



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

CONTENTS

01

Message from
the Chairman of the Board

02

Message from
the President of the University

04

Introduction

08

AUK News

12

AUK 10th Anniversary

14

Office of Institutional
Effectiveness and Planning

16

FACT FACTS(spring 2024)

18

Teaching and Learning

CONTENTS

22

Labs

27

Research

37

Budget

40

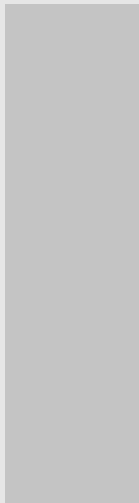
Join Us

42

Support a Student

44

Honor Roll of Donors







Message from the Chairman of the Board

As we celebrate AUK's 10th anniversary this year, we reflect on a decade of remarkable achievements. The dedication of our esteemed Board of Trustees has been instrumental in establishing AUK as a model of good governance, fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. Through various scholarship programs, we have expanded access to education for underrepresented students, creating a vibrant and inclusive campus community centered on student learning. Our steadfast commitment to quality assurance has culminated in a rigorous U.S. accreditation process, with full accreditation anticipated within the next few years. A heartfelt thank you goes to the Board of Trustees, and the generosity of the AUK Foundation, administration, faculty, and staff for their dedicated support over the past decade.

Looking ahead to the next decade, we envision AUK as a transformative force in higher education and a leading institution in the region. Our goal is to expand our programs to meet evolving market needs and support Kurdistan's economic diversification. We are committed to integrating technology into every facet of the learning experience, cultivating a culture of innovation and lifelong learning among our students. With the continued dedication of our faculty, staff, and students, we are confident in AUK's bright future.

Thank you for your continued support for the American University of Kurdistan.



Message from the President of the University

I would like to present the Annual Report of the American University of Kurdistan (AUK) for Academic Year 2023-2024. The Report provides an overview of current initiatives in respect to institutional effectiveness, teaching and learning, lab development, research, and fiscal stewardship.

The AUK is dedicated to preparing future generations of leaders through curricular and co-curricular excellence in an American-style education. At center of this effort is the pursuit of U.S. accreditation with the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). This necessitates the introduction and implementation of international best practices across all academic and administrative operations. Therefore, over the past year, the AUK has been working to develop its academic programs, student success infrastructure, community outreach, entrepreneurship programs, and leadership opportunities to ensure that the University's graduates are globally competitive and well on their own "path to excellence."

Thank you for your interest in the AUK, and your continued support.







INTRODUCTION

The writing of this Annual Report comes at a seminal moment for the American University of Kurdistan (AUK), turning the page on its first decade since establishment and looking forward to the next. AUK's founder, HE Masrouf Barzani, stated that the University would "pave [the] Path to Excellence" for its students, with its dedicated staff and faculty helping students define their career aspirations and engage in learning aimed at academic enrichment and workplace preparedness. We at AUK view "Excellence" as a way of life, not a final destination, and follow it systemically, in line with our core values and pursuant to our Strategic Plan.

Central to that agenda is the quest for U.S. accreditation through the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), recognized as an institutional accreditor by the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Carol Anderson, Vice-President of NECHE, visited the campus in February 2023 to personally observe the institution's effectiveness in meeting its mission and assess its commitment to American best practices in higher education. In February 2024, the Candidacy Visiting Team came to Duhok to delve deep into evidence documenting how the AUK demonstrates adherence to NECHE's nine Standards for Accreditation and complies with its policies. Each of the Standards articulates a dimension of institutional quality and address: mission and purposes; planning and evaluation; organization and governance; academic programs; student support and campus life; teaching, learning, and scholarship; institutional resources; educational effectiveness; and integrity, transparency, and public disclosure. The final outcome of the Candidacy Visit will be announced in October.



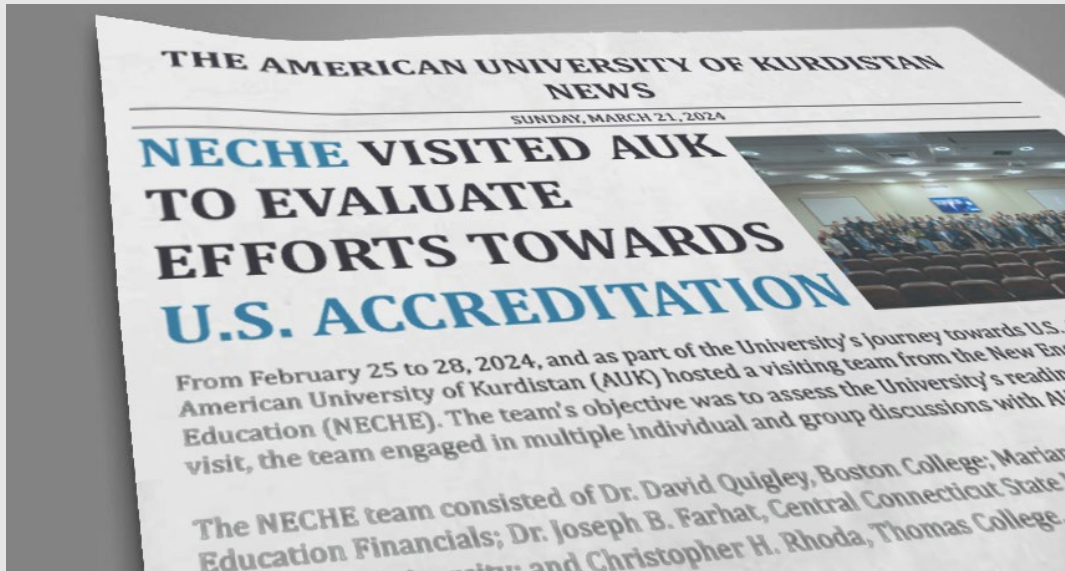


Concurrently, the University is moving forward on two strategic initiatives: the development of a campus masterplan and the conceptualization of master's programs. Regarding the former, the Board of Trustees has approved a vision of an expanded campus with a men's residence facility, sports center, second classroom building, and an amphitheater. Such constructions will facilitate the increased recruitment of students from across Iraq and internationally, an expansion of academic programs, the establishment of labs for research and development, and an enhanced campus environment dedicated to student success and building a strong AUK community. In respect to curricular expansion, the University has conducted an extensive market study to better appreciate the needs of the public and private sectors and the gaps in the current workforce. This will inform future discussions on academic programming. It is important that any new academic programs be distinctive and distinguished, unique in focus and reflective of the standards of excellence envisioned by the Board of Trustees, NECHE, and the people of Kurdistan.

It is also important to mention other newsworthy items: the appointment of a new Provost, Dr. Triona Croke; the hiring of six new international faculty members for fall 2024; the establishment of an AI Lab; the upgrading of classroom technologies; the implementation of SAP for financial management; the delivery of programming in the areas of entrepreneurship and leadership for female students and alumni; the acquisition of hardware and software to support students with physical, motor, and/or other learning challenges; and donor support in the founding of scholarships for students from the greater Kurdistan region.

