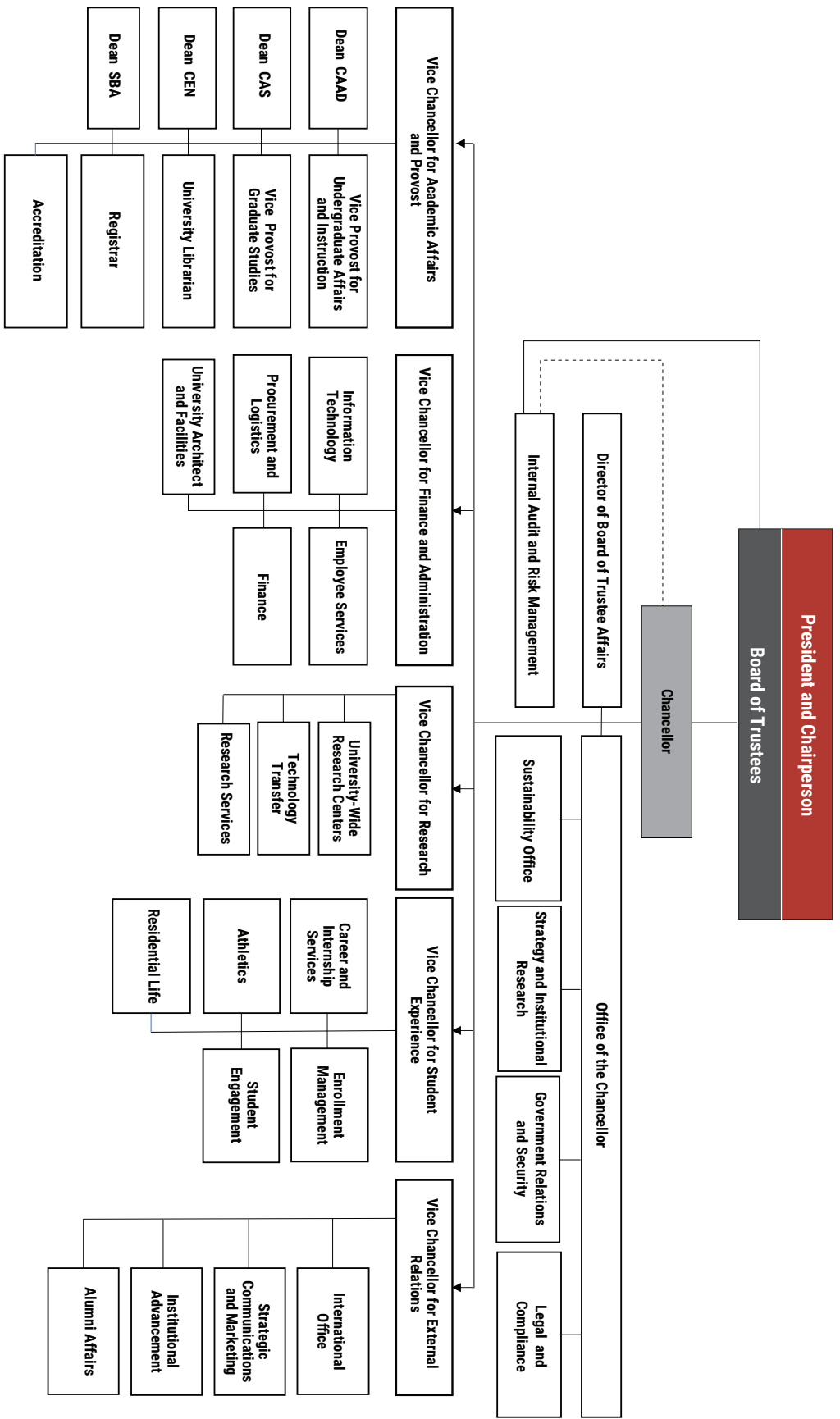
- Description**
- Staff costs
 - Other expenses
 - Scholarships and fellowships

A man with a beard, wearing a blue suit jacket and jeans, is sitting on a green ornate bench. He is holding an open book and looking at it. A black bag is on the bench next to him. The background is a bright, sunlit outdoor area with white columns and a railing.

