American University of Ras Al Khaimah
Academic Excellence, Redefined

Annual Report
For the Year Ended August 31, 2012

Real People
Make Real Change
HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH
SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI

Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah & Chancellor of the University
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Dear Friends of AURAK,

It is my honor to dedicate this annual report, with the accomplishments identified within it, to each one of you. Let me reiterate my sincerest thanks for this prosperous year and for all that you will continue to do to make AURAK one of the leading universities in the region. The 2011-2012 academic year produced a positive difference not only in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah but also in the United Arab Emirates. I thank our many supporters: the Board of Governors, faculty, staff, students, partners, and the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) for making this a reality. AURAK’s success couldn’t be fulfilled without your inspiration, your tremendous enthusiasm, your endless optimism and your tireless commitment and support to serving and bettering AURAK.

The establishment of the American University of Ras Al Khaimah has opened a new era in the domain of higher education in Ras Al Khaimah. Though the university is relatively new, I am confident that with continuing goodwill and sincere efforts we will be able to achieve excellence in education and research. We will continue to adapt, evolve and respond to the challenges in research and academia within the global context. The future of AURAK is the responsibility of each one of us, both collectively and individually. The education we offer, and the actions we take all impact on the world around us, and it is vital that we all make a real effort to improve academia.

The 2011-2012 academic year was significant in many respects, and I am pleased to highlight a few of the achievements. During the year, we have taken a series of steps to improve the entire University’s infrastructure from IT to Logistics to provide a campus that is friendly for all students, faculty and staff. New faculty, that are bright and talented, have been recruited. According to faculty distribution by rank, 22 percent are full Professors, 26 percent are Associate Professors, 42 percent are Assistant Professors and 10 percent are instructors. This is an outstanding result that is both heartening and humbling. With their diverse academic and cultural backgrounds, they can thrive and support AURAK’s vision and mission to better student experience, and to continue an exciting new phase of strategic planning, led by their ambition to create and sustain high standards at the University for the benefit of the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, the UAE, and the region.

The momentum towards achieving excellence was obvious at several levels. Student numbers rose by 140 percent. The University’s Library acquisition rose compared to the previous academic year: books 5.2 percent, CD-ROMs 18 percent, periodicals 3.2 percent, and subscribed databases 33.3 percent. We plan to expand the Library during the next academic year 2012-2013. The University has commenced operating the CampusVue SIS and Portal, Microsoft Dynamics NAV, and Blackboard LMS. Existing laboratories have been upgraded, and new ones established that will be officially launched the next academic year.

Over the 2011-2012 academic year as a response to the dynamic changes around us, we submitted four new undergraduate programs to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research: BS in Civil and Infrastructure Engineering, BS in Accounting, BS in Computer Science and BA in English Language with three specializations in Translation, Teaching of English and Literature. We submitted our proposal restructuring the Business Program to include three majors: Finance, Human Resources, and Marketing and two new minors, Islamic Banking and Finance, and International Business. Revised proposals to restructure the Biotechnology Program and the General Education Program were also submitted to meet market demands. The University, out of its mission to support the educational development of the UAE, initiated a Master of Education in Educational Leadership (MEEL) to be its first offered graduate program.

As we implemented and refined our strategic initiatives, we signed Memoranda of Understanding with international and regional partners from governmental, industrial, and educational sectors who are looking over the horizon and understand the unprecedented pace of change. The support of our friends is critical to our success and allows us to achieve and maintain our distinctive goals.

At the end, let me again reiterate my thanks to you all for taking the time to read AURAK’s detailed Annual Report 2011-2012, and evaluate our achievements. If you have any comment or suggestion regarding its contents, please refer them to us. We depend on your informed input and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim
Vice Chancellor
American University of Ras Al Khaimah
OUR HISTORY

The American University of Ras Al Khaimah originated from the vision of His Highness Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr Al Qassimi, Ruler, Ras Al Khaimah, who wanted to found a university that would serve the needs of Ras Al Khaimah, the United Arab Emirates, and the region. He wished to provide high quality educational opportunities to students that emphasize a global outlook and are rooted in the region’s context and culture. Consequently, the American University of Ras Al Khaimah was established as an independent institution by Royal Decree in April 2009.
The American University of Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK) is an independent, coeducational institution of higher education. AURAK’s mission is to provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate education based on the principles of objectivity and scientific merits that contribute to human development. It encourages life-long learning and professional education.

To be a leading knowledge-based professional institution that adheres to the universality of knowledge-sharing.
OUR VALUES

People
To create a student learning environment that develops social and cultural understanding for personal and professional growth and concern for others, builds skills of independence, self-direction, critical and reflective thinking, innovation and entrepreneurship; to recruit high quality faculty and staff members by capitalizing on their uniqueness and recognizing their excellence in performance.

Quality
To offer high quality academic and professional programs that build mastery and commitment to life-long learning.

Scholarship and Research
To advance knowledge through discovery, dissemination, and application.

Cultural Authenticity
To serve as a center for cultural dialogue and understanding, to promote cultural heritage and to be a community resource for language development.

Integrity
To maintain the highest standards of integrity and instill those standards as an important value for sustaining humankind.

Engagement
To engage faculty, students, and staff with the broader community; to maximize human resources and contribute to the solution of local, regional, and global problems by developing sustainable partnerships that enhance opportunities for students and the community, including partnerships with local schools, local and regional governments, business and industry, and other institutions of higher education.

Improvement and Productivity
To seek continuous improvement through reflection, assessment, and quality enhancement; setting and rewarding high standards and being proactive, efficient, and effective within the context of high quality.

