

University of Balamand

Strategic Academic Plan

Prepared by Sasaki Associates

May 28, 2004

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sasaki Associates completed the following strategic planning document for the University of Balamand in May, 2004, to accompany a physical master plan, also completed for the University by Sasaki Associates.

The strategies recommended in this document grew out of extensive consultation with many constituencies within the University, but nevertheless represent the judgments of the consultants about appropriate policies and directions for the University. Successful implementation of strategies suggested in this document, or variations on those strategies, will depend on their confident adoption by members of the University community and its leadership. This will require a process that models the kind of engaged and participatory pedagogy that the strategic academic plan proposes.

To encourage debate and further exploration of some of the issues touched on in the document, a supplementary section has been prepared referencing examples of current implementation, generally at colleges and universities in the United States, of many of the practices recommended.

Some of the most important strategies outlined in the document depend in part on implementation of the physical master plan. Because implementation of the master plan is dependent on significant fundraising and will be phased in over an extended period, a summary list of issues that can be addressed immediately before the completion of building projects is outlined early in the document.

Because the underlying intention of the planning process is to develop a fully integrated approach, some repetition or overlap of strategies occurs in the document.

2.0 MISSION

The following revised mission statement was prepared in draft for the University by Sasaki Associates.

The University of Balamand is a private, nonprofit, independent Lebanese institution of higher learning. The University was founded in al-Kourah, Lebanon in 1988 by his Beatitude the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Patriarch Ignatius IV. The main campus of the University sits on Balamand Hill, overlooking the historic Balamand monastery and the Mediterranean Sea. Other branches are in the capital, Beirut.

The University operates under a license from the Lebanese government authorizing it to grant degrees in nine faculties. These faculties are: the Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts, St. John of Damascus Institute of Theology, Arts and Social Sciences, Sciences, Engineering, Business and Management, Tourism and Hotel Management, Medicine, and Health Sciences.

The University is committed to broad social and spiritual goals, rather than simply advancing the careers of its students. The central mission of the University is to apply the best traditions of the Eastern Orthodox Church to the complex realities of contemporary Middle Eastern society, and to interpret the spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church, notably its commitment to openness and exploration, in secular and pragmatic terms. Through the education of its students, active research, and broad engagement with the community, the University seeks to contribute in the following areas: nation building, regional stability, embracing religious pluralism, the development an appropriately skilled and committed professional workforce, social justice, economic revitalization, and environmental responsibility.

The University, while established as a secular institution, is founded on a religious commitment to compassion, tolerance and transparency, a respect for the provisional nature of knowledge, and an acceptance of the “other”. In particular, the University is committed to furthering Christian-Muslim understanding. In its commitment to openness, the University offers education to all faiths and nationalities, in the hope of bringing peace, understanding, economic stability and cultural depth to Lebanon and the Middle East region.

The University believes that these goals are best achieved by the establishment of academic rigor in all its Faculties; by promoting an atmosphere of dialog and attentiveness that permeates the life of the campus and encourages the enlargement of one “truth” by exposure to another; and by developing an education characterized by the study of complex and immediate real-world problems. The University seeks to limit the influence of dogma and fundamentalism, in all their intellectual, social and cultural manifestations, and to encourage critical inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural awareness in its students through careful structuring of its curriculum and its extra-curricular programs. The University believes that the total experience of students, and not only their time in the classroom, that makes their education effective and valuable. Students arriving at the University must be exposed to a broader world than they have previously known. The University distinguishes itself by the quality of openness and dialog on its campus, in and out of the classrooms, and by its integration of the spiritual and the practical. Its graduates should have more questions than they have answers.

While recognizing and responding to the dominance of the English language and western intellectual traditions in scientific and technical fields, the University is also committed to the revitalization of Arab culture and tradition in Lebanon and the region. Classes are taught in Arabic and French, as well as English, and all faculties integrate programs to encourage cultural sensitivity and tolerance for complexity. The University embraces approaches to teaching and learning that engage students as active rather than passive participants in their studies. The University is committed to graduating professionals who are not only skilled in their chosen fields, but have a breadth of understanding that equips them to master new fields as they emerge and to achieve the University’s mission.

The University of Balamand believes in responsible freedom, in the role of reason in uncovering truth, in the promotion of the standard of living, and in the deepening of human existence on the under God.

3.0 VISION AND OPPORTUNITY

The University of Balamand is uniquely situated to assume the role of a progressive yet traditional force for regeneration in Lebanon and beyond:

- The University is a young institution, in existence for only fifteen years. This gives the University the nimbleness and entrepreneurial energy that often elude more established institutions. Yet it has ties to the ancient institution of the Antiochian Orthodox Church, with a thousand years of history. This gives the University the legitimacy to establish itself relatively quickly as a major center in the Middle East for education and research.
- The University is a secular institution, open to transcending religious differences in the hope of revitalizing the pluralistic tradition lying at the heart of Lebanon's extraordinarily rich cultural history. At the same time, its religious affiliation emphasizes the essential connection between the spiritual and the practical, and gives it a larger mission than simply providing professional credentials.
- The University has the largest and potentially most beautiful campus in Lebanon. Its relative isolation high above the Mediterranean between Beirut and Tripoli makes it a memorable cultural destination. Its campus also distinguishes it from the various newer degree-granting institutions in and around Beirut. At the same time, it has an important presence in Beirut.
- The University has proven capacity for rapid expansion drawing on a wide range of students in North Lebanon and beyond, and for successful fund-raising.

Apart from giving professional and economic opportunities to its graduates, the University is well positioned to make substantive contributions in the following areas:

- | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Nation building</i>• <i>Regional stability</i>• <i>Religious pluralism</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- ***Development and retention of a skilled and committed professional workforce***
- ***Social justice***
- ***Economic revitalization***
- ***Environmental responsibility***

These large and inter-connected goals must be translated into specific objectives within the University. The Arab Human Development Report 2003 has clearly outlined the need to close the “growing knowledge gap” and the centrality of open intellectual enquiry to the successful future of the Arab world. The overall culture of the University may be even more significant than the quality of individual academic programs in meeting these goals:

- ***The University must be organized and developed in such a way that openness, dialog and a spirit of enquiry are a way of life.***
- ***The quality and reputation of academic programs must quickly be developed so that the best students are attracted from all areas of Lebanon and from the larger region.***

Each decision in admissions policy, each curriculum decision, each new emphasis in pedagogy, each decision on extra-curricular student life, must be made in the context of these large goals. Maintaining focus on these large goals will require, above all, broad-based leadership and collaboration among all senior administrators and trustees.

4.0 APPROACH

Much of our strategic planning thinking has been directly incorporated into the expression of the physical Master Plan, and the relationship between the physical plan and the strategic plan is intended to be seamless. In articulating strategies for the future of the University, we have drawn on a wide range of documentation and experience.

4.1 Master Plan Working Document

This document has relied extensively on the Master Plan Working Document, prepared by the University and dated April 2003. That document explores extensively the theoretical and practical considerations that will shape the future of the University over the next 20 years. Our emphasis is on coordinating the data presented in the Master Plan Working Document, providing assessment and commentary where appropriate, and integrating the various aspects of that report. The Working Document is inevitably something of a “shopping list”, and reflects the independent aspirations of the various University Faculties, and other groups. We have avoided specific recommendation in terms of teaching and research. Primary knowledge and expertise in establishing the details of the University's various programs must clearly remain within the University.

4.2 Interviews and Background Research

Interviews were conducted with key administrators and faculty at the University and supplementary documentation and data were reviewed. Additional research was conducted on the state of Lebanese education, the Lebanese economy and technological infrastructure, and related areas.

4.3 Comparable Institutions

Planning experience at other institutions, notably the American University in Beirut, the American University in Cairo, and a full range of institutions of higher education in the United States has shaped articulation of the proposed strategic direction for the University of Balamand. The University is based on an American model, and conducts its affairs and its classes primarily in the English language. While the American model for higher education tends currently to have broad acceptance, and is often seen as an effective recipe for preparing students for a global economy, we are also mindful that the development of a knowledge-based society in the Arab world has suffered many setbacks. Wholesale adoption of an American model for higher education at Balamand may have unintended negative consequences, accelerating the Lebanese “brain drain,” and reducing emphasis on the need to revitalize Arab culture and the development of internal intellectual resources in the Arab world.

On the other hand, many methodologies and pedagogies currently evolving in the United States at all levels of the higher education system, from community colleges to private research universities, have considerable relevance to Balamand as it strives to develop a humanistic, enquiry-based approach to higher education as an essential pre-requisite to stability and cultural revival in the Middle East. To encourage the kind of internal dialog among faculty that will sow the seeds of the learning community that the University aspires to, we have included as a supplement a broad range of web-based references to best practices in areas relevant to the University of Balamand.

4.4 Integration with Physical Master Plan

A primary focus has been articulating the relationship between the university's academic and organizational goals and the structure of the physical Master Plan. A physical Master Plan is often the best vehicle for conveying the full scope of an academic plan, and for bringing realism to such a plan. Competing and overlapping interests can quickly be identified, and solutions provided. As the University's president has said, the campus is the body in which the spirit of the university expresses itself. However, it is important that the University move ahead immediately in area which are not dependent of completion of building projects.

