

**THIRTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Conference Theme:

**“Learning Renaissance: Innovation and AI
in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment”**

Friday, April 19, 2024 | Online using WebEx



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
Office of Innovation and Transformation
Communication Skills Program
American University of Beirut
Beirut, Lebanon

Center for Teaching and Learning

The mission of the Center for Teaching and Learning is to promote and support high quality teaching and learning at the American University of Beirut in keeping with the mission of the University, particularly the University's commitment to excellence in teaching and the enablement of students to think independently and become life-long learners.

Office of Innovation and Transformation

The Office of Innovation and Transformation strives to provide AUB with an IT enabled environment and innovative solutions that facilitate creative teaching, high quality research, effective learning, as well as professional skills, collaboration, and development. We perform our responsibilities transparently to empower our stakeholders (students, faculty, donors, alumni, Provost's Office, and administration) with IT services in order to smoothly excel and lead in educational advancement and research.

Communication Skills Program

At the heart of AUB's goals to foster liberal arts education, the Communication Skills Program prepares students to be effective writers within a variety of rhetorical situations both in the academic community and beyond. The Program views writing as a process involving multiple modalities and promotes critical reading, thinking, and research skills in line with principles of academic integrity. Using interactive inquiry-based pedagogies, our Program nurtures students' potential to become life-long learners, to transfer skills between disciplines, to ethically engage with their world, and to navigate the challenges of the 21st Century.

The Thirteenth International Conference on Effective Teaching and Learning In Higher Education

“Learning Renaissance: Innovation and AI in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment”

Virtually via WebEx, Friday, April 19, 2024

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the Office of Innovation and Transformation and the Communication Skills Program at the American University of Beirut welcome you to their "Thirteenth International Conference on Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education".

The conference includes five strands: Assessment of Program and Course Learning Outcomes in Higher Education; Community-Based Learning; E-learning and Pedagogy; Teaching, Learning and Assessment Procedures in Higher Education; Writing Instruction and Research in Higher Education.

Assessment of Program and Course Learning Outcomes in Higher Education.

Learning outcomes at the program and course levels have become an integral indicator for assessing curricula in higher education. In the context of evidence-based reporting, learning outcomes present themselves as an inevitable source of data for assessing academic programs and student performance. Therefore, departments and programs, which are keen on assessing their students' attainment of set program and course learning outcomes, develop learning outcomes, design assessment procedures, collect data, analyze it, and use the results in order to improve their curriculum and student learning performance. In this strand, presenters are expected to share, reflect on, and generalize from their ongoing research, published papers or field experience in planning, developing, and assessing program/course learning outcomes of different programs in higher education including general education.

Community-Based Learning.

Community-based learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. It is a hands-on approach to mastering content while fostering civic responsibility. Community-Based Learning builds stronger and more relevant academic skills and provides a context for learning in terms of what students are as citizens, and how they are able to contribute to the needs of society. In this strand, papers should reflect on, present research or field experience in the domain of Community-Based Learning.

E-learning and Pedagogy.

Innovation in teaching inevitably brings forward different delivery formats and modern teaching methodologies. Furthermore, E-Learning is a comprehensive umbrella that incorporates technology tools to support and enrich the learning experience. This strand provides an opportunity for faculty members, graduate students, and instructional designers to discuss and share research, best practices, collaborations and ideas on integrating technology in learning. Topics may include but are not limited to: Innovations in teaching technologies, Web-Enhanced Learning, Blended Learning, Online Learning, Mobile Learning, Quality course design, Creative uses of Learning Management System (LMS).

Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Procedures in Higher Education.

This strand focuses on research investigating issues in teaching, learning, and assessment. Research reports can be on instructor cognition, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, student understanding and learning, and conceptual change at the university level.

Writing Instruction and Research in Higher Education.

Teaching writing at the college level presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for educators. Researchers need to test various pedagogical approaches in order to understand which classroom practices work best to help students become more critical and successful writers. In addition, research is needed to better understand how, why, and when writers write. In this strand, presenters are encouraged to share and reflect upon the philosophies that guide their approach to writing instruction, the pedagogical practices used in the classroom to engage students, and/or assignments that help enrich students' writing and thinking practices in critical ways. This strand also encourages proposals that report on the results of qualitative or quantitative research related to writing practices and pedagogy. Innovative proposals representing a range of writers and writing courses, including first-year writing, writing-in-the-disciplines (WID), writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC), and ESP/EAP, are welcome.

