

AUIS CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY



Students celebrate the 10th anniversary of AUIS in front of Building A

By: Bana Bamoki

With the support of both international and local donors, the KRG and the US Consulate in Baghdad, the founder of The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani, Dr. Barham Salih, laid the foundation of the first American-style liberal arts university in Iraq. The first class was officially held on Oct. 17th, with only over ten students. Ever since, the university has been investing in young talents of the region in hopes of creating a more stable, modern, and civil society. Over the years, AUIS has expanded tremendously and it currently has a community of about 1,600 students. This year marks the 10th anniversary of

AUIS, and as a current student I got to interview the Dean of Students, Mr. Geoffrey Gresk on the institution's journey of expansion and how it has changed over the years. To see the university's development from a different perspective and the impact it has had on the students, I interviewed two former graduates from AUIS.

Do you think AUIS has come far and if so in what way?

Dean of Students, Geoffrey Gresk said: "Yes, AUIS has come far, very far. Physically, I came here in 2009, our third year and we were in a nice, but not super nice campus. Before that, we had been in a car dealership or a storage/warehouse

place, this was back in 2007-2008 and in 2011 we came here to this beautiful campus. As I always say, everyone stood up straighter after we came to this campus, so physically, yes we have come a long way. Much more importantly, the quality of students, the level of the discourse, the general behavior of faculty and staff and most importantly students has changed significantly. I remember, in earlier years, if someone made a mistake during a debate or something, everyone would just laugh and it was terrible, but now it's a much more supportive, mature, and nurturing place by no means perfect, but the differences I see in the maturity level of the average AUIS student shows me

that we have come far indeed."

What did you take away from AUIS?

AUIS alumna, Tawar Rashid said: "Self confidence and the opportunities that came our way career wise after graduating from AUIS are the confirmation that we all needed for knowing we made the right choice choosing AUIS. We all have been able to use the knowledge and skills we were taught at AUIS to the best of our abilities regardless what career path we each took. As for me, AUIS clearly shaped my life and career choices and I will forever be grateful for that. AUIS gave me the push I needed to become the best version of my self regarding continuing my studies and ca-

reer choices."

Student Service Coordinator, Mina Bassam said:

"Opportunity. I came here to AUIS in 2010, I graduated in 2015 and throughout those five years, the opportunities that I had in AUIS, I don't think I would have had anywhere else. That's why the first thing that came to my mind was opportunity. I had a lot of job opportunities, internships, volunteering opportunities, and I learned a lot and grew so much as a person. That's why when I graduated, the first thing I did; I applied and I came back here, because I still believe that as a staff now, AUIS will bring me more opportunities for my future career."

THE STUDENT ASSOCIATION HOLDS ITS FIFTH ELECTIONS

By: Kozhan Yaseen

The AUIS Student Association held its fifth annual elections on Nov. 14th 2017 for its presidential and senatorial seats.

The elections were done through secret ballots in which each student cast his vote, one for president and one for the respective department senator. The voting process was supervised by Geoffrey Gresk, dean of students with the help and organization of student volunteers.

The turnout was 65 percent, as was announced in an email sent out to students after the voting closed by Dean Gresk. Bilal Yaseen was elected president while contending with two other candidates.

"The fifth SA election, despite

many rumors and challenges, was the most competitive and most successful one," said Bilal.

The election nomination process was open to any student who could collect 25 signatures of support to either run for senator or president. Przha Jabar, an IT department senatorial candidate said: "Actions define what are our plans, and who we are. Let's hope it applies best to our choice in picking our leaders."

The process was also criticized by some candidates. Sherzad Rahim, an IS student and presidential candidate, said: "Despite the baseless rumors the electoral process went democratically. The only criticism I have is that APP students should have been excluded from the SA presidential election." The bases

for his criticisms were found on whether APP students had enough knowledge of the elections. "Due to APP's lack of knowledge regarding the elections, they could be easily manipulated," Sherzad also added.

Unlike most previous elections, this year there were three nominees. Bawan Amir, the third presidential candidate said "It was a privilege for me to be a part of such a peaceful democratic process. Special thanks to the volunteers and the voters that consisted of 65 percent of AUIS students, which was an immense improvement compared to the last year election. Hopefully in the future more students will be encouraged to participate in the election and that percentage will increase."

The student association tries to

link the students' problems with university administrators for solving them. It's a small-scale model of minimal democratic rights that sketches the components of a dem-

ocratic political system for students. The university motto is "learn today; lead tomorrow," these elections are a preamble for civic life.



The three candidates for the SA presidential election

AUIS PARTNERS WITH ISMAEL KHAYAT FOR SCULPTURE GARDEN PROJECT

Raz Yadulla

Kashkul, a research based cultural organization based at the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani (AUIS) partnered with a world-renowned artist, Ismail Khayat to create "The Sculpture Garden" on the campus of AUIS.

Kashkul will host a ceremony in November to honor those students who contributed to the garden. In spring, they'll host a bigger event, which will coincide with an airing of a documentary about the project. The project is a collection of works of AUIS students who participated in painting rocks from different shapes and sizes and from different regions. AUIS students and people from different parts of the region were able to participate in this pro-

ject. Each stone and rock was hand-picked by Ismail Khayat from different parts of Iraq and Kurdistan. Ismail Khayat is an artist who's known for his paintings on stones, which he began in 1993. Kashkul collaborated with Khayat to help unite people from different races and ethnicities through art.

"The Sculpture Garden" is part of Khayat's broader project, "The Stone Man." These two projects, according to Marie LaBrosse, co-director of Kashkul, is to "encourage and inspire the emerging generation of artists."

Each rock represents a region in Kurdistan. Khayat's idea of painting on stone is that "human beings are connected with nature and are part of nature." "Human beings have a love relationship with these



Students along with Ismael Khayat and president Ferguson on the site of the project stones," said Khayat.