Academic Freedom
To create an environment of open, critical thought, and enquiry and exchange of ideas; of tolerance for divergent views and beliefs.

Enterprising
To value innovation and entrepreneurship in teaching, research, services, and other enterprises.

Global
To promote multi-cultural understanding, global knowledge, and world citizenship for enhancing world peace and prosperity and creating sustainable futures.
Professor John Ryder
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Philosophy

Prof. Larry Griffin
Dean, School of Arts and Sciences

Prof. Mousa Mohsen
Dean, School of Engineering

Associate Prof.
Irshad Ahmed
Chemistry

Associate Prof.
Hassan Katkhuda
Civil Engineering

Assist. Prof.
Muhammad Badran
English (Linguistics)

Assistant Prof.
Cambria Dodd
Russell
Education

Assistant Prof.
Turgut Guvenli
Dean, School of Business and Management

Lab Instructor,
Hussain Atia
Electronics and Communications Engineering

Assistant Prof.
Rachel Matar
Biotechnology

Prof. Soon Lim Chan
Accounting

Associate Prof.
Majed Khodr
Electronics and Communications Engineering

Associate Prof.
Asha Ravindran
English

Associate Prof.
Mousa Mohsen
Dean, School of Engineering

ACADEMICS
AURAK is in an exciting position, and we in academic affairs have an opportunity that relatively few academics ever have: we are in a position, working with all our colleagues across the university, to craft a first-rate university that can be proud of itself academically, that can provide our students with a world-class education, and that can enhance the strength and growth of its community.

The division of Academic Affairs is excited about and grateful for that opportunity, and the information provided below is presented in the spirit of ongoing accomplishment and growth that we all feel. The 2011-2012 academic year was a momentous one, in which existing degree programs were maintained, and the foundations were laid for program and faculty development that will be coming to fruition in the 2012-2013 academic year. Among the academic highlights of 2011-2012 are:

- B. S. in Computer Science
- B. S. in Civil and Infrastructure Engineering
- B.A. in English Language (Concentrations in Translation, Teaching of English, and Literature)
- B. S. in Accounting
- B. S. in Finance
- B. S. in Marketing
- B. S. in Human Resource Management
- M.Ed. in Educational Leadership
- Minor in Islamic Banking
- Minor in International Business

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- B. S. in Finance
- B. S. in Marketing
- B. S. in Human Resource Management
- M.Ed. in Educational Leadership
- Minor in Islamic Banking
- Minor in International Business

- General Education Program
- B. S. in Biotechnology

Creation of Advisory Councils:
- The creation of an Advisory Council for each of the three schools. The Advisory Councils consist of prominent members of the public who contribute their expertise to the schools’ curriculum development and other activities.

New Degree Programs to Be Submitted to the CAA
- B. S. in Mechanical Engineering
- B. S. in Industrial Engineering
- B. A. in Communication (Concentrations in Public Relations and Digital Media)
- M. S. in Engineering Project Management

New Academic Departments Created
- MBA
- Department of English
- Department of Computer Science and Engineering
- Department of Civil and Infrastructure Engineering
- Department of Accounting

First 12 Graduates of GMU and AURAK
His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Saud Al-Qasimi, Crown Prince of Ras Al-Khaimah, congratulated the first batch of graduates from the American University of Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK) who were continuing for George Mason University, wishing them a bright and successful future. The 12 graduates obtained the Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering.

Professor Hassan Hamdan Al-Alkim, Vice Chancellor of AURAK, thanked His Highness for his support and patronage of the ceremony, and the members of the Board of Governors and attendees for sharing the excitement and happiness of the graduates and their guardians.

Towards the end of the ceremony, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Saud Al-Qasimi, Professor Al-Alkim and Prof. McGlinchey, GMU representative distributed the degree certificates to the graduates.

New Academic Departments Planned
- Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
FACULTY ACTIVITIES

The total number of current full-time faculty perschool (including Dean) is as follows:
- School of Arts and Sciences: 19
- School of Business: 4
- School of Engineering: 8

Faculty members in all Schools have been active in preparing and revising program proposals for the CAA and in staffing university-wide committees. Faculty are also actively engaged in research activities that are coordinated by the university-wide Research Committee and the Research Unit, directed by Dr. Rachael Matar, Department of Biotechnology.

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PROF. MOUSA MOHSEN


PROF. AMINE BERMAK


PROF. JOHN RYDER

Was the conference organizer at the 22nd Annual Conference of the Alliance of Universities for Democracy, held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in 2011. He was the co-organizer, Society and Culture: Theory and Practice, at the Central European Pragmatist Forum, Ratiu Center for Democracy, Turda, Romania, in 2012, and continued to serve as President, Alliance of Universities for Democracy. As an invited speaker at the University of Wroclaw, Poland, he spoke on

“Democracy and the University,” and also gave four presentations on various aspects of “Democratic Theory” at Babe-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Moscow State University, Fordham University, NYC, and at Turda, Romania. Prof. Ryder was the co-editor of Identity and Social Transformation (Rodopi Press, 2011), and had two publications, “The Ontology of Santa Claus: Miracle on 34th Street” and “Richard Rorty and Cultural Criticism” in separate volumes of the International Journal of Cultural Research.

PROF. TURGUT GUVENLI

Co-authored “Perception and Understanding of Bribery in International Business” published in Ethics and Behavior.