Conference Organizing Committee

- **Amal BouZeineddine**
Acting Director, Center for Teaching and Learning, AUB
- **Dorota Fleszar**
Assistant Director, Communication Skills Program, English Department, AUB
- **Jana El Kadi**
Administrative Assistant, Center for Teaching and Learning, AUB
- **Lamia Hussein**
Administrative Officer, Center for Teaching and Learning, AUB
- **Malaki Khoury**
Director, Communication Skills Program, English Department, AUB
- **May Mikati**
Communication Skills Program, English Department, AUB
- **Rana Al Ghazi**
Principal Instructional Designer, Office of Innovation and Transformation, AUB
- **Rayane Fayed**
Senior Digital Learning Manager, Office of Innovation and Transformation, AUB

Time	Activity
9:30 am - 9:55 am	<p>Welcome Note: Dr. Amal BouZeineddine</p> <p>Opening Note: Deputy Provost, Dr. Lina Choueiri</p>

Time	Key Note
<p>10:00 am - 10:50 am</p> <p>Session Moderator: <i>Rayan Fayed</i></p>	<p>“Intelligence Redefined: Teaching and Learning with AI”</p> <p>Professor Mairéad Pratschke University of Manchester</p> <p>Chair in Digital Education in the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures at the University of Manchester. She holds a Ph.D. from McMaster University in Canada and an M.A. from K.U. Leuven in Belgium. Her career has straddled the worlds of higher education, education technology, professional and continuing education, and edtech start-ups. Irish-born, she has worked in Canada, the USA, Belgium and Spain, in multiple languages and sectors, as a researcher, designer, lecturer, director and consultant for digital programs in the arts, humanities, social sciences, sports and business.</p>

Concurrent Sessions 1-1

11:00– 12:30 pm

Session Moderator:

Dorota Fleszar

Studying the development of prospective teachers' noticing of students' mathematical reasoning at the elementary school level

Rabih El Mouhayar, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

This study explores how narrative writing influences the variation in prospective teachers' noticing of learner reasoning. Seventy-nine noticing narratives from eight participants in a practicum course were analyzed using van Es's (2011) framework, which classifies noticing into four levels. Most narratives fell within the average noticing level, denoting that prospective teachers often perceive and interpret salient events in the learning process but may not thoroughly understand or respond to them. Three distinct profiles emerged from the data, showing variations in noticing levels across the ten narratives. One profile demonstrated fluctuations between average and higher levels, indicating periods of more profound insight into learners' reasoning. Another revealed shifts between average and lower levels, whereas the third profile oscillated within the average levels. These findings spotlight the varied nature of noticing in teachers' professional development and the need for continuous learning experiences to foster deeper noticing skills.

Key words: narrative writing; noticing learners' mathematical reasoning; variation in profiles; prospective teachers; retrospective noticing

AUB Makerspace: Fostering Citizenship Skills and Social Responsibility among Students

Fatima Al Ali & Mohammad Harb, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

With the increasing importance to raise future active citizens, various community-based learning strategies have been used to teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities. This study will explore the use of AUB's makerspace as academically-based community service, in which undergraduate students apply the knowledge and skills acquired at the Red Room to assist a school in implementing maker projects. To gather insights into the effectiveness of this approach, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with participating students providing an in-depth understanding of the impact of their engagement in the Red Room and their mentorship experience on the development of their citizenship skills and social responsibility. These interviews will shed light on their roles as active contributors to positive social change. The findings will guide makerspace organizers to thoughtfully integrate community-based learning strategies. Researchers can use these findings to conduct more in-depth studies and contribute to the development of effective community-based learning strategies.

