

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY

AUST believes that free inquiry is essential to the development of ideas and research, and that the practice of responsible freedom promotes the academic process and enables the development of academic capabilities. That is why the Board has set a separate policy on Academic Freedom which is to be read and understood as an integral part of the Academic Affairs Policy.

I) The Role of the University

As an academic institution operating in Lebanon and receiving the overwhelming majority of its students from Lebanon and the neighboring countries, AUST defines its academic role as one that

- a- Offers academic programs that will enhance the quality of education and life of the citizens of Lebanon and the neighboring countries. Some of these programs must come as answers to the needs of the job market, others should be introduced in anticipation of the personal and business needs, and others are to be for widening the educational and cultural horizons of the students.
- b- Educates students as to their role in promoting good international and national citizenships.
- c- Provides students with opportunities to develop leadership traits, self-confidence, independent thinking and analytical decision making.
- d- Collaborates and operates with universities in Lebanon and/or elsewhere to ensure that the academic goals are met.
- e- Offers graduate programs in fields where there is evident need, or where AUST has cut a special niche of expertise and excellence.
- f- Offers undergraduate programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees that are equated to the Lebanese License, and thus, accepting into these programs only those students who have passed the Lebanese Baccalaureate (or its equivalent) as Sophomores. Lebanese students who have waivers of the Lebanese Baccalaureate and non-Lebanese students will have to enroll into a freshman class.

- g- Provides students with on-campus and off-campus opportunities that would complement their classroom education.
- h- Offers undergraduate programs that will satisfy the following three criteria
 1. A core of Liberal Education courses that include requirements in languages, humanities, social sciences, math/computer science/or natural science.
 2. A solid range of courses so as to satisfy the normal requirements of a major in good, reputable US universities while still impregnating these courses with material required by professional societies and/or the business world.
 3. A Capstone Senior Project as a requirement in the Senior year; this project helps students to synthesize the knowledge acquired during the three preceding years; it is to be based on either research or real life experience.
- i- The University offers specialty programs in the four faculties, namely, Faculty of Arts and sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Health Sciences, and Faculty of Business and Economics. The program comprises a minimum of 21 credit hours (7courses) in areas which meet the market's demands.
- j- Establishes a network of universities and institutions that would cooperate with AUST in research, student exchange, faculty exchange, academic conferences and sports events so as to internationalize the institute, and offer its students and faculty a global perspective on education.
- k- Establishes summer programs designed to draw international students to AUST; thus, giving AUST students a chance to meet students from outside the region.
- l- Recruits faculty members who can teach and do research, and gradually increase the emphasis on research so that this emphasis becomes a necessary requirement for promotion.
- m- Provides faculty members with time release so as to get involved in research (according to set procedures).
- n- Holds conferences and activities of academic nature to benefit the University's students and the public.

II) Academic Standards

In order to ensure that academic standards are of high quality, AUST shall subject all incoming students to the Freshman and Sophomore years to entrance and/or placement exams in the English language and in Mathematics. Moreover, it shall see to it that the following conditions are met:

Academic Rules and Procedures: These are set by the University's Council, and are listed in the Student Handbook, and the University's catalogue.

Graduation Requirements: These requirements are by the faculty of each major, keeping in mind that the minimum number of credits required for a Bachelor's degree in any major is 120-credit hours, and that all requirements set by the Lebanese Government to equate the BA/BS degrees with the Lebanese License should be met. A minimum of 2.0/4.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is required in all courses taken, and in the courses described as major courses, to graduate with a Bachelor's degree.

Certain departments may have additional requirements:

- Satisfying the requirements of a Masters' program means the successful completion of a minimum of 39-credit hours, with a minimum GPA of 3.0/4.0. Candidates applying from a different major may be required to take additional pre-requisites to be determined by the Faculty Graduate Committee.
- Ordinarily a 6-credit hour thesis (out of the 39) is required. This thesis should show original research work and results.
- In the MBA program, the number of credit hours required for graduation is 39-credit hours. He student may choose to finish his /her degree by pursuing either a 6-credit thesis or a 3-credit research project. Both choices are included within the aforementioned 39 credits.

III) Faculty Evaluation:

The teaching competence of faculty members shall be evaluated every semester by the students, chairpersons and deans of concerned faculty. Procedures for the evaluation process are to delineated in a clear form.

IV) External Evaluation:

The faculty shall establish procedures for annual evaluation of the quality of the graduating senior students vis-a-vis graduates from reputable universities. These procedures may include interviews, statistics and evaluation from employers, standardized examinations...etc.

V) Academic Services

1. Academic Records: These records should reflect the performance of the students as well as that of the faculty be it in teaching, research and services. These records are confidential and include the key academic information needed to judge the academic standards of the institution, utilizing the commonly accepted approaches in American higher education.

4. Library and Learning Resources: Students and faculty have easy access to these learning resources which support the University's educational process. An adequate percentage of the budget shall be consecrated for the development of the learning resources of the University, including that of the library, the computer centers and the learning laboratories.

VI) Faculty Duties

Faculty members are entrusted with the students' academic welfare. Their primary duties shall be the service of the students in an engaging teaching and learning process.

Furthermore, students' advisement and guidance are to be considered by the faculty members as integral components of the learning process. As mature individuals therefore, they should be trusted friends and noble examples to their students and advisees.

The faculty shall be responsible for keeping itself updated on the most recent and current developments in their areas of study, and endeavor to enrich the learning and teaching process with innovative

techniques and ideas designed to further and enhance the students' involvement and grasp of subject matter.

Full-time faculty members shall enter into contractual agreements with the Institution. Although their teaching and advising duties shall extend from late September to the end of June, they are assumed to be engaged in research, in self-professional development or in teaching during the summer months.

A full time faculty is entitled to **4-week vacation** during the summer unless his/her summer teaching load dictates otherwise.

The following defines faculty's duties in weeks (or their equivalents)

1- Service Equivalents

a. Teaching Duties	24-30
b. Advising and Council Duties	0-6
c. Professional Development	8

2- Optional Equivalents:

a. Summer Teaching and/or Professional Development	10
b. Vacation	<u>4</u>

Total weeks or equivalents **52**

Fulltime faculty members are expected to use the **18** weeks of professional development in the improvement of their research profile and/or in updating their course's material.