**GOVERNANCE AND
LEADERSHIP**



ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



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Sultan S. Al-Qassemi, Founder, Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE

Tod A. Laursen, Chancellor, American University of Sharjah, UAE

FACULTY SENATE

Executive Committee

Nawar Al-Hassan Golley, Senate President

George Newlands, **Seth Thompson**, Senate Vice President (Fall 2023), Senate Vice President (Spring 2024)

Damon Dandridge, Senate Secretary

Magdi El-Emam, College of Engineering Representative

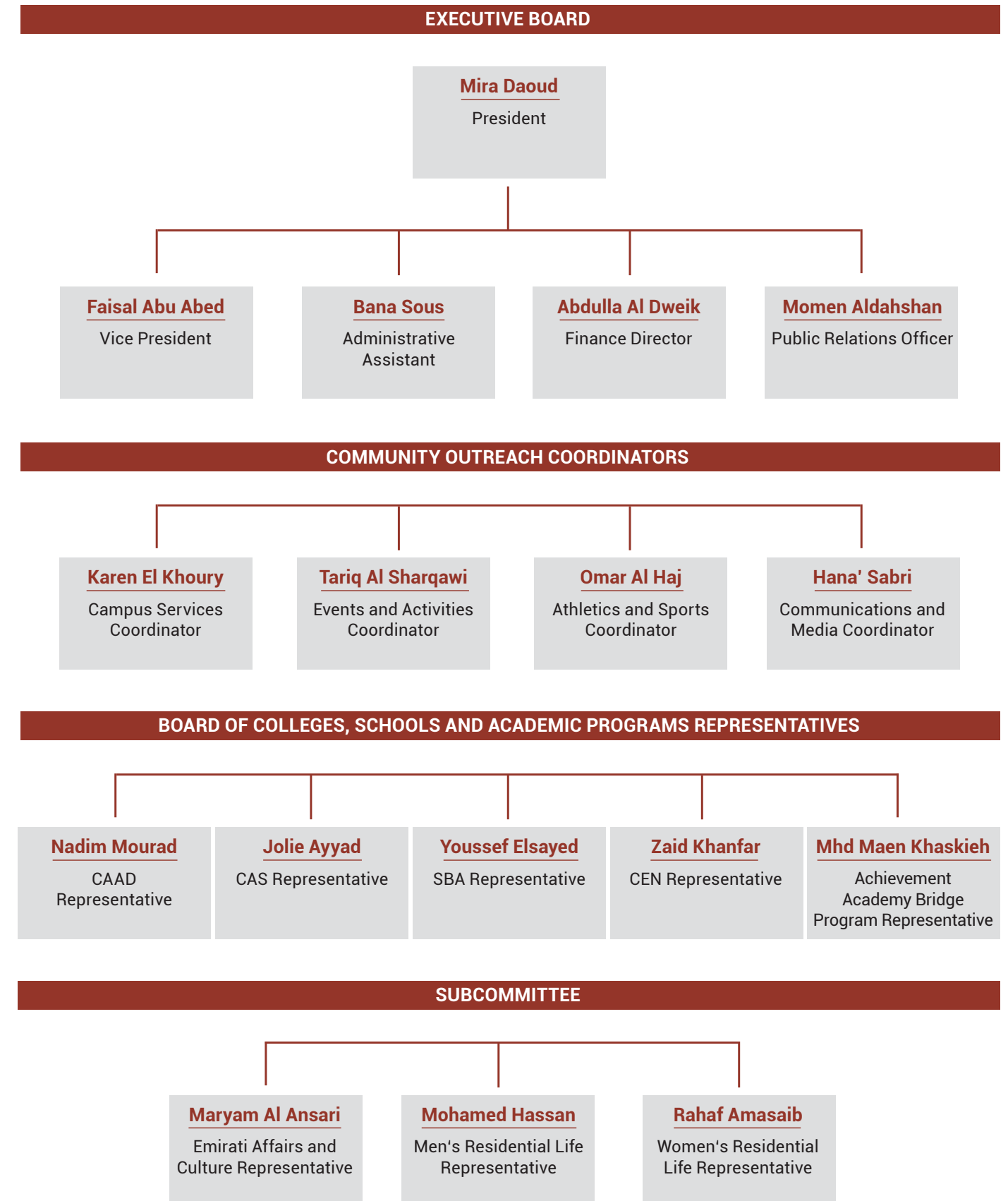
Camilo Cerro, College of Architecture, Art and Design Representative

