



Vice President for Advancement

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OVERVIEW

The Lebanese American University ("LAU") is a nationally and internationally recognized not-for-profit, private American university chartered by the Board of Regents in New York and licensed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Beirut.

Built near the old lighthouse of Ras Beirut, the "college on the hill" overlooking the Mediterranean Sea has constantly evolved as it empowered generations of women through access to American-style higher education. Its first evolution came in 1948-49 as the college expanded into a four-year curriculum and became the Beirut College for Women. In the 1970s, the university became coeducational and transformed into the Beirut University College. The final chapter in its unique trajectory came in 1994 when the university expanded into a second campus and turned into a comprehensive university.

At present, LAU maintains an enrollment of 9,000+ students, 2,000+ faculty and staff (full-time and part-time); two distinct operating campuses in Beirut and Byblos, Lebanon; a branch campus in New York City; and two academic medical centers in Beirut and Jounieh (Keserwan area). The university comprises seven schools serving undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral/professional practice students across more than 60 degree-granting programs.

What makes LAU unique and special is its mission. The Lebanese American University is a "university that cares," committed to academic excellence, student centeredness, civic engagement, the advancement of scholarship, the education of the whole person, and the formation of leaders in a diverse world.

As a result, the university embodies the heart, soul, and history of the country and region. Its survival and success, in the face of periodic conflicts and economic challenges, have strengthened the resolve of the university's community and provided a beacon of hope for youth who seek to better themselves, their countries, and the world. Adhering to the highest standards of American higher education, LAU is accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) and recognized by the New York State Education Department. This acknowledgment affirms the university's commitment to providing a rigorous academic experience that is both enriching and globally recognized. LAU employs the credit-based American system. The language of instruction is English except for courses in Arabic literature and foreign languages. The academic calendar is based on two semesters: fall (August through December) and spring (January through May). A module is also offered in the summer. Course work is measured in credit hours. The undergraduate curriculum includes a common base of liberal arts courses for all students.

The university's mission is rooted in the principles of tolerance, diversity, and ethical leadership. LAU prepares students to contribute positively to both local and global communities. Through its dedication to student-centered learning and community service, LAU continues to uphold its tradition of readying leaders to face the challenges of an ever-changing world.

For more information on LAU, see the Appendix and visit the university's [website](#).

The Lebanese American University (“LAU”) is at an inflection point and poised for further growth and greater impact. This era of opportunity—enabled by positive geopolitical change in Lebanon and the Levant region, a dynamic new president at LAU, investments made by LAU at its Beirut, Byblos, and New York City campuses, and the receipt of the largest gift in the university's history in 2024—positions the university to advance its mission ever more widely, serving Lebanon, the region, and the Lebanese diaspora as a key agent for the rebuilding of Lebanon and expanded opportunity for its people.

Reporting to the President and serving as a critical member of the executive leadership team, the Vice President (“VP”) of Advancement is responsible for the strategic vision and leadership of a full-scale advancement program across fundraising, principal and transformational gifts, annual giving, and donor relations. The VP will assess LAU's fundraising potential and current development operation, crafting a sophisticated multi-year strategy to expand philanthropic support on a global scale, with particular focus on LAU alumni and expats in the US, Europe, and across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Key to this leader's success will be the ability to partner effectively with the university President and Board of Trustees.

Specifically, the VP will:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive advancement strategy that aligns with LAU's mission and supports the university's ambitious goals, driving quality execution to meet best-in-class expectations.
- Restructure and expand the advancement division into a sustainable enterprise by recruiting and mentoring a high-performing staff, with clear metrics for success and a healthy organizational culture.
- Build a well-resourced advancement program serving a strong, expanded donor base with particular focus on increasing annual giving, major and principal gifts, and donor relations broadly defined.
- In concert with the Vice President, Communications and Alumni Relations, strengthen and enhance alumni engagement through innovative programming and outreach initiatives.
- Capitalize on the country's current momentum by tapping into the desire of Lebanese citizens and expats to empower Lebanon's renewal after years of economic and political malaise and the most recent conflict, including potential donors not currently affiliated with the institution.
- Foster a culture of philanthropy and increased awareness about the role that philanthropy can play in LAU's future across all cohorts of the university.

The VP will lead a global and growing staff, including 14 staff in Beirut and nine in New York. The location for this role is somewhat flexible, though the VP will need to have a presence in New York and be ready to travel in North America as well as internationally, particularly to Lebanon, MENA, Europe, and other parts of the United States and Canada.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE

- Minimum of eight years of progressive leadership of multi-faceted development work within a higher education or an equally complex environment; ideally, exposure to fundraising in an international context.
- Evidenced global sensitivity and mindset, with experience cultivating relationships with diverse stakeholders, donor bases, and other external partnerships. Specific experience in both the US and the MENA region would be ideal.