"Stones are objects, but they have witnessed every event that has occurred on the planet."

Each stone represents a story. "Stones are objects, but they have witnessed every event that occurred on the planet," said Khayat. To him, "stones are sacred." He points out that stones are used in different religious practices around the world. There were eight AUIS students

who officially participated in painting these works under the supervision of Khayat. There were people from outside AUIS who participated and helped with placing the stones.

One AUIS student, Yarivan Khoshawe, an engineering major, makeup artist and a YouTuber, participated in painting one of the stones said: "Art doesn't have to be on a piece of paper, but everything around us is considered art." To Khoshawe, "stones are part of us and we need to appreciate its existence by producing things from it, like painting"

People interpret art differently

and see it differently. Sawen Muhammad Amin, an English major at AUIS said: "You don't have to be an artist to appreciate different types of arts."

Kashkul is funded by the University of California, Los Angeles, and other individuals in the United States, currently, all their staff are under the age of 30. "Elizabeth and I, as Co-Directors, believe in the young people we see coming of age around us," said LaBrosse. "Kashkul is a way of investing in that potential." Kashkul wants to organize more events like this in the future not only for student-artists but for everyone who enjoys art.



An example of a stone art work in the project

AUIS DROPS TOEFL EXAM IN FAVOR OF UNIVERSITY-MADE EXAM

Barzi Mohammed

The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani has changed its English placement test from TOEFL to an AUIS standard exam since September 2017, because it's cheaper, less time consuming, and more efficient. The American University of Iraq, Sulaimani recently decided to drop the TOEFL test as an English placement test for bringing in new

students and make their own standardized test. Students have been concerned that this change would bring down the high English standard of AUIS, that AUIS is changing the tests to make it easier and have more students enrolled. "Most students don't come here because they get in level one or foundation and that will cost more time and money," said Jwtyar Jamal, an undergraduate student at AUIS. "AUIS is making

the tests easier so that students can get into the higher levels of APP." But AUIS faculty are denying that to be their motive.

Mrs. Rachel Gresk, Director of the Academic Preparatory Program gave a couple of reasons why they changed the tests. One was that for the TOEFL, students had to pay around \$250 to take the test but with the new one it's \$100 so it's cheaper for the students. Another reason, as

she said, was the timing of the admissions deadlines for the TOEFL, since they had to send the tests back to the US for grading, AUIS had to cut off the admissions at a certain date so they couldn't accept late admissions. But they are more flexible with the deadlines with the new tests because AUIS is grading it. The last reason -as Mrs. Gresk explained- is that the TOEFL tests are undergraduate level tests so it was much more difficult to sort the lower level students into the right level of APP, because some students who went into the TOEFL test "couldn't write a sentence," so it was hard to know for sure if a student belonged in level one or foundation. Therefore, AUIS made the new test to be able to place students more easily in the levels.

Exact documents of number of students enrolled in each level this semester and previous were unavailable so we were unable to make a comparison between this semester and previous semesters.

Mr. Geoffrey Gresk, Dean of Students explained that he hasn't notice any problems, although they have a few students who were a bit shocked when they got into the UG program every semester but "no huge red flags," Mr. Gresk said. "Actually the opposite." And he explained how one of their more demanding professors was "pleasantly surprised" by how the students are functioning in one of the 101 classes.

"Most students don't come here because they get in level one or foundation and that will cost more time and money."

Mr. Rebeen Jalal, Director of Admissions says that the new tests have been more helpful for them as admissions department in terms of responding to students earlier and having longer deadlines to apply than before, he explained how they had to close the applications widow weeks before enrollment because of the TOEFL, but now they can accept students even a week before classes start. He also gave the same reason Mrs. Gresk gave earlier on how the price of the test is cheaper for the students whom are applying.

The new English placement test seems to be almost the same standard of English level as the TOEFL test, and it hasn't lowered the standard. It has been changed for the reasons stated above which are in favor of students because it is more fair, cheaper, and less time consuming.



Students taking an iBT exam in the testing center

AUIS HOLDS INTERNATIONAL JOURNALISM DAY CONFERENCE

Saman Ihsan Fuad

AUIS students organized a conference on Nov. 9 as part of UNSECO's global campaign to end impunity against journalists.

After welcoming remarks, visiting professor at AUIS and international journalist, Maggy Zanger, gave an overview of the news media in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI).

Zanger stated that KRI is one of the most volatile places to live as a journalist. "Since 1992, more journalists have been killed in Iraq than any other country," Zanger said.

She continued by stating that the region lacks an independent media which has made the job of journalists even more difficult since they have to find a good paying job in one of the party-based media outlets. Zanger stated that in the KRI, journalists have to work in an environment where the media are seen above all as political tools to be used.

The first panel of the conference ti-

tled "The Role of Media during conflicts between Erbil and Baghdad" included Saman Fawzi, Mushriq Abbas, Dana Asaad, Fazel Hawrami, and Sherwan Mala Ibrahim.

The panel was quite critical towards Kurdish media with every panelist stating how Kurdish media is not be relied upon at these dire times and how deep in crisis the media actually is. Fazel Hawrami stated that Kurdish media is in a deep crisis and is forced to work within a limited political framework. Furthermore Dr. Dana stated that this current political crisis is seen as a test for all media outlets in the region.

The theme that ran through the panel was that due to the media being controlled by political leaders, it can't be relied upon. There needs to be a different narrative being told that doesn't agree with the status quo.

During the Q&A session, the panelists received criticism for portraying Kurdish media worse than it



Photo courtesy of the Communications department.

actually is. Journalists from NRT, Rudaw, and K24 all criticized the negative image painted by the panelists and wanted to know what type of media did these panelists really want.

The second panel was titled "Strengthening free and independent news media in the KRI" and included Chro Shahab, Twana Osman, Hemin Lihony, and Rahman Gharib. This panel agreed with the previously stated idea that Kurdish media is in deep crisis. However, unlike the first panel, there were defenders of Kurdish media.