5.0 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EARLY ADOPTION

The following recommendations are distilled from the text that follows, and can be implemented immediately. Broad recommendations for action are outlined here. More specific and longer-term recommendations follow.

Apply University Vision in Operational Terms at All Program Levels

- All faculty and department leaders should outline the specific steps they intend to take in the coming three years to align their program with the stated mission of the University, as described above, and describe how success will be assessed.

Integrate Curricular and Extra-Curricular Programs

- Specific initiatives in cross-curricular integration should be supported and publicized by deans and the vice-president as demonstration projects. Research on successful projects in program integration elsewhere and internally should be the subject of faculty workshops. The University should in the next year develop a strategy for becoming a data center for research on Lebanon, and seek funding to support this effort.

Develop Research Capacity and Funding

- Faculty should seek opportunities for collaborative research opportunities with other institutions in the US and Europe. All departments with research programs should prepare research funding strategies in the coming year. Relief from teaching should only be offered to faculty able to secure internal or external funds to support research, and adequate to support replacement teaching faculty.

Focus on Centers of Excellence

- Research development should focus on areas where a critical mass of activity involving several faculty members can be developed. Potential for doctoral programs in targeted areas should be explored. The temptation to support too broad a spectrum of research activity should be resisted.

Focus on Information Technology Capacity

- The University should take an active role in developing improved broadband capacity in North Lebanon, and should consider becoming a service provider for broadband in North Lebanon, to offset internal costs by providing fee-based services to the North Lebanon community. (This approach has been used effectively in parts of the rural United States.) Pilot projects should be encouraged emphasizing the use of technology to support learning in and out of the classroom.

Strengthen Humanities and Social Sciences

- A stronger and more flexible core curriculum should be developed in the humanities and social sciences to support more effectively the University's mission. A comprehensive strategy for the humanities should be developed and approved before the conclusion of the next academic year.

Develop the Campus Community and Engage with the Larger Community

- A plan should be developed to increase frequency of extra-curricular cultural events.

Develop Innovative Learning Approaches

- A grant should be obtained to support development of a center for teaching and learning to foster approaches to pedagogy that will emphasize problem-solving, dialog and engaged learning, consistent with the University's mission statement.

Integrate Research with Undergraduate Education

- A pedagogy more based on problem-solving in certain subject areas should lead to opportunities for faculty-directed undergraduate research projects. Pilot projects should be supported where faculty interest is highest.

Publicize the University and Accelerate Fundraising

- The University should seek opportunities for articles in the international press about its mission. On-site conferences should be planned, supported by grants, to attract regional and international participation. The donor base should be aggressively expanded to include possible major donors in the United States.

6.0 PROGRAM INTEGRATION

There is often a gap between a stated institutional vision and day-to-day realities at the Faculty or departmental level. This section emphasizes the importance of program integration with the institutional vision, and suggests ways to achieve this.

6.1 The Need for a Unified Approach

The philosophy of program integration for the University, particularly at the level of research, is clearly articulated in the University's Science and Technology Task Force report. In this report, a diagram indicates the potential synergy between the various faculties, and suggests possible areas for productive interrelationships resulting in expansion of applied and basic research.

While this relationship between faculties of the graduate level is clearly at the heart of the University's strategy for achieving excellence and an enhanced regional reputation, it will also be important to achieve clear relationships between the various faculties at the undergraduate level. This approach will allow the development of a Liberal Arts tradition for undergraduates, and a more comprehensive education, going beyond mere training. Teaching methods will need to be shared among the various faculties, for example, and Faculties will need to be more open to developing curricula that emphasize the value of a broader liberal arts approach. This integration will be particularly important if the University is to meet the broad social and cultural goals established at the start of this paper. Ideally, students at the undergraduate level will take programs that give them exposure to areas beyond their own discipline, and provide them with access to a variety of modes of thinking.

Strategies:

Development of a Core General Education Curriculum

- Students in all faculties should have a more comprehensive cultural education, to expose them to more varied modes of thought than may be covered in their own areas of specialization. The curriculum should be designed to provide a strong grounding in the humanist tradition, with specific relevance to the Arab world.
- Development of such a curriculum could benefit from the advice of outside experts. An on-site conference to develop a humanist curriculum appropriate to the Arab world could bring useful press coverage and assist in recruitment and fundraising, as well as providing the appropriate range of experience and point of view necessary to developing such a curriculum.

Development of Problem-Based Learning

- Many students arrive at the University with too little confidence in their ability to think independently. The curriculum in all faculties should be reexamined to encourage greater engagement by students, and to give students complex problems that require more than rote application of textbook learning, and are likely to draw on areas of knowledge beyond their own specialization.
- All faculty members should be required to document how they intend to introduce problem-based learning into their curriculum, unless that can provide convincing evidence that such an approach is inappropriate.

Development of Interdisciplinary Programs

- Where possible, programs should be developed to draw on an interdisciplinary approach. For example, business education should be a significant component of engineering and art programs. Special inter-disciplinary program, for example in the environment, should also be developed.
- Programs linking business and art, and business and engineering, should be developed in the next academic year.

The current weakness at the University is in an apparent gap between the articulated vision and reality. Individual faculties, in some cases, work to emphasize autonomy, and there is minimal acknowledgment of other disciplines, particularly the Humanities and Social Sciences. This is manifested, for example, in the recent construction of the Business School as a structure independent of the rest of the campus. In reality, awareness of business issues and economics should permeate all areas of undergraduate education at Balamand, just as awareness of the social sciences, humanities and sciences should permeate business education. This is harder to achieve when there is physical separation.

Another difficulty in achieving an integrated academic program lies in the relative weaknesses of some programs in contrast to others. We strongly believe that there is a need for strength to be developed in the social sciences and humanities in order to parallel the successes and engineering and science. This broad-based success will be essential in terms of building the school's reputation. It will also be critical to the building of strong

inter-disciplinary programs and will make program integration more palatable, and even stimulating, to strongly established disciplines.

This integration can best be achieved initially by encouraging dialogue among faculty members, and by developing shared resources for the various Faculties.

The master plan proposes a Faculty Center directly adjacent to the existing Business Faculty building. This Faculty Center will also house the Alumni Center and the Community Business Center. Our intent in locating these three facilities together is not only practical, in that they will all share dining facilities, but also aims to bring more of the faculty into closer connection with the Business faculty in the adjacent building. This building will clearly encourage dialogue among faculty members, and bring them into closer connection to people from the outside business community and alumni.

It is also important to encourage dialogue among students from different disciplines. The master plan creates a central facility, directly adjacent to the new Zachem Student Center, which will serve as a Library Learning Center. This building will be at the heart of the campus. It will provide computer facilities and a Center for Technology, in addition to traditional library services. It will also offer space for students to study online, to supplement their conventional classroom activities. We see this Library Learning Center as a major force to create dialogue among students and to encourage collaborative learning.

In addition to the Faculty Center and the Library Learning Center, we are confident that the new administration building and the new Student Center will work well to create a more unified approach to education and to the whole University experience for students.

Buildings alone are only a piece of the effort to create an integrated academic community. Often the most important conversations occur in the interstices between different activities. The spaces we create between buildings must encourage dialogue and interaction. The master plan includes many such spaces, and indeed is centered on the concept of a "Path of Learning" which is characterized by a series of landmark spaces intended to generate dialogue and interaction, as well as contemplation. This Path and the

spaces it connects, serves as a symbolic and practical connection between the various disciplines, and bridges, literally, the distance between the secular and mundane, as represented by the Goat House, and religious and spiritual, as represented by the Monastery. It also serves to make the campus into an experiential classroom to increase environmental awareness, and to anchor learning in a sense of place and history.

The risk in emphasizing inter-disciplinary collaboration is a dilution of quality in individual departments. We are not suggesting here a proliferation of cross-disciplinary undergraduate courses, but rather undergraduate programs that expose students to a broader range of distinct disciplines or modes of thought. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is generally (though not always) best confined to research.

Long-Term Strategies

- Complete Faculty Center
- Complete Library Learning Center (possibly renamed Library Commons)

Short-Term Strategies:

Design of New Programs

- Initiate working groups to determine purpose and organization of the Faculty Center and the Library Learning Center, prior to design and construction, to stimulate collaborative thinking among faculty.

Development of Cultural, Athletic and Artistic Activities

- Students tend to leave campus when classes are over, and the majority of students will be commuters, even with the expansion of the residential program. Expanded activities on campus will encourage students to stay, and consequently to increase their interaction with other students and faculty on an informal basis in the University context.
- Develop expanded cultural activities program.

Expansion of Student Clubs and Associations

- Student clubs and activities increase a sense of belonging in students, bring students from different disciplines together, expose students to new ideas, and develop human skills.
- Work with students to develop expanded student clubs.

Development of a Student Advising System

- For students to develop the ability to reflect on the significance of their own education and development in the context of the University's mission and the needs of the country and region requires a carefully developed academic advising system involving a large proportion of the faculty. Development of such a system will require extensive faculty training.
- Review best practice models for student advising in US colleges and universities, and develop appropriate structure for Balamand.

