

# SB NEWSLETTER

VOLUME #10

Your Legacy Starts Here

## Navigating the Future of Business with AI and Sustainable Practices

As we progress through the Spring 2025 semester, SB's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and academic excellence remains at the forefront. This newsletter highlights a dynamic series of conferences, guest lectures, and workshops, reflecting our dedication to equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate an AI-driven and sustainability-focused business landscape.

The integration of artificial intelligence in business decision-making and the growing emphasis on sustainable practices continue to shape industries worldwide. Through expert-led discussions, industry collaborations, and impactful research publications, our faculty and students remain actively engaged in addressing these global challenges.

As the holy month of Ramadan is upon us, I wish you all Ramadan Kareem. Enjoy a well-deserved spring break.



**DR. ASSAAD FARAH**

DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

## Faculty Contributions and Collaborations



AUD's School of Business faculty consistently shapes the academic landscape through their impactful contributions. They generously share their expertise with students and the wider community, publishing book chapters and research articles, developing case studies, and hosting events. These events often highlight inspiring stories from AUD SB alumni, feature insights from industry leaders, and pave the way for internship opportunities at top companies. Their research spans diverse and forward-thinking topics, including the metaverse, artificial intelligence, virtual work environments, financial crises, and the essential role of women in STEM.

Beyond the classroom, their work strengthens connections with industry and academia, driving innovation and collaboration. Stay tuned as we showcase their latest achievements and partnerships within and beyond AUD!

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire—one that can ignite sustainable change." – William Butler Yeats

## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Conference



Dr. Assaad Farah  
DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

### Shaping the Future of Education in the AI Era: Dr. Assaad's Keynote at the 8th Equal Opportunity Conference

Dr. Assaad was a keynote panelist at the 8th Equal Opportunity Conference: Responsible Innovation and Society 5.0, held at the Wyndham Grand in Bahrain Bay. He joined colleagues and industry experts to discuss the evolving landscape of education and the critical role of upskilling in the age of artificial intelligence. His insights contributed to a dialogue on how emerging technologies are reshaping learning, workforce readiness, and the future of equitable opportunities in an increasingly AI-driven world.





## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

### Conference

### Dr. Afaf Wins Best Case Award at the AUB-OSB Third Case Conference

Over the weekend, Dr. Afaf attended the AUB-OSB Third Case Conference, organized by the Case Hub at the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business, The American University of Beirut (AUB), in partnership with Ivey Publishing. The event took place on February 20-21, 2025, at AUB – Mediterraneo in Pafos, Cyprus, bringing together educators and industry professionals to advance the art of case writing.

The conference aimed to foster collaboration between academics and practitioners, enabling faculty members and company executives to share their expertise, present case studies, and explore innovative approaches to business education.

Dr. Afaf was honored to receive the Best Case Award, recognizing her contribution to impactful case writing. This achievement highlights her dedication to integrating real-world business challenges into academia, enriching students' learning experiences through dynamic, research-driven case studies.



Dr. Afaf Tabach  
Assistant Professor of Decision Sciences



## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Event



Dr. Joseph Bitar  
Assistant Professor of Economics

### Exploring the Future of Payments: Mr. Marwan Nader's Guest Lecture at the School of Business

Dr. Joseph hosted Mr. Marwan Nader, Director of Partnerships at PayerMax, delivered an insightful guest lecture at the School of Business, offering students a deeper understanding of the evolving payments and fintech industry. He explored key topics such as payment orchestration, card processing, and the growing influence of alternative payment methods, including Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) solutions and digital wallets.

With a forward-looking perspective, Mr. Nader engaged with students eager to drive the next wave of financial innovation, shedding light on the future of payments in an increasingly digital economy. His expertise provided valuable insights into emerging trends and the dynamic landscape of financial technology, inspiring future leaders in the field.