Hemin Lihony stated that Kurdish media is much better than its neighbors and is not as terrible as the previous panel suggested. He said that what we need is media that tells the truth and that being independent

does not necessarily guarantee that.

Twana Osman stated that people can't criticize the media based on non-journalistic principles such as emotion. He was referring to how Dr. Saman stated that certain media channels showed the peshmerga fighters crying, which he thought was unethical and not journalism. Mr. Osman said that if one is shooting during a war and captures images that might be insensitive in day-to-day life, it doesn't mean that this is not journalism. He added that one should criticize based on how accurately the event was reported.

Chro Shahab stated that Kurdish media has gone arrogant and has invaded the privacy of the lives of each Kurdish individual. In addition to this, Kurdish media has been ignorant of the countless studies done

by the University of Slemani one the performance of Kurdish media. She asked why don't they take interest into what the college of journalism published about their performance.

The event then had another Q&A session and was concluded, with both the defenders and supporters of Kurdish media saying what they had to say. Even after the event was over, some panelists were arguing over the extent to which the conversations held in the conference were true.

"Most AUIS events like this end up without a resolution, so let's make this one different," said Barin Kayaoglu, the moderator of the second panel. And this event, while trying to do that, ended on the same note as other AUIS events: no clear resolution.



The first panel of the Journalism Day event.

AUIS HOLDS A THREE-DAY WORKSHOP FOCUSING ON BUSINESS, INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND START-UPS

Bilal Barzanji

A three-day event, highlighting the current business trends and the challenges entrepreneurs face in their business start-ups, was organized at the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani. Starting on the 20th of November until the 22nd, AUIS Vision brought business students and successful entrepreneurs together.

The first day, opened by AUIS president Bruce Ferguson, consisted of the president's experiences in business start-ups and was followed by a panel with AUIS and Komar students, discussing the challenges

in today's business environment of the KRG.

"I was only 24 years of age. I had just graduated and with my friends, we developed a new idea into a startup."

- President Bruce Ferguson

The president's entrepreneurial experiences were inspiring to the audience, especially when he presented



Zring Faruk, founder of Asia Hawala, giving a speech on the second day of the event.

his first experience with an innovative space company he found with his friends called Orbital ATK.

The second day, titled: Business in the Current Market, was presented by AUIS alumni. The opening with a speech by Zring Faruk, founder of Asia Hawala and an AUIS alumni, further explained the current market from an "entrepreneur" perspective.

Other AUIS alumni shared their success stories to motivate the cur-

rent business students. Of the alumni, there were: Shkar Qaradaghi, owner of Monster Muscle, and Brusk Awat, founder of Meta Solutions. They were among those who shared their success stories to motivate the current business students to take risks and begin their own startups.

The third day, titled: How to create your Startup, was a presentation and workshop by Five One Labs to

help students develop their ideas into successful business startups. During the third day workshop by Five One labs, the students were put into groups and they were given a specific idea to develop and create a distinctive startup.

AUIS Vision overall was a brilliant new idea that is planned to be an annual event organized by the Student Services and Miss Mina Bassam's role in organizing it is much appreciated.



Students watch as Five One Labs presents.

AUIS LAUNCHES GENDER STUDIES MINOR AND WHY YOU SHOULD TAKE IT

Medya Rashid

AUIS launched the Gender Studies minor on Nov. 29 at a special event in the conference hall where Dr. Choman Hardi explained the need for such a minor in defeating societal norms and expressed her gratitude towards her colleagues and the university.

Seven courses have been developed by different departments so far; this interdisciplinary approach allows for students from different departments to take at least one of the gender minor courses, exposing them to some of the concepts. One of the classes offered next semester is Gender and Health in the De-

veloping World, which is from the Mathematics and Natural Sciences Department but could also count toward the gender studies minor.

Being the first of its kind in the country, a gender studies minor is a relatively new area of study and students may still not see the value of taking such a minor. The reaction from some of the slightly supportive students upon hearing about it can best be summed up by one of them, who said, "it sounds interesting, but I just don't have the time or energy to do it."

Most students have argued that it is simply not a priority, especially when it seems to be of no use to their future careers. However, these

new areas of study are well-suited to today's competitive and rapidly developing job market which requires the kind of awareness and sensitivity acquired through gender studies. Dr. Choman emphasized the importance of developing gender-sensitive analyses and their relevance to justice and democracy. She also mentioned its necessity in both the public and private sector. "One of our own students who didn't do a minor in gender studies but took one course wrote back saying, at this moment in his current job [at a well-known NGO], this is the only course that's been useful to the work that he does," Dr. Choman said.

A liberal arts education is not just

about equipping you with the technical skills needed to survive in the workplace. It is about becoming a well-rounded person with different intellectual capacities. A Gender Studies minor is perhaps just the right addition for a liberal arts education today.

Some students declare that gender studies concern only women. "Men have problems too," declared Jutyar Talabani, an engineering major. It is clear from the various interviews and discussions with students around campus that many misunderstand the very meaning of the term. Their misunderstanding allows for them to justify their indifference, or even contempt, for the minor. What they don't realize is that this indifference is what perpetuates some of the central issues addressed in this minor and which affect society on different levels.

The minor will also include a class on social justice which will combine theoretical knowledge with practice in the field. "It's not just about women," said Dr. Choman, "it's about social justice in general [...] Working on gender equality and fighting gender-based discrimination is not just women's work, it's anyone's work who is interested in justice and democracy."

Fighting for gender equality is just as much men's responsibility as it is women's, if not more, considering they are the dominant gender. This is why the Gender and Develop-



Dr. Choman giving her speech

ment Center started the recent Mr. Feminist campaign at AUIS, which turned out much more successful than expected, given the initial reluctance of some students to label themselves as feminists. Many of these students later took part in the campaign.

