



Center for Civic Engagement and Community Services (CCECS)

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| Director: | Shibli, Rabih |
| Administrative Assistant: | Bou Fadel, Mireille |
| Staff and Research Assistants: | Abou Farraj, Lina; Fleihan, Hala; Chahine, Karen; Hajaig, Rabih; Kouzi, Sarah; Bou Matar, Sarah; Dabbous, Lin; Kossaifi, Clara; Massalkhi, Fatima; Ziadeh, Raghdah; Al Ajami, Ahmad; El Ali, Qamar; Saleh, Aya |

Vision

Positioning AUB as a civic convener and frontline responder to societal conflicts and challenges while realizing the potential of university students as change makers in local and global contexts.

Mission

Leveraging operational research, campus community, and socially responsive partnerships to address societal challenges while equipping students with professional skills for ethical and effective crisis management. This is reflected in three cross-cutting tenets:

1. Engaged Scholarship Program (ESP):

Each year, CCECS guides more than 700 undergraduate and graduate scholarship recipients from Lebanon, the Middle East, Africa, and Afghanistan through a four-track journey beginning with workshops, volunteering rotations, extending to internships, and culminating in the development and implementation of Community Support Projects (CSP). Skills development workshops are sequentially layered according to students' academic standing and in alignment with the ESP milestones. Volunteering rotations allow freshman and sophomore students access to community organizations and direct exposure to services offered to vulnerable communities. Community-based internships provide junior and senior students with specialized opportunities to gain work-like experience over a minimum of 4 weeks. This preparatory experience culminates with a CSP that engages students in a participatory design process with local stakeholders to develop and pilot interventions that respond to pressing challenges facing vulnerable communities.

2. Fundamental in Civic Engagement (FCE):

Under the new General Education Program, the CCECS is developing a three-credit general education course requirement bridging theory with practice, provides students with a five-option pathway to fulfill, namely through, Volunteering Rotations, a Community-Based Internship, Capstone Project, Community Support Project (CSP) and a Service-Learning Course. The common ground of these five options is a one credit online prerequisite course that entails the fundamentals of civic engagement and field reports developed by students; an opportunity to recognize some of the prominent student-led initiatives, that can be used as references to further inspire their peers. Each of these reports starts with a short documentary raising awareness and understanding on a specific societal challenge along with a case study illustrating the global relevance, the national manifestation of its policies and practices, and the local context where a specific site is identified for the pilot project implementation.

3. Strategic Community Initiatives (SCIs):

CCECS plays a leading role in empowering the most vulnerable populations through high impact multi-year interventions, by first identifying themes, setting the roadmap for project development, and establishing strategic partnerships with academia, stakeholders, and funding agencies. Each contextualized SCI is initially a prototype that is meticulously designed to tackle local complexities; it must be flexible, resilient, and positioned in the most appropriate setup for it to thrive. Insights, common practices, and readily available resources within the targeted communities provide invaluable building blocks that increase local buy-in, ownership, and the sustainability of the prototype. Leveraging cutting-edge operational research, SCIs yield tangible solutions that are expandable to cover a wider scope of the same targeted community and are transferable to various locations enduring similar challenges.

AUB's civic engagement through CCECS has earned international recognition. AUB has been designated as the "most civically engaged campus" in the Middle East and North Africa, won the MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship, the MIT Enterprise Forum 'Innovate for Refugees' Award, as well as the Fritz Redlich Human Rights Award from Harvard University.