Using Corpus Creation Strategically: Data Driven Learning Meets Writing in the Disciplines

Maya Sfeir & Jana Massoud, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

Since the early 1990s, an increased interest in corpus linguistics and the ways it can serve pedagogical practices has paved the way for data-driven learning (thereafter DDL). Within this approach, students adopt the role of an analyst, tasked with uncovering language patterns and structures using corpus linguistics tools and methods. DDL has also been applied in the teaching and learning of academic writing, with a focus on error self-correction, rhetorical functions, linguistic realizations, among others. However, the integration of DDL, even in academic writing, has largely focused on learners as analysts of existing corpora, rather than compilers and annotators of new corpora. Alternatively, this study aims to explore the role that DDL, in particular through corpus creation and annotation, can play in advancing the teaching and learning of academic writing, with a focus on writing in the disciplines. We build on data from observations, notes, and assignments, in particular a SoTL-funded research project currently being conducted at AUB's Department of English as well as the ENGL 294D: "Advanced Topics in Grammar - Corpus Linguistics" course. Preliminary findings suggest that corpus creation can play an integral role in understanding writing practices and rhetorical moves within specific disciplines. We argue that a corpus-creation-oriented approach to DDL can aid in the learning and teaching of discipline-specific writing skills to undergraduate and graduate students.

Concurrent Sessions 1-2

11:00– 12:30 pm

Session Moderator:

Rayan Fayed

The ethical use of AI: impact and effectiveness

Jasmina Najjar, American University of Sharjah

Abstract:

Banning the use of generative AI isn't realistic. A more implementable alternative is showing students that AI can be used ethically as a "tool" but not as a "generator" for complete work. How? Through instruction, activities, and assignments that help them understand the issues and concerns behind generative AI (including linguistic justice for non-native English speakers; hallucination, misinformation, inconsistencies, and biases; questions of ownership and authorship; and the loss and limiting of creativity) and how generative AI should and shouldn't be used. This research focuses on whether or not this foregrounding of ethical considerations has an impact on students' awareness, perceptions, and behaviours. It addresses universities' policies and how departments are adapting. Using data collected through a survey of 52 students (administered after a course module covering issues with generative AI and the ethical use of AI) and observation of related activities and assignments, it explores students' practices regarding generative AI, if students recognise ethical issues, and most importantly whether teaching the ethical use of AI creates more student awareness, understanding, a shift in behaviour, and an impact. It also examines activities that support a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of generative AI and promote the ethical use of AI. Findings show it's possible to encourage the ethical use of AI through instruction, activities, and assignments but it's not a cure-all, highlighting the importance of making course content and assignments relevant to students and helping students see value in honing their own skills and being active agents in their own learning journey.

“Teach Them How to AI’: Promoting AI Literacy in the Classroom”

Gacia Danaoghlian & Sara Baalbaki, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

In response to the advancement of AI technology over the past two years and the numerous challenges that come with teaching writing to L2 English learners, it had become clear that the permeation of such technology in academia was inevitable. As a result, we decided to be proactive in our classrooms and teach students about the potential and limitations of AI. The objective of improving AI literacy in our writing classrooms is to equip students with the knowledge about the ethical concerns surrounding AI to ensure transparency and encourage ethical standards in coursework. As educators, we do not want to police writing practices. Instead, we want to teach students about the limitations of AI, reflecting on how they can claim their own agency as writers as well as their capacity to evaluate and analyze writing based on what they have learned in class. Overall, this pedagogical tool helped students learn about the importance of their agency as writers and encouraged them to be more confident writers. While it was insightful, the limitations of this activity include time constraints, small student sample size, and the lack of reproducibility which can produce different results in other classes. Possibilities for future applications include experimenting with different prompts and follow up questions and creating tasks that prompt higher order thinking. This activity is not confined to the writing classroom; it is a versatile tool and can be implemented in other classes, which offers an interdisciplinary approach to AI literacy in universities.