In this Report, you will find information on our initiatives for institutional effectiveness and the enhancement of teaching and learning, as well as fast facts on our student demographic and budget. Also included is an advance peak into our vision for the 10th Anniversary celebration.

The University has accomplished much over its short history. Now, we're looking forward to the next decade(s). Central to all our efforts is the institutional mission and the founding vision for achieving "Excellence." The American University of Kurdistan has adopted and adapted U.S. best practices in higher education, and serves as model for the region. Next, we intend to push further to become recognized as one of the leading educational institutions in the Middle East.



SEPTEMBER 2023

The AUK hosted a delegation of members of the Canadian Parliament and a representative from the Kurdistan Regional Government in Washington for a discussion about current developments at the institution, including the accreditation process with the New England Commission of Higher Education and potential reception events for Kurdish communities in Canada to strengthen ties and create opportunities for AUK.

The AUK and Sumel's Hafid School celebrated the graduation of 43 instructors from the teacher training program. An initiative of AUK's Center for Academic and Professional Advancement (CAPA) aimed at making The Hafid School a Teacher Training Center with the goal of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the Duhok Governorate's public schools.

OCTOBER 2023

On October 1, the United States Department of State (DOS) awarded AUK a \$3.75 million grant entitled "Support to American-Style Higher Education in Iraq." The grant provides 49 scholarships to first-time university students from underrepresented groups, women, and students from minority backgrounds. Furthermore, the DOS Grant will be utilized to fund the establishment of an AI laboratory in order to optimize the teaching and learning of the developing technology.

AUK hosted an art exhibit titled "Halabja in the Golden Days," organized by the UK-based Gulan Charity in partnership with AUK's Center for Peace and Human Security (CPHS). The exhibition included artworks by a number of Kurdish artists relating to the culture of Halabja, a display of Kurdish costumes, and an art installation of banners depicting the poets and historical figures of Halabja.

NOVEMBER 2023

The AUK hosted the fourth Middle East Peace and Security (MEPS) Forum in Duhok, titled "Renewal, Revision, and Resiliency: The Future of the Middle East." Over 800 experts from around the globe participated in the conference, including governmental leaders, academics, and think tank members. Keynote and plenary speakers included H.E. President of the Kurdistan Region, Nechirvan Barzani, H.E. Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government, Masrour Barzani, and former UK Prime Ministers Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson and Rt. Hon. Sir Tony Blair.

The AUK and the Barzani Charity Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on education, student workforce preparedness, and capacity building in the Kurdistan Region. The partnership aims to advance education for vulnerable populations and support their pursuit of higher education.

DECEMBER 2023

AUK's College of Nursing hosted its inaugural Capping, Candle Lighting, and White Coat Ceremony on December 2. The event symbolized the transition from classroom education to clinical practice, embodying values of integrity, empathy, and professionalism. Twenty-three students participated.

JANUARY 2024

AUK's Center of Peace and Human Security continued its lecture series with a presentation by international expert in Middle Eastern politics, Prof. David Romano, Missouri State University, on January 30. In his lecture, titled "Kurdistan Region's Relations with Neighboring Countries," he addressed the historical context and contemporary challenges shaping Kurdistan's relations with its neighbors, including diplomatic interactions, geopolitical interests, and economic considerations.

FEBRUARY 2024

AUK hosted the Japanese Ambassador to Iraq, Futoshi Matsumoto, on February 19 as part of a lecture series sponsored by the University's Center for Peace and Security. The lecture was titled "Japan's Modernization and its Lessons for the Future of Iraq," and addressed issues of national identity, openness to the global world, and the trajectory to modernization.

Mr. Bişar Çoktin, Chairman of BC Group Holding, visited campus on February 12 to discuss details of the new BC Group Scholarship. In providing a grant of \$250,000 for a period of five years, the BC Group demonstrates its dedication to aiding deserving Kurdish students hailing from Northern Kurdistan, Türkiye.

AUK's College of Nursing announced its new Life Support Training Site, AUKLS; this is Iraq's first accredited American Heart Association training site hosted by a university. The AUKLS' programs are designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively to cardiac and other life-saving emergencies.

During February, the AUK was the subject of an extensive evaluation visit by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE). The NECHE team engaged in multiple individual and group discussions with faculty and staff in order to assess the progress made by the institution over its short history. The full Commission will vote on Candidacy at its meeting in September.

MARCH 2024

The AUK welcomed the Dutch Consul General, Jaco Beerends to campus on March 6. Topics discussed included support for programs on start-up culture and entrepreneurship, youth employment, programming for IPDs and refugees, capacity building among public sector employees (including school teachers), and faculty and student exchanges with Dutch universities.

AUK Giving Day, held on March 7, brought together students, alumni, faculty, staff, and members of the community. Central to the festivities was a concert by international artist Dashni Morad; proceeds were directed towards financial aid for AUK student scholars. The event also provided a platform to showcase alumni businesses.

APRIL 2024

The CAPA launched the "She Leads" Women Leadership Certificate Program. Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of State titled "Supporting American-Style Higher Education in Iraq", this program provides opportunities to 20 female students and alumni to develop their leadership skills. The program also includes talks by educators, experts, and women leaders who share their insights and experiences.

MAY 2024

The University welcomed Charlie Pacana Manangan, the Ambassador of the Philippines to Iraq. During the visit on May 6, AUK President Dr. Randall Rhodes highlighted the University's focus on healthcare and nursing education in the region as well as the importance of its internationalization strategy for advancing teaching and learning.

The AUK received Seungcheol Lim, the Republic of Korea's Consul General to the Kurdistan Region on May 8. Discussions focused on supporting students through scholarships and internationalization strategies that will advance the curriculum, learning outcomes, and professional opportunities of students.

The University conducted its second annual job fair on May 5. The event featured over thirty companies offering a variety of positions to AUK students and alumni. In preparation for the event, the Office of Career Services provided students and alumni with a variety of trainings, including cv writing, interview preparation, job searching, and speaking skills.

The AUK and Ideas Beyond Borders (IBB) established the "Wikipedia Club" to promote cultural exchange by translating Kurdish articles into English. The collaborative effort emphasizes AUK and IBB's joint mission to promote knowledge accessibility, education, and empowerment within the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

JUNE 2024

On June 2, the AUK conducted its fifth Commencement Ceremony. Sixty-two students participated. Keynote speeches were provided by AUK President Randall Rhodes, H.E. President of Iraq, Abdul Latif Rasheed, H.E. President of the Kurdistan Region, Nechirvan Barzani, H.E. Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of AUK, Masrour Barzani, Acting Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, Muhsin Al-Mandalawi, and U.S. Acting Ambassador to Iraq, David Burger. Valedictorians were Banaz Ghazi, Binav Abdulrahman, Solin Younes, and Shang Saib. Prime Minister Barzani awarded the Resilience Award to Shireen Khero Khudeeda.