# SB & Industry

## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Events & Conference

**AI for Everything Conference at Expo | Binance | CFA Institute University Challenge | Amazon Transcend University Challenge | UN HIA Conference**

Dr. Rima has actively contributed to bridging academia with industry by engaging students in high-impact learning experiences and prestigious competitions.

At the AI for Everything Conference at Expo, she explored artificial intelligence's transformative role across industries. The conference underscored AI's growing influence in reshaping global economies and business landscapes.

In collaboration with the Office of Outreach and Student Development, Dr. Rima also facilitated guest lectures from industry experts. A speaker from Binance engaged MBA finance students in an insightful discussion on the future of cryptocurrency and decentralized finance. Additionally, a guest session on Technical Analysis was conducted for undergraduate finance students, equipping them with practical tools for market analysis.

Dr. Rima is also proud to highlight the remarkable achievements of her students. Her undergraduate finance students reached the local finals of the CFA Institute University Challenge 2024-2025, demonstrating their strong analytical and investment management skills. With the finals scheduled for Sunday, their dedication continues to inspire. Likewise, her finance students advanced to the semi-finals of the Amazon Transcend University Challenge, a testament to their strategic thinking and problem-solving abilities in digital commerce.

Beyond academia, Dr. Rima represented the American University in Dubai (AUD) at the UN HIA Conference, reinforcing AUD's commitment to global discussions on sustainability, innovation, and inclusive economic development.



**Dr. Rima Assaf**  
Assistant Professor of Finance





## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

Event



Dr. Lama Blaique  
Assistant Professor of Management

### SB Students Engage in Youth, Innovation, and Education at SEE Institute Round Table

Dr. Lama Blaique, alongside two of her students, Mahmood Alsaheen and Mohamad Alqemzi, represented AUD at the recent SEE Institute Round Table Discussion. This event was designed to foster meaningful connections and generate innovative ideas around the summit's themes of Youth, Innovation, and Education. Various representatives from Educational institutions and corporations participated in dynamic, semi-structured networking to exchange ideas, share experiences, and forge collaborations across thematic zones.





## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Event

### Future of Learning at the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation Summit 2025



Dr. Pakinam Nazmy  
Associate Professor of Marketing

Dr. Pakinam attended the Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation Summit 2025: Innovation in Higher Education, where she explored key developments in AI-driven education, digital accessibility, and innovative pedagogy. The summit provided a platform for thought leaders and educators to discuss the transformative role of technology in shaping the future of learning.

A key highlight of the event was a workshop on micro-credentials, which underscored their growing significance in upskilling and career readiness. The discussions emphasized how education must continuously evolve to meet the shifting demands of the workforce, ensuring students are equipped with relevant and adaptable skills.



## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Event



Dr. Akram Al Matarneh

Associate Professor of Business Administration

### Dr. Akram Almatarneh Moderates Panel on Data Protection and Privacy Laws at Global IP AI and Tech Conclave

In January, Dr. Akram Almatarneh participated as a panelist and moderator at the prestigious Global IP AI and Tech Conclave and Awards hosted by Legal Era – Legal Media Group at the iconic Taj Dubai. Prof. Almatarneh engaged in thought-provoking discussions alongside distinguished legal experts—on a topic of global significance: “Data Protection and Privacy Laws: The Necessity of a Holistic Approach to System Designs and Technological Safeguards for Legal and Regulatory Compliance Worldwide.”

His discussion delved into the intricate relationship between technological advancements and the evolving legal frameworks needed to navigate the complexities of privacy and compliance in an increasingly digital world.





## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

Event

### Bridging the Gap Between Industry and Education: Odoo ERP Workshops at AUD

Dr. Afaf recently had the privilege of hosting a series of workshops focused on Odoo ERP. These workshops brought together students, faculty, and industry professionals to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical business applications. These hands-on sessions provided students with valuable, job-ready skills while empowering faculty to integrate ERP education into their curriculum.

By engaging directly with industry experts, participants gained insights into the real-world implementation of enterprise resource planning, enhancing their understanding of how businesses optimize operations through ERP systems. A special thank you to our partners at Odoo and esteemed speakers Kevin Farah and Naseraldin Kayemah, whose expertise and contributions made these workshops a resounding success!