AI in Higher Education within the Arab World: Pioneering the Cusp of Integration and Unveiling Revolutionary Prospects

Maha Sourani, Lebanese University

Abstract:

The education sector grapples with a plethora of challenges that compelled scholars and practitioners to seek solutions. Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a prominent solution, though its adoption in education remains limited due to issues like inadequate trials, testing, and recommended applications. This article explores the potential of AI in enhancing higher education through a systematic review design, aligning with Khangura's (2012) rapid survey protocol. This eight-step systematic research literature review analyzes studies on AI integration in education, revealing that AI can customize educational content for individual learning needs, creating a more personalized and efficient learning experience. Additionally, routine tasks like grading can be automated, allowing educators to focus on strategic and interactive teaching aspects. The study suggests that Chatbots can offer instant, personalized assistance, addressing student queries and providing real-time guidance. The findings highlight AI's potential benefits, paving the way for future research implications and further exploration in the field.

Concurrent Sessions 2-1

12:30 – 1:30 pm

Session Moderator:

May Mikati

Implementing Gamification in Teaching Statistics for Master Education Students

Sanaa Shehayeb, Lebanese University

Abstract:

In the evolving landscape of higher education, innovative teaching methods are paramount for engaging students and enhancing learning outcomes. This study investigates the impact of implementing gamification on the attitudes and learning outcomes of master's level students in a statistics course at the Lebanese University Faculty of Education. Gamification, the integration of game design elements in non-game contexts, is hypothesized to increase motivation, engagement, and comprehension in complex subjects like statistics. The implementation of gamification will be applied based on Landers' (2014) theory of gamified content.

The research will employ a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data. The sample consists of 16 master students-Teaching technology registered in a Statistics 1 course. They will experience learning statistics through Gamification for a whole semester. Data will be gathered through pre- and post-course assessments to measure changes in learning outcomes, while attitude shifts will be evaluated through Likert-scale surveys and direct feedback from students. Qualitative data will be collected through individual interviews to gain deeper insights into students' experiences and perceptions. Results will be ready end of semester.

Teaching, Learning, and Assessment: A Confluence of Artificial Intelligence

Zakia Djebbari, Tlemcen University

Abstract:

In the realm of teaching, AI has empowered educators with intelligent tools that enhance instructional strategies, facilitate personalized learning experiences, and enable real-time feedback. Virtual tutors, adaptive learning platforms, and smart content delivery systems leverage AI algorithms to tailor educational content based on individual student progress, ensuring a customized and effective learning journey.

The teaching-learning-assessment processes undergo a profound transformation with AI, as it facilitates interactive and immersive experiences. Virtual reality, augmented reality, and AI-driven simulations contribute to creating dynamic teaching-learning environments, engaging students in experiential and application-oriented activities, fostering a more intuitive and responsive learning atmosphere. Assessment practices are also revolutionized through AI, as it enables the development of intelligent evaluation systems capable of analyzing diverse forms of student work. Automated grading, plagiarism detection, and predictive analytics streamline the assessment process, providing educators with valuable insights into individual and collective learning outcomes. This research explores the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the landscape of education, specifically focusing on teaching, learning, and assessment methodologies.

The Efficacy of Utilizing Chat GPT in Teaching English as a Second Foreign Language

Eman Hasan Saleh, Lebanese University

Abstract:

The digital age is characterized by the massive use of technology in all sectors and especially in education. Chat GPT is one of the most common used tools in education. Thus, this research paper aims to investigate the use of Chat GPT in teaching English as a second foreign language. It will conduct a descriptive research by choosing three lessons from higher education, design a lesson plan, prepare relevant instructional materials and assessment tools. It will also utilize Chat GPT as a student who is asking for professional development to check the accuracy of using this tool in summarizing, paraphrasing, writing, translating and self-assessment. The materials will be collected and analyzed qualitatively according to rubrics that check the reliability and validity of these tools. Then, the results will determine the positive points that teachers and students have to rely on and suggest recommendations to avoid their draw backs

Concurrent Sessions 2-2

12:30 – 1:30 pm

Session Moderator:

Lamia Hussein

Investigating Remote Learning through Cultural-Historical Activity Theory:

A Case Study in Lebanon

Lamya Sabbah, Saint-Joseph University of Beirut

Abstract:

This case study investigates remote learning in a higher education institution in Lebanon using Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). It addresses the lack of cultural-historical studies examining remote learning, while illustrating and enhancing the third generation of CHAT. The choice of Lebanon stems from the country's concurrent financial, banking, and political collapse. This tumultuous situation, which disrupts regular functioning, can elucidate the interplay of activities that are often overlooked but play a vital role in the success of teaching.