JULY 2024

The AUK announced 5 scholarships funded by Mr. Bnas Doski (Shinal Company) for residents of Duhok city. Recipients must hail from underrepresented communities and provide evidence of financial need. The scholarships cover tuition fees and education-related expenses for a duration of five years, applicable to the Architectural Engineering and Petroleum Engineering programs within the College of Engineering.

The American University of Kurdistan is excited to announce the celebration of its 10th Anniversary, a significant milestone in the institution's journey. As we look back with pride on the progress and achievements of the past decade, we also eagerly anticipate the opportunities that lie ahead in shaping the future.

While the 10th Anniversary of the American University of Kurdistan will be formally celebrated with a Gala Event on December 1, Academic Year 2024-2025 will feature a year-long series of events and news stories commemorating the University's achievements in teaching and learning, as well as the impact the University has made during its first decade. Features will include sharing alumni success stories, showcasing research achievements, and highlighting community outreach initiatives.

The overarching theme for the year's celebration is "ACHIEVE." This word symbolizes the institutional commitment to progress and excellence. It characterizes the optimistic, yet strategic, vision for moving the University, its students, its faculty and staff, its broader community, and the entire region onward to greater heights and on a united path to excellence.

Collectively at AUK, everyone will ...

- ◆ Achieve academic and professional fulfillment and success
- ◆ Achieve progress that will have great impact for the benefit of the Kurdistan Region and Iraq

Inspired by the Mission and Vision of the University, our graduates will

- ◆ Achieve leadership roles
- ◆ Achieve transformative and innovative research leading to start-ups advancing the economic growth of the Region

And their contributions will

- ◆ Result in the achievement of respect for inclusion, diversity, gender parity
- ◆ Result in the achievement of a democratic nation dedicated to transparency and good governance
- ◆ Result in the achievement of a nation that is globally connected and contributes to the betterment of humanity

Together We Achieve



10TH ANNIVERSARY

2014-2024



OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND PLANNING

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning (OIEP) has a mission to collect, analyze, organize, and communicate data and information in order to provide a valid, consistent, and accurate understanding of the AUK and its progress toward optimizing institutional effectiveness measures.

From February 25 to 28, the University hosted a Candidacy Visiting Team from the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) as part of its journey towards U.S. Accreditation. The Team, which included experts from diverse institutions in the U.S., assessed AUK's readiness for Candidacy through multiple discussions with faculty, staff, students, and the Board of Trustees. In the concluding assembly, the team praised the AUK for its significant progress over its short history, as well as the enthusiasm, dedication, and professionalism of its faculty and staff. The final determination for Candidacy will come in October 2024.

The academic programs of Architectural Engineering and Computer Software & Security, and the non-academic units of the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Student Affairs, underwent reviews. This involves the writing of a Self-Study and a Review Report, which results in an action plan driving the respective programs' strategic plans for the next five years. This year, the external reviewers represented James Madison University, Lawrence Technological University, California State University - Chico, and Wayne State University.

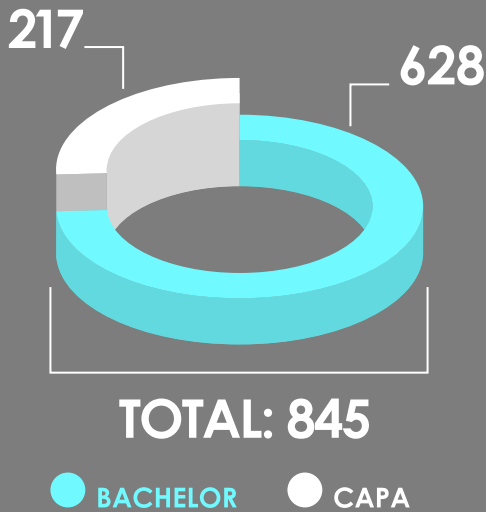
The OIEP also plays a role in ensuring institutional effectiveness by monitoring the development, revision, and management of AUK's policies. Over the past year, twelve new policies were approved. The Office conducted multiple presentations to review the existing and newly approved policies with the campus community.

The OIEP also supports the leadership of the AUK in fostering a culture dedicated to data-driven decision-making. To this end, various surveys and reporting activities have been implemented to measure key performance indicators that align with the institution's strategic priorities. This includes updating dashboards with institutional data and fast facts, using demographic and census data capturing progress in enrollments, student success initiatives, teaching and learning, and satisfaction levels among faculty, staff, and students.

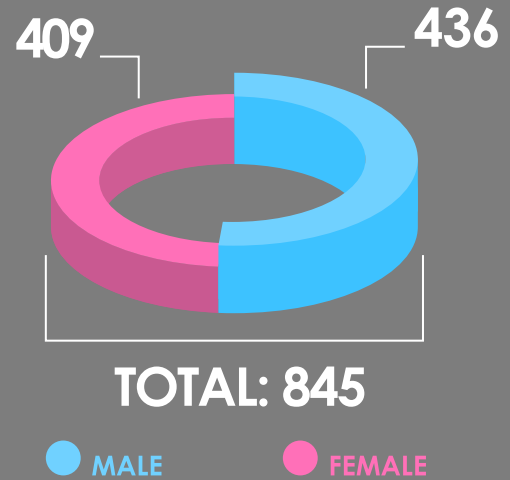


FACT FACTS (SPRING 2024)

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE STUDENTS



TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIVE STUDENTS



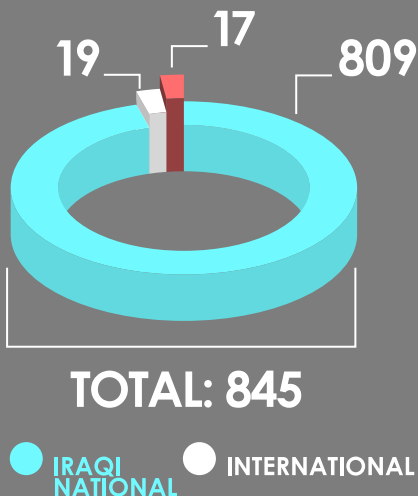
STUDENT TO FACULTY RATIO



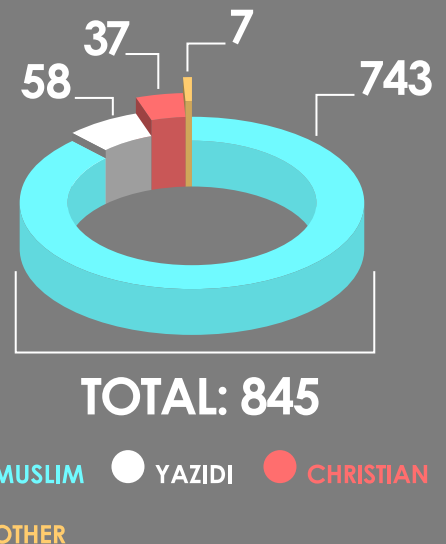
FACULTY FULL-TIME TO ADJUNCT RATIO BY HEAD COUNT



