

American University of Beirut  
Office of the President



April 4, 2014

Dear AUB Students,

In recent months, I have heard and seen your civil protests and I fully understand your concerns about the impact of tuition increases at AUB. I deeply respect the activism of student leaders and the passion the student body has shown in communicating its position to the greater AUB community. AUB has a proud democratic heritage; civic engagement and peaceful protest movements are important components of that heritage. Moreover, they are at the heart of our liberal arts educational experience. The protests staged by students over the past several weeks were well-carried out. More importantly, they effectively conveyed your devotion to AUB and ideals to which our community should aspire, including standards for shared governance, greater transparency in our administrative operations, and sustainable fiscal practices to ensure that ability to pay is never a barrier to an AUB education for qualified students. I wholeheartedly support these ideals. Indeed an engaged community, transparency and socio-economic diversity, are aspirations I have championed since the start of my presidency.

As this recent protest comes to an end, I would like to share with you some positive steps that we have taken. This week members of the Board of Trustees met with student representatives from the Tuition Increase Committee (TIC) to listen to, and discuss more specifically, the issues of concern that the student body has articulated. This follows open and honest discussions that the Provost and I held with student leaders from the USFC and TIC over the last weeks. At this point in time, each of the demands made by the students have been discussed at the very highest levels of the university and are under active consideration.

I have asked for several budget scenarios as soon as possible to help us make decisions on tuition rates for next year. I am very hopeful that in the coming weeks, I will have a viable budget proposal to present to the Board of Trustees that will be satisfactory to all parties. The goal is to incorporate into our budget framework tuition rates that minimize the impact on families, as well as mechanisms that will project budget and tuition trends for a period of at least three years.

I know that all of you have the best interests of AUB at heart – and those of your fellow students and their families. At AUB, we belong to a unique community in the region, where we share humanistic values associated with the finest liberal arts universities. I am proud that AUB students have both the right and the inclination to stand up for these values in a peaceful and persistent way.

Sincerely,  
Peter Dorman