

The International Composition Course



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# auIBridge

Al Akhawayn University's official student newspaper

AUI Policies: to what Extent are they Applied?



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December 2009

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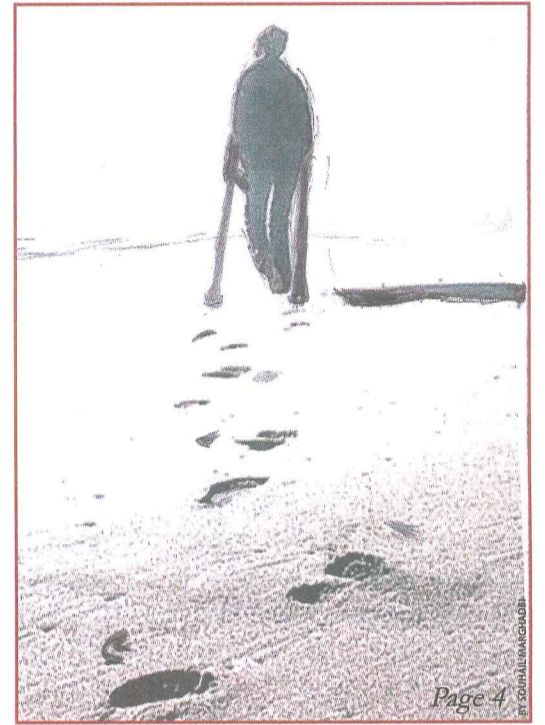
Fall 2009, Issue 2

## Welcome to Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane

## A Life at AUI Full of Challenges

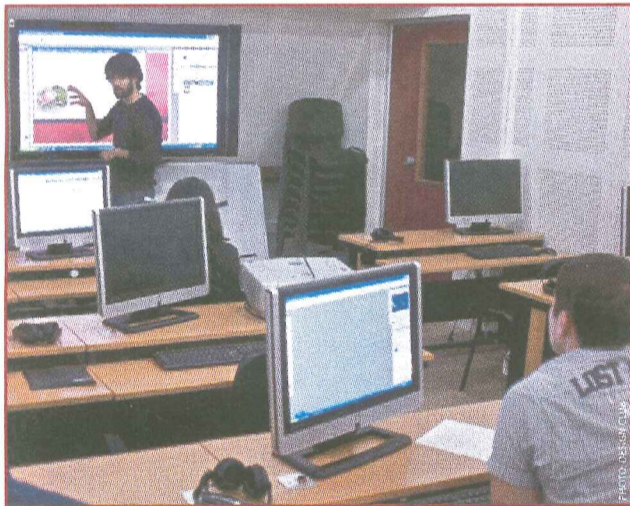


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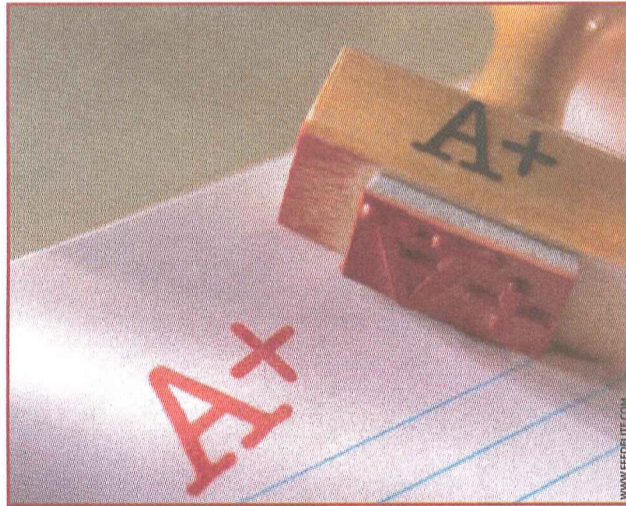
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### It is All About Sharing



The Design Club was founded on the principle of sharing. Once one becomes a member of the club, they must be ready to share their knowledge, experience, and talent.  
*(continued on Page 9)*

### Tips for Top Grades



How do you define success? Does university success mean learning useful content without an obsession with grades? Does it mean getting the maximum of learning with straight A's? Does it  
*(continued on Page 8)*

### Climate Change

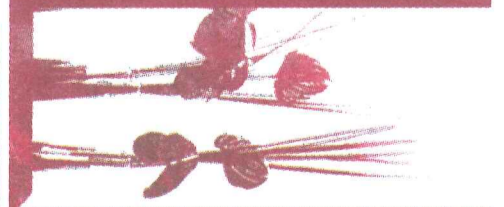


On Wednesday, December the 2nd, School of Business Administration organized a conference on climate change: Kyoto protocol and green business opportunity for Morocco.  
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## Editorial

AUI “contributes to the historical and cultural vocation of the Kingdom of Morocco, an Arab-African nation occupying a privileged geostrategic position, belonging to Islamic civilization, and open to Europe, America, and Asia.” This is a quotation extracted from the second paragraph of AUI’s founding statement, available on its website. As a senior student, I have long been attracted by some of the TV channels offered on AUI campus. However, my surprise, sometimes turned into a shock, can also be extended to the fact that there is not one TV channel dedicated to Islam.

