

AU COLLEGE OF BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023/2024 (SEP 2023 - DEC 2023)

HIGHLIGHTS



COB CONFERENCE



FILL THE GAP



EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING



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Collaborations

AU

Sandro-Marketing Research



On the 20th of December 2023, Dr. Faidon Theofanidis (Associate Professor-Marketing and Events Department) and Ms. Marcelle De La Roche (HOD-Marketing and Events Department) scheduled a meeting with Al-Futtaim group representatives on their premises (View Tower, Salmiya), where the students Aishah Alali, Joseph Elbechara and Bashar Altabtabaei from the Marketing Research course, had the chance to present the empirical findings of the marketing research project conducted especially for Sandro brand.

Sandro-Marketing Research



A convenience sample of 115 AU students from all majors participated in the survey and the most important findings are summarized below:

- Out of 115 participants, 77 knew about Sandro. 38 never heard the Sandro brand name.
- Most customers purchase women's clothing from Sandro (62.3%).
- Sandro's store's atmosphere is between neutral and inviting.
- 45.5% of the participants like to visit Sandro store from 12:00 to 18:00.
- 71.4% of the respondents search on the Internet before they visit Sandro physical store. This signifies the importance of high-quality local online presence of the Sandro brand.
- Most preferred social media platform is Instagram (62.3%). Second is Twitter and TikTok (both 22.1%).
- 57.1% of participants are not engaged with Sandro's events and activities.

Students provided customized examples and recommendations, which can enhance the position of Sandro brand in the Kuwaiti market. The presentation was attended by the Sandro Brand Manager Ms. Dina Mohammad and HR Manager Ms. Riyadh Lbaidi who expressed their gratitude for the presentation and their intention to collaborate with AU CoB for internships and joint marketing research projects like the one implemented.



Business Talks

AU

Developing My Self-Awareness



On the 5th of October 2023, AU hosted alumni Ms. Sindis Al-Baqsami for an insightful talk about how students can develop their self-awareness. Ms. Sindis is a certified life coach specialized in self-awareness and emotional intelligence. She is also a personal development mentor as well as a motivational speaker.

Ms. Sindis shed light on self-awareness and the potential positive outcomes that can arise from it, such as increased self-confidence and decision making. She also highlighted the role of self-awareness in lowering anxiety levels which can lead to a more positive growth mindset. Students left the talk motivated and well aware of the significance of emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

Beyond Glamour–Navigating the Luxury Retail World in the Corporate Industry w/HR Insights



On the 2nd of November 2023, the Human Resources Department within the College of Business hosted Mr. Elie Antoun to present a talk titled “Beyond Glamour: Navigating the Luxury Retail World in the Corporate Industry with HR Insights”. Ms. Hamsa Sarhan introduced Mr. Elie on the stage who is an accomplished business partner with a demonstrated history of working in Retail and distribution of fashion, gifts and beauty industry with a bachelor's degree focused on Business Administration and Management from NDU, GRP Administrator, and EMBA ESA.

The talk covered interesting topics for the students as they had the chance to explore the intricate dynamics and unique experiences met by Elie Antoun on his journey in a compelling industry, highlighting the importance of HR practices in fostering a positive work environment and nurturing talent within luxury retail organizations. He provided insights into the art of crafting exclusive customer experiences and the strategies employed to maintain brand allure. He also uncovered the fusion of traditional craftsmanship and modern business practices that define this captivating sector.

Furdhtek Talk



On the 26th of October 2023 the Kuwaiti businessman, Mr. Mohammed Alhajref, was invited to chat with AU students about perseverance in the world of entrepreneurship. Alhajref encouraged students to soldier on and be patient when it comes to seeing the fruits of their labor. No entrepreneur becomes a success over night. It takes focus, patience and perseverance to reach the top of the ladder of success.



The talk attracted students from all AU majors and resulted in a full house filled with inquisitive young future entrepreneurs. Many raised their hands during the Q&A session and waited eagerly to hear Alhajref's wise response.



The talk ended with a roar of applause and happy students leaving the talk with gift bags provided by Alhajref's team at Furdhtek.

The Future of HR Functions



On the 19th of October 2023, AU hosted Deputy CEO Mohammad Alawwad from Combined Group Contracting Co. to discuss how the role of HR has evolved rapidly over the years. He has over 20 years of experience in successfully spearheading HR and pioneering innovative projects for high-growth organizations in the Gulf region.