“Democracy and the University,” and also gave four presentations on various aspects of “Democratic Theory” at Babe-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Moscow State University, Fordham University, NYC, and at Turda, Romania. Prof. Ryder was the co-editor of Identity and Social Transformation (Rodopi Press, 2011), and had two publications, “The Ontology of Santa Claus: Miracle on 34th Street” and “Richard Rorty and Cultural Criticism” in separate volumes of the International Journal of Cultural Research.
**DR. AISHA RAVINDRAN**

Presented a paper at the 25th International Conference on the First Year Experience at Vancouver, Canada.

**DR. MUHAMMAD A. BADARNEH**

Published on pragmatics, specifically politeness theory, Gricean maxims, and the sociocultural, political, and religious embeddedness in journals such as Journal of Pragmatics, Text and Talk, Applied Linguistics, and Humor: International Journal of Humor Research.

**DR. BRENDAN D’SOUZA**

Published “Bfl-1 is a crucial pro-survival Nuclear Factor-KB target gene in Hodgkin/Reed-Sternberg cells” in the International Journal of Cancer.

**DR. ANTHONY PATTERSON**

Edited a critical edition of George Moore’s *A Mummer’s Wife* and also published in the Wellsian, a journal dedicated to the life and work of H.G. Wells.

**DR. IRSHAD AHMAD**


**DR. MAXIME MERHEB**

Published two articles “A novel SERRS sandwich-hybridization assay to detect specific DNA target” and “Enzyme-free detection and quantification of double-stranded nucleic acids” in PLoS One and *Anal Bioanal Chem*, respectively.

**DR. MAJED KHODR**


**DR. FATIMA EL GUEZAR**


**DR. HASSAN KATKHUDA**

published “Improving Durability of Concrete to Phosphoric Acid Attack”, in the *Jordan Journal of Civil Engineering*, in 2012.

**DR. RACHEL MATAR**

Was a full-time researcher at Nestle Corporation in Switzerland. His presentation at the Fourth International Workshop on Advanced Materials at Ras Al Khaimah, was on “Dielectric-Based Method for the Online Assessment of the Viable Mixed Biomass.”

**DR. MUSTAPHA MERABET**

Published “Bfl-1 is a crucial pro-survival Nuclear Factor-KB target gene in Hodgkin/Reed-Sternberg cells” in the *International Journal of Cancer*.

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GENERAL EDUCATION

The General Education Program is a graduation requirement for all AURAK undergraduate students. The program is supervised by the university-wide General Education Committee, and its delivery is supervised by the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Courses that meet general education requirements are offered by all the university’s Schools. A revised version of the General Education Program has been submitted to CAA for its approval.

THE SAQR LIBRARY

The Saqr Library is supervised and administered by the Director of the Library, and its policies and practices are guided by a university-wide Library Committee. Several changes in the library during the current academic year have led to greater efficiency in library services and in the expansion of its resources. Modification and upgrading of the library management system to Symphony 2012, has enabled the library catalog to be changed from local, single user to Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), multi-user, which could be accessed through the internet. The library has initiated specific steps to establish a consortium among academic and research libraries in the UAE through Ankabut. The library is in the process of increasing its acquisitions through the ordering of 1,312 titles and has received 469 titles for different programs at the University as follows:
- School of Engineering (447 titles)
- School of Business (43 titles)
- School of Arts and Sciences
- Biotechnology (394 titles)
- English Language and General Education (428 titles)

Currently, the library is processing orders for new acquisitions for English Language and Literature, General Education, Biotechnology, Business and Civil Engineering programs. The library has also upgraded the library computer lab, hosting twelve workstations to enable students to access information sources via the internet, and three new workstations to facilitate access to the library catalog. Spatial expansion includes a seminar room within the library to train students on searching electronic databases and resources. Besides the orientation and training courses for new students and staff, the library plans to create an awareness of library services and collections, including electronic resources, through workshops. As part of the university’s commitment to the local community, the library has prepared a list of duplicate and unused books to be donated to the Cultural Center at RAK.

ACTIVITIES

- On 28 April 2012, the university held a Biotechnology Day, and invited the community to campus to learn about contemporary applications in the field. Presentations were given by Dr. Brendan D’Souza, Chair, Department of Biotechnology, and faculty from the department, Dr. Maxime Merheb and Dr. Irshad Ahmad.
- Dr. Cambria Russell, faculty, Department of Education, is serving the courses. A Language Lab and Civil Engineering programs.
- Presentations were given by Dr. Cambria Russell, faculty, Department of Education, is serving the Master’s program in Education. The English Language Program (ELP) runs classes at different levels. The courses bridge the gap between high school and university education by focusing more on academic writing and incorporating study skills within the courses. A Language Lab and additional classrooms are expected to be fully operational in November 2012.
- A number of community engagement activities by the university and individual members of the faculty were held during the academic year 2011-2012. Plans are also underway for programs and activities that will be realized during the academic year 2012-2013.
- Arabic Classes for staff and faculty members will begin in October 2012.
- The Director of the Saqr Library will provide professional development for librarians in RAK schools.
- AURAK will partner with AMIDEAST to provide TOEFL services to RAK schools.
- Plans are underway to begin two English for Professional Purposes (EPP) classes. The aim of these classes will be to improve the English levels of professionals in the community as well as staff working within the community.
- An evening course is to be run for the Media Council.
- Discussions are underway to partner with ESI to deliver professional development programs in project management for RAK companies and government agencies.
- Plans are in place to begin a series of community oriented professional development courses and workshops in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). A full-time geographer and GIS specialist will be hired for 2013-2014.
AURAK continues to grow and attract a diverse international student body. Enrollment numbers are showing steady growth with an increase of 26% compared to 2011. AURAK’s students come from 35 countries spanning five different continents, which show the heterogeneity of AURAK’s student population. Emirati nationals constitute 27% of the student population; therefore, despite the multinational nature of the student body, the indigenous population remains the largest group represented. Figure (1) shows the distribution of students by nationality.
This past year AURAK targeted the international student market through overseas recruitment events and exhibitions. Students came to AURAK from countries as diverse as Nigeria, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Sierra Leone, and Ireland. Ten percent of the current student body represents international students. The Business Administration program is currently the most popular program in the university with 35.2% of the student body enrolled in the program. It is closely followed by Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) with 32.8% of the student body enrolled, while 13.7% are non-degree students in the English Language Program (ELP), working towards completing the university’s English language proficiency requirements. The percentage breakdown of student enrollment by program is shown in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronics and Communication Engineering</th>
<th>Computer Engineering</th>
<th>Biotechnology</th>
<th>Business Administration</th>
<th>English Language Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Percentage breakdown of enrollment by program