Development of Teaching Approaches that require Extensive Student Collaboration Outside the Classroom

- Changes in pedagogy mentioned above to increase emphasis on engaged problem-based learning will inevitably require that students collaborate extensively outside class. This will increase the level of thoughtful dialog among students and increase the overall quality of campus life. Many initiatives proposed in the Master Plan are designed to encourage informal learning outside the classroom.
- Identify instructors that use or would like to use collaborative learning outside the classroom, and invite them to report the results of their approach to faculty meetings.

6.2 Interfaces: Graduate/Undergraduate, University/Community

The Working Document emphasizes the notion of “interfaces”, and their significance in achieving a high level of educational productivity. There are the interface between high school and undergraduate education, the interface between undergraduate education and graduate education, and then the interface between graduate education and professional

and social life. There is also an interface between undergraduate education and professional and social life. The effectiveness of the transitions between the various interfaces will determine the success of education

The quality of secondary education in Lebanon, still in recovery after the impact of the Civil War, makes the relationship between high school and undergraduate education problematic. For many students, remedial learning is necessary at the college level before significant steps can be made in a defined undergraduate program. Given the relative lack of sophistication of some students entering the University, the choice of program is sometimes difficult. This is reflected in data on the career choices of students graduating from university in Lebanon. A majority of students shift from their undergraduate major in terms of career choice within a few years.

Strategies:

- *Develop improved freshman orientation programs*
- *Establish greater breadth in undergraduate programs*
- *Facilitate an easier transition from one major to another, provided that minimum educational requirements can be met.*

The interface between graduate education and research and undergraduate education is particularly important for the University. It is essential that new research influence undergraduate education, both in method and content. This is important so that undergraduates fully understand that an advanced education requires the ability to perceive and solve problems, in addition to absorbing information. This is a particular need in contemporary Lebanon, where the ongoing challenges of reconstruction invariably require a multi-faceted approach, and reconstruction of the social fabric is as important as reconstructing the physical infrastructure, and often more difficult. Lebanese and Middle Eastern students also need to gain confidence that knowledge is not necessarily an import from an external and dominant culture, such as the United States, but can be generated internally.

Strategies:

- *Emphasize problem-solving in undergraduate education*
- *Expose undergraduates to current research in their courses, rather than relying exclusively on textbooks*
- *Emphasize humanist traditions in the Arab world*

At the same time, undergraduates must acquire the basic skills and understanding to prepare them for effective participation in graduate study. The emphasis on integrating research into undergraduate education will ensure that undergraduates perceive the relevance of their basic education, since research, particularly applied research, will connect their studies to the real world, and real scientific, technical and social issues.

The interface between graduate work and research and the larger society is more complex. On one hand, the expectation is that universities work to meet demands of the workforce, in providing suitably trained graduates. On the other hand, the university can be a force for setting new societal directions, and opening up new possibilities, both socially and economically. Both approaches are required in Lebanon. Assessment of workforce demand is problematic, in the absence of reliable national employment data. Some indication of demand can be determined by relative ease of job placement among graduates. However, available research suggests that job placement is most often a function of appropriate family connections. A better approach is to anticipate growth and investment. The most recent report of the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) indicated a move towards increased investment in the Mohafazat, as opposed to concentrated investment in Beirut, with North Lebanon's share of investment moving from 5% to 12%. The emphasis of the Economic and Social Fund for Development provides some possible impetus for socio-economic improvement in support of these efforts.

The Lebanese economy, though uncertain, is increasingly service-based. It is essential that universities in the Middle East be sources for new thinking and new ideas. Consequently, research must not be applied simply to known problems, but also to theoretical issues. The University must become an influence for opening minds in the larger society, just as awareness of active research in a university can help foster open-mindedness among undergraduates.

At the heart of this interface must be an entrepreneurial spirit linked to professional expertise in appropriate areas.

Strategies:

- *Ensure that graduates of the engineering program to have familiarity with basic principals of business and economics.*
- *Engage students in applied research to develop early awareness of “real world” issues.*
- *Ensure that graduates have developed an awareness of community development issues, through volunteer work and internships.*
- *Develop improved analysis of workforce demand as a function of the proposed Center for Statistics.*
- *Develop a leadership role in planning infrastructure development for North Lebanon.*

6.3 Suggested Integrated Programs:

6.3.1 Environmental Studies

An area requiring program integration that is of critical importance to the region is Environmental Studies. The complex challenges involving the environment require both an understanding of the underlying scientific and technical issues and an appreciation for the relevant economic, political, legal, historical and ethical dimensions. At Balamand, a degree program in Environmental Studies would draw on Engineering (including the emerging GIS program), Social Sciences, Business, and Science and Technology. A Center for Environmental Studies has been located in the Master Plan as a “hinge” between the compact, concentrated academic core of the campus and the more rural, contemplative upper campus.

6.3.2 Health Sciences

Expanding the Health Sciences program from Beirut to Balamand offers opportunities for integration with Social Sciences, Medicine, Engineering (the GIS program), and SEED.

Strategies:

- *Initiate cross-disciplinary program in Environmental Studies*
- *Initiate cross-disciplinary program in Public Service*

7.0 COMMUNITY IMPACT

The trend in higher education increasingly is to see the campus as having permeable boundaries, and to understand education as a process that is fully involved with the local community. The University of Balamand is committed to engagement in the local community. This engagement is valuable not only for the community but also for students.

Increased investment in reconstruction and the development of an improved business climate in North Lebanon, as described above, will lead to an increase in economic activity in the area, provided that economic conditions begin to improve as planned. It will be important for the University to play a significant role in this expansion of activity, as described below.

7.1 Volunteer Programs

Volunteer programs such as SEED will play an increasingly important role in the education of Balamand students. As the size of the University grows, it will be possible to develop an increasing range of volunteer opportunities in the community. It may be desirable to offer credit courses in the Social Sciences that relate directly to these off-campus experiences.

Strategies:

- *Focus on urban issues in Tripoli*
- *Coordinate varied sources of expertise within the University (e.g. demographics, GIS, health sciences) to support volunteer programs.*
- *Ensure news coverage of volunteer activity.*

7.2 Cultural Center

As the campus at Balamand is developed, it will increasingly become a destination in North Lebanon. It is on a beautiful site with magnificent views, and benefits from the presence of the historic Monastery. While it cannot compete with the vibrancy of the city, it provides a potential alternative to Beirut. Once additional facilities have been completed, it will be possible to host conferences and provide other amenities for local events. The University already has the best athletic playing field in North Lebanon, and with the completion of additional athletic facilities, as proposed in the Master Plan, it will

be able to provide a major resource to the region, which will both enhance the University's own reputation, while adding to the cultural amenities of the region. The campus will also be able to host other cultural events and arts activities. Once the Path of Learning has been completed, and the Environmental Center and the Botanical Garden are in place, the campus will become something of a showpiece for environmental engagement and interpretation, and will attract visitors from North Lebanon.

Strategies:

- *Showcase athletic events*
- *Increase frequency of cultural events*
- *Encourage campus tours and visits*

7.3 Increased Residential Presence

The master plan creates a residential village on the campus, both for faculty families, graduate students and undergraduates. At present, the campus itself is not lively after the end of classes, but this will change with the increasing number of students and faculty in residence. This will create more of a presence of the University in the community. However, the University plans that many, and perhaps a majority, of its residential students will live in housing off the campus, in local villages. If carefully planned, this increased student presence in the villages will have a significant economic and cultural benefit. It will be possible for the University to develop residential communities in the villages working closely with entrepreneurs, as at the Koura Residence. This collaboration will ensure that the goals of the University in developing the villages and in providing appropriate living conditions for its students are addressed.

Strategies:

- *Develop on-campus community with evening events designed to attract participation from nearby villages*
- *Develop non-credit evening programs for local residents*
- *Collaborate with local communities in developing off-campus housing, to ensure community acceptance and local economic benefit*

7.4 Hospital

With the introduction of a Medical School at the University, there have been plans to develop a new hospital in North Lebanon in association with the Medical School. The location of the hospital has been the subject of much discussion. While there is

considerable merit to having a hospital directly adjacent to the medical school with which is associated, we do not recommend siting the hospital on the Balamand campus. Our preference is to locate the hospital on land owned by the Church on the main road along the coast between Beirut and Tripoli. We believe that this location is significantly more visible and accessible to a much larger proportion of the community that the hospital will be intended to serve. Students at the Medical School will be completing their studies at the hospital in Beirut as well as at the hospital in North Lebanon. The location of the hospital on the main road will provide increased visibility for the University.

Strategy:

- *Establish hospital on monastery land adjacent to and visible from main road*

7.5 Technopole

The creation of a Technopole, or Research District, associated with the University will be an essential component to developing entrepreneurial activity within the University, as well as revitalizing the region. The concept of incubators for technology and business is in its infancy in Lebanon. The question is only whether a location outside Beirut will attract the kind of talent and investment that will be required for success. It may be preferable for the University to consider a Beirut location for the Technopole. However, the North Lebanon location would enhance the University's contribution to the local economy. As with the hospital, the Technopole should be located on the main coastal road, and not on the campus. This will be important for accessibility, visibility, and for other practical reasons.