STUDENT NATIONALITY



STUDENT RELIGION (SELF-REPORTED)

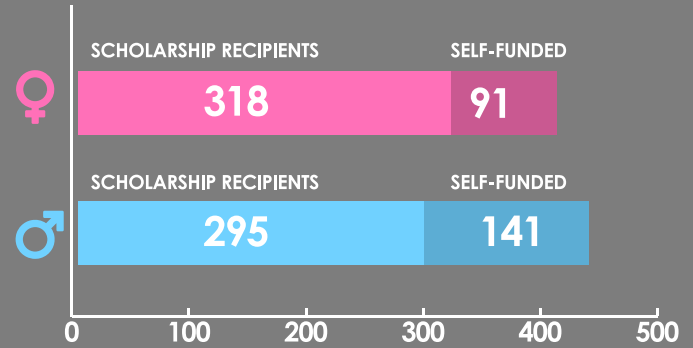


AVERAGE CLASS SIZE



19

SCHOLARSHIP AND SELF-FUNDED BY GENDER



ACTIVE STUDENTS BY ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Programs	Total
Architectural Engineering	271
Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering (ETE)	76
Petroleum Engineering	63
Business Administration	130
Computer Software & Security/IT	84
Design/Interior Design	75
International Studies	39
Nursing	100
Undecided	7
Grand Total	845

TEACHING AND LEARNING



The American University of Kurdistan's commitment to quality education is exemplified through the adoption of international best practices in teaching and learning. Each college has placed strong emphasis on the assessment and monitoring of classroom practices and student outcomes and has implemented feedback loops to achieve greater institutional effectiveness. Initiatives for institutional and program-level accreditations have also advanced the teaching mission of the University.

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES (COAS)

The CoAS is dedicated to advancing teaching and learning methodologies by adopting student-centered learning, experiential learning, and international best practices. This approach ensures that students are active participants in their educational journeys, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and practical skills essential for contemporary professional environments. Students' interpersonal skills are cultivated through liberal arts courses offered under the General Education Program's various categories, including communication, quantitative literacy, social sciences and humanities, arts, natural sciences, and IT literacy, ensuring their success during their academic journey and post-graduation. Students are required to complete community-related capstone projects, showcased annually at the Graduation Research Expo, effectively preparing them as future entrepreneurs. State-of-the-art laboratories support this pedagogy, including studio labs, the Fab Lab (used for classes in the Design Department), computer labs for students in Computer Software and Security, and an AI Lab, currently under development.

The B.Sc. in Computer Software and Security upholds the standards set forth by ABET, and the B.A. in Design follows the standards of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, which mandates the cultivation of technical skills and creative expression. By following these standards, the CoAS ensures its curricula and course delivery processes are grounded in real-world applications and mirror industry needs.

The Course File Reports summarize the course delivery process and the achievement of course learning outcomes, which have been mapped to program-specific student learning outcomes. The reports also include recommendations for improving course delivery for future cohorts. Additionally, student feedback on faculty teaching performance is utilized to further enhance teaching quality. All programs undergo a five-year peer review by external academic experts. Furthermore, the programs have established advisory boards; these boards provide critical feedback to enhance program relevance based on the skills required by industry.





COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (COE)

The CoE is committed to delivering exceptional teaching and learning by adopting and achieving international accreditation standards. Emphasis is placed on the standards of The Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET). Having completed the first two cycles of assessment, the CoE has restated its assessment strategy and timeline. By the end of six years, the CoE will have conducted two complete data collection cycles for the B.Sc. in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering. At the end of each semester, faculty submit course file reports summarizing course delivery and the achievement of the Course Learning Outcomes. These reports also include recommendations for future course delivery improvements. Student feedback on teaching performance is also collected and utilized to advance teaching quality.

Departments within the College have established advisory boards consisting of faculty, students, alumni, and industry experts. These boards conduct annual reviews of academic programs, providing critical feedback to ensure program relevance and alignment with industry skills requirements.

To promote experiential learning, the CoE requires all students to complete internships at relevant local or international locations under the supervision of faculty and site advisors. Students are required to complete capstone projects and showcase their projects annually at the Graduation Expo, effectively preparing students for the professional workplace.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS (COB)

The CoB is committed to developing innovative, socially responsible business professionals who can navigate and lead in a dynamic global business environment. This objective is accomplished through a strong focus on building an educational environment where student-centered teaching methods are prioritized, and experiential learning and adherence to international best practices are valued. Aligning with the accreditation standards of the Association to Advance Collegiate



Schools of Business (AACSB), the College ensures its curricula and course delivery processes are competitive.

The College employs a comprehensive approach of direct and indirect assessments of learning to ensure achieve proficiency in the core competencies of critical thinking, innovative and creative skills, communication skills, quality research, social and ethical awareness, and global business leadership. Direct assessment methods involve evaluating students' performance through various academic tasks, such as exams, projects, presentations, and case studies. Indirect assessment, on the other hand, encompasses activities such as internships, where students gain practical experience in real-world business environments.



The CoB emphasizes and values experiential learning through the promotion of seminars, workshops, and courses taught by industry experts who bring extensive experience into the classroom. Thus, the gap between theory and practice is filled by integrating real-world concepts and practical knowledge. Further, the College has incorporated global business perspectives into the curriculum and provided opportunities for international engagement. Collaborations in team teaching with James Madison University provided an opportunity for students from both institutions to engage in the virtual classroom and co-create.

COLLEGE OF NURSING (CON)



The CoN ensures high-quality nursing education through a proactive approach to continuous improvement. This commitment is evident in the pursuit of programmatic accreditation through the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA), and programmatic alignment with these standards to enhance teaching strategies and optimize student outcomes. To further this agenda, the CoN has maintained and implemented several strategic initiatives. Admission procedures and intake periods have been revised to provide equity in access and opportunity for all prospective students, reflecting NLN CNEA's emphasis on student support.

To measure and enhance program outcomes, the CoN has updated its assessment strategies. This includes refining formative and summative assessments, aligning practical evaluations and clinical skills assessments with NLN CNEA standards, and integrating the Next Generation NCLEX exam. These updates ensure evaluations accurately reflect current licensure standards and competencies, supporting continuous curriculum and teaching improvements.



Resources within the Nursing Skills and Simulation Lab are continually expanded with state-of-the-art equipment and simulation technology. Additionally, the acquisition of Elsevier ClinicalKey and Complete Anatomy has provided digital text resources and an advanced 3D anatomy platform, which have been instrumental in supporting both student learning and faculty instruction.