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There have been a multitude of scholarships on offer for new students at AURAK. Scholarships can either be internal or from an external organization. Internally, the university offers the opportunity to two continuing students per semester to get the Chancellor’s Scholarship. For newly admitted students, the Vice Chancellor has approved a 15% reduction on the first semester tuition fees. The University also offers a faculty/staff family discount for the son, daughter, brother, or sister of a full time employee at AURAK and is a full time student to a discount of 25% on tuition fees so long as the faculty/staff remains employed at AURAK. Externally, the University obtained full scholarships from ten different organizations in both the public and private sectors to sponsor AURAK students and cover their tuition fees. Currently, 34% of all students at AURAK have scholarships from external sponsors. Figure 2 shows the distribution of students by sponsors.
Because of the multitude and variety of scholarships on offer at AURAK, there were plenty of opportunities not only for Emirati nationals but also for non-Emiratis with a record of high academic performance, proven financial need, or both, to receive scholarships. This was reflected by the fact that 44% of sponsored students were non-Emirati’s. Figure 3 shows the distribution of sponsored students by nationality.

The vast majority of sponsored students were enrolled in either the ECE or Business Administration programs; this was because of the popularity of the two programs and the fact that some external sponsors required students to enroll in certain programs. The Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (TRA), for example, required that students enroll in either the ECE or the Computer Engineering program, while the Ministry of Foreign Trade (MOFT) required that their sponsored students enroll in the Business Administration program. Figure 4 shows the distribution of sponsored students by academic program.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The Career Development Office (CDO) was established at AURAK in early February 2012. AURAK’s CDO is committed to providing a diversified range of career services to all students at each and every stage of their university life. The office aims to offer a full range of career programs and services to enhance and support students in career preparation, workplace sophistication, and employment opportunities, including individual career counseling and assessment, workshops, career books, job and internship listings, interview programs, and career fairs.

1. Individual Appointments:
A number of senior students visited us to discuss their career plans, get help for their resumes, job hunting strategies, cover letters, and complex career counseling issues. Most of the students preferred “walk in” sessions for quick questions, each contact lasting for a minimum of 10 minutes. Same day appointments were also arranged for students who wanted to get themselves assessed for their personality, skills, interests, motivations, standardized tool use, and assistance with internships. A small number of the appointments focused on graduate school planning. Juniors and seniors are the primary target for our services that have been used by the majority of them. Some freshmen were also very frequent in attending workshops and group discussions.

2. Resources:
A number of new books related to career development were purchased through the Library and were displayed on various occasions to encourage students to read them. The license of TypeFocus Careers was purchased for one year to help students use this software for self-assessment, make career goals, use resume wizard redundant, and create a career portfolio. The Interview Mastery 2.0 was also purchased to help students know the techniques of interview. Many DVDs related to career development were provided to students during group discussions/individual viewing. Various career-related inventories are also available for students to help them discover their interests.

3. Workshops:
Workshops assist students in preparing for their job search by introducing them to various career resources such as new textbooks in Saqr Library, by teaching them the techniques and strategies to be more successful, and by building their confidence. Five workshops were conducted in Spring 2012 with the following topics:
- Orientation to TypeFocus Careers
- Self-assessment and matching profiles with occupations and jobs
- Resume writing, cover letter writing, JIST card, and Portfolio writing
- Use of resume wizard
- Interview to win your first job
- Use of good answers to tough interview questions (Using Talent Inventory to prepare for Interview)
- Introduction to Interview Mastery 2.0

All these workshops were well attended by students. Students seemed very enthusiastic to participate and freely asked questions. A few students made several “walk ins” following these workshops to know more about the topic, and they were also handed the DVD for personal viewing.

4. Mason's Group Discussion:
These two-hour group discussions were arranged every Thursday for students who could not attend the workshops but wanted to learn about the topic. Average attendance was 5 students. These group discussions were successful because students could freely discuss the issues among their peers along with the presence of an expert.

5. Expert Talk:
Under this series, the first talk was given by Ms. Marion Janet, Assistant Professor, English Department, AURAK, on “Persuasive Communication Strategies.”

6. Trips to Attend Conferences:
Around 15 students went on a trip to Dubai to attend the YOULEAD Forum that was organized by AIESEC and UAE Careers. Students also attended the leadership conference in which the keynote speaker was Mr. Kevin Abdul...
7. Student Work Placement:
A new policy for career development and student empowerment was established that allowed students to work as part-time staff in the following positions:
- Library Assistant
- Lab Assistant
- Admission Assistant
- Marketing Assistant
- IT Assistant
Two students worked as Library assistants, one student worked as a PR assistant and another five worked as Admissions assistants during Summer 2012. The students were paid on an hourly basis.