With the introduction of new technologies and the changes in the way of work, he highlighted the importance of embracing novel approaches, adapting operational strategies and fostering innovative engagement methods.





Job Shadows

AU

Safat Home Job Shadow



As part of the Retail Marketing course, students were invited to visit Safat Al-Ghanim and Xcite in collaboration with INJAZ, to learn more about Retail Marketing in practice. The store manager explained concepts specific to retail store layout, income generation through "store-in-store" initiatives, as well as Digital Marketing options for Xcite and their vendors. Promotional pricing strategies were explained and students were given insight into merchandise planning and selection. Overall, the job-shadow visit was very informative and helped students bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Ali Abdulwahab Job Shadow

Workforce planning students visited Ali Abdulwahab (AAW), Head office in Kuwait City. The visit was facilitated by INJAZ. The student completed a one-day job shadow at AAW and got a chance to interact with their HR leaders and discuss topics like recruitment, strategic HR policies, succession planning, job skills, training and boosting their careers in the private sector. The class trip was organized by Ms. Rupali Bhagat, Senior Instructor, HR, and she mentioned that the HR students were happy to learn about these topics as this was like a real learning experience for all attending students. This gave them a chance to see how the HR policies they learn in class are applied to real work scenarios.





Events

AU

Fill the Gap



On the 26th of November 2023, the CoB held their bi-annual “Fill the Gap” event where first year students put their Marketing skills to the test as part of their Marketing Principles course. The area opposite to Building Two was alive with creativity. Students designed and promoted a variety of products, ranging from jet-ski parts to recycled hoodies. The future marketers put on a great festival for us all!

AU Cultural Day



The College of Business-Event Management students played an integral role in organizing the AU Cultural Day this semester. They had an opportunity to put their newly learnt event skills into a real-life practice under the guidance of the Event Management course coordinator, Ms. Aleksandra Jovanovic. The students were responsible for planning and implementing many activities for children and adults, as well as creating a diverse program that helps educate and entertain guests with various cultural topics. Effective partnership and creating a positive and cheerful environment are skills our students are practicing in the Event Management course. It is a brilliant learning experience for the students to be able to experience organizing an event on campus.

International Scientific Conference on Digitalization, Innovation & Sustainable Development



The College of Business, Australian University Kuwait organized two scientific conferences on the 29th of November and 14th of December 2023.

International Scientific Conference on Digitalization, Innovations and Sustainable Development: Trends and Business Perspectives.

The details of this Conference are available in this link: <https://cobconference.au.edu.kw/ISCDIS>

The Conference aimed to bring together researchers, industry representatives, scholars and policymakers to present and discuss their research on the frontiers of knowledge on selected topics in the field of digitalization, innovations and Sustainable development. The theme of the Conference-Digitalization, Innovations and sustainable Development: Trends and Business Perspectives-is chosen so broadly to accommodate the diverse issues and implications that innovations and digitalization are bringing to businesses and society.

The Conference was organized in partnership with international partners:

1. Central Queensland University, Australia
2. Topkapi University, Turkey
3. Institute of Economic Sciences, Serbia.

Experts from various fields of digitalization, innovations and sustainable development delivered their keynote speeches during the Conference days. The Conference hosted the following keynote speakers:

1. Prof. Isam Zabalawi PhD, FIET, C Eng, Eur-Ing, FIEAust, AU President, HERE: Higher Education Reform Expert.
2. Prof. Tugrul Daim, Professor in the Department of Engineering and Technology Management, Portland State University; Director of the Technology Management Doctoral program at Portland State University; Editor in Chief, IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management; Associate Director of The Mark O. Hatfield Cybersecurity & Cyber Defense Policy Center.
3. Prof. Luis Rueda, Professor of Computer Science, School of Computer Science, University of Windsor, Windsor, ON, Canada. Associate Editor of IEEE/ACM-TCBB and NetMAHIB.
4. Prof. Ernan Coskun, Professor of Management Information Systems; Head of MIS Department, Izmir Bakircay University; Director of Executive Digital Transformation Program, Prince Mohammad Bin Salman College, Saudi Arabia.
5. Mrs. Thorhildur Sunna Aevarsdottir, Member of Parliament for the Pirate Party in Iceland. Elected to the Icelandic Alþingi in 2016, Ms. Aevarsdottir holds an LL.M. in International Law of Human Rights and Criminal Justice from Utrecht University.