Gender studies is an exciting area of study that is eye-opening and one that can no longer remain obscure to the modern intellectual. It does not necessarily mean you will pursue it as a career, but it can still benefit you in whatever field you get into. The least it will do, however, is allow you to see societal norms and actions from a different angle. That awareness is exactly what this minor is expected to achieve, which is already a big step towards a better society.



Students and guests listen during the launch of the Gender Studies minor

AN EXCLUSIVE Q&A WITH THE GENDER STUDIES CENTER

Shady Atef

What is the gender center? How did it start and by whom?

The Center for Gender and Development Studies (CGDS) was established in November 2015 by Dr. Choman Hardi. It is a flourishing institution inside AUIS and within the wider community. The center's projects integrate education, research, and community development. Here at the CGDS we work at the intersection of academic research, knowledge sharing, and development work to effect real change in our community. We bring academic theory and practice together, make knowledge accessible, and encourage discussions and exchanges that are then shared in the wider community through various outreach strategies. In order to achieve that, we need to continue building a network which includes civil society organizations, the private and public sectors as well as academia.

How many people do you have in the gender center? How may do you hope to be?

CGDS is growing quickly. The core management team of three people (Dr. Choman, Dr. Lynn Rose, and Ms. Goshan Mohamed) takes care of most of the center's ongoing projects. We will hire a coordinator for the center soon, thanks to a generous donation from our supporters. We have two international consultants, one in the UK and one on the US. In addition to three undergraduate interns, we have several supporting members: Mr. Michael-Paul Hernandez and Ms. Jessica Postma from APP, Dr. Maria Saldarriaga, Dr. Akeel Abbass from the academic program and Mr. Rezhyar Fakhir from Christian Peacemaker Teams.

What is the aim of the gender center?

CGDS aims to become a vector of change by advancing gender parity in Kurdistan, Iraq, and the greater MENA region. One of CGDS's

core beliefs is that challenging deeply entrenched ideas about gender inequality and changing the everyday rhetoric requires a holistic approach. We believe that striving for gender equality is most successful when knowledge produced in academic institutions is disseminated within the relevant communities and integrated into capacity building projects. In order to achieve our goal we have designed new, gender related courses, organized events, seminars and workshops and provided training to AUIS students and to the larger community. We are pleased to announce that we now offer a minor in gender studies. It is the first minor in Gender Studies in Iraq.

CGDS has also forged important connections to enhance its capacity and expand its academic and outreach offering. CGDS is partnering with the Center for Women, Peace and Security at London School of Economics (LSE) in the Network on Gender Violence Across War

and Peace with the. More recently, CGDS has successfully obtained support from the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) to build a partnership with the Women's and Gender Studies Program at Ball State University (BSU). Securing this competitive IREX grant puts CGDS in an excellent position to develop continuing international programs.

What is the importance of having something like the gender center around? Do you think it's needed in our community?

Women compose 57% of the population in Iraq, and a tenth of Iraqi households are headed by a widow, so securing gender equality is not a luxury but a must. Considering that the illiteracy rate among females in Iraq is around the 25% mark (UN Iraq factsheet, 2013), it is not surprising that the participation rate of women in the workforce is one of the lowest in the world (World Bank, 2016). But an educated and successful mother can raise her children to be educated and successful. When we empower women, we empower an entire society.

We also believe that women's empowerment alone cannot function to bring about change. We must work to change the perceptions and attitudes that permeate the status quo and maintain structural inequality. Combating gender discrimination is not the responsibility of women alone, it is the responsibility of everyone, especially those who care about justice and democracy. Our mission is therefore to challenge gender stereotypes (that are most harmful to women but also to men, especially those who do not fit into society's expectations of manhood), to support and showcase women's potential, to expose how patriarchal systems divide women and make them compete with and fight each other, and to involve men in the process of change. We firmly believe that victim groups should

not be blamed and held responsible for the problems they face. Any forms of victim blaming should be exposed so that the responsibility of patriarchal institutions and discourses can be clearly seen, as well the responsibility of those who are complicit in the system.

What response/ attitude are you expecting towards the gender center from the AUIS community and the Suli community?

We are expecting the same positive and encouraging response that we have received all along. Now that we are growing, and since the Gender Minor was passed, more people are becoming aware of our existence. We feel fortunate to work in a place where we can develop courses in the field, raise awareness, and influence the making of a new discourse, one that challenges the patriarchal one, and is egalitarian, fair, and humane. We hope that the graduates of our classes will help spread awareness within the larger community and that they, as future leaders, administrators, and bureaucrats, will make gender-sensitive decisions and changes.

How can people who are interested join, is it even possible to join?

We are very interested in continuing to expand CGDS. Any interested faculty can email Dr. Lynn, at lynn.rose@auis.edu.krd. Students are encouraged to join The Action Group (TAG), which is supervised by CGDS. They can e-mail Awin Adil, awin.adil@auis.edu.krd. Most of all we want to ask students to take our new and exciting range of gender-related courses. These are distributed amongst English, Social Sciences, and Maths and Sciences departments. We encourage students to develop their own projects to address inequality. The best of those projects, be they short films, research, photography, creative writing, art, and music, will be showcased on our website.



The founders of Gender Studies center along with their student assistants

OSSIC COMPANY LAUNCHES FIRST 3-D HEADPHONES

Rawand Rasool

We have seen many devices that have turned into smart devices and 3-D, but nothing significant has happened to the headphones. All the changes we have seen so far in headphones were about wireless, Bluetooth, noise cancelation, and some other physical changes.

The new generation of audio was introduced last year which was 3-D audio. OSSIC company has been working hard to provide an impressive new model of an audio system since 2014. To do so, they introduced a new headphone which is called OSSIC X which is 3-D audio in 2016. OSSIC X is one of the most advanced 3-D audio system in market. This device will provide a new hearing experience. Therefore, the new versions of phones, laptops, and other devices have to support this new system as well.