8. Resume Clinic: A two-week Resume Clinic was organized in May to serve as a valuable resource for students to network, gain practical feedback/advice from the career counselor, and to prepare for summer job/interships. A number of resumes were critiqued. New career-related books, DVDs, and other resources were displayed for students. First-year students were advised to use the Resume Wizard available with TypeFocus Careers. With the introduction of this tool and resume checklist, Career Development expanded the benefits to students that resulted in improvement in first drafts and enhanced the outcomes of the student-counselor work.

9. Resume Competition And Award Ceremony:
The resume clinic concluded with a resume competition on May 17, 2012 in which 16 students participated and were judged by a panel. The Vice Chancellor of AURAK gave the prizes to the best three resumes at a ceremony organized on May 20, 2012.

10. Internship:
Summer internship for senior students was arranged for 13 students from Biotechnology, Business, and Engineering. Biotechnology students went to Julphar Pharmaceutical Industries, RAK; Business students went to RAK Chamber of Commerce, RAK Free Trade Zone, Azuri Constructions, and the Department of Economic Development, RAK; and Engineering students went to Etisalat and the Federal Electricity and Water Authority.

11. Bayt.com: Negotiations continue with Bayt.com Company about the possibility of having partnership with them so that in future AURAK may have an online career management system developed with the help of e-recruitment technology provided by the company.
His Highness Sheikh Mohamed Bin Saud Al Qasimi, Crown Prince of Ras Al Khaimah, congratulated the first class of graduates from AURAK, who were part of George Mason University (GMU), by wishing them a bright and successful future. The 12 graduates obtained Bachelors of Science degrees in Electronics and Communication Engineering. Professor Eric McGlinchey, representing George Mason University, also attended the ceremony.
The Student Life Office (SLO) oversees a wide range of activities for students throughout the year by introducing students to the immense cultural diversity of the UAE. The SLO also offers various opportunities for students to participate in sports activities, join student clubs/organizations, develop leadership skills, and participate in various intercollege competitions. These outlets allow students to further exercise their skills, imagination, and talents and to learn to balance their academic and extracurricular interests. The following is an overview of the activities of AURAK students for Fall and Spring 2011/2012:

Orientation and Campus Activities
The fall semester began on September 8, 2011 with encouraging words by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim who welcomed new students and emphasized the importance of quality education. New students were then given orientation about AURAK’s different schools, administration offices, library, and student services, with a tour of campus facilities. In September, student activities held the new students welcome party where new students were introduced to the Student Government Association (SGA) and various clubs on campus, and the day ended with a friendly soccer match between the new students and continuing students. Spring Semester 2012 began with the new student orientation on January 22, 2012. The Cultural Club organized a BBQ party and a falcon show on the soccer field for all AURAK students, staff, and faculty. In April, the SGA elections were announced, with a new SGA elected by AURAK students. The Deanship of Student Affairs had a meeting with the SGA, student clubs, and the student body as a whole. The spring semester ended in June with the graduation ceremony.

Sports Activities
In September, student activities had selection of various teams on campus, namely indoor and outdoor soccer, basketball, indoor and outdoor cricket, table tennis, and pool. Various indoor sports competitions, such as table tennis and football, were organized and the teams on campus began their training sessions and rounds of friendly matches with other universities in Ras Al Khaimah. November saw the peak of sports activities when all the finals of indoor competitions were played. The third AURAK cricket league 2011-2012 continued until April 2012. AURAK also participated in RAK Medical Sports Festival 2011 where our students won second place in men’s and women’s table tennis and third place in men’s chess. AURAK indoor soccer team participated in UCOWD soccer tournament in Dubai. AURAK students took part in the first AURAK Mini Marathon with more than 300 participants from various schools, colleges and universities in Ras Al Khaimah. The first place in the women’s section was won by AURAK and in the men’s section, 4th, 5th and 8th places were also won by AURAK. In December the third AURAK cricket league matches began with AURAK winning all the three league matches of the month by beating RAK Medical University, Bolton University and BITS Ranchi. Soccer coaching continued along with friendly matches: AURAK beat Madonna College 8-1, RAK Men 5-1, and Bolton University 8-1. Student activities sponsored basketball training and in a friendly match against BITS Ranchi; AURAK won 52-47. Student Activities also had a session of women’s throwball training. The AURAK Indoor Soccer League for all students interested in soccer took place in the period from 6-15 February 2012, with students divided into six teams playing against each other. Twenty AURAK students participated in the RAK Marathon as volunteers and received appreciation from the RAK Marathon organizers in the form of certificates. At the end of February, the AURAK Cricket Team won all their league matches and stood on the top to win the League. AURAK participated in the 11th Annual Gulf Medical Sports Festival in soccer and basketball with the soccer team winning their first match against Skyline University College and losing in the second round to Preston University. The AURAK Basketball Team beat Murdoch University to reach the semifinals before losing to BITS Pilani Dubai. The Indoor Pool and Table Tennis Championship for the Spring Semester began on March 13, 2012, and continued for a month. AURAK also participated in the BITS Sports Festival Dubai and both the soccer and basket teams played well. The soccer teams reached the finals and were the runners up and the basketball team reached the finals. The first session of Campus Soccer and Cricket Cup began on campus on April 24, 2012. The AURAK Soccer Team had a training session with Barkley
Premier League Club coaches on the AURAK soccer field for a day. The AURAK Soccer and Cricket Team won the campus rolling trophy for the first time when AURAK beat Bolton University. The Sports Awards Ceremony for Fall and Spring was conducted on May 10, 2012 with the Vice Chancellor Professor Hassan Al Akim presenting awards to the top sports persons of the year.