During the second day of the Conference Prof. Steven Collbran from Central Queensland University delivered a workshop dedicated to the Ethical use of AI in Research.



The Conference provided three publishing options for the interested authors:

1. Book of Abstracts
2. IGI book on Convergence of Digitalization, innovations and Sustainable Development
3. Journal of Women Entrepreneurship and Education

In total, 71 authors submitted their abstracts for consideration using the Conference submission system. All submitted abstracts were double-blind peer reviewed by two referees and on the basis of the reviewers' opinion the editors made the final decision.

28 abstracts were presented orally during the Conference day(s) and 12 abstracts were presented as virtual poster presentations on the Conference website <https://cobconference.au.edu.kw/posters/>

The Future of Sustainable Transport Conference

The second Conference details are available in this link: <https://cobconference.au.edu.kw/FST>. This Conference aimed to foster collaboration among researchers, industry representatives, scholars and policymakers, facilitating the presentation and discussion of cutting-edge research in the field of Electric Vehicles (EVs), EV Charging Infrastructure, Environmental and Economic Impact of EVs and other means of sustainable transport. It is also the final dissemination event for the project entitled "Breaking the Internal Combustion Engine Reign: A Mixed-Methods Study of Attitudes Towards Using and Purchasing Electric Vehicles in Kuwait", which is funded by KFAS. More information about the project research output is available in this [link](#). The Conference started with an opening speech by Dr. Andri Ottesen from the College of Business, Australian University, who is the PI of the aforementioned project. A panel discussion on the future of sustainable transport gathered the experts in the field from various organizations as follows:

1. Eng. Dina AlNakib, Program Manager/Flagship Projects Program Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS).
2. Dr. Hidab Hamwi, Assistant Professor at Kuwaiti Institute for Scientific Research.
3. Eng. Abdulaziz Al Kous, Senior Engineer at the Ministry of Electricity and Water, Renewable Energy Division (MEW).
4. Eng, Oliver Van Der Brueggen Chief Technical Officer of Chargedkw.
5. Eng. Mohammed Navfal, Senior Marketing Executive at Kia Kuwait.
6. Mr. Michael Iskander - Customer Experience and Training Manager - Al Mulla Automobiles Co. - Mercedes-Benz Kuwait.

In the final Conference session, 3 authors presented the results of their scientific research.

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Employability Skills Training



The College of Business launched its first series of Employability Skills Training Workshops for all AU students. The workshops were designed to improve students' chances of securing a job in the near future and provide them with a solid foundation for their future careers. Led by seasoned industry experts, these engaging sessions were held bi-weekly and will be concluded at the end of the spring semester. Topics covered this semester included theoretical sessions on goal setting and a practical workshop on CV writing whereas next semester will consist of new topics such as enhancing interview skills and practical mock-interview workshops. Attendance rates were high as students from the College of Engineering and College of Business attended and benefited from these sessions.



School Visits

AU

School Visits



The CoB, as part of its internal marketing efforts, visited various private schools in Kuwait to promote our new programs. The response was very good, and awareness of our university status was well received. Many students showed interest in our MIS, Banking and Finance and Marketing and Events Management programs. Schools visited so far are:

- Kuwait English School
- American United School
- Bayan Bilingual School
- American International School
- Ghars International School
- The English School for Girls
- American School of Kuwait
- Cambridge English School Mangaf
- American Creativity Academy

We look forward to more visits and exhibitions in the new year and initiatives to invite students onto campus.





Internships

AU

Internship Visits



The aim every semester is to provide enough internship opportunities for all registered internship students in Diploma and Bachelors. The internship team, including faculty members, tries their best to create these opportunities. The internships are managed by Ms. Rupali Bhagat.



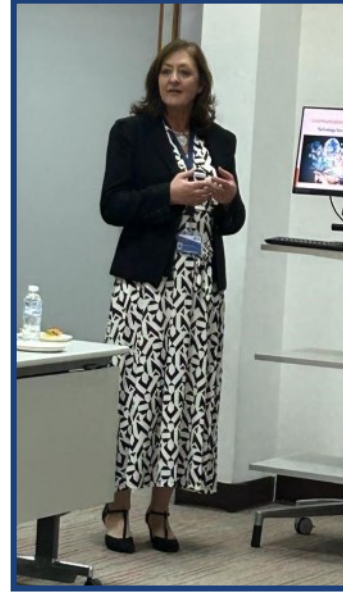
For the Fall 2023/2024 semester, the AU representative met new company's representatives and, existing company's representatives to ensure that all AU students in Diploma and Bachelors are placed. The same network is used to get more opportunities related to job shadows, training, guest speakers and business talks. We are thankful to the companies that have supported the internships and other activities in the College of Business. We look forward to continuing this relationship.



