

STUDENT CENTERED APPROACH

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES @ AOU LEBANON

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OUTLINE

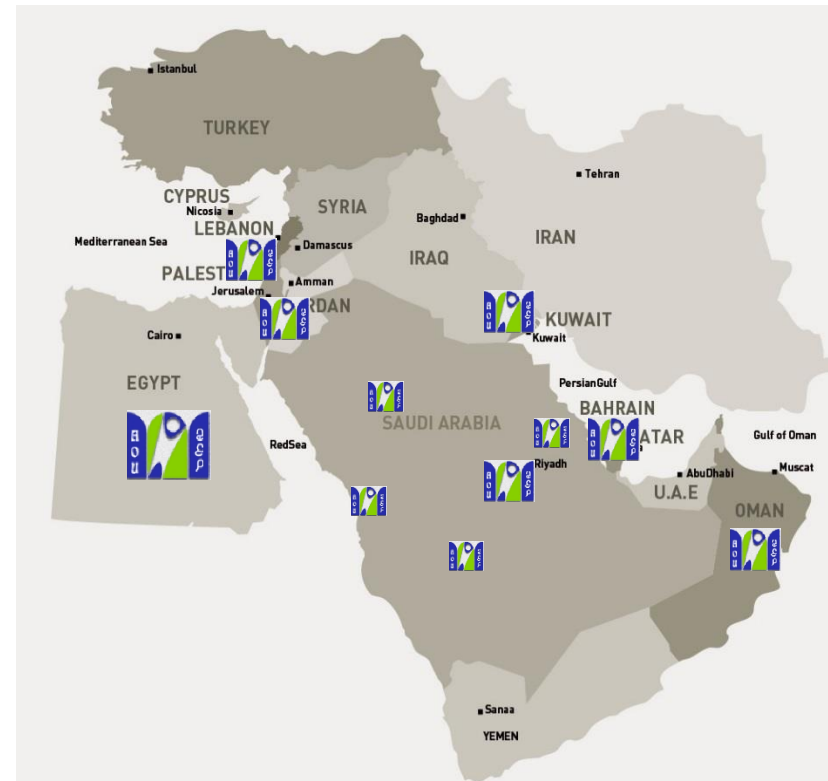
- **AOU – Some facts**
- **Overview**
- **AOU Student Services**
 - Admissions and Registration
 - Academic
 - Student Affairs
 - Helpdesk

ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY – SOME FACTS



Some facts

- Non-Profit Organization
- Supported by AGFUND (Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organization)
- Eight branches
- Four faculties
 - Business Studies
 - Computer Studies
 - Language studies
 - Education studies



ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY – SOME FACTS



AOU – UKOU agreements

- Structured and formalized collaboration, but without jeopardizing the position of the AOU as an independent institution.
- AOU adopts and adapts UKOU learning materials for its own use
- Allow AOU to be accredited by CICP(Centre for Inclusion and Collaborative Partnerships) and award UKOU own degrees.
- Business, English language and ITC programs are validated

OVERVIEW

❖ Goals: A Total Quality Management vision

- Listening to the “client”
- Services are evolved around the student – the end user
- Quality of Service (QoS) is implemented in every support aspect
- Employees pride themselves in the quality of the work

OVERVIEW – CONT'D.

- ❖ **AOU processes are student centered**
- ❖ **Student feedback loops are implemented to measure student satisfaction and implement enhancements**
- ❖ **Student feedback Cycle**
 - Student survey (each term)
 - Student complaint/feedback facility (online & drop boxes)
 - Appeals and Petition
- ❖ **Real action is made and students made aware of, whether individual or collective**
- ❖ **Students who believe their feedback is acted upon are more satisfied and have more AOU loyalty**
- ❖ **Continuous improvement by opening channels with students and acting upon their feedback**

STUDENT SERVICES

❖ Support services evolve around the main branch functions:

- Admissions and Registration
- Academic
- Student Affairs
- Financial
- Helpdesk
- Alumni
- Extracurricular

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION



❖ On Campus Orientation (Pre-admission)

- Receiving prospective applicants and providing them with comprehensive information
- Addressing candidate applicants individual needs
- Illustrative information that is simple to understand (flyers, brochures)
- Most important aspect is face-time. Each applicant is dealt with individually and given enough time to feel comfortable and confident in pursuing admission

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION



❖ Post-admission Orientation

- Orientation and counseling for new students including course/section selection and optimizing the student's schedule
- New students are usually disoriented. Our system caters for their needs by one-to-one sessions with trained admission officers who readily answer questions

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION – CONT'D.