Dr. Afaf Tabach  
Assistant Professor of Decision Sciences



## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

Field Trip

### Exploring Organizational Behavior in Action: Field Trip to Wadi Al Amardi Farm



Dr. Reimara Valk  
Associate Professor of Management

On Thursday, February 6, students from the Organizational Behavior course embarked on a field trip to Wadi Al Amardi Farm, owned by the family of student Mohammed AlGergawi. This visit provided a unique opportunity for students to observe organizational and leadership dynamics in a real-world setting while experiencing farm management's cultural and operational aspects.

The students enjoyed a guided farm tour, gaining firsthand insights into its operations, teamwork structures, and sustainability practices. The visit concluded with a warm and generous lunch hosted by the AlGergawi family, fostering meaningful connections and an appreciation for experiential learning beyond the classroom.





## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

### Conference

### Initial Accreditation Committee Meeting and Dean's conference in Las Vegas

Dr. Assaad attended the AACSB Initial Accreditation Committee Meeting in Las Vegas on February 6, contributing to discussions on advancing business school accreditation and educational excellence. In addition, he participated in the Deans Conference, where over 700 business school deans from around the world convened to explore the evolving landscape of business education. Key discussions at the conference centered on the impact of artificial intelligence, the growing necessity for continuous upskilling, and the transformative role of disruptive technologies in reshaping the global workforce. The exchange of ideas with industry leaders and academic experts reinforced the importance of adaptability and innovation in business education.



Dr. Assaad Farah  
DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



## Educational Spotlight: Industry Gurus, and more!

Event

### Dr. Wissam El Khoury on CNBC Arabia's The شيفرة المال: Truth About Meme Coins



Dr. Wissam El Khoury  
Chair of the Department of Economics, Finance,  
and Accounting and Assistant Professor of  
Finance

Click text to watch  
interview!

In his recent interview on CNBC Arabia's program (The Money Code) شيفرة المال, Dr. Wissam provided a sharp analysis of meme coins, their speculative nature, and the risks they pose to investors. He explained that, unlike Bitcoin and Ethereum, meme coins lack intrinsic value and are fueled by social media hype, celebrity endorsements, and speculative trading.

Dr. Wissam highlighted the FOMO-driven retail frenzy that keeps meme coins in the spotlight, but warned that they are more gambling than investment, with wild volatility and no real utility. He compared them to stocks, real estate, and Bitcoin and emphasized that meme coins don't fit into a balanced portfolio due to their high risk and susceptibility to pump-and-dump schemes.

Addressing price movements, he pointed out how social media, whale manipulation, and political branding can send prices soaring or crashing overnight. His advice to investors: Be cautious. Meme coins can generate short-term gains but are not built for long-term wealth preservation.





Conference

## Illuminating Minds, Continued...

### Presenting Research on Lifestyle Interventions at ICASF 2024

Dr. Reimara Valk had the privilege of attending the 2nd International Conference on Advancing Sustainable Futures (ICASF 2024), held in Abu Dhabi on December 11 and 12. During the conference, he presented his paper titled "Slow and Steady Wins the Race: Combating Obesity and Cardiovascular Disease Through Healthy Lifestyle Behaviors – A Case Report."

Dr. Valk expressed gratitude to his esteemed colleagues, Haitham Solh, Professor of Mathematics, and Health & Vitality Coach James Hammill, for their collaboration in researching effective lifestyle interventions to address obesity and cardiovascular disease. She also extended her appreciation to the Dean of the School of Business and the Provost of the American University in Dubai (AUD) for their support in facilitating this opportunity.

Through this research and presentation, Dr. Valk hopes to contribute to the ongoing discourse on sustainable health interventions, providing individuals suffering from obesity and cardiovascular disease with practical strategies to enhance their cardiometabolic health. By promoting sustainable lifestyle modifications, the findings aim to support improvements in quality of life, longevity, and health span—the period of life spent in optimal health.