Jason Riggs, the CEO of OSSIC company, said, “Headphones have not changed a lot in the past 65 years. The mission in OSSIC is to take the final leap from reproduced audio to something that is indistinguishable from reality.”

This revolutionary audio system can be the best news for gamers and musicians because it makes you accurately hear sounds from above, below, in front, and behind, or different instruments from different levels of distance that gives different tastes for the music. Additionally, it gives full control to unlock sounds above and below.

After releasing the demo of OSSIC X, people have been eagerly waiting for this new product around the world. Also, this will be a new challenge for other companies like JBL, Beats, and Sonny. About the time of launching the product: it was supposed to be in the market by

this November for pre-ordered customers, but they have not launched the product yet. This caused the customers frustration. The reason for the delay was because they faced some hardware problems.

“Headphones have not changed a lot in the past 65 years. The mission in OSSIC is to take the final leap from reproduced audio to something that is indistinguishable from reality”

I interviewed the company through email about the new deadline and they said: “We just sent out a Kick-



The world's first 3-D headphone released by OSSIC

starter update announcing that we are targeting shipment in early 2018, and will continue to provide updates as we get closer to production.” I

asked him about the price, and he answered: “Our pre-order price was \$299, the retail price when we launch the product will be \$499.”

AUIS IT STUDENTS PROVIDE PC SERVICE THAT SAVES \$400

Rawand Rasool

The very best solution IT technicians and professionals recommend you to do is formatting your personal computer (PC) when it is running slow. If you take your PC to a local store, chances are that they will install an operating system (OS) – like Windows – that is illegal and maybe cracked. This leads to security issues that, without you being aware,

might make your computer a victim of Distributed Denial of Service attack (DDOS) as a computer zombie. Without your knowledge, your computer will be used by hackers somewhere in the world to participate as a tool to break into servers, let alone the fact that your personal files and photos may be stolen. All this may happen due to not installing the right OS and software the right way, legally.

If you want to buy Microsoft Office tools and Windows OS, it may cost you over \$400. But if you are an AUIS student with a valid AUIS email address (john.smith@auis.edu.krd), you can get them for free. The Information Technology Administration Department worked with rigor to provide major software for AUIS community, an advantage that most of us may not know about. A few AUIS IT students arranged an event at the cafeteria in the past two days to help students, faculty, and staff register and download licensed Windows OS and Microsoft software. In addition, the latter can provide free services such as formatting computers and installing essential software.

The intention behind this service is to establish a culture of activities where IT students give back to the community with what they learn in the classrooms. This offer is for all majors, including APP students.

The event ran for two days in a row. Students who could not attend on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays can get the services on Mondays and

Wednesdays. Further details was provided in AUIS Newsletter and posters on campus as of which two days the event will be scheduled.

The intention behind this service is to establish a culture of activities where IT students give back to the community with what they learn in the classrooms.

This event was performed by five IT Senior Students: Ahmad Jalal, Atta Sallar, Rawand Ali, Shanaz Aras, and Zheer Qadir. Mr. Berzy, the IT Lab Assistant, and Mr. Shad Rashid, Senior IT Technician provided further assistant and supervising the event. Furthermore, they provided logistics for the event aiming to make it productive.

The IT Department arranges several events per semester like the IT Day, Capstone Exhibition, and Roundtable Discussions. These events will not only help AUIS community see the creativity of the department, but also show the capability of how IT classes motivate students to use their acquired skills anywhere.

From here, I want to encourage all IT students from different stages to think about different events and activities related to IT. The IT Department is willing to help and support activities that are student-led, such as this event. Eventually, these events will add invaluable experience and skills to your future professional careers and can serve as a work experience on your resume. As for future events, I am planning to provide a similar service where I provide all the tools that are used in all computer-based classes. This event will take place at the beginning of every semester. The reason behind launching this event is to help students who are struggling with downloading and installing programs.

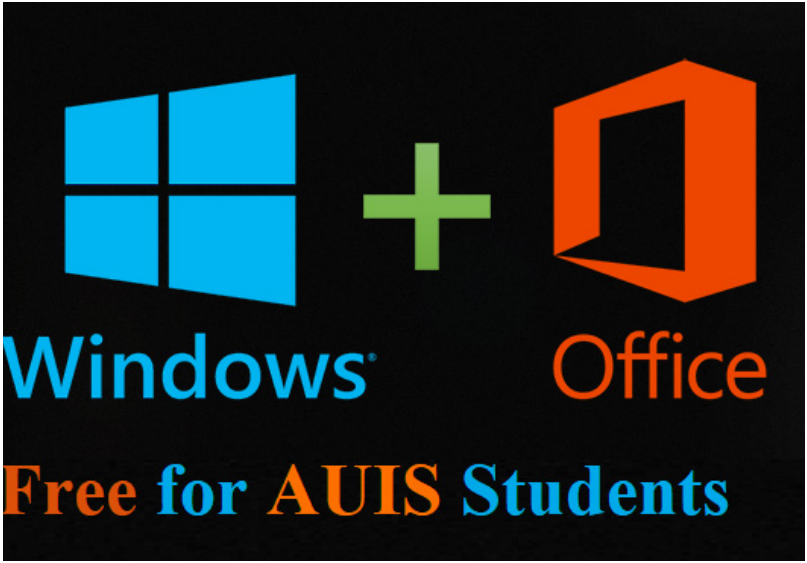


Image courtesy of Rawand Rasool

AUIS HOSTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP EVENT AS PART OF GEW

Saman Ihsan Fuad

AUIS hosted an entrepreneurship event with eight successful entrepreneurs as panelists, including AUIS Alumni, as part of Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) on Nov. 12.

The event included three AUIS Alumni: Hemin Askari, who runs Lavazza Franchise; Bayad Jamal, CEO of Bayad Inc.; and Hevi Manmy, CEO of Brsima and Bazary Online.