Following a sequential explanatory design, data was collected through a survey completed by 190 students of a private university in Beirut, subsequently 8 of whom accepted to be interviewed for more in-depth information. Drawing upon Engeström and Sannino's framework (2011), the study analyzed the contradictions/tensions experienced by students in online learning, while also exploring how subjects resolved these contradictions.

The most reported contradictions pertained to internet connectivity, demotivation and concentration issues. The most prevalent contradictions took place across activities, with 60 out of 79 contradictions remaining unresolved. The resolution of contradictions primarily relied on adjusting the tools employed in remote learning. Two students went a step further by actively engaging with the community and were able to overcome additional contradictions. Subjects did try to adjust the rules governing social interactions, nor mobilized the division of labor and coalitions of activities to address conflicts.

Keywords: Remote Learning – Higher Education – Cultural Historical Activity Theory – Contradictions.

The Impact of Computer-Based Testing on EFL University Students' Reading Test Performance

Andrew Wagdy Farag Ghaly, Pharos University in Alexandria

Abstract:

The shift from paper-based tests (PBTs) to computer-based tests (CBTs) has been widely adopted in various fields, including English as a Foreign Language (EFL) assessment. While PBTs have been the traditional method for assessing reading comprehension, CBTs have emerged as a promising alternative due to their perceived advantages in terms of efficiency, consistency, and engagement. However, the impact of CBTs on EFL university students' reading test performance remains a subject of debate.

Research on the impact of CBTs on EFL university students' reading comprehension performance has yielded mixed results. Some studies have found no significant difference in reading comprehension scores between CBT and PBT formats, while others have reported either positive or negative effects depending on the specific test design, student characteristics, and contextual factors.

Overall, the impact of CBTs on EFL university students' reading comprehension performance appears to be complex and multifaceted. While CBTs offer several potential benefits, they also present some challenges that need to be carefully considered and addressed in order to optimize their effectiveness for EFL assessment.

Using AI to Build Critical Thinking

Zinnia Shweiry & Stephanie Farah American University of Beirut & Lebanese American University

Abstract:

The advent of AI has brought forth many concerns especially regarding its employment by students. Many educators have encouraged its inclusion in education and have already started embedding it in their syllabi and assignments allowing students to use it for specific tasks (Chauncey & McKenna, 2023); others have been more skeptical about it citing cheating instances and total dependence on it which could on the long run lead to a decrease in critical thinking skills (Volante et al., 2023). Since students are attracted to using anything that could help them write effortlessly and accurately, AI could be introduced in English courses to help build critical thinking skills (Ariyo Okaiyeto et al., 2023).

Break 2:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Concurrent Sessions 3-1

2:30 – 4:00 pm

Session Moderator:

Rana Al Ghazzi

Academic Integrity assessment tools, results and intervention needs at FHS

Jihad Makhoul, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

With the recent rise and proliferation of Large Language Models and AI tools, practical guidance on the application of academic integrity is much needed (Eaton and Kumar, 2023). This practical guidance guides education, research and scholarship in institutions of tertiary education and safeguards against misconduct. However, this requires developing a culture of academic integrity among staff, students, faculty and all units which is a long-term process. For this process to be evidence based, an assessment of the practices, skills and perceptions among the constituencies of the university is needed to identify inadequacies, gaps and institutional needs. Research has identified factors contributing to academic dishonesty, at the level of students and faculty, such as the pressure for high grades, peer influences, non-compliance to university policies (McCabe et al., 2008; Karim, 2015), yet these may vary in collectivist societies, such as those in the Arab world, where student academic misconduct is an outcome of the obligation to protect their peers, avoid shame, patriarchal pressure (Aljurf et al., 2020); nepotism, favoritism and lack of transparency in hiring are institutional level factors (Cinali, 2016).