Javed Younas, School of Business Administration Representative

Ghada Alobaidi, College of Arts and Sciences Representative

John Katsos, Past Senate President (non-voting member)

STUDENT COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



AUS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Board Members

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Ali Lootah, Class of 2013, Bachelor of Science in Design Management

VICE PRESIDENT

Mahmoud Mian, Class of 2003, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

EXECUTIVE OF THE COUNCIL

Noora Alshehhi, Class of 2011, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

TREASURER

Areej Makda, Class of 2021, Master of Business Administration

EXECUTIVE OF ADMINISTRATION

Dania Atatreh, Class of 2021, Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

Council Members

Council Representatives: Schools and Colleges

- College of Architecture, Art and Design Chapter | Tala Alnounou
- College of Arts and Sciences Chapter | Sarah Al Saeid
- College of Engineering Chapter | Sameed Khalid
- School of Business Administration Chapter | Mozah AlSamahi

Council Representatives: Regional Chapters

- Abu Dhabi Chapter | Nabil Kenan
- Dubai Chapter | Ruba Al Nashash
- Sharjah and Northern Emirates Chapter | El-Cheikh Fadi Kais
- Kuwait Chapter | Hussain Al-Essa
- Saudi Arabia Chapter | Nada Almuhanha
- Egypt Chapter | Farah El Sadat
- Jordan Chapter | Dina Tahboub
- Canada Chapter | Mahmoud Ghandour
- Pakistan Chapter | Hussain Fakhruddin
- UK Chapter | Muhammad Abdullah Khan
- Australia Chapter | Mariam Abdou

Council Representatives: Graduating Classes

- Rola Faour | Class of 2002
- Kareem Elayan | Class of 2003
- Nancy Zakharia | Class of 2004
- Raheal Akhtar | Class of 2006
- Wafa Khalfan | Class of 2008
- Ahmed Alhammadi | Class of 2010
- Shahd Hamdan | Class of 2011
- Majd Abudagga | Class of 2012
- Anam Tariq | Class of 2013
- Mohammed Mahdi | Class of 2014
- Hisham Mahmoud | Class of 2015
- Mehak Ayaz | Class of 2017
- Suhaib Al-Hasani | Class of 2018
- Mohammad Atallah | Class of 2019
- Abdulhakim Shoshaa | Class of 2020
- Fatima Khankham | Class of 2021
- Mohammad Said | Class of 2022

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

NAME	POSITION	PROGRAM/COLLEGE/SCHOOL
Faisal Mustafa	President	PhD candidate, Materials Science and Engineering - CAS
Lara Omar Dhin	Vice President	MS in Construction Management - CEN
Reza Ali Davoodi	Treasurer	MS in Electrical Engineering - CEN
Joel Nabil Georgeous	Executive Assistant	MS in Biomedical Engineering - CEN
Sara Nezar Al Armouti	Public Relations Coordinator	MS in Construction Management- CEN
Arhum Hassan	Activities Coordinator	PhD candidate, Material Science and Engineering - CAS
Ahmed Sherif Anwar Sayed	Activities Coordinator	MS in Civil Engineering - CEN
Hiyam Sultan AlZarooni	Media Coordinator	MS in Business Administration - SBA
Yusur Khalid Al-Mnaseer	Media Coordinator	MS in Engineering Systems Management- CEN
Muhammad Asim	College Representative (CEN)	Master in Mechanical Engineering - CEN
Mahra Talib Almarri	College Representative (SBA)	Master in Business Administration - SBA
Sania Parambathkandy Shanavaz	College Representative (CAAD)	Ms in Urban Planning - CAAD
Dania Mohammad Dallah	College Representative (CAS)	MS in Mathematics - CAS



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