The panelists also included Hallo Sgarma, Director of Indigo Canvas; Fatin Al-Weli, co-founder of Escape the Room, Iraq; Alice Bosely, co-founder of Five One Labs; Talar Noore, CEO and founder of World-

wide Business Management; and Rawaz Rauf of Hiwa Rauf for Investment and Development.

The panelists said that if anyone in the room wanted to start a business, they should not wait until they finish their university but should start working on it right now. “Start the business!” was the motto.

The advantages are that you can collect data easily as a student since most companies will give it out, your friends and family will be willing to help out because you are a university student trying to start a business, you will have many customers that you will know first-hand since you can market in the university, and you will build a strong foundation for your business once

you graduate.

Their advice was to get as narrow as possible about what you want to do. Alice Bosely stated that successful entrepreneurs usually start out thinking hugely, but in order to succeed you have to start out thinking small. “You’re not going to be Mark Zuckerberg on your second day,” Bosely said. Rawaz Rauf said that the broader your business seeks to be the harder the challenges. He said that if you are planning on going against Asiaceil and Lafarge, do not expect them to sit down while you take their market share.

Adding to the legal challenges, Hemin said that there is no way around it and you have to abide by the laws. He said that he has to deal

with outdated laws from the 50s and 60s which hinders his business. Hevi Manmy reiterated and said that if Hemin had to deal with outdated laws, his online business had no laws to register or protect his business. He said that he had to get a special paper signed by the ministry of commerce to register his online business.

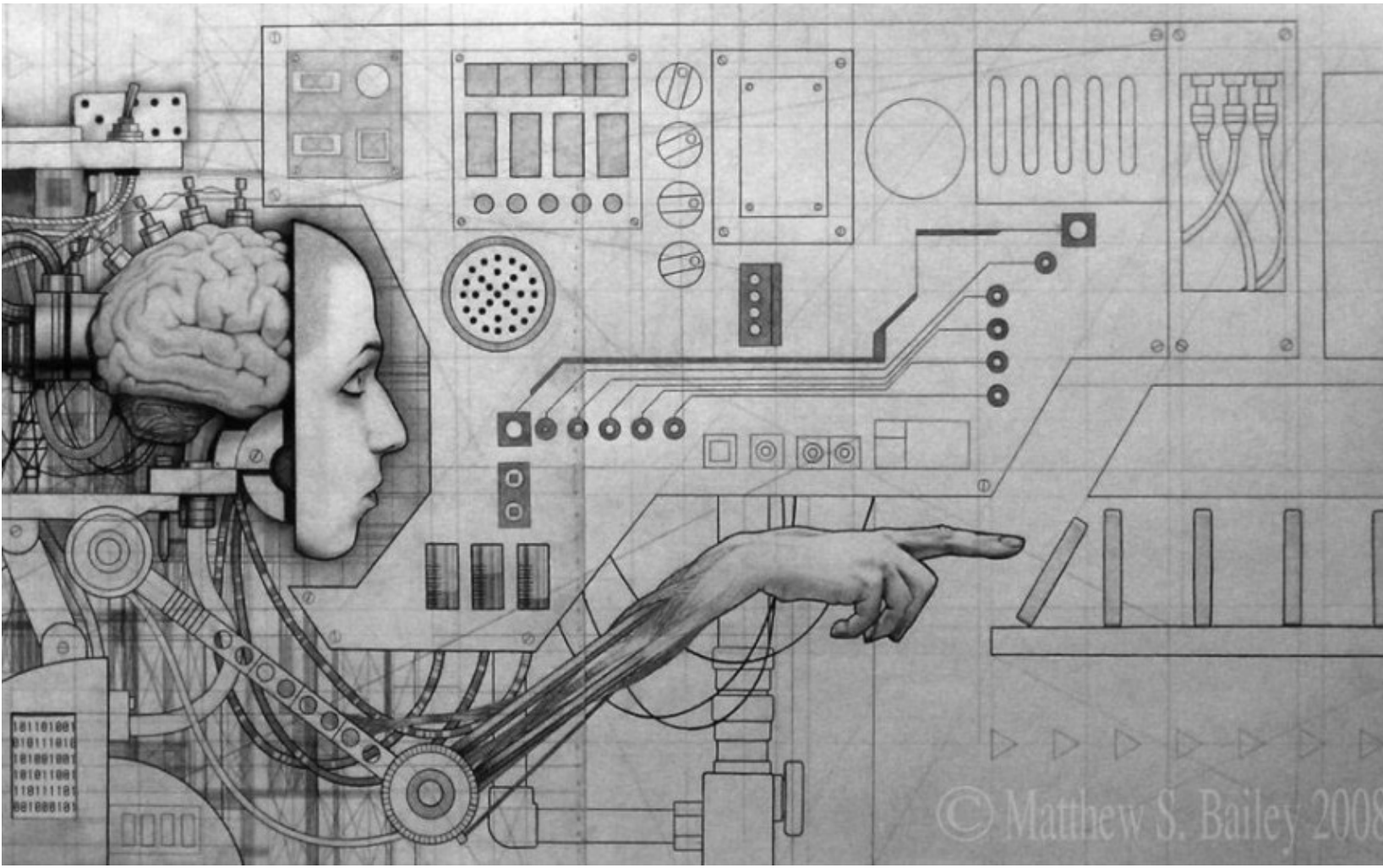
The panelists recognized that there are no efficient patent laws in Iraq which means your business is truly not secure. However, this is no reason to surrender and since the government does not do a good job of protecting small businesses, there is no reason to pay them for registration straight away until the time comes which will happen eventually

down the road.

The panelists said that the first year of any business is risky. You have to be prepared to lose money the first year. Hevi said that he got in debt when he started his business, but eventually came through by borrowing from friends and family. Fatin said that she and her two co-founders all have part-time jobs since they’re not ready to be broke at the end of the month.