If administrative and entrepreneurial leadership were available internally, the University might consider a more modest version of the IT University of Copenhagen, with a focus on developing information technology in North Lebanon and the region by means of strategic partnerships with emerging technology businesses. Such an endeavor would make Balamand a catalyst for economic and cultural development in North Lebanon.

Strategies:

- *Review relevant programs in Europe and the United States*
- *Develop relationships with emerging businesses in fields appropriate to areas of research interest within the University.*
- *Explore possibility of playing a major role in developing information technology capability in North Lebanon.*

7.6 Executive Center

An Executive Center has been proposed on the campus to encourage association between Business School students and the larger business community, and to encourage the development of public/private partnerships. The Center will be located in the same building as the Alumni Center and the Faculty Center. These adjacencies will ensure its vitality. The location is directly adjacent to the Business School and the Tourism and Hotel Management Center. The building will be directly adjacent to the Botanic Garden and the proposed outdoor amphitheater, and will have views towards the Mediterranean Sea.

Strategies:

- *Review programs at United States colleges and universities*
- *Work with recent alumni and trustees to determine most valuable functions for an Executive Center*
- *Establish short-term business training programs for local businesses.*

8.0 REGIONAL IMPACT

The University is committed to having major impact on the cultural and educational character not only of North Lebanon, but the country as a whole and the Middle East region. The impact of the University will depend to a great extent upon its ability to develop a prominent role in a wide range of research activities, while continuing to attract students from outside North Lebanon.

Currently, the majority of students enrolled at the University of Balamand are from North Lebanon. The University's goal is to change the distribution of students as it increases its size. Ultimately, the university would like to draw 20% of its students from other countries in the Arab region, and up to 70% of its students from areas other than North Lebanon. This redistribution of enrollment will clearly increase the impact of the

University on the region, but it is in the area of research and scholarship that the regional impact will be fully realized. A number of strategies have been discussed to increase the regional impact of the University.

8.1 Center for Christian Muslim Studies

The enlargement of the activities of the Center for Christian Muslim Studies has the potential to have a major regional impact. This Center will not only contribute significantly to the University's commitment to nation building; it will also attract scholars and experts from the region and beyond. The fact that the university is committed to an integrated approach to teaching and research across disciplines may well contribute to making this Center a particularly effective institution. The relationship to the Monastery and the Theological School is also clearly critical to the success of this venture.

It will be important that the Center have a distinct location on the campus. We have proposed that the present library building be adapted as a home for the Center for Christian Muslim Studies. The building is well situated; it is the closest University building to the Monastery, and has an outlook over the Mediterranean Sea beyond the towers of the Monastery. It also fronts onto an elegant plaza, and will be within easy reach of the planned Lookout, a contemplative spot on the campus. We have proposed that the Museum also be incorporated in the former library building. We believe that the association between the Museum and the Center for Christian Muslim studies will be beneficial. The Center will also be able to take advantage of the Faculty Center adjacent to the amphitheater on the Path of Learning.

The Center should seek significant external funding to support its activities, and should be engaged not only in scholarship but also in hosting regular symposia and conferences. As the campus is developed and completed, the Center will take on the character of a retreat, and the location of Balamand will be beneficial to creating an atmosphere likely to be productive. It is also significant that the university is situated between the Christian Koura and Muslim Tripoli.

Strategies:

- *The Center must actively seek grants from international sources to establish regular conferences, seminars, retreats and publications, not only at Balamand but also in other locations, and drawing broadly on leaders and scholars in the region and beyond.*
- *The Center's web site must be brought up to date and should become a useful resource by including links to any relevant sites.*

8.2 Technology

The University intends to establish an Institute for Technology. While much of the focus of its activity may be internal, there is a great opportunity to have a regional impact.

Absence of internally generated technology capacity has been a major handicap for the development of a knowledge society in the Middle East. It will be important for the university to develop a leadership position in this area, as described in the previous section of this report. A variety of announcements in the past six months suggest that the Middle East is poised for dramatic expansion in use of the Internet. Access to improved bandwidth in Lebanon and beyond may well lead to explosive growth. It will be critical that this growth does not merely give access to imported forms of technology and knowledge. The opportunity for generating technological capacity internally within the Middle East must be grasped. It will be important for the university to seek external funds to develop initiatives in this area. Technology in the Arab world will have a major impact on the capacity for business development, cultural development, and improved communication. Currently, the use of technology at all levels of government in Lebanon and beyond is relatively unsophisticated. There are real opportunities for leadership, not only in the technical and design areas, but also in the innovative uses of technology to further social, political and economic development.

Other Arab countries are already poised to seize the initiative in this area, particularly in the field of electronic commerce. The integrated approach to research and education at the University should make it well positioned to develop social cultural and business applications of technology that have relevance not only to Lebanon, but also to the Arab world in general.

Strategies:

- *Seek external funds to develop high-profile technological initiatives*
- *Develop strategies at the University for the use of the Internet to further cultural and economic development in the Arab world.*

8.3 Distance Learning

There is currently essentially no locally generated distance learning in most of the Arab world. This absence can be attributed in part to absence of access and bandwidth, and in part to cultural and local conditions. However, change in this area is inevitable. Distance-learning programs in Arabic may well turn out to be a major market, as well as an opportunity for achieving the vision of the university.

It is possible that the development of distance-learning courses should be one of the activities of the Institute for Technology, which we have suggested should be housed in the new Library Learning Center. Since this building is perceived as a crossroads for the University, it may be possible to encourage large numbers of faculty to become involved in the development of distance-learning programs.

Strategies:

- *Review successful distance learning programs in United States.*
- *Develop Web sites for all existing courses, using commercially available software.*
- *Develop pilot tri-lingual distance learning programs to test potential market, using commercially available software.*

8.4 Research Centers

As with technology, the Arab world now lags behind in terms of research development. Most promising researchers leave the country for improved opportunities elsewhere. The University must work to reverse this trend by providing an environment for research that attracts the best scholars. Such a method can become an example to the larger Arab world as well as to the rest of Lebanon. Research centers at the university can become a major draw for conferences and for visiting scholars. Again, the funds will need to be established to initiate such efforts.

At this point, we do not believe that research centers separate from the core activities of the university should be encouraged. If an integrated approach to research and teaching is to be fully developed, it will be important that those researchers with the most entrepreneurial energy be fully visible and engaged in the day-to-day life of the university. Separate buildings for research centers will weaken this effort.

Strategy:

- *Focus initially on developing centers of excellence and clustering research activities with the involvement of more than one faculty member.*

8.5 Links to American and European Universities

An important aspect of the regional outreach of the University will be the connections it has with universities in the United States and Europe. These intellectual affiliations will be important not only for graduates of the university, but also in ensuring intellectual associations that will strengthen the research competence of the university. Lebanon retains an enormous hold on the imagination of people living in United States. It should be possible to attract visiting scholars provided that associations have been established and funds are in place. The high cost of American universities may make it desirable to establish broader connections in Europe, as well as, possibly, in the eastern Mediterranean (Cyprus, Greece, Turkey) and Japan.

Strategies:

- *Establish additional scholarly affiliations with United States and universities, either through faculty connections or through shared research interests.*
- *Establish joint research activities, for example with Middle Eastern Studies departments in American universities.*

8.6 Conference Center

The Conference Center mentioned above for its importance in providing connection to the North Lebanon community, will also play a major role in developing interest in the University's overall activities. While a specific Conference Center building has not been proposed in the Master Plan, the university's facilities will lend themselves well to this kind of activity. The University may also be able to make use of resort facilities on the coast in the off-season. Investing in a full-time Conference Center distinct from other activities

does not seem to be a sufficiently high priority at this time, especially with the possibility of using other facilities in the area, and hence assisting the local economy.

Strategies:

- *Plan a conference on Christian-Muslim Studies*
- *Plan a conference on the future of humanistic studies in the Middle East in the context Arab history*
- *Plan a conference on the cultural impact of the Internet on the Arab world*

8.8 Technopole

The Technopole is discussed in a previous section. The significance of the Technopole in terms of regional reach will be determined by the activities that it generates. If it can be used as an incubator for innovative work in technology, it may well come to be an effective regional draw.

9.0 RESEARCH

The university has made a commitment to emphasize research in order to increase the intellectual vitality of the institution, to play a major role in the regeneration of Lebanese Society, to attract excellent faculty, and finally, to attract excellent students.

Currently, the University has done well in attracting research activity, given its relative youth. However, the amount of research dollars it has attracted from the Lebanese government is a very small percentage of that attracted by other institutions. In fact, it has attracted less funding than any other higher education institution. This fact, though discouraging in terms of perceived prestige, is not so damaging in terms of research funding, since funds available from the government are extremely limited, and primarily directed to two institutions. The University has been more successful in attracting outside funds, but again research activity is only recently beginning to take hold at the University.

The University is adequately equipped to support research in engineering and in science. It has a range of laboratories and equipment, and is beginning to attract a high level of student. It will be critical to develop a clear research strategy at the University in order to attract funds. The strategy should be built around existing strengths. The University

believes that it will be more effective to begin with a heavy emphasis on applied research that can have a direct impact on the local economy. This strategy is likely to attract local funds as well as funds from the international sector.

