

Launching of the New
Beirut Arab University
Website and Portal
5/3/2009

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are gathering today to celebrate the launching of the new BAU website and portal. Today – the 5th of March will make the end of an era and the beginning of a new one in the calendar of development in the life history of Beirut Arab University.

It gives me great sense of pride to say that BAU has always been among the leading universities in the train of progress trying to catch up with the latest trends of scientific and technical steps of development.

The date of the old website goes back to the 90s of the last century; it covered a large area which provided the university with its necessities for the time.

The new website and portal will provide the whole university – staff – students – researchers and administrators with all whatever information from all over the world.

All over the globe, education experts are debating whether open educational resources, e-learning, mobile learning, web applications, blended learning, and educational games are merely a blip on the educational radar or a phenomenon that is here to stay. Seen by many as part of a significant trend towards more openness in higher education, many questions remain unanswered about how to build in sustainability, what the best organizational model to choose is, and how to make sure high quality is maintained.

Universities nowadays have a mission to provide knowledge not only to their on-campus students but also beyond the "Walls" of the institutions. This implies a far more service-oriented approach, where the emphasis lies in providing knowledge services including the possibility for networking and collaboration and creation of shared knowledge. This opening can be taken a step further, placing the notion of a university clearly in the virtual world.

Beirut Arab University, which was founded in 1960, started with only four faculties and has expanded over the past years into ten academic faculties with 35 departments distributed across the disciplines as to cover specific fields of

specialization, in addition to campuses in Beirut and Debbieh, and future campuses in Tripoli and the Bekaa.

BAU is continuously looking to improve its academic and administrative services by consistently upgrading these services with the latest technologies. Self assessment and time and motions studies are periodically conducted to target areas that require improvement.

With a clear vision to the future, BAU aims to achieve the following priorities by 2012:

- 1- To recruit and retain high potential students and retain staff of the highest quality.
- 2- To meet Distance Learning needs.
- 3- To invest in our academic base by diversifying our sources of income.
- 4- To increase both the numbers and proportion of international students.
- 5- To develop and maintain a sustainable infrastructure development program across the university.
- 6- To promote active participation and involvement on the part of our alumni and wider community.
- 7- To be always at the leading edge of the fast evolving computer technology within a multi-campus operation.

Today's students live on-line; they share games, videos and friends on the internet, and adapt technologies even before they enter the market. They are the new generation.

They are the new revolution, and classrooms worldwide will not stay untouched by this revolution.

Will today's teaching methods soon be a matter of the past?

What is happening in today's classrooms as a new generation of technically informed students enters universities?

How does the world's economic crisis and shrinking budgets affecting education and training in their present forms?

To be able to meet this aggressive future commitments BAU have allocated substantial amount of resources and acquired in 2008 Banner Student Information System, Banner Finance, and Luminis University portal System. The services of ITS have been acquired in implementing Banner as part of an overall strategy, with an intensive 18 months training schedule, and is committed to succeed in its journey toward the new technological era.

Today, with the launch of the new website and portal, BAU is setting the milestone infrastructure and the foundation of e-education to meet the ever increasing technological needs of the students of the future.