

For Immediate Release



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AUB launches the new degree in Health Communication:

Bridging the educational and professional gap for achieving a better health in Lebanon, the region, and beyond”

While governments, international agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private sector institutions are considerably investing in raising awareness and changing behaviors throughout the various disciplines impacting health, new job opportunities arise for professionals who want to work in a growing and challenging field: health communication.

In response to regional job market needs, the Faculty of Health Sciences in the American University of Beirut (AUB) launched a new Bachelor of Arts in Health Communication, the only program of this kind in the region, outside the United States and Europe.

"Health communication is the art and science of communicating health information (such as in public health campaigns), or communicating between doctors and patients, or nurses and doctors," stated Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Iman Nuwayhid.

More and more governmental, for-profit and non-profit organizations in the Arab world are investing resources to address pressing public health problems, such as pollution, chronic diseases and communicable diseases. Many campaigns are developed to raise awareness about these issues and to foster behavioral changes among communities and individuals. This program is tailored to respond to job market opportunities in health communication in Lebanon and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), filling a major educational gap.

"This program will provide the first batch of health communication professionals whose expertise is needed to help in addressing the pressing health needs in the region", added Dr. Nuwayhid, reflecting on the various challenges that this region is facing in different fields, including environmental governance and pollution, non-communicable diseases, and post-conflict situations.

Through this multidisciplinary program, students will gain the knowledge and technical skills needed to design health communication activities, including:

- Learning the science and art of communication to promote health among different people
- Understanding the health needs of your community and get involved in finding solutions
- Creating change and make tangible impact with health communication
- Designing health communication activities to improve people's health and improve society.

“Unlike other health specific degrees, this program doesn't necessarily require a scientific background. Students from all backgrounds, whether scientific or non-scientific, can apply, as long as they are passionate about health, and interested in communications”, said Dr. Nuwayhid. In terms of employment, graduates from this program will have a wide career choice as they can work in international organizations (WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, ICRC), government agencies (ministries and municipalities), civil society organizations and NGOs, advertising and marketing companies focused on health, hospitals and health institutions, and universities.

Enrolling in this program is rewarding in terms of employability, but what is more important, is that professionals in this particular field will be the ones who will actually make the mass impact on the health of the public. They will be the ones driving the change. They will be the real change makers.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,100 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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