The University can distinguish itself by proposing a multidisciplinary approach to research, in common with its overall strategy of an integrated approach to learning. This approach may be easier to develop at a young university, where lines are less heavily drawn between traditional academic disciplines.

In order to attract attention in the research field, it will be important to focus on areas where there is a high likelihood of generating funds and overachieving high visibility.

Major research directions that have been suggested are as follows:

- Aeronautics
- Biotechnology
- Information Society
- Environmental Studies
- Medical Studies
- Nanotechnology
- Christian Muslim Studies
- Theology

In terms of applied research the areas seen as most promising are as follows:

- Aeronautics
- Design
- Information Technology
- Marketing
- Medical Services
- Robotics
- Structure

- Software
- Social Studies

In each of these areas the cross-disciplinary opportunities need to be defined and articulated. An overall research strategy must be built on cross-disciplinary studies, on the entrepreneurial capabilities of the faculty and on a commitment to regeneration of Lebanon and the development of technical and scientific expertise.

Ideally, there should be a sustained and focused research effort in a number of key areas, each involving a group of faculty members. This will enable the University to develop “centers of excellence,” rather than sporadic initiatives by individual faculty members.

It will be important to have a highly professional presentation of the University's research strategy, if major funding from international sources is to be located. It will also be essential to have a properly staffed office responsible for researching funding sources, assisting faculty in preparing grant proposals, and publicizing successful grant applications.

The infrastructure requirements to support this research initiative are developed in the physical Master Plan. While it will be important to implement the first phases of the plan quickly, in order to provide adequate research space, the first priority must be a more rigorous and comprehensive articulation of the University's research strategy.

Once this strategy has been fully articulated, it will be possible to develop hiring strategies and workload strategies to support the plan. While it might seem desirable, in the interest of fairness, to lighten the entire faculty's workload in order to encourage research, this is probably impractical. A better strategy will be to address the workload issue case-by-case on the basis of research funding achieved. It will probably not be financially feasible to release faculty time across-the-board to encourage unfunded research.

Strategies:

- *Develop faculty clusters of research interest in the above bulleted areas.*
- *Where no critical mass exists internally, develop collaborative ties with other Lebanese institutions.*
- *Develop expanded research ties to American and European universities in bulleted areas above.*
- *Conduct aggressive research on funding opportunities; establish office to support grant proposal development.*

10.0 FACULTIES

This section deals with the various faculties at the University, making connections between their plans for growth, their potential associations with other faculties, and the facilities that have been planned for them. There is sometimes a significant divergence at the Faculty level from the philosophical and educational vision for the University as a whole. Correcting this divergence will require leadership and collaboration, and can often best be achieved in the context of physical reorganization. To achieve its goal of becoming a major educational and cultural influence in Lebanon and beyond, the University must develop a distinct collective identity, and this identity must be expressed in the organization and structure of its various programs, and not only in rhetoric.

Strategies:

- *Encourage engagement with the overall philosophical vision at all levels of the University*
- *Distribute of information about practices at other institutions, faculty presentations on research and pedagogy, faculty seminars conducted by visiting scholars or faculty at other Lebanese institutions, e.g., AUB.*
- *Host frequent social events for faculty and staff to encourage dialog, transparency and a sense of collective identity.*

10.1 ALBA

In allocating space to each faculty, we have used norms that are generally accepted in American universities. In calculating space for faculty offices, for example, we have assigned a standard space per full-time equivalent faculty member. In other areas we have assessed the needs of each Faculty in the context of the programs that it offers, and adjusted these in the context of the norms at comparable American universities. Currently the Balamand ALBA consists of programs in decorative arts and interior design. Plans are

to increase the scope of the programs dramatically. Currently there are 64 students in the program. The plan submitted by the faculty anticipates an enrollment growing to 300. The faculty has proposed multidisciplinary programs at the undergraduate level with concentrations emerging within those disciplines. This structure is proposed for both the BFA and MFA level, and is consistent with the cross-disciplinary approach advocated by the university as a whole. While this approach has been embraced by a number of art schools and design schools in the United States, its liability is that students develop no real proficiency in any one area.

Anticipated target enrollment in 20 years is for 213 undergraduate students, with the remainder in graduate programs. The five major areas anticipated are:

- Interior Architecture and Design
- Graphic Design
- Art Teaching Diploma
- Environmental Design
- Fashion Design
- Industrial Design

Technology competence will be central to many if not all areas of the proposed series of programs. This competence in technology will assist the faculty of ALBA in developing ties to other faculties. Currently the Faculty, or at least its students, see themselves as distinct from other members of the University community. We imagine that the development of increased and more sophisticated use of technology in addition to other artistic skills will encourage more alliances with other disciplines, as the complex presentation of ideas and information requires greater graphic sophistication, and as students in the arts need to align themselves with those in other areas in order to acquire greater technological sophistication.

While there might be arguments for placing the studios and classrooms of ALBA at the center of the academic enterprise, we have elected to propose a new building for ALBA north of the current building and possibly connected to the current building by a bridge

over the ring road that will surround the campus. This will keep this the ALBA programs close to programs in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences and also within easy reach of Engineering. At the same time the location acknowledges the preference for independence, or difference, among art students. The location of the building is highly dramatic, and will provide an attractive and magnetic setting for a gallery for student work and other exhibitions. It is also directly adjacent to the planned Outlook, a small outdoor theater with magnificent views to the Mediterranean Sea. This will serve well as a place for students to gather to show work and to have small performances when weather permits. Because other members of the University community will also use the Outlook, it will ensure that ALBA is not invisible or isolated.

We have not proposed that this building be built in the first phase of construction. The studios and classrooms currently occupied by ALBA will remain in use, and additional space to accommodate the growing needs of the Faculty will become available in buildings vacated by the Sciences, Social Sciences and Engineering. This delay is appropriate, not only in order to phase the many construction projects that are required, but also to allow for a more comprehensive and clearer sense of direction to emerge for ALBA.

In calculating space needs for ALBA, we have used a total target enrollment of 250 rather than 300, to bring growth projections more in line with those of other faculties. However, the space allocated will still be adequate if the higher target is reached.

Strategies:

- *Focus ALBA programs on the Balamand campus on the intersection between technology and the arts.*
- *Develop capacity for provision of web design services and other graphic services as a private/public partnership in North Lebanon, with students serving as interns.*
- *Provide training in business development to ALBA students.*
- *Develop synergies between ALBA, the Center for Technology, and the Business Faculty.*
- *Develop capacity for design and cultural sensitivity to Arab cultural and aesthetic traditions through full integration of ALBA programs with general education or "core" programs in liberal arts, as described below.*

10.2 Arts and Social Sciences

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences provides courses all for faculties. However, it is in many ways a weak link in the overall University structure. It must develop stronger undergraduate and graduate programs in order to provide the kind of integrated educational experience that the University aspires to. Much of the work of the Faculty involves remedial activity and meeting basic general education requirements in other faculties. Our sense is that the University should develop greater emphasis in the Social Sciences, and in particular in those areas of Social Science that are most appropriate to creating awareness of the need for societal regeneration in Lebanon and the Middle East. While emphasis on the English language will remain important, it is possible that there should be increased emphasis on teaching Arabic culture and literature. This emphasis would be consistent with the University's commitment to establishing greater influence throughout the Middle East, to nation building, and to Muslim Christian understanding.

We propose a comprehensive reassessment of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and its role within the University. The renewed emphasis on Arab culture as well as Western culture and traditions will need to be carefully assessed in the context of a secular institution. If the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences can become a true cultural hub within the university, it will lend enormous strength to the institution as it grows and develops.

Strategies:

- *Review Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum for relevance to the University's mission.*
- *Develop core Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum for undergraduate students in all faculties that develop habits of dialog and transparency across the University..*
- *Develop degree programs in the Humanities and Social Sciences that specifically support the University's mission and provide appropriate skills for graduates in meeting the University's larger goals for Lebanon and the region.*
- *Develop programs that require collaboration with other Faculties, for example Health Sciences, Business and Theology.*
- *Model progressive approaches to pedagogy, based on engaged learning, problem-solving, dialog and transparency to provide appropriate experience to those graduates planning careers in primary and secondary education.*

- *Support faculty publication of articles on cultural issues.*
- *Budget for visiting speakers.*
- *Develop and publicize a range of cultural activities to establish the University as a cultural center in North Lebanon.*

In preparation for making the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences more central to the intellectual life of the University, we recommend that it occupy the core buildings at the heart of the existing campus. Additional space will become available in these buildings as Engineering is relocated. Further into the future, more space again will become available when a new Medical School is built and a new Science facility is constructed adjacent to it. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will be further strengthened by the construction of the Library Learning Center directly adjacent to it. We see this Center as becoming a crossroads of activity for the campus, where innovative learning strategies are used, and students learn to take the initiative in their own education. The Center will also relieve pressure on teaching spaces in the existing academic buildings, allowing for conversion of some classroom and former lab spaces to offices, and providing improved working conditions for faculty members and staff.