Training

AU

KIPIC Training



In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Kuwait Integrated Petroleum Industries Company (KIPIC) and Australian University–Kuwait,

Prof. Alper Erturk, Head of Management Department and Ms. Marcelle de la Roche, Head of Marketing Department, from CoB, delivered three workshop & training sessions for KIPIC mid-level managers as part of their career training programs.

Sessions were delivered in AU facilities:

- First Session (4th of October 2023): Communication, Motivation, Collaboration, Organizational Attitudes & Behaviors
- Second Session (1st of November 2023): Leadership, Accountability, Transparency, Visionary Approach
- Third Session (6th of December 2023): Managing Change, Innovativeness & Creativity, Organizational & Digital Transformation

During the workshop sessions, subjects were discussed from a theoretical perspective, and several individual and team-based case studies were conducted.

Attendees have learned how to identify challenges, develop alternative solutions, and make evidence-based decisions through the exchange of ideas in those interactive workshops.



CSR Activities

AU

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)



AU's Business Management students played a pivotal role in organizing various CSR activities this semester. Students studying the Management Principles course had the opportunity to put their new-found management skills into real-life practice by reaching out to the wider community. They were responsible for planning and implementing a large number of activities on and off campus. Some of these group activities included donating clothes and food to cleaners, gas station labors and charity organizations, whereas other groups organized beach cleanups and paid visits to the elderly, orphanages and the autism center. Raising awareness was another priority for these students, who managed campaigns on the dangers of smoking as well as breast cancer awareness among many other topics.



Class Visits

AU

Business Internship I – Saleh Al-Mouli



The Business Internship I course prepares the students for the real internship experience which each business student is expected to complete before they graduate with a Business Diploma. As a requirement of the course, Ms. Rupali Bhagat, the instructor teaching this course for Fall 2023/2024 semester invited Saleh AL Mouli, currently employed at KPC as an HR analyst.

He explained to the student the process of applying to the government and private sector. He also discussed the importance of job skills and interpersonal skills. The session was interactive as the students were curious and ended up asking many questions related to job search and interview process. Many thanks to Saleh al Mouli for accepting the invitation and visiting CoB at AU. Ms. Rupali mentioned that these sessions are important for the students as they bring a good balance between academia and industry.

The feedback received from students was positive and encouraged us at CoB to invite more speakers to class and organize more activities that could benefit the students.

Mock Interview by Ali Abdulwahab- Business Communication



Mock interviews were organized by AU and Injaz, Kuwait. A team from Ali Abdulwahab (AAW) Head Office was invited to conduct mock interviews. Each participating student went through a formal but mock interview. The event was the final event for the Head Start program organized earlier in the semester. The students were mostly in semesters 1 and 2 and they enjoyed being interviewed by industry leaders.

The instructor for this course, Ms. Rupali who took this initiative was delighted to share that all the students thoroughly enjoyed the workshop, and she mentioned a special thanks to the AAW – HR team and to Injaz for supporting these activities.

INJAZ Head Start Workshop-Business Communication



The College of Business, AU hosted a Head Start program for Business Communication students for the Fall 2023/2024 semester. Mr. Abdullah al Hamly delivered the training which included CV-making and interview tips as the main topic. The participants also attended mock interviews to practically prepare them for the real job scenarios. The training was organized by Ms. Rupali Bhagat and she mentioned that these training programs are important for students as they help them prepare for real job scenarios. The students enjoyed the training and mentioned that they would like to be part of such training in the future where they get a chance to learn in a fun way.



Industry Advisory Board

AU

CoB Industrial Advisory Board Meeting

As every semester, the College of Business conducted two meetings with the Industrial Advisory Board during this Fall 2023/2024 semester. During the meeting, the board members proposed industry related IT software to be taught in the new programs offered by the College of Business. After discussion, the board agreed to create a data bank of industry positions who could guide/support the students in the Career Mentorship Program and to guarantee a number of students and provide them Co-supervision of Graduate Projects for Bachelor Degrees.