Dr. Reimara Valk  
Associate Professor of Management

# BROWN BAG SEMINARS

## AI-Generated vs. Human-Generated Recommendations in UAE Digital Banking



**Dr. Charbel El Khoury**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MARKETING

As part of the School of Business Brown Bag Seminar Series, Dr. Charbel El Khoury delivered an engaging talk, focusing on “Customers’ Perceived Value and Trust: AI-Generated vs. Human-Generated Recommendations in UAE Digital Banking.” His presentation provided key insights into how customers perceive and trust AI-driven versus human-generated recommendations in the digital banking sector. The session sparked an interactive discussion, with attendees engaging in thoughtful debates on the evolving role of artificial intelligence in financial services and the implications for customer experience and trust.

This seminar offered a valuable platform for faculty and students to critically examine the intersection of AI, trust, and consumer behavior, reinforcing the importance of understanding technological advancements in the banking industry.

## INVESTIGATING ENTREPRENEURIAL INTENTION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



**Dr. Sunitha Kshatriya**  
DIRECTOR, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND  
INNOVATION CENTER (CERTIFIED  
INCUBATOR) AND ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT

This study underscores the critical drivers of entrepreneurial intentions, emphasizing that self-efficacy, passion, and agility influence entrepreneurship across individualistic and collectivist cultures, including the UAE. These characteristics are pivotal in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, equipping individuals to navigate dynamic business landscapes.

A global shift toward entrepreneurial mindsets highlights the necessity of developing these traits as they contribute to resilience and innovation in an increasingly uncertain world. The findings reinforce the cross-cultural applicability of entrepreneurial traits, demonstrating that entrepreneurship education remains universally relevant regardless of cultural differences.

Furthermore, the study presents a youth-centric educational approach, offering a roadmap for curricula designed to cultivate agility, self-efficacy, and passion—all essential for entrepreneurial success in both developed and emerging economies. The research also supports the development of global innovation ecosystems, affirming the effectiveness of fostering these traits within diverse, innovation-driven environments.

This study addresses research gaps, particularly in the role of risk and agility in shaping entrepreneurial actions, and urges further exploration of global markets to enhance understanding and application. Ultimately, the research reinforces the universal relevance of entrepreneurial traits, offering valuable insights for policymakers and educators worldwide to design initiatives that drive innovation, resilience, and economic growth.



## Faculty Feats: SB's Publications/ Research/Grants



### PUBLICATIONS!



#### SCOPUS Q2

#### International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health



**Dr. Sunitha Kshatriya**  
DIRECTOR, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND  
INNOVATION CENTER (CERTIFIED  
INCUBATOR) AND ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT

This study systematically reviewed the literature on happiness across cultures and countries to enhance scholarly understanding of the happiness construct. Drawing from 155 studies spanning over 100 countries and 44 cultures, the research identified a diverse range of happiness determinants, categorized into three broad themes: Health, Hope, and Harmony. Key factors influencing happiness included mental, emotional, and physical well-being, a balanced work-life dynamic, strong social relationships, self-care, and cultural, community, and environmental harmony. The study culminated in developing an “Integrated Model of the Determinants of Happiness,” offering a universally applicable framework for conceptualizing happiness. Analyzing research conducted over the past 90 years, the findings reaffirm that happiness is a multifaceted construct, shaped by individual well-being, future aspirations, and social and cultural integration.

click through underlined descriptions for direct links!