Intellectual adjacencies will be of the utmost importance to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences will occupy the core buildings also. While newer laboratories and research space will be created in a new building adjacent to the proposed Medical School, the core of undergraduate science will remain in the main buildings, directly adjacent to the Arts and Social Sciences. This continuing adjacency will reflect the University's commitment to an integrated approach to learning, and will help ensure that literature and social science students cannot remain scientifically illiterate, and that science students are exposed, at least tangentially, to the humanities and the social sciences.

We have also located the Health Sciences program in these buildings. The intention behind this is to develop synergy between the Social Science programs of the University and Health Science programs. The emphasis will be on the practical relevance of social science to social regeneration in the region.

10.3 Business and Management

The faculty of Business and Management has the potential to be an ideal model for the integration of local concerns and awareness of globalization. It also has the potential to be a model for integrating multiple disciplines and faculties at the University. The strategic plan prepared by the Faculty of Business and Management is probably the most fully developed and most sophisticated plan in the university's range of strategic planning efforts. However, the plan assumes levels of funding and a quality of student that is in some ways premature. As with other faculties, the need for a high level of investment in technology is clear.

If the University of Balamand is to become a major center for business training and research, it will need to develop some specialized capabilities. The strategic plan prepared by the faculty suggests the desirability of a variety of initiatives. Many of these center on an Executive Center.

The Executive Center is intended to include a Consulting Institute, which will provide consulting services to emerging businesses in the surrounding community. Such projects would be fully in tune with the overall strategies of the University, in that they involve students working with faculty members in real-world problems, while developing essential skills. If a sufficient competence and reputation is developed, such consulting could be conducted regionally.

As a support to these activities, a Middle East Data Center and Case Depository is recommended. The absence of data in Lebanon is striking. For the University to take the lead in becoming a data depository is ambitious, and possibly unrealistic. However if such an undertaking were possible, it would certainly place the University in a central position as a participant in Lebanon's reconstruction. As part of this Data Depository, the plan suggests the development of case studies based on Middle East situations. This also has the benefit of involving the University in the larger Lebanese community, as cases are developed, and possibly in the larger Middle East community. The funding and experience necessary to undertake such a venture would be considerable. However, the initiative is one that would be very much in line with the University's commitment to becoming a force for revitalization in Lebanon and Middle East. The Data Depository

would also provide valuable opportunities for undergraduates in a range of academic disciplines to become directly involved in research.

As an additional activity, the plan suggests offering training programs for local businesspeople. Again, this is very much in line with the local and regional commitments that the University wishes to make. Such connections with the local and regional business community are highly beneficial in terms of ensuring good placement for Business School graduates.

In connection with the above activities, an Advisory Council is recommended, with the goal of achieving more complete integration with the North Lebanon business community. Such a Council would both keep the university up-to-date on business trends in the larger community, and would also keep the business community familiar with the activities at the University.

The Business faculty would also be closely, associated along with other faculties at the University, with the establishment of a Technopole.

Two years ago, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia advised the University on methodologies for linking the university scientific research to the development process in North Lebanon and the region. The establishment of a Technopole or incubator would require considerable activity and engagement on the part of the Business faculty. Again, it is not clear at this time that the expertise and impetus are present for implementation of this recommendation. The role of the Business Faculty in providing the development of business plans, public relations strategies and so forth would be critical.

The various activities outlined above would all contribute to the improvement of internship opportunities and job placement for University graduates from the business program.

Strategies:

- *Establish an Executive Center, with a Consulting Institute, to facilitate an exchange of expertise with the local community. Initially, this Center can use existing facilities until a dedicated facility, as proposed in the master plan, is built.*
- *Establish a Middle East Data Center and Case Depository, in collaboration with faculty in Engineering and the Center for Technology.*
- *Establish an Advisory Council, with representatives from the business community in North Lebanon and beyond.*
- *Reassess opportunities for initiating a Technopole, as discussed elsewhere in this document.*

The Master Plan accommodates these various initiatives for outreach in a single building adjacent to the existing Business School and the Tourism and Hotel Management building. Currently the Business School building is isolated from the other faculties. This is unfortunate, as it will play a critical role in bringing the other faculties together in a common strategy. The intent is to reduce the relative isolation of the Business programs by creating a major new focus for campus activity adjacent to them, and to provide in it a magnet for all faculty members from all disciplines. The building will house the Faculty Center, the Alumni Center, and the Executive Center in a single building. The building will overlook a large amphitheater for outdoor gatherings, receptions, and performances. The combination of activities on this site will ensure ongoing activity, and will encourage interaction between visiting business people and members of the various Faculties.

Early construction of this building will be an important first step in making feasible the other recommendations of the Business Faculty strategic plan. Without appropriate facilities, it will be impossible to make the Business School a preferred destination and focal point for local business activity, let alone regional activity.

In terms of academic programs, the Business Faculty will be able to design specialized MBAs that relate to the work of different faculties elsewhere in the University. For example students in the Social Sciences might move to taking an MBA in nonprofit public management. Students from the tourism and hospitality program might take an MBA in hospitality, and so forth. The faculty might also develop executive MBA programs, with the intention of attracting mid-career participants from the Lebanese business community, thereby enhancing the reputation of the institution while attracting desirable tuition

income. Joint PhD programs might also eventually be established with American universities, allowing students to acquire awareness of globalization issues while developing local expertise in the first two years.

Strategies:

- *Develop specialized MBA program in conjunction with other Faculties*
- *Develop Executive MBA programs for mid-career professionals*
- *Develop joint PhD programs with American universities*

The Faculty also proposes significant growth in the Economics department. In this field, it will be possible to develop collaborative courses with many other departments in the university, for example courses associated with an Environmental Studies program.

10.4 Engineering

The four departments of the Engineering Faculty at the University, when taken together, constitute by far the largest, and arguably most successful, academic entity at the University. At the same time, the organization of education in engineering could be seen as conforming least to the overall educational vision of the University.

There are four departments within the Faculty of Engineering: civil engineering, computer engineering, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. In each of these departments two degrees are offered: a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. The bachelor's degree takes three years to complete, and the master's degree can be completed in an additional two years.

These accelerated undergraduate programs have proved extremely popular, and have attracted large numbers of students. Inevitably, however, a more narrow approach to education is required in order for students to complete their studies in the allotted time. This narrow focus probably appeals to the natural affinity for computational analysis in the Lebanese educational tradition.

The consequence of this narrow and traditional interpretation of an engineering education is that such options as a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, which would be closely tied to one thread of the University's mission, are presumably not possible. It is

also not possible currently to graduate from Engineering with a Minor in, for example, Business. Although five-year combined bachelor's and master's degree programs are fairly common in the United States, they are often described as accelerated programs. If we compare engineering degrees at American universities, we find that a four-year bachelor's degree is generally required, followed by a one-year master's program. Typically, in four-year undergraduate programs, students will be required to take as many as seven courses outside the field of engineering. At Balamand, students are required to take only three, once they have met their English-language requirement.

This acceleration may be problematic in terms of the University's overall mission. The goals of nation building, community service, interdisciplinary awareness, and so forth are more difficult to meet when there is no time for courses outside a defined field of study. A further difficulty arises from the need to choose a field of concentration immediately. In many engineering programs, there is a common core of courses for all first year students, allowing them to familiarize themselves with a range of possibilities before committing to a specific field.

It will be important for the University to assess whether its emphasis on cross-disciplinary exploration and exposure should be applied to the field of Engineering at the undergraduate level, and if so how it can be applied without jeopardizing the flow of students to the University. It is almost inevitable that the mandatory courses in the humanities are taken less seriously than they should be when such a small number of courses are required, and when the required courses are the same for all students. It is also difficult to establish a more learner-centered approach, with emphasis on opportunities for involving in research projects and internships with an accelerated program.

Strategies:

- *Review contemporary trends in engineering education in the United States, particularly at Olin College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.*
- *Increase degree requirements for general education in all branches of Engineering*
- *Develop a common first-year program for all branches of Engineering, to facilitate more informed choices of specialization among undergraduates*
- *Review approaches to pedagogy*

Rapid expansion of Engineering is contemplated, and there is an immediate need to address a shortfall of space for labs, particularly for research. A sequence of four building projects to meet the needs of engineering is contemplated. The first two buildings, which will be on the west side of the campus, will allow the engineering department to vacate the space it currently occupies, permitting the expansion of the Arts and Social Sciences and Sciences. Subsequent phases of construction will create two additional buildings beside the football field. Engineering thus remains close to the other faculties, and within easy reach of the Library Learning Center and the Student Center.

The Phase II Engineering building will also include a student dining hall. This will ensure that Engineering is not isolated from the other faculties and their students, but is, in fact, something a hub for student interaction. The Faculty Center, combined with the Executive Center and Alumni Center adjacent to the existing Business and Management building, will also play a significant role in linking Engineering research to Business, and encouraging entrepreneurial activity. Since Engineering is largely concerned with applied research, this association should be fruitful.