The panelists then restated that starting a business in Iraq is difficult, and will have lots of challenges. However, they said that one can’t simply surrender, and encouraged the students to not be afraid and work out the challenges till they get it right.

ARE WE THE REAL AUTHORS OF OUR LIVES?



A Portrait of Determinism by Mathew S. Bailey

Hogar Hadi

When I decided to write this article, I had a feeling that I could have done something else. This is an issue that should really matter to people, but ironically it doesn't. Most people for the most of the time of their lives feel clearly that they are actually behind the steering wheel, and they are the author of their lives, the thinker of their thought, and the intender of their intention.

As a result, from this perspective of being a self, and subsequently cherry picking experiences, people think

that something very significant about their conscious experience would be lost if we were to determine philosophically or scientifically that there is no such thing as freewill. The problems here are unlike many other philosophical or scientific questions. There are no ways at our disposal to describe an alternative universe so as to test against the idea of free will so that we make sense of it.

So, what do we mean by free will? Free will in its simplest definition and according to most people is the idea that, our conscious selves are free to choose our course of action;

you choose what you want, and what you will to do. We think this is true all the way from gross motor action to the course of life we take. Most of the people don't deny that they are influenced by the environment they grew up in, the kind of genes they have, and the social system they live in. Yet, they think they are always behind the steering wheel and have in every moment the freedom to choose.

This standpoint of conscious awareness of your inner life is not true. Everything you are aware of in every moment is the product of

causes which you are not aware of and have no access to. Therefore, we possess no conscious control over our own conscious life.

For example, let's do a simple experiment: think of someone you know. Now that that someone has come to mind, it feels that you have picked that person from the shelf of memory, but the problems here is you can't account for why you thought of that person as opposed to someone else. Let's say you know a hundred people in your life. Before I asked the question, you weren't thinking of anyone. But the moment I asked

the question, someone emerged into your conscious awareness. Neuroscientists through many lab experiments know that the emergence of that person into your mind was manufactured by the brain at the end of series of causes of which you are not aware and not conscious. You are merely receiving that information.

This is true for all the decisions you make in your life. In fact, Neuroscientists in lab would know which eyes you are going to wink, using neuroimaging technology seconds before you winked your left eye. In an article in the journal *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, Dr. Patrick Haggard suggested that the same neural networks involved in planning motor actions most likely also plan the experience of conscious intention. This idea applies to our eye wink scenario, Dr. Haggard's theory suggested exactly the same thing and wrote that "the conscious experience of free will is the contemporary of the physical wink and not the initial choice of laterality."

This poses a great riddle to the whole question of free will, and the idea that we are the real authors of our life in every moment, because we know we are downstream to causes of which we are not aware of. The contents of our conscious are born out of unconscious mental life. Now some one may ask: then what does word like choice and effort really mean? Why do we get out of the bed in the morning, why should we choose to do anything at all? Well, to choose to do nothing is in itself a very hard choice. We can't really get out of the stream of being lived by our unconscious life. The notion of choice still can be preserved, because choices and efforts at the levels of our conscious life are what precede some of the biggest changes in our life.

AUIS INTRAMURAL TOURNAMENT FINISHES GROUP STAGE

Ahmed Aram

On Nov. 5, the AUIS intramural tournament finished its group stage leaving all the teams on their toes as the next round will start next semester.

Continuing an annual tradition, the AUIS Intramural Tournament started on Oct. 10, in which 16 teams signed up to battle for first place. The participants were divided into four groups.

Each group consisted of four teams that were fighting to advance to the next round. Each team had to play three matches to gather as many points as possible to qualify for the knockout stage of the tournament. All games were held on the AUIS soccer field with respect to time.

Group A consisted of Sharvan, Gawhar, Kashkol, and Expendables, whereas teams like Diarbakr, AUIS Staff, Dostan, and Al Talaba found themselves in Group B.

Rangers, The Red Devils, Outlaws, and Hezi 21 faced off in Group C. Lastly, BabaDoner, Ranya, Azadi, and Balamaka met up in Group D.

Gawhar came out victorious against Kashkol in the opening match of the tournament. The last match of the group stage was on Sunday, Nov. 5, between BabaDoner and Azadi. The undefeated Azadi managed to tip the game in their favor and advance to the next round.

In group A, Expendables and Gawhar qualified to the next round while Al-Talaba and Diarbakr were the winners of Group B. Hezi 21 and Outlaws also made it through to the next stage. Finally, in Group D, Azadi and BabaDoner held off the competition and advanced to the next round. According to the AUIS Student Service Office, the next round is likely to commence next semester as the advising week and final exams are approaching. "This is only the first round of this year's tournament," Mina Attar said. "The second round might be postponed until next semester."

The exciting games of the group stage were stronger and more competitive than the previous years, and the players were very enthusiastic and hungry to win. Peshang



Scene from the AUIS Intramural tournament

Zahid, who is a key player of Azadi, said: "In general, this year's group stage was more intense and difficult than last year's competition. Our opponents were on top of their game and battled hard to win. The teams have a big physi-

cal presence and I think that that is what makes this tournament so intriguing."

Raven Rasul, a player from Expendables admitted that their games in group A were all challenging. However, they prevailed

and managed to reach the next round. "Group C was the toughest one, since three strong teams were fighting hard for a place in the next round," he said. "The Rangers, one of the best teams did not survive the group stage of this tournament."

THALES OF MILETUS: A SCIENTIST BEFORE HIS TIME

By Mohammed Dler

The history of western philosophy goes back to the ancient Greek, around sixth century BC. The Greek colonies of Ionian (modern day Turkey) are contributed with the birth of philosophy. The location of these colonies allowed for the exchange of ideas between west and east through trade routes. The ideas from west and east were challenged and this allowed for new ways of thinking about the natural world and explanation that dependent on rationality rather than mythology or religious explanation.