Industrial Advisory Board



Faculty Representations

AU

WISE-Qatar Foundation



The WISE (World Innovation Summit for Education) initiative brings together a network of education stakeholders who share ideas and collaborate to solve challenges facing education. This year, the theme for the global education summit was "Education for all". Ms. Rupali participated in the summit representing AU and Kuwait. WISE is a response to the necessity of revitalizing education and providing a global platform for the development of new ideas and solutions. Since 2009, WISE has evolved into a thriving global, multi-sectoral community, which continues to generate fruitful dialogue and productive partnerships. The wise theme for 2023 was Creative Fluency: Human Flourishing in the Age of AI.

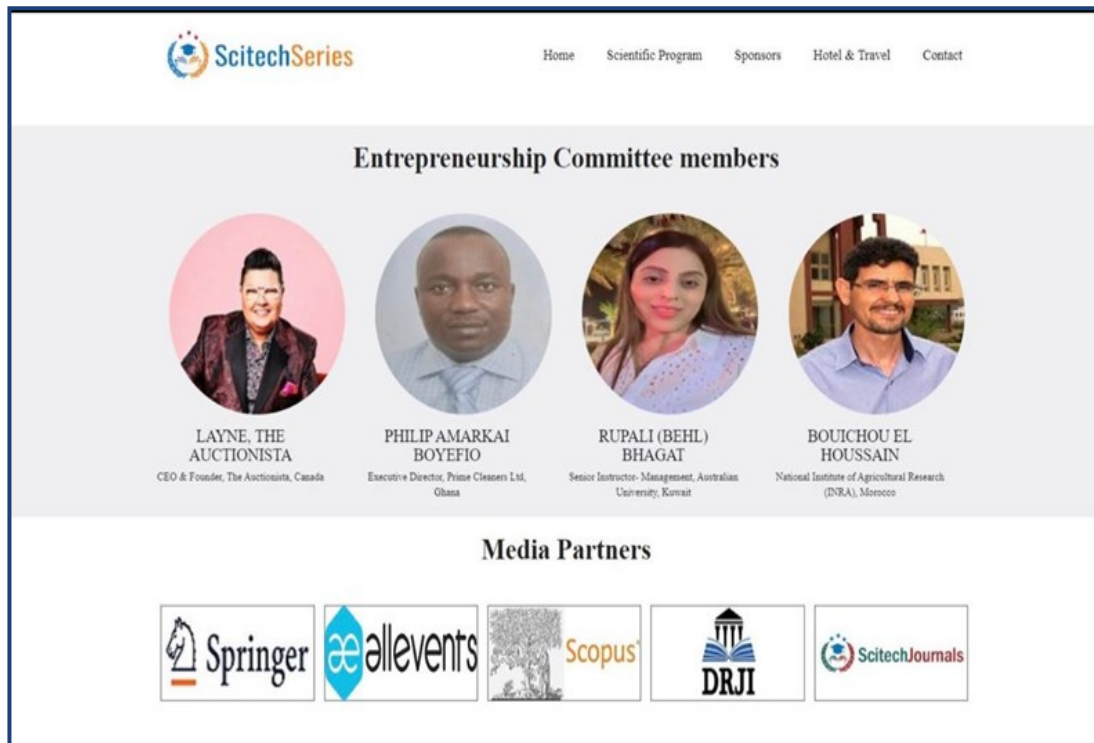




The main topics for this year for educators to brainstorm were classrooms of future, digitalization in education, AI, redefining learning, critical thinking in AI age, Green education and much more. The wise11 included youth forum which showcased youth ideas from MENA region and globally.

On the second day of the forum, Sheikha Moza deplored the distressing targeting of over 36 educational facilities in the Gaza Strip, emphasizing the indispensable role of safeguarding education in regions facing adversity. "Since the start of the current aggression in October, 36 Education Above All (EAA) supported schools and universities have been completely or partially destroyed. With the collapse of each school and each university, we lose a pillar in the foundation of the future. For every child deprived of education because of violence, another pillar is lost," Sheikha Moza said. The platform brought educators together to discuss issues of immense importance to education.

Guest Speaker at Entrepreneurship Conference, Montreal Canada



Ms. Rupali Bhagat, Senior Instructor, CoB represented AU in the Global Entrepreneurship forum as a guest speaker and spoke about marketing trends in the MENA region. The presentation was based on one of her research projects conducted in MENA regions on marketing trends and digitalization.

Ms. Rupali participated in the conference online and shared her research and her views on entrepreneurship. The research will be published soon.



If you have any inquiry, please do not hesitate to contact us on the
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