Like Egypt itself, the American University in Cairo enjoys deep roots, a rich heritage and great promise. For more than 90 years, people have been coming to this institution from across the region and around the world to teach, to learn, to discover and to serve. Contributing and learning, each one shares a long and distinguished history of travelers to Cairo — forever one of the great cities of the world — and a common goal of visionary educators at AUC, a beacon of liberal education in a turbulent era.

Today, AUC is embarking on yet another chapter in its journey. Poised to play an increasingly important part in the global research networks that will contribute to making the world a more just, humane, prosperous and peaceful place, AUC’s internationally renowned scholars and scientists are at the forefront of their fields, from physics to philosophy, economics to Egyptology. Attracting equally talented and tenacious students from Egypt and around the world, drawing on a network of more than 36,000 successful alumni worldwide, and reflecting its unique location in an increasingly dynamic Egypt, AUC has the ambition and commitment to serve as a local and global catalyst for change.
Since its early founding in Tahrir Square in 1919 by Americans devoted to education and service in the Middle East, AUC has balanced a strong commitment to liberal education with an understanding of regional needs for practical and professional programs. It has also served as a vibrant cultural center in Cairo, hosting prominent scholars, artists and activists from around the world. An independent, nonprofit, apolitical, non-sectarian and equal-opportunity institution, AUC is fully accredited in Egypt and the United States.

In 2008, the University moved to a new, 260-acre, state-of-the-art campus in New Cairo, while maintaining its presence in Tahrir through its continuing education program and downtown cultural center. Today, with two campuses operating simultaneously — AUC New Cairo and AUC Tahrir Square — the University is continuing its rich, 92-year-old tradition of education and outreach to Egypt and the world.
AUC New Cairo was designed by a team of international architects to foster interaction and enhance campus life. The $400 million New Cairo campus is equipped with modern classrooms, laboratories, lecture halls and other essential facilities to support current and future teaching methods, curricula and educational technologies. At the heart of the campus, the library houses the largest English-language collection in the region. Renowned architect Ricardo Legorreta designed the Campus Center and the student-housing complex, which he likened to a small village. Weaving Egyptian urban and architectural traditions into the design of a modern campus, AUC New Cairo is spacious, technologically advanced and environmentally friendly.

The historic AUC Tahrir Square serves as a landmark and cultural oasis in the heart of Cairo. A gathering place for lovers of literature, theatre, art and academics, the campus includes a two-story AUC Bookstore, a café overlooking Tahrir Square and two permanent exhibition spaces. Inside the historic palace building, Ewart Memorial Hall hosted events ranging from an Om Kalthoum concert in 1937 and lectures by prominent Egyptian intellectual Taha Hussein to top dignitaries, ambassadors and intellectuals from around the world. Together, Ewart and Oriental halls continue to serve as the prime downtown destination for a range of conferences, lectures, seminars and public events held by the University.
We believe that a sound education not only prepares students for professional success, but also for responsible citizenship and community engagement. The liberal arts tradition, with its emphasis on the broad education of a common Core Curriculum and the experiential learning of rich extracurricular programs, strengthens the curiosity and courage of AUC graduates, and promotes civic participation.
For AUC, Cairo — the cultural, political, and social capital of the Middle East — is a singular edge in its pursuit of becoming a global center of excellence. To take full advantage of the city as a rich resource for research and teaching, AUC is developing its academic program to use Cairo as a field site across the curriculum. Courses that explore everything from the Nile, Islamic architectural design and ancient Egypt to the country’s environmental issues and the modern Arab family, all draw heavily on Cairo as an extension of the classroom. There is a discernable shift in education as it becomes more experiential — learning by doing. “And if you believe in that — and we do — you see your surroundings as an extension of the classroom,” said AUC President Lisa Anderson. “Our surroundings are resources because of the new ways in which we think of education. If you think of the old model of kids sitting in rows in a classroom and getting information from a teacher, the emphasis was on preparing them to work on assembly lines in huge factories or rows of offices in a faceless bureaucracy.” For today’s graduates, who must, in contrast, learn to sift through massive amounts of information and continually adapt to a rapidly evolving world around them, this kind of experiential, hands-on education fosters creative analysis and professional agility.

Cairo as the Classroom

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Service and Reach

Hands-on learning not only ensures the skills gained are relevant, but more importantly, instills in students an understanding that their education is intricately tied to the world around them, and that they have both an obligation and an opportunity to have a positive impact on their communities. AUC’s Community-Based Learning program integrates community service into academic coursework. To date, AUC has offered more than 50 courses with activities that include using engineering methods to design toys and games for impoverished children, compiling narratives of the daily lives of refugees as part of a rhetoric and composition class, and seeking solutions to environmental problems. Integral to the AUC experience, service is also a key component in the dozens of vibrant student organizations on campus that tackle everything from sustainable development, illiteracy, environmental awareness and road safety to supporting orphans, refugees and the elderly. Alashanek Ya Balady (AYB), founded by Raghda El Ebrashi ’04, ’07 as a student organization when she was a freshman at AUC in 2001, has grown to become one of the leading development organizations in Egypt, operating in all of the country’s governorates. The Student Union’s main service project, AYB works to provide educational and employment opportunities, and promote entrepreneurship and activism in underprivileged communities.
AUC is a source of insight and inspiration in many fields, and we expect our faculty members and students to participate in scientific, scholarly or artistic production. We particularly emphasize those domains in which there is the prospect of a tangible effect on the development of disciplinary knowledge or the enhancement of societal welfare.
Nano-solutions to Big Problems