- Proven success in designing and implementing a strategic fundraising plan that has significantly grown an existing development program; significant personal achievement in cultivating major, principal, and transformative gifts, as well as large-scale campaign execution.
- Track record of increasing the effectiveness of a development program and staff through established objectives and performance standards.
- Demonstrated success in mentoring and guiding an organization's President, senior leadership, Board, and wider staff in the fulfillment of their fundraising responsibilities.
- Experience serving as a dynamic and confident spokesperson on behalf of an organization to a range of audiences.
- Financial fluency and operational efficiency; ability to develop, monitor, and manage a budget.
- Bachelor's degree required.

CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITIES

Strategic and Visionary Leadership

- Develops, communicates, and executes a strategic fundraising plan that effectively expands LAU's philanthropic performance.
- Embodies a readiness to set ambitious goals and execute effectively against them, translating strategies into measurable actions that deliver results.
- Identifies and executes new advancement approaches that are benchmarked against sector best practices and drive enduring, positive change to LAU's advancement capabilities.
- Builds a sense of confidence and pride in the advancement program and a culture of philanthropy across LAU, its alumni, and external audiences.
- Communicates the vision with enthusiasm and passion, focusing on long-term goals while celebrating current achievements, tracking progress, and giving critical feedback to both team members and Board and university leadership.

Collaborating, Influencing, and Fundraising

- Builds strong, authentic, and collaborative relationships with colleagues at all levels within LAU and earns trust by working effectively across functions.
- Engages others in open dialogue and adapts own influence approach to different stakeholders in ways that address their interests and concerns.
- Incorporates best-in-class development processes that deliver sustainable and significant increases in philanthropic support; seeks creative pathways to identify, activate, and engage new prospects, significantly expanding LAU's donor base.
- Manages a portfolio of major and principal gift prospects and donors.
- Collaborates with VP, Communications and Alumni Relations to drive activity and initiatives that better engage alumni.

Organizational Impact

- Demonstrates respect for diversity in people, ideas, and backgrounds.
- Incorporates best-in-class development processes and operational management that will track progress and ensure accountability.

- Builds, mentors, and inspires high-performance teams, fostering energy, enthusiasm, commitment, and ownership in staff, as well as an environment where people want to excel.
- Galvanizes the Board, President, senior leadership, volunteers, alumni, academic leaders, and non-development staff around fundraising while guiding and mentoring as needed to help individuals understand how they can support LAU's fundraising success.

OTHER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Strong analytical skills.
- Authentic relationship builder.
- Culturally sensitive and adaptive to working within diverse environments.
- A deep appreciation for Lebanon, its people, and its culture.
- Unimpeachable integrity and ethics.
- Clear and effective communicator.
- Humble, empathetic, and approachable.
- Inclusive, respectful, and team-oriented.
- Politically savvy.

APPLICATIONS & NOMINATIONS

Lebanese American University is eager to receive input that will help it build a pool of talented individuals. To that end, the Search Committee welcomes your comments, inquiries, applications, and nominations, which may be submitted via the confidential search mailbox: LAUAdvancement@SpencerStuart.com.



Appendix



Dr. Chaouki T. Abdallah President

Chaouki T. Abdallah became the tenth president of LAU on October 1, 2024. Most recently, he served as Executive Vice President for Research at The Georgia Institute of Technology (“Georgia Tech”), from September 2018 until September 2024.

Under Dr. Abdallah's leadership, research expenditures at Georgia Tech increased significantly from approximately \$850 million at the start of his term in 2018 to \$1.45 billion as of December 2023. Dr. Abdallah previously served as the 22nd president of the University of New Mexico. His efforts there contributed to an 8% increase in first-year student retention and a 125% increase in four-year graduation rates. A prominent expert in control theory and systems engineering, he has authored eight books, serving as co-editor for three of them and co-author for five. Additionally, he has contributed to more than 400 peer-reviewed articles. Dr. Abdallah is deeply committed to guiding students and has personally mentored 36 Master's degree and 16 Ph.D. candidates.

Dr. Abdallah studied at the Faculté d'ingénierie of the Université Saint-Joseph in Lebanon before continuing his studies in the United States at Youngstown State University in Ohio, where he obtained a Bachelor of Engineering (B.E.) degree in 1981. He earned M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech in 1982 and 1988, respectively.