This paper aims to preliminary results of an assessment of academic integrity competence including questions on AI at the FHS, AUB for faculty and students. The assessment uses 2 tools that have been developed from the literature and integrate common practices. The results will shed light on gaps that will help design an intervention for strengthening academic integrity in the Faculty, using similar models from European Network for Academic Integrity and other relevant networks

Assessment for learning or of learning

Gehad Samir, Pharos University

Abstract:

Although Assessment is a fundamental component of the educational process that allows teachers to evaluate student learning and progress, it is not a common topic between teachers. Assessment helps to measure how well students are meeting learning objectives, identify areas where they may need additional support, and make informed decisions about instruction and curriculum. Effective assessment practices are grounded in a deep understanding of student learning, and are designed to provide meaningful feedback to both teachers and students. By using assessment to guide instruction and support student learning, teachers can create an environment that promotes student success and achievement.

Formative and summative assessments are two common types of assessments used in educational settings to evaluate student learning and progress. Formative assessments are ongoing evaluations that occur during the learning process and are used to provide feedback to both the teacher and the student. These assessments are designed to help identify areas where students may be struggling and to provide opportunities for improvement and growth.

Both formative and summative assessments play important roles in the educational process. Formative assessments provide ongoing feedback that can help students improve and stay on track, while summative assessments provide a more comprehensive evaluation of a student's knowledge and understanding. By utilizing a combination of both types of assessments, teachers can gain a better understanding of their students' strengths and weaknesses and provide targeted support to help them succeed.

Grading reflective essays: the reliability of a newly developed tool- GRE-9

Nisrine Makarem, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

Background

The main objective of this study is the development of a short reliable easy-to-use assessment tool in the aim of providing feedback to the reflective writings of medical students and residents.

Methods

This study took place in a major tertiary academic medical center in Beirut, Lebanon. Seventy-seven reflective essays written by 18 residents in the department of Family Medicine at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) were graded by 3 raters using the newly developed scale to assess the scale reliability. Following a comprehensive search and analysis of the literature, and based on their experience in reflective grading, the authors developed a concise 9-item scale to grade reflective essays through repeated cycles of development and analysis as well as the determination of the inter-rater reliability (IRR) using intra-class correlation coefficients (ICC) and Krippendorff's Alpha.

Results

The inter-rater reliability of the new scale ranges from moderate to substantial with ICC of 0.78, 95% CI 0.64–0.86, $p < 0.01$ and Krippendorff's Alpha was 0.49.

Conclusions

The newly developed scale, GRE-9, is a short, concise, easy-to-use reliable grading tool for reflective essays that has demonstrated moderate to substantial inter-rater reliability. This will enable raters to objectively grade reflective essays and provide informed feedback to residents and students.

Concurrent Sessions 3-2

2:30 – 4:00 pm

Session Moderator:

Malaki Khoury

Comparing Patterns in Graduate Student and Expert Disciplinary Writing in the Department of English: A Corpus-Assisted Study

Maya Sfeir, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

In the past two decades, there has been a surge of interest in examining the role of lexical bundles or “recurrent strings of uninterrupted word forms” (on the other hand, the size of the) (Hyland, 2008, p. 42) in academic writing. A growing body of evidence suggests that a strong connection exists between the use of four-word lexical bundles, and writing and disciplinary expertise. However, to date, no known empirical research has focused on exploring the relationship between lexical bundles, and writing experience and field-specific knowledge in the writing of AUB’s academic community, namely students and academic experts. The aim of this study is to compare the four-word lexical bundles used in the theses of Department of English students and the research articles written by their professors. The study mainly seeks to understand how these lexical bundles produced by students and professors are similar or different at the level of their structure and discourse functions. For the purpose, a corpus consisting of theses by English Language and English Literature students and research articles by their professors will be compiled, cleaned, and analyzed using corpus tools. The findings of the study will shed light on graduate writing in the Department of English, and can be used to develop pedagogical materials that promote discipline-specific reading and writing.

Perceptions of medical students regarding their professional identity formation in Lebanon

Mona Osman, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

Purpose: This study aims at describing the lived experiences of fourth-year medical students in Lebanon in building their professional identities, and discussing the possible factors that they perceive to have influenced their professional identity formation.

