

# INSTITUTIONAL BACKBONE

## A. Library

LAU's expansion over the years into a full-fledged, internationally recognized university has been accompanied by a vibrant growth in library resources. Currently, there are four distinct facilities that serve the research needs of the university's faculty, students and staff: The Riyad Nassar Library in Beirut, the Byblos Campus Library, the Health Sciences Library (also in Byblos) and the LAU NY Library. At present, a brand new facility is under construction in Byblos, the Gibran Khalil Gibran Library, which will address the continually widening needs of our Byblos-based community.

Between them, the libraries house an ever-expanding print collection of more than half a million volumes and more than 500 print periodicals. No less than 300,000 e-books are also available for LAU libraries users. In addition, the staff works constantly to update subscriptions to online databases and interlibrary loan services, providing library users with access to millions of records on demand.

Library Circulation	
Number of borrowed books	92,126
Number of borrowed books/day	400
Total number of transactions	20,4951
Total number of transactions/day	891
Attending users	1,061,989
Attending users/Day	4,047

## B. Department of Institutional Research & Assessment (DIRA)

In AY2016-2017, DIRA's basic role of overseeing institutional reporting expanded, as the university established new partnerships with leading educational organizations and industry. DIRA now provides data annually to a range of internal and external organizations, including ranking agencies.

DIRA has also been instrumental in supporting evidence-based decision making and strengthening a culture of assessment throughout the university, conducting an extensive SWOT analysis that has provided a better understanding of LAU's internal strengths and weaknesses and aided in identifying possible external opportunities and threats, laying the ground for the development of SPIII.

The department conducted a comprehensive benchmark study on human resources, with the aim of identifying best practices or strategies that will lead to improvement. DIRA has also conducted labor market studies funded by USAID to explore the demands of the Lebanese job market, with the goal of enhancing the employability prospects of its graduates. Finally, as AY2016-2017 drew to a close, DIRA completed a first-of-its-kind study of LAU's contribution to the national economy.

## C. Information Technology for the New Millennium

As always, LAU's Information Technology (IT) department spent the past academic year providing superior support services to the entire university, maintaining an effective and reliable network, introducing new smart classrooms and upgrading existing facilities, introducing a cutting-edge data management system to several university departments, and constantly monitoring developments in the industry in order to provide the university with state-of-the-art technology.

Highlights included commencing the university-wide deployment of the next-generation information security system to guard against potential hackers, initiating a major infrastructure upgrade in Byblos, implementing a document management system, as well as a lecture capture system in some classes. In addition, IT implemented Deep Packet Inspection (DPI), a flexible internet traffic management system with advanced intelligence and policy enforcement features.

IT worked on connecting the LAU-Louis Cardahi Foundation in downtown Byblos to the LAU campus network and is in the process of building its online museum to display the literary, artistic as well as historical items in its inventory. IT also procured and doubled the internet connectivity for the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital as well as LAU. Finally, the department is playing a key role in an inter-university project that aims to connect several Lebanese universities, public libraries and research centers in a single network in order to enable and accelerate research and collaboration projects and achieve greater efficiency in projects and procurement cycles.

IT is continuously upgrading its systems in order to maintain its services at the optimum operating level and provide students, faculty and staff with the latest tools enhancing teaching, learning, research and the administrative process. Recent highlights include:

- Banner upgrades in preparation for the new Banner XE platform and latest mobile features.
- Upgrades to LAU's Active Directory, faculty and staff email.
- Upgrade of OLIB, Dspace and Blackboard to the latest recommended releases.
- Migration of Raiser's Edge (RE) from Oracle to SQL, including re-engineering of all RE reports.



In spring 2017, LAU launched new student mobile packages offered by Alfa and Touch — the first of their kind in Lebanon. The university was able to offer this opportunity to its students due to its capacity and technical infrastructure, which enabled swift cooperation with the telecoms providers while maintaining student confidentiality.

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## D. Maximizing Human Capital: The Personnel Pool

As in previous years, the Department of Human Resources went above and beyond in proving its commitment to providing qualified personnel to undergird the work of the entire university community, be it in the area of faculty, supporting staff or administration.

The recently restructured department successfully operationalized a new assessment system, which accounted for both “Management by Objectives” and “Competency-based Management.” Based on the outcome of the performance appraisal cycle and supervisors’ recommendations, a training and development plan was implemented and around 200 employees benefitted from centrally organized training workshops.

In 2017 and in collaboration with the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, the Legal Counsel and Finance, HR developed a salary scale for the full-time and part-time physicians at the school.

The department saw the launching of a new Staff Relations & Development Unit in fall 2016; the new unit has since developed an onboarding program for new staff members. HR also sponsored a number of staff relations initiatives, such as a campaign emphasizing healthy eating habits in the workplace, and Mothers’ Day celebrations.

## E. Capital Plan Implementation: State-of-the-Art Learning and Research Facilities



A university so obviously on the move would not be possible without a steadily improving and expanding physical space to support the many activities of its students, faculty and staff. As always, the Facilities Management department (FM) worked round-the-clock throughout the past year to accommodate LAU’s evolving spatial needs.

In AY2016-2017, the Byblos infrastructure project reached its final stage. When finished, it will provide the Byblos campus through a newly-built underground tunnel network with 9 megawatts of electrical power, central chilled water air conditioning, heating, and waste water treatment plants, a central water-pumping station, and a 3,500m<sup>3</sup> water reservoir facility. Also in Byblos,

the construction of the Engineering Laboratories and Research Center (ELRC) was completed; the School of Engineering began using parts of the premises as of spring 2017. Work on the site of the new Library and Central Administration buildings (conceived with the goal of achieving LEED-Gold Certification) is progressing at a rapid pace.

Following the completion, in 2015, of the first phase of the Beirut infrastructure upgrade, work on Phase II progressed at full speed throughout the past year. The project – which was substantially completed by February 2017 – consisted of building a 25-meter-high steel tower to pipe up the exhaust fumes produced by generators to a high altitude above the surrounding buildings and connecting a newly-procured 2000 KVA generator to provide back-up power to the main power plant.

Also in Beirut, the planned renovation of the Gezairi Building continued apace while design processes for the renovation of Irwin Hall (including its auditorium) and Gulbenkian Theater also reached their final development phases.

In January 2017, members of the FM department began assisting LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital with its planned renovation projects, which include operation upgrades and expansions, guided by the medical Integrated Strategic Plan (see the section on Health Sciences schools in this report); in addition works are progressing in parallel with the long-term Master Plan for the Hospital.

In addition to specific projects, numerous renovation and deferred maintenance tasks are being executed across both campuses and will be completed throughout the upcoming academic year. These include measures focused on safety, energy management and sustainability, university design guidelines, assessing the conditions of buildings and grounds, implementing Enterprise Asset Management software, reviewing procedures and guidelines, establishing a university real estate unit, administering LAU's Property Management Insurance policy, launching a new Facilities Management website, and upgrading waste management capacity while initiating a university-wide recycling campaign.

Facilities Management launched a unique recycling program targeting the university community as a whole and carried out in partnership with the NGO L'Ecoute. Proceeds from recycled materials are channeled to supporting the organization's constituency of the hearing impaired, blind and reduced mobility residents of Lebanon.