Community Service
AURAK initiated a number of community service activities. The Public Relations Office, along with Students Affairs Deanship, organized a blood donation drive in which AURAK students, staff, and faculty participated. Students, staff, and faculty paid a visit to the home for the elderly at Salf Hospital in Ras Al Khaimah. AURAK students and staff participated in the Terry Fox Charity Run in RAK and in the Gulf Traffic Safety Week from 11-15 March with photos taken by one of AURAK students on driving safely.

Trips
A number of trips were organized during 2011-2012, to the Dubai GITEX, to the Shooting Club of Ras Al Khaimah, the Dubai Air Show where students had a tour of aircraft and a seminar, the Abu Dhabi Horizon Pilot Training Academy and a trip to the Al Ain Zoo on April 12, 2012.

Cultural Activities
On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the UAE National Day, the campus had two days of celebrations on the 29th and 30th November 2011. On the first day, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi attended the cultural program and visited the Heritage Village.

AURAK had a spectacular show marking Global Day (May 2, 2012). His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi honored the occasion as the chief guest where he, along with more than 300 students, family, and friends, enjoyed a cultural program, food, and sartorial styles from various countries.

AURAK students also participated in the RAK Medical Quiz Competition and won second place, in the AUS Debate Competition, and the Skyline Cultural Carnival Western Dance Competition where they won the third place.
1. FACULTY

The international diversity of faculty at AURAK has been a supportive factor for teaching, scholarly research, as well as community service at AURAK and has served to enrich all aspects of university life for faculty, staff, as well as students. This diversity in discipline, intellectual outlook, cognitive style, and personality offers students the breadth of ideas that will constitute a dynamic intellectual community at AURAK. As shown by Figure 5, the faculty currently serving at AURAK come from different countries around the world. The largest portion of faculty come from Jordan and the United States, with equal percentages, followed by countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Ethiopia. This distribution reflects not only different nationalities, but also diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and teaching and educational experiences.
2. PROFESSIONAL STAFF

AURAK has aimed to achieve staff diversity through pro-active employment practices. This diversity has been beneficial in many ways. It has helped identify new or better ways of serving the student body and the faculty, to provide AURAK with an expanded pool of skilled labor for recruitment, to increase retention of valued staff, and build on the University’s skills-base.

The distribution of faculty by academic rank shows that AURAK has attracted and recruited faculty with different academic ranks, and hence different teaching and research experiences. This has served the University in two main ways. AURAK has benefited from the teaching and research experiences of faculty of higher ranks, while at the same time providing the necessary resources and opportunities for faculty of lower academic ranks to develop in terms of teaching and scholarly research for purposes of promotion, which would potentially contribute positively to the academic reputation of AURAK in the short and long run.
The academic year of 2011-2012 has been a challenging year for many academic institutions due to significant budget cuts, and AURAK was no exception. The AURAK Accounts and Finance Department is happy to report, however, that through meticulous planning and dedicated commitment by our staff, the department achieved its objectives despite these challenges.
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
As per the business requirement, the Fiscal Resources policy has been restructured and further approved by the Vice Chancellor and Board of Governors.

BUSINESS PLAN (Financial Model for Five Years)
The Accounts and Finance Department developed the AURAK five-year financial model which comprises statistical data and summarizes student recruitment forecast, operating expenditure, and financial statement. The financial statement has been prepared in accordance with international accounting principles and reflects the financial position and the results of AURAK operations.

ANNUAL BUDGET
The annual budget was planned and prepared according to the AURAK Policies and Procedures Manual within the acceptable deadline and was further approved by the Board of Governors. Moreover, the Accounts and Finance Department has effectively managed its cash flows in order to keep expenditures within the budget for the year of 2011-2012.

FINANCIAL MODULE
(ERP – Microsoft Dynamic NAV 2009 Classic)
AURAK’s Accounting System has been computerized by customizing a software module known as Microsoft Dynamic NAV for recording all financial transactions. The Student Information System (SIS) and generation of various MIS reports in real time basis have been integrated in the module. Furthermore, two programs, General Accounting (Bill Processing, Journal Vouchers) and Student Accounting have been developed and successfully implemented.

PAYMENT OPTION
A new and convenient option of making payments has been added for students so they can pay their tuition and other fees through a Credit/Debit card.

EXTERNAL AUDIT
The Finance Department has been successfully audited by an external auditor.

THE ROAD AHEAD
Many projects are underway to complete digitization and computerization of accounts and records. The main focus is on improving the process and payment procedures and reducing the time taken to complete tasks.
ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) DEPARTMENT

AURAK can celebrate numerous accomplishments in 2011-2012 from all the departments of the University. The IT Department has managed to support and expand the computer and network systems vital to the University’s day-to-day business. An exciting achievement has been the creation of CampusVue and Blackboard which gives students the opportunity to register remotely and increase faculty/student contacts. The IT Department has responded vigorously to the requirements of the Accounts and Finance and Human Resources Departments by customizing a software module known as Microsoft Dynamic NAV to help in recording all transactions and to transfer to paperless administration.