Materials and methods: This is a qualitative empirical study using interpretive phenomenology as an approach, targeting fourth-year medical students at the faculty of medicine at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, a small country in the Middle East embracing both the conservative Arab culture and modernization, with some gender equity challenges. A convenience sampling was used. Semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted online using Webex and were audio-recorded, after securing ethical approvals and getting participants consent. Reflexive thematic analysis of the transcribed recording was used to inductively generate codes and develop themes and subthemes.

Results: Eleven medical students participated in the study. Five main themes were generated with 21 subthemes. The five themes are the formal curriculum, the informal/hidden curriculum of the learning environment, the personal and professional values, the students' wellbeing and mental health, and the sociocultural context. The formal curriculum helped them build a solid knowledge namely through interaction with patients; the volunteering in students-led clinics contributed to building their professional identity; the informal learning environment posed some challenges related to unhealthy relationships with others, despite the crucial role that role models and mentors played in shaping their professional identities; burnout and mental drain were considerable; and the uncertainty resulting from the economic crisis and the COVID pandemic added to the students' stressors and increased their need for more support and guidance

Conclusion: The perceptions of medical students in Lebanon regarding the formation of their professional identities were comparable to findings in the literature, with a few differences in the enabling and inhibiting factors related to the socio-cultural context. This research study has some implications for undergraduate medical education and the development of professional identity formation among medical students. It calls for an important role for medical schools in establishing integrated wellness programs for students, and ensuring a welcoming informal learning environment.

Simulation techniques in nursing education related to community-based learning in nursing schools in Beirut and its suburbs

Farah Hussein Jabak, Lebanese University

Abstract:

Nursing community-based learning is the key to improving the quality of care and life in a community. Students are future nurses who gain their knowledge and skills through nursing education. Preparing a student to be a competent nurse requires an appropriate clinical training environment. One of the methods used is simulation. This method imitates reality and uses technology on different levels to provide a learning experience for students. This study will highlight the challenges faced in providing community-based learning, using technology and simulation, and incorporating studies into the learning experience to prepare nursing students for their future roles and responsibilities in the community. , The main problem relies on providing community-based learning for nursing students by using simulation and technology in universities in Beirut and its suburbs Methods used are triangulation; a questionnaire to study nursing students' perspectives on the learning process of community-based by using technology teaching, a questionnaire directed to the instructors involved in the process, and an interview with nursing leaders to study their perspective on methods and strategies used. Results expected should show the challenges faced in the learning and teaching process, reflect different perspectives toward community-based learning strategies used, and the reality of utilizing various resources and their effectiveness in the quality of education for nursing students and achieving desired goals through the program.

Concurrent Sessions 4-1

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Session Moderator:

Dorota Fleszar

The Influence of Montessori Education on Academic Performance and Motivation Among Students of grades 2, 3, and 4

Salam Syagha & Fatima Khalifeh, Lebanese International University

Abstract:

This quantitative study employs a descriptive design to examine the quantifiable impact of Montessori learning on the academic achievement and motivation of grades 2, 3, and 4 students. Data for this study will be gathered through structured surveys for each students administered to grades 2, 3, and 4 teachers. The research aims to quantify the influence of the Montessori learning approach on academic outcomes by employing standardized measurements to assess key cognitive and developmental domains. Additionally, the study seeks to quantify intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors within the Montessori context that contribute to grades 2, 3, and 4 students' engagement in learning activities. The findings are expected to offer nuanced insights into the intricate relationship between Montessori education, academic performance, and motivational dynamics during this crucial phase of early childhood education. Top of Form

Universal Design for Learning (UDL).... A Need in Higher Education

Rim El Hout, American University of Beirut

Abstract:

As we teach in higher education, we need to consider the diverse students that attend our classrooms since barriers sometimes become apparent and impede the learning process. Our learners appear to have different backgrounds, learning styles, preferences and abilities that we have to accommodate for throughout our teaching practices to ensure affective learning. Universal design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to teaching that guides educators in removing those present barriers which hinder the learning and helps our learners in achieving the required outcomes.

Concurrent Sessions 4-2

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Session Moderator:

Malaki Khoury

How the role of Student Affairs as educators will be affected by AI?