At home, one can have access to many TV channels that reflect all walks of life and various religious and spiritual disciplines. When it comes to AUI, I understand the choices have to be limited (for technical reasons). However, what seems to be unclear for me is the following: how come there are many sets of channels that can have repetitive messages, such as music channels, English speaking movies, and news broadcasting, while there is not one single TV channel aimed at discussing religious matters and, more specifically, the Moroccan Maliki Islam. Even more simply, one would just ask to have a TV channel that sheds light on the daily issues of Muslims and how one can overcome them.

Sometimes, such requests can be easy to make: “please contact the person in charge in the Office of Student Activities and your request shall be considered” I was once told. Yet, such request, for me, should be considered by the concerned Office itself without having to receive student requests. The reason is quite simple: AUI’s identity is highly attached to that of Morocco. In other words, AUI courses and its environment are meant to reflect the multiculturalism of Morocco and the uniqueness of its values of tolerance and mutual understanding that are based on the teachings delivered in Islam, the official state religion. Such teachings can be delivered to AUI students via a continuous access to a TV channel that sheds light on Islam and discusses various themes in an open, moderate, and authentic manner.

Having one Islam TV channel, at least, would open the doors for non-Muslim AUI students to discover it. Other Muslim members, on the other hand, would keep interest in discovering more about their religion instead of looking for other alternatives; online blogs and online Islam TV channels may be radical and deliver negative messages to whoever watches them. AUI, in this regard, can provide one of the many Islam TV channels to its community, largely constituted by Muslims.

Last but not least, I hope to bring back the spirit into the discovery of Islam on AUI campus. AUI, the beacon of tolerance, seems to be a blurry description that has to be improved in order to be truly proved.

### Correction about last Issue

- Jokes were written by Mohamed Amine Maissour, our Entertainment Editor.
- The Movie Review was written by Thami El Kortbi.
- The image of “The Liga with a New Flavor” article was kindly made by Youssef El Boukhari, the article’s author.

The newspaper apologizes for the above mentioned individuals and hope to avoid such mistakes in future issues.



## auiBridge

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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor in Chief,

I am pleased that the next issue’s topic is about AUI policy application. In this regard, I am concerned about how rules are applied to some students and not to others. Also, I want to understand why some policies make segregation between AUI community members based on their status (student, staff, faculty...). I can’t wait to read your article.

Yours faithfully,

Abderrahim Batahi  
Computer Science senior student

Dear Editor in Chief,

As an AUI student, I have been surprised by the multiculturalism within this university. In fact, it shows how important it is to adapt oneself with different mentalities, and I think it is a noble ability of the human being. I think AUI can be a very good setting for researchers to depict the impact of socializing among people of different cultural backgrounds on their life. It could be also a factor of academic excellence since these experiences enrich our knowledge and improve our way of thinking. All in all, I would definitely love to read about this topic once it is out.

Best Regards,

Dina Fikri Benbrahim  
Business Administration sophomore student

## Knowledge sharing at AUI

NEWS TEAM

Al Akhawayn University and the Islamic Development Bank, organized a Knowledge Sharing Workshop from 2 to 4 November 2009 at AUI. That is in context of implementing the IDB Program for Achieving Excellence in Higher Education. Participants from Egypt, Iran, Malaysia, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sudan, Turkey, and Uganda

