

For Immediate Release



8 PhD students awarded CNRS doctoral scholarships to conduct scientific research at AUB

Beirut, Lebanon- 01/11/2013 - Eight PhD students at the American University of Beirut have received the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) doctoral scholarship award, which will allow them to conduct research in various scientific disciplines.

This year, the scholarship recipients will focus their studies on electrical and computer engineering, environmental and civil engineering, mechanical engineering, and biology.

“AUB leads the Arab world in terms of research publications per faculty member, both in quantity and quality, and often surpasses several peer European and American universities,” said AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal, during the distribution of certificates of appreciation to the students on November 1, 2013. Nevertheless, the average expenditure for an AUB publication over the past few years was between three and nine times less than for papers from comparable US institutions, he added. “None of these achievements could have been made without the excellent students that compete to join AUB graduate programs, and today we celebrate the success of eight new students.”

The eight recipients of the CNRS PhD scholarships are: Mohamad Abou Shahine, Hilal Al-Misilmani and Jihad Fahs, who will join the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering; Ashraf Chamseddine who will be part of the Environmental and Water Resource Engineering Program at the Department of Civil Engineering; Iyad Anwar Fayssal, who will join the Department of Mechanical Engineering; and Layla Kamareddine, Farah Nassar, and Dana Bazzoun, who will do research at the Department of Biology. With the exception of Bazzoun, all students attended the ceremony.

CNRS secretary-general Mouin Hamze explained that the council, over the past year, established memoranda of understanding with several Lebanese universities to help promote scientific research in the country and entice promising young scientists to stay in Lebanon and contribute to its development, while at the same time raising Lebanon’s ranking on the international research circuit.

“These scholarships are awarded on the basis of excellent academic ability, originality of the research proposal, integrity and intellectual curiosity,” said Hamze. “They are given with the expectation that selected scholars will make significant and lasting contributions not only to the scientific community of AUB but to the entire Lebanese community as well.”

Hamze added that AUB is one of “our privileged partners in Lebanon,” noting that over 50 percent of the research projects subsidized by the CNRS within its Grant Research Program

are submitted by researchers from this university. “This is undoubtedly due to the high quality research realized at AUB,” he said.

The American University of Beirut signed an agreement with CNRS last year to help fund PhD students at AUB.

By virtue of the agreement, the CNRS will support a total of eight doctoral students at AUB per year with an annual individual stipend of \$6000. Each student has the opportunity to renew his or her stipend for up to three years, such that by 2015-16, it is expected that CNRS would be supporting 24 students per year. Priority will be given to candidates doing scientific research. On December 1, 2012, CNRS and AUB honored the first eight PhD students that were awarded this scholarship.

Student awardees must hold a master’s degree with an average of at least 85/100 (or equivalent). Alternatively, if they do not have a master’s degree, they should have spent at least two years at AUB in their respective doctoral programs and earned an average of at least an 85/100. The CNRS doctoral scholarship will cover the last three years of the PhD program. Student awardees must not be older than 28 years of age during their first year of support.

AUB currently offers 75 master’s programs, including several interfaculty and interdisciplinary programs, as well as nine PhD programs, re-established in 2007. It is the first US-accredited university in the Arab world to offer PhDs. Currently, AUB has about 1100 graduate students and 90 PhD students out of a total student body of 8300.

ENDS

PHOTO CAPTION: Scholarship recipients (in alphabetical order); Dana Bazzoun is absent; Provost Dallal and Dr. Hamze distributing certificates

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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 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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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