## Faculty Feats: SB's Publications/ Research/Grants



### PUBLICATIONS!



#### SCOPUS Q1

#### International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management



DR. LAMA BLAIQUE  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
OF MANAGEMENT

This study empirically examines the relationship between Caring Human Resource Management Practices (CHRMP) and employee engagement, focusing on the serial mediation effect of an organizational climate of care and employee caring for the organization. Additionally, it explores whether caring management moderates the link between CHRMP and an organizational climate of care. Using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data from 245 employees in U.S. customer service firms were analyzed. Findings reveal that CHRMP positively influences employee engagement, both directly and indirectly, through a culture of care and reciprocal employee commitment. However, caring management did not moderate the CHRMP-organizational climate of care relationship. This study enhances HRM literature by leveraging social exchange theory to explain how caring HR practices drive engagement, providing valuable insights for organizations aiming to foster a supportive and committed workforce.

click through underlined descriptions for direct links!





## Faculty Feats: SB's Publications/ Research/Grants



### PUBLICATIONS!



ABDC rank: B

#### World Economics Journal



**Dr. Joseph Bitar**  
Assistant Professor of Economics

Dr Bitar's conceptual note on international liquidity and FX markets in developing economies is published in World Economics.

Title: The International Liquidity Concept and Developing Economies' Foreign Exchange Markets

Abstract: The concept is introduced and its importance for macroeconomic analysis in developing and emerging economies is highlighted. International liquidity is defined as the sum of: i) Central bank's gross international reserves, ii) Resident banks' international liquid assets, iii) International currency notes held by resident agents. The paper discusses the unique characteristics of foreign exchange markets in developing and emerging economies, emphasizing their local nature. It is argued that the exchange rate in these economies is determined by the country's international liquidity market.

click through underlined descriptions for direct links!



## Faculty Feats: SB's Publications/ Research/Grants



### PUBLICATIONS!



SCOPUS Q1

#### Social Responsibility Journal

##### Abstract:

##### Purpose

Understanding behavior toward sustainable consumption remains among the most challenging contemporary topics and requires continual investigation. The aim of this paper is to explore young Bahraini women's level of awareness of sustainable consumption while also considering their attitudes, motivations and behavior as key elements in the study.

##### - Design/methodology/approach

A qualitative approach was used to collect the data. More specifically, 46 semi-structured interviews with young Bahraini women took place and the results were produced using thematic analysis.

##### - Findings

Results reveal that consumers' awareness levels toward sustainable consumption have been growing but awareness remains variable among consumers. In turn, motivation toward supporting sustainability is more associated with environmental reasons than cultural or economic ones. The attitude toward sustainable consumption is generally positive among young consumers. Moreover, sustainable consumption has been found to be present through various means in the purchase decisions of young Bahraini women.

##### - Originality/value

This study exclusively explores the awareness levels of young Bahraini women regarding sustainable consumption with a focus on the elements of the behavioral process, namely, "awareness, attitude, motivation, and behavior", as central research pillars.



**Dr. Charbel El Khoury**  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF  
MARKETING



**Dr. Farah Arkadan**  
CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
MANAGEMENT AND  
MARKETING, ASSISTANT  
PROFESSOR OF MARKETING,  
AND ACCREDITATION LEAD


click through underlined descriptions for direct links!





# رمضان كريم

RAMADAN KAREEM



AS THE HOLY MONTH OF RAMADAN IS UPON US, IT BRINGS A TIME OF REFLECTION, GRATITUDE, AND COMMUNITY. IT IS A MONTH OF FASTING, PRAYER, AND GENEROSITY, REMINDING US OF THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPASSION, KINDNESS, AND HELPING THOSE IN NEED. WHETHER THROUGH SMALL ACTS OF KINDNESS, SUPPORTING CHARITABLE INITIATIVES, OR SIMPLY OFFERING WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT, EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THIS TIME MORE MEANINGFUL FOR OTHERS. SB COMMUNITY WISHING EVERYONE A BLESSED AND PEACEFUL RAMADAN, FILLED WITH PATIENCE, TOGETHERNESS, AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH.



A bright sunburst with a rainbow halo is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the image, casting rays across a dense forest of tall, thin trees. The sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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IN DUBAI ||  
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**COMMUNITY**

WISHES YOU A  
PLEASANT SPRING BREAK!



GET LIFE READY

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Thank you  
&  
Stay tuned!