Strategies

- *Increase opportunities for undergraduate involvement in applied research*
- *Increase opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student contact with area businesses*

10.5 Health Sciences

Currently, the Health Sciences programs are located in Beirut. There is little opportunity for further expansion of the programs in the city, and the university plans to expand the program to the Balamand campus. The Faculty sees an opportunity to adapt the services that have been developed for the City to a more rural situation. The Health Sciences programs constitute a series of integrated cross-disciplinary efforts to improve the health and quality of life of communities in Lebanon. The health of the Lebanese people is seen in a social context. Apart from formal programs in nursing, medical lab technology, public health, and health promotion, the faculty has supported a number of other community-oriented initiatives, such as the Landmines Resource Center, Salemtec (a publication aimed at improving the lifestyle of youth in Lebanon), literacy programs, environmental

awareness programs, workplace safety awareness programs, and a resource center for gender and women's studies.

These programs involving social outreach can form a major contribution to the overall atmosphere on the Balamand campus. We believe that these programs should be located in the main building complex, along with the Arts and Social Sciences, and the Sciences. They represent the kind of cross-disciplinary awareness and commitment to nation building that is the hallmark of a Balamand education. These programs will in many cases share classrooms with other faculties, but will also need dedicated space and a welcoming atmosphere, as they draw in members of the larger local community.

Strategies:

- *Develop health science programs to support needs of local village communities*
- *Develop health science programs to support Tripoli community*
- *Coordinate efforts with development of the proposed Middle East Data Center*
- *Develop collaborative programs with other faculties*

10.6 Science and Technology

The vision for the future of science and technology at the University suggests multiple links connecting various disciplines. This cross-disciplinary activity is envisaged at the level of research, and not at the level of undergraduate education, although there should be opportunities for undergraduates to become involved in research projects as part of their education.

A number of possible cross-disciplinary synergies and areas for focused research have been proposed and evaluated in terms of achievability. Timely follow-up will be essential and may require additional staffing to establish possible funding sources and develop proposals.

The reputation of the University will be most rapidly developed if research in the sciences, coordinated with other disciplines, can expand at a rapid pace. A faculty committee has outlined the physical and organizational conditions necessary to support this expansion. The Master Plan proposes that science remained in the main building complex, to achieve

the integration that it aspires to. However, we propose that a new building be constructed to accommodate additional laboratories and research activity to the left of the existing main entrance, close to the main complex. It will be easier to develop appropriate research space in a new building, and this building can also house research centers, if the University decides that these should be housed independently of other academic activity. In addition, the Master Plan proposes an Environmental Center on the Path of Learning, at a key location linking the academic core to the historic olive groves, oak woodlands and the planned Botanic Garden.

The phasing of construction for the four new engineering buildings will allow a gradual expansion of science programs over the next twenty years.

A Center for Technology has also been proposed. We suggest that this be housed in the Library Learning Center. In many ways, the extent to which the University is able to develop real expertise in the development and deployment of technology, within the University and beyond, will determine its success. Just as the Business and Management Faculty will have pervasive relationships throughout the University, the Center for Technology should become a clearinghouse for new applications in research and teaching across all disciplines. The Library Learning Center, which is conceived as a crossroads for the University community, is an ideal location for the Center for Technology.

Strategies:

- *Focus on developing research capability (as described above)*
- *Concentrate efforts on areas promising as "centers of excellence", and requiring collaboration among faculty members*
- *Strengthen ties to universities in Europe and the United States*
- *Develop Center for Technology as described elsewhere*
- *Develop cross-disciplinary graduate programs, particularly in Environmental Studies*
- *Review undergraduate pedagogy to emphasize problem-solving and student engagement*

10.7 Medicine

Although very new, the Medical Faculty is expanding rapidly. While this expansion can readily be accommodated in the existing buildings, when engineering has been relocated, it will ultimately be essential to build a new building for the Medical School. Our plan is to build this adjacent to a science laboratory building on the north side of the existing main buildings. This will allow the sharing of labs between the Science Faculty and the Medical Faculty, where this is appropriate, and will encourage inter-disciplinary research. The relationship of the Faculty of Medicine to the proposed new hospital for North Lebanon has been discussed above. We do not support building the new hospital adjacent to the Balamand Campus.

Strategies:

- *Expand enrollment through recruitment of international students*
- *Ensure consistency of approach to medical education and University mission statement*

10.8 Theology

While the Faculty of Theology is separate from the main campus, there may be increased opportunities for interaction, and the Path of Learning will be designed to facilitate this interaction. The extent of the relationship will inevitably be dependent on the desire of the Theological School to maintain separation. As the life on the campus is enriched with cultural events, visiting scholars and conferences, the Faculty of Theology may come to play an increasing role. To encourage a productive relationship, we have proposed adapting the current library building as a Center for Christian Muslim Studies. The library is the building closest to the Monastery, and makes a natural bridge between the religious and the secular. However, it may be preferable to construct a new building, as illustrated in the final version of the master plan, closer to student and faculty residences.

Strategy:

- *Involve theology students to a greater extent in the intellectual and cultural life of the University, as it develops additional programs.*

11.0 CAMPUS LIFE

11.1 Residential Life

At present, although 150 students live on the campus, and some 15 faculty families, there is minimal activity on the campus outside class hours. There is little to keep students on the campus or to generate a life outside the classroom. In recognizing that learning happens as much outside the classroom as in it, the University is committed to creating a vibrant atmosphere on the campus, and plans to expand considerably the number of students living in campus housing. Ultimately, as many as 500 students will be accommodated in campus housing, although the great majority of students will still commute or live off-campus. Some student housing will also be adaptable to graduate student use as well as undergraduate use. The student housing is organized in such a way that at some future time residential colleges might be established, forming living/learning communities.

In addition to students, up to 100 faculty members will be provided with accommodation on the campus. The provision of student housing will bring with it the responsibility to develop an increasing number of on-campus programs for students outside class hours. The fact that many more students are living on campus should also have the effect of keeping commuter students for longer hours on the campus.

The redesign of the campus as a whole will also have a significant effect on its attractiveness as a comprehensive community. At present activities are very much concentrated in the core campus buildings, and students seldom venture beyond these. When the Path of Learning is completed, along with the Botanic Garden, the Environmental Center and the Goat House, as well as other significant outdoor spaces, the campus will become an attractive place to be enjoyed by all members of the university community. It will have more the feeling of a public park than simply a series of building sites.

Currently, there is a retail activity above the parking lot directly opposite the main entrance to the campus. It may be desirable at some future point to consider creating additional retail activity on the campus itself.

With the increased enrollment at the University it will be necessary to provide additional dining rooms for students and faculty. These will contribute to the overall life of the campus. A new student dining room is planned in one of the new Engineering buildings is, strategically placed along the Path of Learning. The Faculty Center, further up the Path of Learning near the Business and Management Faculty, will also provide a focal point for residential life.

Strategies:

- *Expand residential program as rapidly as feasible*
 - Providing additional housing for students and faculty will increase the vitality of the campus outside class hours

- *Develop of cultural, athletic and artistic activities*
 - Students tend to leave campus when classes are over, and the majority of students will be commuters, even with the expansion of the residential program. Expanded activities on campus will encourage students to stay, and consequently to increase their interaction with other students and faculty on an informal basis in the University context.

- *Expand student clubs and associations*
 - Student clubs and activities increase a sense of belonging in students, bring students from different disciplines together, expose students to new ideas, and develop human skills.

- *Develop a student advising system*
 - For students to develop the ability to reflect on the significance of their own education and development in the context of the University's mission and the needs of the country and region requires a carefully developed academic advising system involving a large proportion of the faculty. Development of such a system will require extensive faculty training.

- *Develop teaching approaches that require extensive student collaboration outside the classroom*
 - Changes in pedagogy mentioned above to increase emphasis on engaged problem-based learning will inevitably require that students collaborate extensively outside class. This will increase the level of thoughtful dialog among students and increase the overall quality of campus life. Many initiatives proposed in the Master Plan are designed to encourage informal learning outside the classroom.

11.2 Athletics

With the completion of the existing playing field, the University has created a facility that is second to none in North Lebanon. As the University expands, it will require additional indoor athletic facilities. These facilities have been planned at the top of the hill on the campus, with the possibility of a significant adjacent parking for popular events, in addition to a second practice playing field.

Strategy:

- *Develop connections to community and foster regional reputation with growth in athletic programs*

12.0 INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

The planned expansion of the university will depend very much on the extent to which it can generate a market in the whole of Lebanon, and in the Middle East, for the distinct form of education it provides.

The University's rapid growth of the past 15 years certainly indicates that its longtime goal of growing up to 5,000 students is achievable. However, it will be important for the University to continue to expand awareness of its programs and to develop a distinct image that differentiates it from other institutions in and around Beirut. While direct marketing may be problematic in other Arab countries, it will be important to find ways of publicizing the University's activities beyond simple word of mouth. Articles about distinctive programs and about research initiatives will be important, as will recognition in the American press. As the campus itself is developed and becomes more and more attractive and impressive, visits to the campus will play a major role in attracting new students and their families.

The University has certain distinct advantages. It provides an attractive and less costly alternative to sending children overseas for their education. It is close by, yet it is not in the city of Beirut. The fact is it is in a Lebanese village, and surrounded by other villages, also has a distinct appeal. It provides a traditional environment, one in which parents can have confidence. Its affiliation with the Church provides reassurance, but the fact that it provides a secular education allows it to attract students of various faiths. There is, too, awareness that the University has a distinct vision and sense of mission.