LABS

Through the generous support of the American University of Kurdistan Foundation (AUKF) and the U.S. Department of State's Grants dedicated to "Supporting American-style Higher Education in Iraq", the AUK has been successful in installing state-of-the-art labs simulating industrial standards. It is within these labs that students gain the hands-on experiences with commercial-level projects that will effectively prepare them for the global marketplace upon graduation.

PETROLEUM LAB

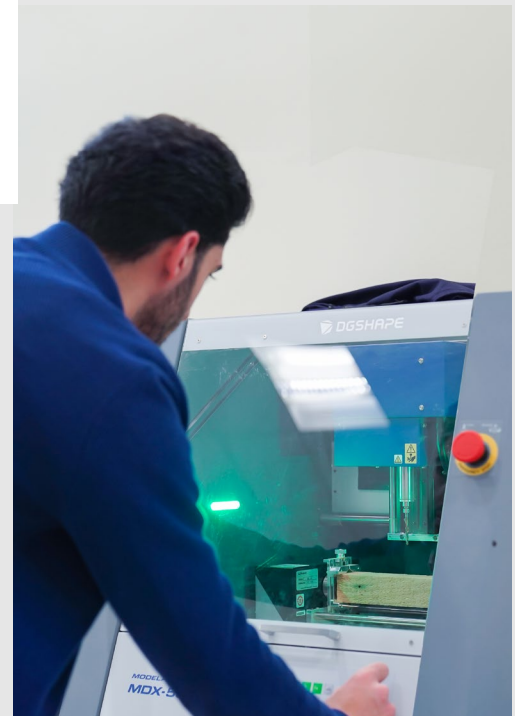
This facility is equipped with high-tech equipment, including a Mud Balance for measuring fluid density, Marsh Funnel Viscometers for viscosity measurements, a Bench pH Meter, a Viscometer for determining viscosities, a Filter Press for filtration properties, and an Emulsion Stability Tester. Additionally, the Lab houses a Core Plugging Machine, Trim Saw and End Face Grinder, Soxhlet Extractor, Humidity Drying Oven, Manual Saturator, EPSA, Magnetic Stirrer, Digital Balance, Acoustic Velocity System, Liquid Permeameter System, Helium Porosimeter, and a Vacuum Heated Desiccator. This equipment supports industry-level experimentation and production by enabling comprehensive analyses and testing of petroleum-related samples.

Students are trained to utilize this equipment through hands-on practical sessions, engaging in real-world applications of petroleum engineering principles. They learn to perform critical measurements, analyze data, and understand the physical and chemical properties of drilling fluids and samples. The Lab also fosters collaboration with industry partners through internships, research projects, and joint initiatives, such as those led by the Petroleum Engineering Student Chapter.

FABRICATION (FAB) LAB

AUK's Fab Lab is a workshop with various digital fabrication tools, including 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC machines, vinyl cutters, and milling machines. These tools enable high-precision prototyping and production, supporting academic research and commercial industry needs. It is designed to be accessible to individuals of all skill levels. Students are trained through structured workshops and hands-on projects, which teach them how to operate digital fabrication equipment and transform digital designs into physical objects. This training fosters practical skills in design, engineering, and rapid prototyping.

The Fab Lab promotes collaboration with industry partners by serving as an incubator for startups and entrepreneurial ventures. The Fab Lab attracts people from various backgrounds, including artists, engineers, designers, students, and hobbyists and hosts events and meetups that connect students with professionals from multiple industries.



Building Information Modeling (BIM) Lab

The BIM Lab is a specialized facility with cutting-edge software and tools. These resources support advanced research and development in digital representation and management of building characteristics, crucial for designing, constructing, and operating buildings and infrastructure. Students are trained in the BIM Lab through courses, workshops, and hands-on projects that teach them to use BIM software and methodologies effectively. This training encompasses modelling, data exchange, and collaborative practices, preparing students for roles in the construction and architectural industries.

The BIM Lab fosters collaboration with industry partners by engaging in research projects and establishing partnerships with construction companies and software providers. These collaborations enhance the practical application of BIM technology in real-world projects, improving efficiency and coordination in the industry.

Electronics and Telecommunication (ETE) Lab

The ETE Lab is equipped with a variety of advanced tools and resources, including electronic circuit design stations, MATLAB software, analog and digital communication systems, industrial electronics, microprocessor and microcontroller kits, instrumentation and sensors, spectrum analyzers, and digital signal processing equipment. Students are trained to use the equipment through hands-on experiments and practical sessions integrated into their coursework. This training helps students develop practical skills in designing, testing, and analyzing electronic systems, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world engineering challenges.

The ETE Lab facilitates collaboration with industry partners by providing opportunities for research projects, and practical workshops. These collaborations allow students to apply their skills in real-world settings, enhancing their readiness for careers.





Nursing Skills and Simulation Lab (NSSL)

The NSSL features high-fidelity patient simulators, clinical skills trainers, simulated medical devices, and realistic simulated clinical settings. This cutting-edge facility allows students to engage in hands-on training that closely resembles real-world healthcare settings. Orientation sessions introduce students to the equipment, followed by structured simulation exercises supervised by the nursing faculty. Audio-visual recording and debriefing systems allow for performance review and skill refinement. Regular practice sessions and checkoffs, interactive workshops, and team-based simulations further enhance students' proficiency.

The Lab fosters collaboration with industry partners through joint simulation exercises, partnership programs, guest lectures, workshops, clinical placements, and research and development projects.





RESEARCH



Mustafa Aziz Amen



Ahmad Afara

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

The Persuasibility of the Globe Thermometer in Predicting Indoor Thermal Comfort Using Non-standard Globe Diameter: Row Houses of Semi-Arid Climates as Case Studies

Author: Mustafa Aziz Amen, Ahmad Afara, Salar Salah Muhy-Al-Din

Abstract: The assessment of accuracy of thermal comfort is critical for designing thermally comfortable and energy-efficient buildings. The Predicted Mean Vote (PMV) index is widely recognized by national and international specifications to predict thermal comfort. The main purpose of this research is to evaluate PMV inside row houses in semi-arid climates using lower-cost equipment rather than high-cost and difficult-to-access instruments while maintaining acceptable accuracy. This is accomplished by using a smaller black globe thermometer than standard ones. The effects of airspeed as a critical factor on PMV were considered. Therefore, case study methodology has been applied in this study, and two sets of six-row residences with a similar typology oriented to the south and north were chosen and explored in summer. CBE Thermal Comfort Tool as a computer program has been applied to obtain the easiest accessible measurement for investigating thermal comfort inside buildings. The outcome demonstrated that the difference in the size between the black globe thermometer and standard ones becomes considerable when the air velocity inside the building increases above 0.12 m/s. Therefore, the limitations introduced in the current study for applying the small globe thermometer in the prediction of thermal comfort inside buildings in the study area and some recommendations have been suggested for future studies. The outcomes shared significant facts to increase our understanding regarding the use of low-cost methods in evaluating thermal comfort.