- ❖ **Support to these services is implemented via:**
 - Trained staff that are courteous and knowledgeable providing high-touch service
 - Solid and clear procedures and guidelines (students hate to be disoriented or passed on to other departments)
 - Students feel cared for and supported (their problem is our problem)

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION – CONT'D.



❖ Online Services

- Single access portal to all online services at AOU
- One interface facilitating interaction with all e-services (students have one place to go)

❖ Services cover

- Student Email
- LMS (moodle)
- Course registration, drop/add, change of section
- Grade view
- Appeals/Petitions, Certificates, Guidelines/Procedures
- Etc.

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION – CONT'D.



❖ Support via online

- User friendly and intuitive design
- Timely execution of students requests (24 to 48 hour feedback/action)
- Clear feedback channels (face-to-face, email, phone calls)
- Ability to use help desk online

❖ Empowering students to use online services

- Training module during induction
- Guidelines and procedures are disseminated vigorously
 - Orientation (in class and online)
 - Awareness campaigns (emails, distribution of material, and online posting)
- Lab assistants with training to assist needy students

STUDENT INDUCTION

- ❖ **Addresses new student needs and questions**
- ❖ **Highlights major AOU policies and regulations**
- ❖ **Explains grading system and GPA**
- ❖ **Introduces what plagiarism is and how to avoid it**
- ❖ **Explains online services and LMS (Moodle)**

ACADEMIC

- ❖ **Special academic support to student aimed at enhancing the learning experience**
 - Assigning academic advisor
 - Step by step advising plan for program and track (made available for students)
 - One-to-one individual follow up on students
 - Identification of students with special cases (academic probations, handicapped, etc..)
 - SSLC (Student-Staff Liaison Committee)

ACADEMIC – CONT'D.

- ❖ **PASS initiative (Peer Assisted Student Support)**
- ❖ **Improving the use of the Electronic support tools i.e. E-Library and LMS by our student**
- ❖ **Enhancing the student's academic experience by empowering tutors**
- ❖ **Non-program courses aimed at enhancing employability and addressing program deficiency**
 - CISCO Academy
 - ORACLE Academy

STUDENT AFFAIRS

- ❖ **Direct high-touch student support and services**
 - Face-time and direct guidance
 - Orientation and counseling
- ❖ **Professional workshops**
- ❖ **Job fair and professional training**
 - Guiding and matching student's job aspirations to potential employers
 - Links and channels with the industry
 - Annual Job Fair takes place on campus to give students and alumni the opportunity to network with potential employers and experience demands of the employment sectors.
- ❖ **Education Seminars and workshops**
- ❖ **Student Activities**
- ❖ **Student Publications**

STUDENT AFFAIRS – CONT'D.



❖ Student Clubs and Activities

- Activities are a vital part of the students' educational experience helping them establish bonds with their university and the community as a whole. Students are encouraged to engage in social, cultural and athletic events.

❖ Support for special needs (visual needs, physical needs, learning difficulties, etc...)

- A committee was instituted to follow up on students with special needs and facilitate their integration in the university life

STUDENT AFFAIRS – CONT'D.



- ❖ **Other support functions**
 - Infirmery with a highly trained staff
 - Health awareness campaigns
 - Red cross training
- ❖ **Online announcement system and automated LCD screen system**
 - Allowing students to follow-up all important announcements while on campus
- ❖ **Various orienting brochures, flyers, and documents (also found online)**

HELPDESK

- ❖ **Helpdesk is the central resource and assistance repository for troubleshooting student problems and answering their inquiries**
 - Trained personnel
 - Ability to answer and deal with all sorts of inquires
 - Forwards students to appropriate channels
 - Available by phone, email, online (website-moodle), and in person
- ❖ **The Helpdesk has had direct impact on student integration into AOU**
- ❖ **The helpdesk is a critical student support mechanism**

THANK YOU