The ancient philosophers were more like pre-scientific ancient scientist. They were asking questions about natural order of the world and how the world functions and works including the natural process in the physical world. What are the funda-

mental elements that world is made of? How the world is created if it is created, or if this world is eternal, how do we know it is eternal?

The first of the philosophers was Thales who lived around 600 BC in the city of Miletus. Thales is counted as the first of the seven sages of Greek. Most of what is known about Thales is from account that was told by later Greek philosophers like Aristotle, and his students. Unfortunately, these accounts are not very detailed and Aristotle does not give much to us to know more about Thales. However, we do know that Thales tried to find out, what the world is made of, and what are the fundamental element or elements that make up the physical world. His conclusion was that water was the fundamental element and, that other elements are made from it. He reasoned that

water is essential to all life. It exists in gas, liquid, and solid state. He also believed that the earth is floating in water like a piece of wood, and earthquakes were resulted from that, instead of a supernatural being creating the earthquake.

Thales is also credited with prediction of a solar eclipse of year 585 BC. He was very knowledgeable of primitive cosmology and he was one of the ancient philosopher who tried to understand the natural order of cosmos and if there is a moral order of the cosmos the way there is a natural order.

What is most interesting about Thales is the rejection of traditional explanation of the world and instead trying to use logic to do so. He believed that there is an order to the world and if we try to use reason we can get to understand it and predict the way it works. In modern



“Thales of Miletus” by Werner Horvath
time this way of thinking is usually done through scientific view of the world which tries to explain the physical world. So, in a way Thales is credited with this type of thinking.

THE FORGOTTEN SOVIET ANIMATIONS OF OLD KURDISH TV

By Mirako Fuad

Two years ago, when I found the Soviet animations that I used to watch as a kid, I got a little misty-eyed as the memories of watching them repeatedly at home at my grandparents’ house flooded over me in nostalgic waves. Thanks to the internet, finding obscure childhood favorites is now easier than ever before.

Any kid who watched Khak Tv productions or Kurdsat Tv during its early years has encountered the catchy Kurdish dubbed Soviet animations. The Kurdish adaptation was done in such an exceptional way that they gained fame and mainstream popularity among adults.

I think it is a travesty that people can think of themselves as animation enthusiasts with no knowledge of the Soviet animations, a genre unto itself. If you have ever looked for alternatives to Disney’s adaptation of folk tales, “The Little Mermaid” (1968), “Alice in Wonderland” (1981), and many other titles might be your cup of tea, there are plenty to find.

There are also many new adaptations among which are “It Will Be Raining Soon” (1959), “The Golden Antelope” (1954), “Cat’s House” (1958), “About the Hippopotamus Who Was Afraid of Inoculations” (1966), “Once Upon a Time” (1957), “Thumbelina” (1964), and “Petia and Little Red Riding Hood”

(1958) are short ones that got famous. Modern values, historical archetypes, and change in nature of storytelling make these animations subject to humorous reinterpretations and revisions, so we have to keep an open mind while watching. It is a shame that the pioneers on the other side of the Iron Curtain never really got the praise they deserved for their brilliant works. History of Soviet/Russian animation remains a nearly unexplored field in film theory and history outside Russia. Pioneering stop motion started around 1906 by several individuals and became prominent after the revolution serving as agitprop in the beginning.

Experimentation and development of both form and content continued during the late 1920s and 1930s by a large number of creative men and women, including the well-known Ivan Pyetrovich Ivanov-Vano, Yuriy Norshteyn, Mikhail Druyan, and Lev Atamanov. Inspired by Disney and Fleischer Studios, the Soviet started mastering the cel technique and developed their own three-color film process and detailed rotoscoping. Civil unrest, monopolization, and lack of funds prevented the further development of Soviet animation throughout the years. As a result, mini-series and anthologies replaced feature films. Earlier, the shift from Disney and other basic styles to traditional art started. Traditional Nenets art, puppet animation, magazine caricatures, formalism, anthropomorphism, bas-relief paper dolls, ROSTA posters, Fedoskino miniature, paint-on-glass animation, photorealism, and enforced Socialist realism are among the numerous styles and schools that were



Scene from the animation “Cats”
followed and rapidly replaced. The Soviet populist-proletarian beliefs, some nativist values, and Slavic folklore, decoration, architecture, dress, textiles, and manners were the major embedded elements. Beside the take away lessons, derived from the fantasies about the natural, wholesome lives of honorable, strong-willed Russian peasants and folk heroes, that has definitely attracted the Kurdish TV station, the Soviet animations have lush orchestral soundtracks and are decorated with folk art motifs, horror vacui, acidic art, dazzling colors, and multicultural folk materials, like the Nart sagas and other Fare Eastern ones. Although there are many artistically experimental classics like The Black Cauldron, Metamorphoses (1978), Fantasia (1940), The Rescuers Down Under, Sleeping Beauty, Dumbo, Sword in the Stone, Alice in Wonderland, and many 1940s and 1930 movies

and series like Silly Symphony, the Soviet animators can be praised for far greater efforts of artistic experimentation.

To further explore the artistic features of Soviet animation, we have to look at the strong stylistic influence of Art Nouveau, a modern reactionary school of art, on many of these animations. This school promoted the idea of ‘art and design as part of everyday life’, therefore the style was applied to architecture, textiles, household items, and decorative objects. Typical decorative elements include leaf, tendril motifs, intertwined organic forms, curvaceous shapes, the depiction of flowers and zoomorphs, and subdued pastel-colored images. This school was influenced by Celtic-style, works on botany for artists, and Ukiyo-e, and among its most gifted painter and illustrators are Alphonse Mucha, Gustav Klimt, and Ivan Bilibin.



Scene from the animation “Seasons”



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زەللاتەى ميوە لەگەل ئايس كرىم ، يان قاشىك كىك

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