The Kurdish Media in the Middle East and Diaspora: Alternative Public and Participatory Spaces for a Non-State Nation (The Handbook of Media and Culture in the Middle East)

Author: Jiyar Aghapouri

Abstract: This chapter examines the emergence and the evolution of the Kurdish media from print to social media. It argues that the emergence and development of the Kurdish media has provided favorable opportunities for the Kurds as a non-state nation to connect, organize, and advance the construction and articulation of their cultural, political, and national identities. Media have served as mobilizers, public spaces, and social capitals. The chapter also cast light on role of the Kurdish diaspora in establishing, developing, and operating these communication channels. It ends with a discussion on the Kurdish social media, which are argued to be transforming the notion of Kurdish nationalism and nation-building into a more pluralistic and participatory era.

Monitoring and Employing Interventions to Enhance End-User Security Practice within Organizations

Author: Zinnar Ghasem, Nathan Clarke, Steven Furnell

Abstract: Protecting assets within organizations through technological measures continues to remain an ongoing problem in the cyber security domain. There is extensive literature pointing to the “human-element” being a significant factor in security breaches – whether This paper focuses on enhancing individual user’s security compliance in real-time through an intervention-based approach. The framework comprises various interconnected components and utilizes several sources including active evaluation, monitoring, role/job responsibilities, and manager observations to feed into an assessment of the individual users’ needs. Different mechanisms seek to identify the reasons behind their non-compliance, and provide a targeted and tailored series of interventions to maximize the likelihood of improved security behaviors and compliance.



Jiyar Aghapouri



Zinnar Ghasem



Soma Tatar



Rozhan Jasim Shro

Analyzing Pioneering Salutogenic Designs: Applying The Bone Marrow Transplant Center in Duhok as a Model

Author: Soma Tatar (student)

Abstract: Healthcare facility interior design is significantly more complex than most individuals believe. It takes much more than just picking out furniture and artwork to make a space seem more cheerful. To create an atmosphere that is both visually attractive and functional, each aspect needs to be thoroughly investigated. Healthcare designers must take into account a wide range of elements, such as the requirement for infection control, navigation, acoustics, illumination levels, thermal comfort, and usability. It is imperative that they possess knowledge of evidence-based research in order to integrate aspects that facilitate healing and overall well-being. Research indicates that a hospital's architectural layout may have an impact on patients' recovery times and their level of satisfaction. This research will show evidence-based solutions that will further develop healthcare institutes in Kurdistan, while promoting sustainable and eco-friendly designs.

Enhance the Tourists' Cultural Awareness through Innovative Green Design Hotels

Author: Rozhan Jasim Shro (student)

Abstract: This capstone thesis project envisions the transformation of the building of the Directorate of Retirement in Duhok, Kurdistan, into a cultural boutique hotel. With a focus on sustainable tourism and cultural immersion, the project aims to provide a unique and affordable lodging experience for tourists while showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Duhok. The abstract explores the key aspects of the project, including its significance, objectives, and the central question: "How can we redesign and repurpose a traditional building into a cultural, green design hotel?" The Waterwell concept, inspired by the Kurdish village of Serin, serves as the guiding philosophy, promoting unity, cultural exchange, and sustainability. The integration of Building Information Technology (BIM) ensures a technologically advanced and streamlined design process, aligning with the project's commitment to innovation and upholding industry standards. Overall, this project aspires to redefine hospitality in Duhok, offering a harmonious blend of cultural authenticity, environmental consciousness, and cutting-edge design.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Enhancing Environmental Performance: Evidence from SAARC Countries

Authors: Shekar Bose, Asadul Hoque, Olaf Weber

Abstract: This paper examines the influence of population density, economic growth, and regulatory quality on the environmental performance of five SAARC countries from 2000 to 2020. To this end, fixed and random effects models are used. Quantitative data on socio-economic and environmental characteristics reveal notable differences across countries. The results show a significant positive and negative impact of the covariates economic growth and population density, respectively, on environmental performance. While the estimated coefficient of the regulatory quality variable was positive, it was statistically insignificant. The results also suggest a significant inter-country dependency and a significant change in environmental performance across countries over time. Based on the results, several strategic approaches are proposed at both individual and multi-country settings. Furthermore, the authors emphasize the roles of the government, international and regional agencies, private sector, and civil society organizations. Finally, possible extensions of the present paper are discussed.

Impact of Gas Flaring on the Environment in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Author: Mba Okechukwu Agwu

Abstract: Gas flaring is a common practice in the oil and gas industry that involves the burning of natural gas during the extraction and processing of crude oil. Despite its economic benefits, gas flaring has significant negative impacts on the environment. This paper explores the various ways in which gas flaring affects the environment, including the emission of greenhouse gases, air pollution, acid rain, and the destruction of ecosystems. It used a cross-sectional survey research design in



Asadul Hoque



Okechukwu Agwu



Philip E. Agbonifo



Solin Younes



Omar Mohammed

generating the primary data used for the study; the location of the study is Kurdistan. It used a sample size of 375 from a population of 6000 oil and gas company workers in Kurdistan. The findings of the study suggest that the negative impacts of gas flaring on the environment are significant, and requires urgent action to mitigate its effects. This paper provides valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders and researchers interested in addressing the environmental consequences of gas flaring in the oil and gas industry.

The Impact of Oil Spills in Kurdistan Region: Case Study of the Environment in the Duhok Governorate

Author: Philip E. Agbonifo, Solin Younes, Omar Mohammed (faculty and students)

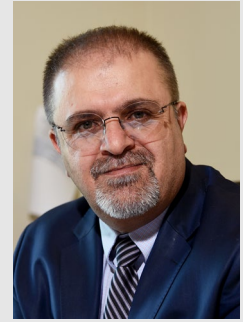
Abstract: Oil spills in the Dohuk region represent a major environmental challenge, requiring a comprehensive legislative framework for effective prevention, response, and mitigation. This framework includes main areas of emphasis: environmental protection laws that impose strict regulations, equipment maintenance, environmental impact assessments; emergency response legislation for standardized protocols and environmentally friendly cleaning procedures; sanctions and accountability provisions to incentivize compliance and compensate affected parties; transparency and reporting requirements to ensure accurate documentation and public awareness; cross-border cooperation mechanisms regarding the impacts of transboundary spills; support for research and innovation to develop sustainable solutions; and community engagement requirements to integrate local knowledge and interests into decision-making. This comprehensive legislative approach not only holds companies accountable, but also protects the environment and the well-being of affected communities, thereby promoting a more responsible and sustainable oil industry.