Wadad El Housseini, Qatar University

Abstract:

Student affairs practitioners play a significant role in educating students outside the traditional classroom context. They provide guidance, support, and resources that contribute to students' personal, social, and professional development. Through various extra-curricular programs, advising, academic support, athletics programs and activities, they help students lead their university journey and experience to learn valuable life skills. Whether it's offering career advice, counseling, organizing events, or promoting cultural competencies, student affairs professionals are educators in their own right, shaping students' holistic growth. This proposal will highlight the role of student affairs by presenting its two main guiding criteria: NASPA- ACPA competencies and CAS standards (Council of the Advancement of Standards in higher education including its self-guided assessment. The main highlight would be how AI might affect the role and core functions of Student Affairs practitioners especially in the MENA region.

Communities of Practice: How Are They Classroom Teaching/Learning Innovations? Using Communities of Practice in Classrooms: Teaching and Learning Innovations

Milton D. Cox, Miami University

Abstract:

Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner, Reid, and Bruderlein (2023) have published a new book providing the latest information about communities of practice (CoPs): *Communities of practice within and across organizations: A guidebook*. In this session we will discuss this book and applications of CoPs as best practice for teaching and learning in classrooms. To provide future evidence that CoPs are a best practice, we will issue a call for SoTL research and manuscripts in this area.

Concurrent Sessions 4-3

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Session Moderator:

Jana El Kadi

Collaborative Partnerships, Critical Language Awareness: Multilingual Learners' Experiments with AI

Christina Michaud, Boston University

Abstract:

In a first-year composition class of multilingual learners, students with language backgrounds in Russian, Chinese, Arabic, and more collaborate on various projects and learn more about academic writing. In today's classroom, how can we harness AI for students' own exploration and growth? In a semester-long experiment involving multilingual students as collaborative researchers, one instructor explored the affordances, and the limitations, of writing with, and back to, AI in an open and questioning environment. Students were surveyed at the beginning and end of the semester about their attitudes on AI and also kept reflective AI researcher journals throughout the semester. In pairs, students were responsible for posing a query to AI and critically evaluating the process and results. We conclude with a list of student-generated tips and warning signs for their future interactions with AI.

Harmony in Transition: Resolve Writing Fallacies for Arab Students in English-Medium Academic Settings

Insaf Sensri, American University of Iraq-Baghdad

Abstract:

International students constitute a significant readership in academic communication books. However, a prevailing assumption treats them uniformly as non-native English speakers. As English-medium universities burgeon across the MENA region, educators are turning their focus toward understanding and facilitating a smooth shift for Arab students from Arabic to English communication.

This presentation delves into the subtleties of this linguistic transition, emphasizing the move from Arabic composition to English norms. It aims to dispel three misconceptions surrounding this transition. Firstly, it challenges the notion of "thinking in English," encouraging students to embrace their ideas without limiting them to English vocabulary. Secondly, it stresses the importance of comparing Academic English to Standard Arabic, rather than non-academic or poetic forms. Lastly, it questions the belief that only the Western scientific method is mature and correct.

In response to these challenges, the presentation proposes gentle corrections to rectify these misconceptions. Students gain a nuanced understanding by debunking these ideas, enhancing their English performance. Moreover, recognizing the interplay between Arabic cognitive capacity and English proficiency fosters improved academic performance. The insights shared contribute to a more holistic approach, acknowledging the unique linguistic and cognitive attributes of Arab students in the pursuit of effective communication in English within academic settings.

Time	Conference Concluding Round Table Discussion
<p>5:00 pm - 6:00 pm Session Moderator: <i>Amal BouZeineddine</i></p>	<p>“AI in Higher Education: Where are we heading?”</p> <p>Dr. Shady Elbassuoni American University of Beirut</p> <p>Dr. Elbassouni is an Associate Professor of Computer Science at the American University of Beirut. Dr. Elbassuoni's research interest spans multiple areas in AI such as Natural Language Processing, Computer Vision, AI Ethics and AI in Higher Education. He has published many peer-reviewed articles and given several talks in these areas at the American University of Beirut and international venues.</p>

THANK YOU