The following is the list of achievements:

Implemented the following new systems:
- Campus VUE SIS and Portal
- Microsoft Dynamics NAV
- Symphony Application for Library
- Moved AURAK email migration to Microsoft Live@edu to minimize expenses
- Installed IT Helpdesk Portal on AURAK website
- Provided Technical Support reachable via it@aurak.ae
- Installed IT Helpdesk Portal on AURAK website
- Restructured and upgraded four laboratories
- Restructured and upgraded four laboratories
- Initiated the creation of the new AURAK website www.aurak.ac.ae
- Signed new Memoranda of Agreement with
  - Microsoft
  - Etisalat
  - ITS

The achievements and accomplishments in such a short period of time have been recognized and acknowledged by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA).
LABORATORIES

To improve the quality of the laboratory-based modules in all programs, there has been a strong commitment towards purchasing and upgrading of equipment for all laboratories over the past year.

BIOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

A second Biotechnology laboratory, the Julphar Biotechnology Laboratory, was built earlier this year with the support of Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries- Julphar, Ras Al Khaimah a leading pharmaceutical company in the region, and will be functional in September 2012. This laboratory houses facilities for the Cell Culture, Molecular Biology and Microbiology laboratory modules of the Biotechnology program.

CIVIL AND INFRASTRUCTURE ENGINEERING LABORATORIES

Stevin Rock L.L.C, the leading quarry operator in the Middle East for the past 32 years, partnered with AURAK to establish the Civil and Infrastructure Engineering Laboratories. The Laboratories that Stevin Rock will establish are:

- Advanced Computing Central Facility (AutoCAD)
- Surveying Laboratory
- Construction Materials Laboratory
- Geotechnical Engineering Laboratory
- Fluid and Hydraulic Laboratory
- Highway Engineering Laboratory

The primary estimate for those laboratories is 4.5 AED Millions.
In 2011-2012 AURAK established associations with the following:

- Emirates Transportation in Ras Al Khaimah signed two accords with the university on 29th September 2011, stating that it would provide various services for AURAK vehicles.

- The university signed memoranda of understanding in December 2011 with three US universities: George Mason University, California State University, San Bernardino, and the University at Albany, State University of New York, in order to benefit from the experiences of universities in USA in terms of academic and administrative performance.

- On February 14th, 2012, the Vice Chancellor signed a three-year agreement with the Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence in the Emirate. The agreement was signed with Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Ibrahim on behalf of Dr. Mohamed Khalefa, Director of SSPGE to provide Scholarships to AURAK students. One of the agreement’s conditions was to change the main Library’s name at AURAK to Saqr Library in memory of His Highness Sheikh Saqr Bin Mohamed Al Qasimi.

- On February 20th, 2012, AURAK signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries (JULPHAR) to provide scholarships for Emirati students to study at AURAK in the fields of Biotechnology, Engineering, and Business Administration. According to this agreement, Julphar has agreed to sponsor the new Biotechnology Laboratory, to be named the Julphar Biotechnology Laboratory, and to offer all the required support to the Biotechnology Department.

- The Vice Chancellor signed a contract on 29th March 2012 with Mr. Rabea Qranib from International Turnkey Systems (ITS) to provide the following programs: Blackboard, Microsoft Dynamics Nav, and CampusVue, an electronic registration system for students. All these systems are to be operative by the next academic year. Professor Al Alkim is keen to provide better online services for students comparable with the best universities in the state.

- On June 5th, 2012, AURAK signed a Memorandum of Understanding with...
the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) to provide scholarships for Emirati Students to study at AURAK. According to this agreement, the sponsored students will get a monthly stipend from TRA.

The Ras Al Khaimah Charity Foundation signed an agreement in June 18th, 2012 which states that, beginning in fall 2012, the Charity will provide a number of scholarships per year in various disciplines for students who come from remote areas in the Emirate (RAK). The agreement was signed by the Vice Chancellor and the Director of Ras Al Khaimah Charity Foundation, Mr. Ahmed Rashid Soula al Zaabi, the Secretary-General of the Corporation.

On August 7th, 2012, AURAK signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Foreign Trade (MoFT) to provide scholarships for Emirati students to study at AURAK in the field stipulated by the Ministry of Foreign Trade. According to this agreement, the sponsored students will work in the Ministry after their graduation.

On 2nd August 2012, the university signed a memorandum of understanding with Al Rahma Charity. This agreement provides financial assistance scholarships to a group of students that suffer from financial hardship. The agreement was signed by the Vice Chancellor and Al Rahmah Charity Director, Mr. Abdullah Hamad Sgran.
In collaboration with the Economic Development Department in Ras Al Khaimah, the Business department at AURAK held a symposium entitled: “The Academic Sector’s Role in the Knowledge Economy” on Tuesday, 25th Oct 2011 at the Hilton Hotel. The main focus of the symposium was to seek the means to bridge the gap and to raise the level of cooperation between the academic and economic sectors. Issues discussed included the skills and human resources necessary to improve education and the programs most likely to produce graduates capable of effectively contributing to the knowledge economy. The Symposium was attended by His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Kayed Al Qasimi, Deputy President of RAK Economic Department, Prof. Hassan Hamdan Al Akim, Vice Chancellor of American University of Ras Al Khaimah, representatives from different Government institutions and a group of faculty members and researchers from different universities in UAE.
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEWS AND EVENTS

The Department of Marketing and Public Relations had a very enterprising year in promoting various aspects of life in the university. The Department’s activities included, publicizing specific events within the university, effecting recruitment campaigns for students, and fostering student participation at a number of events and in various activities. Below are some of the significant highlights of the Unit’s engagement with the community:

- The Department launched summer recruitment drives in 2011 and 2012. These included the deployment of e-mail and text marketing, online and street banners, information stands at malls, radio and newspaper advertisements, such as advertising scholarship opportunities in Al Khaleej and an advertisement in Al Waseet for an Open Day in May.
- The Department was also involved in student orientation for First-year students and their families at AURAK’s Student Center, where the new Vice Chancellor, Professor Hassan Hamdan Al Akim, welcomed new students and discussed student life and AURAK’s program offerings.
- The Department also organized a number of events in the year, including, in October, National Products Week, in which AURAK received a delegation from the Center of Social Development in Ras Al Khaimah. The aim of the week was to inspire students by showcasing an array of national talent in the area of arts and crafts.
- In October, World Teacher’s Day was celebrated by the Cultural Club at the University. The day publicized the pivotal role that teachers play in the community. Club members gave gifts of appreciation to the Vice Chancellor and faculty.
- Also in October, AURAK held a public audience with the Ambassador of Kazakhstan at which a student Shaikha Al-Shamsi interviewed the Ambassador.
- In December, as part of the National Day Celebrations, AURAK organized a marathon in which 275 members of different RAK educational institutions participated.
- In cooperation with Saqr Hospital, a Blood Donation Campaign was launched in January. Professors, staff, and students all participated, and the public was encouraged to come to campus to donate blood.
- In February, AURAK hosted Ms. Marwa Ahmed Al Qurashi an expert trained in the field of international etiquette, learning strategies, and customer service. Ms. Al Qurashi delivered a lecture that focused on etiquette as a modern means of communication in society and in the classroom.
- In March, the Department promoted AURAK’s involvement in the global campaign Earth Hour. All electrical devices on campus were switched off for one hour to save energy as a demonstration of AURAK’s commitment towards protecting the environment.
- March also saw the university’s celebration of Women’s International Day. The event hosted many famous women from the UAE, and...
included lectures and presentations about women and their role in society.
- The Cultural Club in coordination with the Department of Student Activities at the university hosted a workshop entitled “Personal Dimensions” in which many students participated. The workshop stressed the importance of communication, tolerance, and integration.
- In May, the Cultural Club organized the second Global Day event on campus. Shaikh Mohamed Bin Saud Al Qasimi, Crown Prince of Ras Al Khaimah, attended the celebrations in which students from various nationalities participated in dances, performances, and displayed their heritage, culture, and food. A talent and a fashion show also formed part of the festivities. The event was also attended by Shaikh Abdullah Al Qasimi, Manager of His Highness Ruler’s Office in Ras Al Khaimah, Shaikh Saqr Bin Mohamed Bin Saqr Al Qasimi, Shaikh Saqr Bin Omar Bin Abdullah Al Qasimi, Professor Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim, the Vice Chancellor of the University, AURAK’s faculty and staff, and students with their families.

Throughout the year, students were encouraged to participate in a wide range of community activities and events:
- In November, AURAK students participated in “The Spirit of the Union” Essay Writing Competition sponsored by RAK Medical and Health Sciences University. AURAK won second place in this competition.
- In December, AURAK students visited senior citizens at the nursing home at Obaidullah Hospital. The visit was a fruitful experience for both patients and students.
- December also saw AURAK participate in Tanmiya’s Open Day which was attended by Khalfan Al Suwaidi, the Director of Employer Relations at the Office of Development in Ras Al Khaimah, and fifteen different private and governmental parties, including AURAK.

- In April, students participated in the Innovative Projects Exhibition attended by His Highness Sheikh Faisal Bin Saqr Al Qasimi. This inaugural exhibition fostered innovative projects by students within all Ras Al Khaimah educational institutes. Also present at the event were Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Mansour, Director of the Ras Al Khaimah Educational Zone, Mr. Ibrahim Al-Naimi, Deputy Director of Ras Al Khaimah Educational Zone, and Mr. Moza Matar, President of the UAE Chemical Society.
- In August, the AURAK community donated 480 books to the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Community Development. This donation strengthened the relationship and communication between AURAK and the Ministry.
- The University was also extensively promoted by Professor Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim whose appointment as Vice Chancellor was publicly announced in August. Among many other activities, Professor Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim was interviewed by Arab Magazine about the establishment of AURAK’s Career Development Office and its future benefit to students.
- In an awards ceremony later in the year, the Vice Chancellor also publically recognized the efforts of Mr. Adnan Okasha, Director of Al-Khaleej, a Ras Al Khaimah newspaper, for maintaining the profile of the university in his newspaper.
DIGNITARY VISITS

• Visit to the Embassy of Sultanate of Oman to United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi

On October 19th, 2011, Prof. Hassan Hamdan Al Alkim, Vice Chancellor and Dr. Mohamed Al Neyadi, Dean of Student Affairs, visited the Embassy of Sultanate of Oman to United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi to discuss with Mr. Walid Salem Al Atiqi, Cultural Attaché, the possible future bilateral cooperation between the Ministry of Higher Education in Sultanate of Oman and the American University of Ras Al Khaimah.

• Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi

On October 23rd, 2011, Mr. Askar Mussinov, Ambassador of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan visited AURAK to discuss the bilateral relations between United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Kazakhstan.

• Embassy of Canada to United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi

On October 26th, 2011, Mr. Sherif Nagi and Mrs. Isabel Mainville, part of a delegation from the Embassy of Canada to the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi visited the Vice Chancellor to discuss the prospects of Higher Education in the UAE.

• Cooperation with the Omani Ministry of Higher Education

The Vice Chancellor visited the Ministry of Higher Education in Oman on 24th March, 2012, to meet Dr. Abdullah Mohammad Al-Sarmi, Undersecretary of the Ministry to discuss cooperation in cultural and educational fields.