Dr. Abdallah is a native of Rachana, a village in northern Lebanon known for its beautiful sculptures, where some of his family still live. He and his seven siblings are all first-generation college graduates, thanks in part to the hard work of their parents. Dr. Abdallah met his wife, Catherine, also an engineering graduate, at Georgia Tech. She is the president of a global supply chain company. They have two engineering graduate sons.

LAU CAMPUSES

LAU has two campuses in Lebanon: Beirut and Byblos. Steeped in history, both cities still bear traces of their ancient origins yet are distinctly modern. Through their libraries, athletic facilities, residence halls, theaters, laboratories, computer centers, and academic support services, the two campuses provide state-of-the-art infrastructure and a wealth of services that enrich the experiences of students, faculty, and staff.

The **Beirut** campus, the university's first, is located in the Ras Beirut neighborhood within steps of the Mediterranean Sea, with 13 buildings ranging from traditional, Ottoman-style architecture to ultra-modern structures. The campus also hosts the Arab Institute for Women, which was founded in 1973 as the first institute of its kind in the Arab world. The Beirut campus is a green gem inside a bustling city and is valued by the LAU community, and indeed the nation, for evoking Lebanon's heritage.

The **Byblos** campus, which began development in 1987, represents for many LAUers a combination of modernity, style, and cutting-edge learning. The campus, located near the ancient Phoenician port, has 19 buildings, all constructed with sustainability as well as aesthetics in mind. The campus is home to the health sciences schools, the cutting-edge Clinical Simulation Center as well as the School of Engineering and its high-tech laboratories.

LAU has also expanded its facilities with a strategic presence in Manhattan, New York with a 2,400 square meter campus. Since 2014, this center has been offering courses in Arabic and holding cultural events. A plan to offer more courses in partnership with US universities is currently under development.

LAU MEDICAL CENTERS

LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital

LAU's expansion into the field of medical education was buttressed by the acquisition of a majority shareholder position in the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital. This large medical campus in the heart of Beirut is designed to support LAU's schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Pharmacy while providing clinical facilities and services to the community.

LAU Medical Center-Saint John's Hospital

Inaugurated in 2021, the LAU Medical Center-Saint John's Hospital in the Jounieh/Byblos area adds enormous value to the medical practice in a major part of the country. Managed and operated by LAU, it is the only university medical center in that region.

KEY LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY FACTS

The university's significant impact is evident through its numbers: over 54,000 alumni across 78 nationalities, more than 9,000 students, and a vast array of extracurricular activities, supported by 2,000+ faculty and staff (full-time and part-time).

LAU's commitment to accessibility and diversity has been demonstrated in the midst of Lebanon's financial crisis during which the university delivered a \$190 million financial aid program over the course of two years, unprecedented in the nation's history, so that no eligible student would be turned away on the basis of need. 80% of LAU students benefit from one or more forms of financial aid. Through its endowments, LAU is able to rely on a safety net to address unforeseen issues and access additional resources to support vital areas of the university's development.

Today, the Lebanese American University comprises seven distinct schools:

- **School of Arts and Sciences** offers a diverse range of programs in humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics.
- **School of Architecture and Design** is home to internationally recognized programs in architecture, art, and design, including a fashion design curriculum offered in collaboration with ELIE SAAB.
- **Adnan Kassar School of Business** provides comprehensive business education, emphasizing ethical leadership and global business practices.
- **School of Engineering** offers engineering programs that blend technical skills with hands-on learning.
- **Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine** provides medical education and training, emphasizing patient care and research.
- **Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing** focuses on nursing education and practice, preparing students for healthcare professions.
- **School of Pharmacy** offers programs in pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical sciences.

CULTURE

In both planning for its future as well as conducting its ongoing daily activities, LAU seeks to act in a manner that is guided by a deep-rooted sense of shared ethical values and aspirations. Built upon this foundation, Lebanese American University:

- Draws its fundamental inspiration from the devotion of its Presbyterian Founders to always seek the Truth, respect human dignity, promote gender equality, and be inclusive;
- Provides educational opportunities as one university with multiple campuses, each with distinctive gifts and attributes;
- Commits to academic and service excellence throughout the institution;
- Demonstrates dignity and respect for and from the Board, faculty, staff, and students in word and in deed;
- Celebrates the accomplishments and contributions of all members of the LAU community;
- Succeeds because its people take pride of ownership and are held accountable for their actions;
- Works together as an extended family community that reflects the highest ethical and moral standards;
- Enables individuals to find their own spiritual and personal fulfillment while ever sensitive to the changing global village in which they live; and
- Promotes social connectedness of the students to the country of Lebanon; encourages their commitment to social justice and democracy.