The admissions picture at the university is healthy. For example, acceptance into the Medical School is around 50%, a rate comparable with the American University in Beirut. Acceptance rate for undergraduates is 74%, and the yield currently of those accepted is 84%. Although this acceptance rate appears high, it is not high for Lebanon, in particular because many average students go free to the public Lebanese University, and the pool of students willing to pay tuition or partial tuition is consequently of high caliber. Although all students are required to have matriculated before being admitted to the University, some tracks are significantly more rigorous than others in the matriculation system, and this creates difficulties with some students. For example, students who have matriculated in literature and humanities are required to take remedial mathematics before they are eligible for the program in Business and Management, and need to take five additional courses to qualify for Engineering.

If the University is to achieve its broad strategy of inclusion, it will need to develop a more comprehensive financial aid strategy. Developing a strong group of alumni will be important not only for increasing and sustaining enrollment, but also eventually for assisting in fundraising. One goal of the master plan is to create an Alumni Center on campus. This will help develop loyalty and, incidentally, will also be beneficial in developing business associations for current students, as they look for jobs.

12.1 Image, Public Relations and Fundraising

The story of the University of Balamand is compelling—its mission, its historical roots, its rapid emergence from the ashes of the Civil War. The story is made even more compelling when put in the context of the site it occupies. Rising, phoenix-like, beside the ancient Monastery, the new University is a symbol of hope for the Lebanese people and the region. It reminds us of a two-thousand-year history of mingling sophisticated culture and spirituality with vigorous entrepreneurial activity, and suggests a way forward for Arab peoples.

Considerable efforts have already been made to tell this story, with good results. At this next stage of the University's evolution, a highly professional, attractive and carefully articulated case must be prepared that will sustain and enlarge the University's

international reputation, while helping to attract the funds that will allow a rapid implementation of the Master Plan and the accompanying academic, research and student life programs. In the Lebanese context, the generation of a powerful image is essential to generating confidence to achieve the substance that must ultimately rest behind it. To this end, the phasing of the Master Plan has been structured to provide dramatic improvements early on.

Strategy:

- *Develop an international public relations strategy*

13.0 TECHNOLOGY

While the physical character of the University is important both in generating an appropriate image and in effecting substantive transformation, its engagement with technology may be equally powerful. At various points in this report, the need for an increased investment in technology has been emphasized. The university has already made considerable investment, but will be able to distinguish itself by a readiness to take advantage of increased bandwidth nationally and regionally. The university must also become a leader in research in the area of technology, and the significance of establishing and supporting the Institute for Technology cannot be over-emphasized. Technology will play a central role in all areas of research contemplated by the University, and will integrate many areas of research and development in the same way that the Faculty of Business can do. Pervasive technology will also play a central role in building a knowledge society in Lebanon.

14.0 EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

The university in its literature makes frequent reference to progressive teaching methods. Emphasis is said to be on learning rather than teaching, and on conversation and questioning in the classroom. This is consistent with the University's overall commitment to dialogue and transparency, and contrasts sharply with criticisms in the 2003 Arab Human Development Report, which describes educational practices in the Arab world as authoritarian and overprotective, reducing independence, self-confidence and social efficiency, and fostering "passive attitudes and hesitant decision-making skills."

Clearly, transparency and dialogue must be pervasive throughout the campus, consistent with the belief that the whole campus is, in essence, a classroom, and that learning happens everywhere. Classrooms, course materials, curriculum organization, buildings, and the campus as a whole must be designed to encourage questioning and dialogue, and confidence among undergraduates and graduate student to ask new questions and come up with unexpected answers.

14.1 The Internet

The Internet is perhaps the most powerful vehicle for transparency, and breaks down traditional authoritarian lines of a knowledge hierarchy. Access to the Internet should be pervasive, in dormitories, the student center, classrooms, common spaces, the library, and ideally in outdoor spaces. A comprehensive wireless network should be considered as a cost-effective and more flexible alternative to a hard-wired network.

Strategies:

- *Negotiate actively for improved broadband capability in North Lebanon*
- *Make computers available for Internet access throughout the campus*
- *Play an active role in developing Internet access in the larger community*
- *Become a service provider*
- *Develop Internet cafes in villages where students live, in conjunction with local businesses*
- *Offer community workshops in Internet use*

14.2 Classrooms

Classrooms at the University are well sized, but lack the acoustics and furnishings that support student dialogue. The majority of classrooms at the University are currently organized to reflect traditional teaching methodology. The heavy chairs with writing tablets, which are in wide use, are typically arranged in rows facing the front. While this kind of classroom furniture appears to provide flexibility, it does not allow for the use of technology by students, or for group problem solving, and is not conducive to classroom discussion. As new classrooms are developed, alternative furnishings and arrangements should be explored that more accurately reflect the educational philosophy of the University.

There is currently no Internet access in classrooms. While it will be important to provide this access, widespread use of computers by students in classrooms will probably be less important than general availability of computers *outside* the classroom. On the other hand, provision of Internet access and projection capability for instructors will be increasingly demanded, and should be a high priority.

Strategies:

- *Develop Internet access in classrooms*
- *Consider wireless network*
- *Provide fixed data projectors in selected classrooms*
- *Refurnish some classrooms as prototypes to encourage engagement and dialog*

14.3 Library Learning Center

The rapid shift in the nature of libraries at colleges and universities has been widely acknowledged. In many ways, the new kind of library that is emerging is the most powerful manifestation of the new knowledge society. If the old library was about access to information, the new library has the added component of being a stimulus to learning, to turning information into an ingredient for analysis, synthesis, problem-solving and idea generation. The new library provides tools for access to information, and these are as often in electronic as in print form, but also tools for making the best use of that information (also frequently electronic), and an environment that gives students the self-confidence to use those tools.

It has been said that all learning is fundamentally social, and that understanding and intellectual creativity are best enhanced through dialogue. The new library is a social space as well as a place for contemplation and quiet study. Students work in study groups in spaces created for this purpose, explaining things to each other. They learn from library staff how to access information, how to use databases, how to refine Internet searches and test the reliability of information.

Students also work on coursework. Increasingly, the face-to-face instruction and dialogue in the classroom is supplemented with work on a computer in the Library Learning Center. In the Center, a group of students may work together on computers, resolving

technical issues and explaining concepts to each other. They may also work alone. Many of the learning tasks traditionally taken on in the classroom are more efficiently undertaken on a computer, where a student can pace himself, repeat exercises, and is not embarrassed by his initial lack of understanding. He is then better prepared for class, and class time can be used more productively for dialogue and explanation. The spaces created for this purpose do not resemble a traditional computer lab, with rows of machines. Instead, machines are arranged in clusters, creating a more informal atmosphere, and encouraging groups to form. Assistance from instructors or assistants is readily available.

The Library Learning Center may also house classrooms with specialized technological capabilities, and will be home for the Center for Technology, which might perform a variety of functions: a clearinghouse and support center for innovative teaching practices, an incubator for new concepts in software development, a focal point for the development of cross-disciplinary technology-based research initiatives. An additional program element in the Library Learning Center will be a large community meeting room, which can double as an examination hall.

These new roles for the library do not replace its print collections or its need to support research activity at the graduate level. We recommend that the research libraries proposed for different faculties be housed in the central library, to encourage cross-pollination of ideas.

The location of the Library Learning Center at the hub of the campus, between the academic core and the student center, and facing onto the outdoor Forum Plaza, is essential to its success. The building should become a crossroads for the campus, and a marketplace of ideas, for both students and faculty. It should not be quiet throughout, and should include comfortable seating areas, and possibly have food and drink available.

Strategy:

- *Accelerate completion of Library Learning Center as a catalyst for improving student engagement and encouraging transparency and dialog throughout the University.*

14.4 Informal Learning

Often what makes an education memorable and transformative is the range and quality of unplanned and informal interactions among students and between students and faculty. The paths taken by students and faculty inside buildings and across a campus must allow for and encourage this informal interaction, so that it takes place in settings that are themselves attractive and memorable. The corridors of buildings should provide easy access to outdoor gathering places and courtyards, and should include informal spaces where students can study or confer with fellow-students. Access to food should be readily available.

Journeys between buildings should take students through gathering places with shade and seating, some intimate, some spacious. Landscape should encourage students and faculty to explore the campus, and perhaps to have a conversation while walking up the Path of Learning to the Goat House and back between classes, or to go to the Outlook and have a discussion with friends while looking out over the Mediterranean Sea.

Strategy:

- *Accelerate develop of outdoor gathering areas in master plan.*

14.5 Arab Language and Culture

If the education of Balamand students is to achieve the vision set out at the start of this document, the place of Arab language and culture should be reconsidered. For practical reasons in a global economy, and particularly in the fields of science, engineering and business, the argument for the dominance of American English is compelling. However, education at Balamand must balance preparing students for a global economy and equipping them to renew confidence in a vital and forward-looking Lebanese and Arab culture.

Strategy:

- *Organize conference on the topic of developing a humanistic education in the Arab world*