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Effects of Chopped CFRP Fiber on the Mechanical Properties of Concrete

Author: Razaq Ferhadi

Abstract: Enhancing concrete's mechanical properties has recently become a prominent field. Numerous studies have investigated the possibility of enhancing the mechanical properties of concrete by adding additive materials. Few studies investigated the effects of chopped CFRP on the tensile strength of normal-strength concrete (NSC) and low-strength concrete (LSC). In this study, the effects of Chopped Carbon Fiber Reinforced Polymer (CCFRP) on the mechanical properties of LSC and NSC were investigated. Different volume fractions (0.5% ,0.25% ,0%, and 0.75%) of chopped carbon fibers were added to the concrete mix for the 13 MPa and 28 MPa concrete grades, and five mix trials were conducted to achieve concrete with 13 MPa and 28 MPa. The ratios of 1:1.5:2.5 for the normal strength mix and 1:2.6:4.1 for the low strength mix were chosen. Three tests were conducted to evaluate the effects: compressive strength, tensile strength, and flexural strength. A total of 120 pieces were cast, including 24 beams, 48 cubes, and 48 cylinders. The cubes were 15 × 15 × 15 cm and the cylinders were 15 cm in diameter and 30 cm in length. Prism beams with a 15 × 15 cm cross-section and a 56 cm length were tested under a single point load. The samples were tested at 7 and 28 days of age, and the sample density was recorded. The results revealed that adding 0.25% CCFRP increased the compressive strength of LSC from 9.5 MPa to 11.2 MPa which is about a 10% enhancement and which slightly affected the compressive strength of NSC by about 5%. On the other hand, adding 0.25% CCFRP to both LSC and NSC increased split tensile strength from 2.5 MPa to 3.6 MPa which is about a 44% enhancement for NSC and 16.6% for LSC. Similar improvements were made in flexural strength with an increase from 4.5 MPa to 5.4 MPa; whereas the effects on LSC were unremarkable. As such, this study recommends 0.25% CCFRP fiber as the ideal dosage.



Razaq Ferhadi



Omar Abdulghafoor



Ahmed Hamood



Herish Basy



Reda Abdel Azim

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) in 6G Wireless Network Optimization: Survey, Tutorials ,and Open Research Directions

Author: Omar Abdulghafoor, Ahmed Hamood, and Herish Basy

Abstract: This research explores the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) in optimizing 6G wireless networks. As wireless networks move from 5G to 6G, the demand for faster, more reliable and efficient wireless communications systems has led to the adoption of artificial intelligence and machine learning capabilities. This research investigates the application of artificial intelligence algorithms and machine learning models in improving various aspects of 6G wireless networks including latency, energy efficiency, and resource allocation. By adopting AI algorithms and machine learning mechanisms, 6G wireless networks can achieve extraordinary levels of optimization, facilitate ultra-reliable low-latency communications and enhance mobile broadband. The study also addresses the challenges for data privacy, security concerns, and the need for powerful computational resources. Through a comprehensive analysis of current trends and future prospects, this study underscores the critical role of artificial intelligence and machine learning in realizing the full potential of 6G networks.

Estimation of Free and Adsorbed Gas Volumes in Shale Gas Reservoirs under a Poro-Elastic Environment

Author: Reda Abdel Azim, Abdulrahman Aljehani, Saad Alatefi

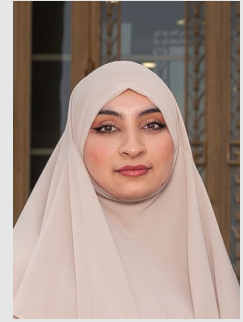
Abstract: Unlike conventional gas reservoirs, fluid flow in shale gas reservoirs is characterized by complex interactions between various factors, such as stress sensitivity, matrix shrinkage, and critical desorption pressure. These factors play a crucial role in determining the behavior and productivity of shale gas reservoirs. Stress sensitivity refers to the stress changes caused by formation pressure decline during production, where the shale gas formation becomes more compressed and its porosity decreases. Matrix shrinkage, on the other hand, refers to the deformation of the shale matrix due to the gas desorption process once the reservoir pressure reaches the critical desorption pressure where absorbed gas molecules start to leave the matrix surface, causing an increase in shale matrix porosity. Therefore, the accurate estimation of gas reserves requires

Careful consideration of such unique and complex interactions of shale gas flow behavior when using a material balance equation (MBE). However, the existing MBEs either neglect some of these important parameters in shale gas reserve analysis or employ an iterative approach to incorporate them. Accordingly, this study introduces a straightforward modification to the material balance equation. This modification will enable more accurate estimation of shale gas reserves by considering stress sensitivity and variations in porosity during shale gas production and will also account for the effect of critical desorption pressure, water production, and water influx.

Smart Irrigation System in Agriculture Using IoT Technology

Author: Rayan Abdulazeez Majeed, Mustafa Bassam Ismael, Kawar Haydar (students)

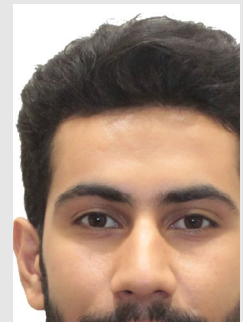
Abstract: The agricultural sector plays a crucial role in ensuring global food security; efficient water management is essential for optimizing crop yield. This paper introduces a Smart Irrigation System (SIS) leveraging Internet of Things (IoT) technology to enhance water usage in agriculture. The proposed system integrates sensors, actuators, and IoT-enabled devices to create an intelligent and automated irrigation infrastructure. The core of the system comprises soil moisture sensors strategically placed in the field to monitor the real-time moisture content of the soil. These sensors continually gather data, which is subsequently transferred to a centralized control unit using IoT protocols. The control unit processes the information and determines the precise irrigation requirements based on predefined thresholds and crop-specific parameters. Utilizing actuators such as solenoid valves, the SIS automates the irrigation process, ensuring that crops receive the optimal amount of water. In order to maximize resource efficiency and minimize water waste, the system takes actions based on environmental data including temperature, humidity, and weather forecasts. Through an easy-to-use interface, either a web portal or a mobile application, farmers may remotely access and manage the SIS. With the use of this data, farmers may implement precision agricultural techniques that enhance crop yields, save operating expenses, and promote sustainable water management.



Rayan Abdulazeez Majeed



Mustafa Bassam Ismael



Kawar Haydar





BUDGET

The following Budget Summary presents the revenues and expenditures of the American University of Kurdistan (AUK), as the University seeks to foster transparency, accountability, and effective financial stewardship in line with international best practices and U.S. accreditation standards.