Scientists at the Yousef Jameel Science and Technology Research Center are working on a variety of nanoscience and technology-oriented projects that have the potential to alter people’s lives in the near future. With nanotechnology, AUC professors are constructing miniscule devices atom by atom. Such devices include microscopic robots that can be injected to perform surgery without an incision; sensors that can warn of fires or earthquakes in buildings and low tire pressure in cars; optical computers that transfer information by light; and windows that allow heat in during the winter and keep it out during the summer.

Leading research efforts in the field of bionanotechnology, Hassan Azzazy, chemistry professor, constructs and utilizes a variety of nanoparticles to discover cancer biomarkers and develop ultra-sensitive, low-cost testing for sensitive detection of the hepatitis C virus. Using the latest research in genomics and bioinformatics to understand how the virus mutates, Azzazy and his team are also working on treatment options to target the delivery of hepatitis C medicine straight to the liver. “There has been a lot of work done in genomics, but most of it deals with strains of the disease and genotypes that we don’t see in Egypt,” said Azzazy, who recently won the prestigious National Excellence Prize in Advanced Technological Sciences.

Discovering Ancient Egypt

AUC’s Egyptology program is among the most renowned in the world, offering students the unrivaled opportunity to learn about Egypt’s rich heritage under the shadow of the great pyramids, museums and monuments, and alongside distinguished faculty scholars. In addition to its undergraduate Egyptology program, AUC has recently launched a new master’s program in Egyptology/Coptology. "Although universities based in the Western world offer very good programs and many fieldwork opportunities, none match what AUC offers in terms of sustained exposure to the legacy of ancient Egyptian civilizations,” explained Salima Ikram, professor of Egyptology at AUC and author of Ancient Egypt: An Introduction (Cambridge University Press, 2010). "Studying daily against the backdrop of the pyramids and other monuments makes for a learning experience that cannot be replicated outside of Egypt.

Ikram founded and co-directs the Animal Mummy Project at the Egyptian Museum. The project had her at the Egyptian Museum for weeks on end researching, X-raying and cataloging the museum’s 90-year-old collection of unstudied mummmies. Ikram and her students wrote labels and catalog entries for each mummy, painted the modern cases that would house the mummmies and translated hieroglyphic material. Ikram also co-directs the North Kharga Oasis Survey, which aims to officially map the Kharga Oasis, one of Egypt’s richest but unexplored archaeological sites.
Bacterial DNA Holds the Key to New Drugs

Utilizing the University’s high-tech facilities, AUC’s biotechnology researchers are finding real-world applications for their projects, enabling them to address crucial issues in the fields of pharmaceutics, diagnostics, agriculture and the environment. One such project, the Red Sea Marine Genomics Project, in collaboration with the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, has AUC students and faculty members working as part of a larger international collaborative research expedition, aimed to identify bacteria with potential antimicrobial properties that live in brine pools 2,300 meters beneath the water’s surface with temperatures up to 70 degrees Celsius. AUC researchers are developing a genomic facility where they are working to isolate bacterial genomes, sequence their DNA and map the microbes for the discovery of biotechnological and pharmaceutical products.

“The world constantly needs to develop new antimicrobial drugs, and to do this, we need to discover new bacteria,” said Rania Siam, associate professor of biology, director of AUC’s biotechnology graduate program and one of the faculty members working on the Red Sea Marine Genomics Project. “This project is historic in that it marks the first time exhaustive brine pool sampling of the Red Sea has been done for environmental genomic analysis. It exposes our students to contemporary science and technologies, and allows them to utilize cutting-edge experimental and analytical tools in several interdisciplinary fields such as marine biotechnology, genomics and bioinformatics.”
We are dedicated to serving communities in Egypt and around the world through extension and outreach programs that bring University expertise and insight to a wider public, that profit from our convening power, and that serve to inform and enlighten public discourse, enhance access to information and knowledge, and enrich artistic and intellectual life.
From the Lab to the Real World

The annual Cairo Science and Engineering Festival brings science from inside AUC to the community, fostering exchange on scientific matters and an appreciation for the role of science. Organized by AUC’s School of Sciences and Engineering, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Cambridge Science Festival and the University of California, San Diego Science Festival, the three-week event includes public lectures, open houses, as well as dialogues with Nobel laureates and science luminaries via videoconferencing from the MIT museum. In addition, high-school students from Cairo videoconferenced with high-school students from the San Diego, California area, and were able to video-tour a biology lab at the University of California, San Diego campus. As an extension of the festival, AUC students and faculty members visited the Children’s Cancer Hospital of Cairo. Wielding suitcases filled with anatomical models, robotic cranes, magnetic puzzles and scale models of the solar system, students and faculty members set up experiments to interact with the children there and to teach scientific concepts through hands-on experience.