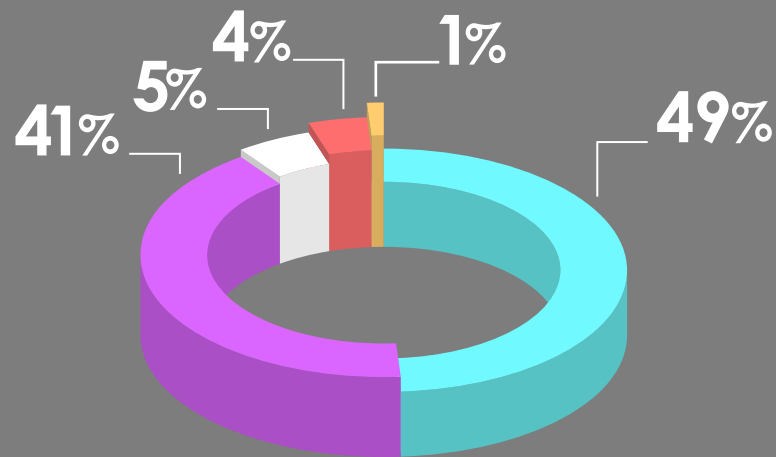
During the Academic Year 2023-2024, the AUK demonstrated diligent financial management. This revenue achievement reflects institutional success in establishing multiple revenue streams; the main sources being: student tuition and fees, competitive grants from the United States Department of State (DoS) and other governmental and non-governmental sources, fundraising by the AUK Office of Advancement; in-kind contributions, KRG scholarship support, revenues generated by community courses of the Center for Academic and Professional Advancement (CAPA), and auxiliary revenues.

- Approximately 49% of the University's budget is derived from student tuition and fees; these are paid directly by the students.
- The KRG provides scholarship support to the sons and daughters of Political Prisoners and Martyrs.
- External funders account for 41%. The primary grantor is the U.S. Department of State whose funding has been dedicated to AUK's institutional and program-level accreditation efforts, lab construction, and the scholarships for women, minorities, and vulnerable populations.
- Donations, gifts and in-kind contributions, and program sponsorships directed by the Office of Advancement; these constituted 4% of the revenues.
- The CAPA generated about 5% of the total revenues through programs and training provided to the community.
- Auxiliaries amount to approximately 1%, consisting mainly of income from the Women's Residence Facility and rent for the cafeteria.

The expenditures reflect the core missions of education, research, and outreach. These include employee salaries, and costs in support of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and the administration and operations of the University.

- Salaries constituted the largest portion of expenditures (58%); funds are dedicated for the recruitment and retention of qualified international faculty and administrative staff.
- Academic Affairs and Student Support comprising 11% of expenditures, encompass investments made to enhance teaching and learning, including: accreditation efforts, research support, lab enhancement, and student success initiatives.
- Operations and Administration account for 31% of the total expenditure. This includes the maintenance and improvement of the labs, classrooms, and IT infrastructure to meet the changing needs of 21st century higher education. This category also includes the acquisition of equipment and software to improve operational efficiencies.

REVENUES



● TUITION AND FEES

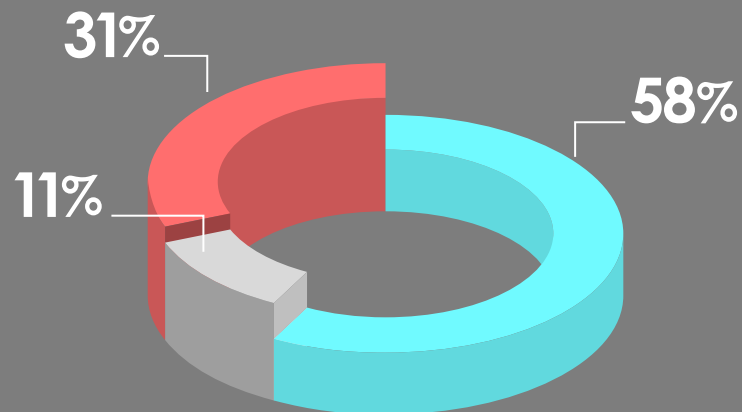
● EXTERNAL FUND

● CAPA COMMUNITY

● ADVANCEMENT AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

● AUXILIARY REVENUES

EXPENDITURES



● SALARIES

● ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT SUPPORT

● ADMINISTRATION



The Office of Advancement has taken notable steps in promoting a culture of philanthropy and community engagement. As AUK begins the celebration of its 10th anniversary, we reflect on our journey and recognize those whose continued support has enabled us to achieve so much. In supporting community involvement, transparency, and impactful initiatives, the Office of Advancement has inspired donors to support higher education and build a culture of philanthropy.

This year, the Office of Advancement has successfully provided scholarships and financial aid support to ensure deserving students have access to American-style higher education. Funds from corporate entities, organizations, alumni, and individual donors have supported the Laptop Lending Program, the implementation of recycling across the University, and supported the College of Nursing's establishment of the AUK Life Support Training Site (AUKLS), which is Iraq's first accredited American Heart Association (AHA) training site within a university.

By laying the groundwork for the AUK Endowment, registered as a 501(c)(3) in Virginia, we continue to expand opportunities for giving. The Endowment allows for the principal to be invested, while the interest helps support institutional initiatives and operating expenses.

The progress AUK has made would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. As we look to the future, we invite you to continue contributing to the American University of Kurdistan. Your donations are not just investments in individual students but in the broader society. Together, we can ensure that education remains a powerful force for positive change in the region.



JOIN US

Contact Info

Email: advancement@auk.edu.krd

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SUPPORT A STUDENT

Over the last decade, AUK has made considerable progress in fulfilling its goal of offering an American-style education upholding international standards in access and inclusion. During spring semester, out of the 845 students, 72.5% received scholarships, evidencing the commitment to provide access to students based on their academic merit, not financial status. AUK strives to offer opportunities for students from all around Iraq, including those of minorities, vulnerable populations, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees, fostering an environment of inclusivity and mutual respect.

Yet, our scholarship pool is limited. Similarly, the institution's financial aid pool is insufficient to meet the needs of continuing students who struggle to pay for housing and transportation. "Support a Student" aims to grow our scholarship and financial aid initiatives, with contributions for full scholarships and financial aid coverage. A full scholarship, including English-language courses, tuition, fees, and housing amounts to \$50,000. Donors identify the criteria for the selection of awardees, including financial status, hometown or country, gender, ethnicity, and/or academic program. The Scholarship Selection Committee oversees the review of applications and conducts interviews to ensure the values of transparency, accountability, and integrity to the process. Donors receive annual stewardship reports that provide details on awardees, their success rates, and progress-to-graduation.

Contributing to the scholarship and financial aid pools helps the University realize its goal of establishing an inclusive campus educating the best students of the Kurdistan Region, Iraq, and the greater Middle East. By contributing to the University, donors invest not only in the academic and professional journeys of our students, but also contribute to the formation of our nation's future leaders.



AUK GIVING DAY

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