Alaa Ibrahim, assistant professor of space astrophysics and founder of the festival, explained that AUC’s science outreach program inspires a knowledge-based culture, as well as fosters innovation and creativity, by taking science out of classrooms and laboratories and presenting it through informal and entertaining media such as interactive exhibitions, art galleries, the performing arts, public lectures and dialogues. “The festival is a platform to blend and enjoy science and the arts together, and to offer unconventional means of scientific communication to society,” said Ibrahim. “We are committed to informing the general public and the AUC community about major scientific and natural events of interest because we believe the public has a share in science and knowledge.”

After Tahrir: Building the New Egypt

Weeks after the historic AUC Tahrir Square bore witness to the 18 days of demonstrations that toppled the Mubarak regime, AUC announced the launch of a new project, University on the Square: Documenting Egypt’s 21st Century Revolution, to preserve the history of the momentous events of early 2011 in Egypt through the eyes of the AUC community. The project chronicles the experiences of AUCians in the revolution through photographs, videos, testimonies and other digital material online, in addition to designated collection centers for the donation of physical items.

The University on the Square project is one of several new initiatives taken by students, faculty and staff to contribute to the future of Egypt after the revolution. Recognizing the need to create a space for open dialogue and exchange, AUC’s School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAAPP) and John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement each launched a public outreach series. GAAPP’s Tahrir Dialogue lecture series — one component of the school’s extensive outreach program — provides a forum through which leading political figures, activists, emerging leaders, academics and knowledgeable professionals debate issues before the public. Sessions highlighted a variety of topics pertaining to the new Egypt, from managing the transition and restarting competitive politics to ensuring media freedom and reforming the constitution. The Gerhart Center, in collaboration with El Sawy Culture Wheel, also launched a public seminar series, Egypt in Transition: Know Your Role, that includes activists, labor leaders and public officials who discuss topics ranging from the electoral system to the criteria for selecting presidential and parliamentary representatives to the role of civil society in Egypt. The series raises awareness among Egyptians of their civic rights and obligations, and provides the tools to help them participate in shaping their country’s future.
AUC Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD)
- Applied Sciences with Specializations in Biotechnology, Computer Science or Nanotechnology
- Engineering with Specializations in Construction Engineering, Electronics Engineering, Environmental Engineering or Mechanical Engineering

Master of Arts
- Arabic Studies
- Community Psychology
- Counseling Psychology
- Economics
- Economics in International Development
- Egyptology and Copticology
- English and Comparative Literature
- Gender and Women’s Studies in the Middle East and North Africa
- International and Comparative Education
- International Human Rights Law
- Journalism and Mass Communication
- Middle East Studies
- Migration and Refugee Studies
- Political Science
- Sociology-Anthropology
- Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language
- Television and Digital Journalism

Master of Business Administration

Master of Global Affairs

Master of Laws (LLM) in International and Comparative Law

Master of Public Administration

Master of Public Policy

Master of Science
- Biotechnology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Construction Engineering
- Electronics Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Finance
- Mechanical Engineering
- Nanotechnology
- Physics
- Robotics, Control and Smart Systems

Graduate Diplomas
- Community Psychology
- Comparative Literary Studies
- Computer Science
- Counseling Psychology
- Economics in International Development
- European Studies
- Forced Migration and Refugee Studies
- Gender and Women’s Studies in the Middle East and North Africa
- International and Comparative Law
- International Human Rights Law
- Middle East Studies
- Physics
- Political Science
- Public Administration
- Public Policy
- Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Bachelor of Accounting
- Accounting

Bachelor of Arts
- Anthropology
- Arabic Studies
- Art
- Communication and Media Arts
- Economics
- Egyptology
- English and Comparative Literature
- History
- Human Rights Program in Political Science
- International Marketing Communication
- Middle East Studies
- Multimedia Journalism
- Music Technology
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Theatre

Bachelor of Business Administration
- Business Administration
- Management of Information and Communication Technology

Bachelor of Musical Arts
- Performance

Bachelor of Science
- Actuarial Science
- Agricultural Engineering
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Engineering
- Computer Science
- Construction Engineering
- Electronics Engineering
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Petroleum Engineering
- Physics

Undergraduate Minors
- Accounting
- American Studies
- Anthropology
- Applied Probability and Statistics
- Arab and Islamic Civilization
- Arabic Literature
- Archaeological Chemistry
- Architectural Design
- Art
- Biology
- Business Administration
- Chemistry
- Classical/Medieval Islamic History
- Community Development and Organizing
- Comparative Religion
- Computer Science
- Coptic Studies
- Development Studies
- Economics
- Egyptology
- Electronics
- English and Comparative Literature
- Environmental Science
- Film
- Graphic Arts and Design
- History
- Information Systems
- International Relations
- Islamic Art and Architecture
- Islamic Studies
- Linguistics
- Mathematics
- Mechanisms
- Middle East Politics
- Music
- Music Technology
- Philosophy
- Physics
- Political Economy
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Russian, and Writing
- Sociology
- Spanish
- Traditional Egyptian Arts