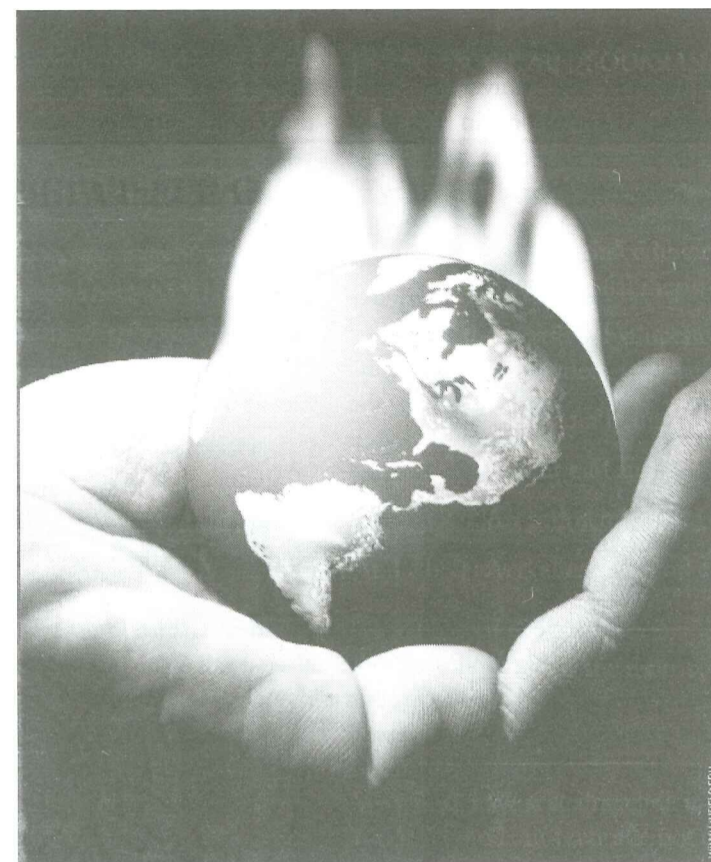
came to explore, discuss, and validate Roadmaps towards “Achieving Excellence in Science and Technology Higher Education in Islamic Countries”. Furthermore, the purpose of the seminars was to embracing a General Roadmap and three Sector Roadmaps focusing on the areas of Nanotechnology (in the Asia region), Information and Computer Technology (in

the Arab region), and Agriculture (in the Africa region). Also, Participants discussed their experiences and best practices in implementing science and technology education. The final Roadmaps will be published and distributed in order to spur development and assist countries throughout the region in improving scientific education.



## Climate Change

NEWS TEAM



On Wednesday, December the 2nd, School of Business Administration organized a conference on climate change: Kyoto protocol and green business opportunity for Morocco. The conference was animated by Dr. Nicholas Hamelin from SBA in addition to two other guest speakers; Mr. A. Ziane a professor at ENSEM and Hassan II University and Mrs. Ouafae Bouchouata from the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Water and Environment.

The conference stressed on the problems affect the climate and has impact on agriculture and ozone hole. The guest speakers talked also about the industrial revolution and earth in general. Further, Dr. Hamelin and the quest speakers spoke of changing people’s behaviors that it is in terms of living, food, clothing, etc.

## Workshop on Drugs and Pharmaceutical Industry

NEWS TEAM

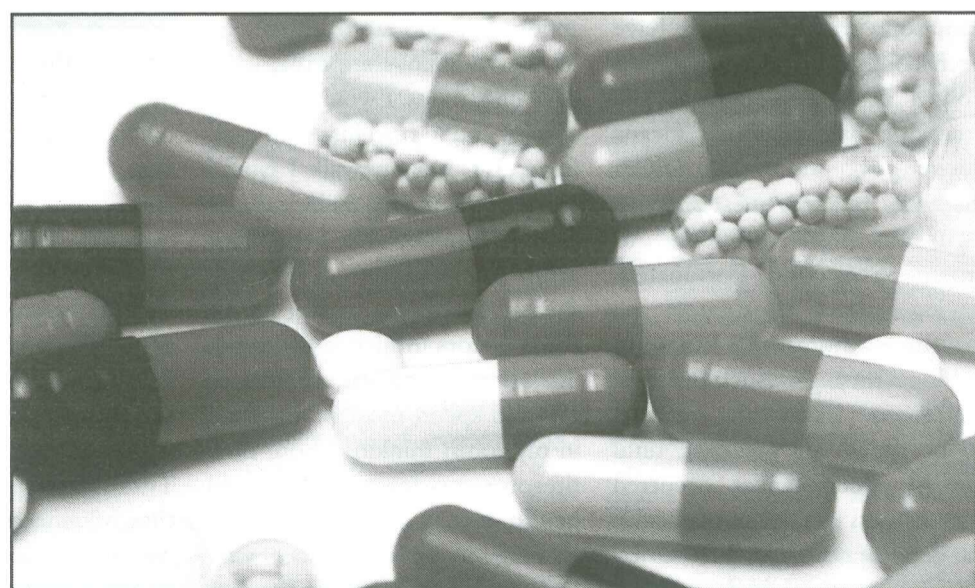
On Friday, 4 December, the School of Science and Engineering organized a one day workshop on drugs and pharmaceutical industry and it was mainly for Biotech students.

The opening ceremony started with the President, Dr. Driss Ououicha, and Dr. Ahmed Legrouri, Dean of School of Science & Engineering. The first session of the conference was monitored by Dr. Berrada, Associate Professor of Biology. In addition to Dr. Karime Samine (Senior Advisor, Pharmacopia in USA), Dr. Mohammed El Idrissi El Azami (the Marketing Director at Pfizer-Maroc), Dr. Salah Aouad (the Scientific Director at Pharma). They talked about Drugs, Drug

Discovery, regulation, standards, and how to put drugs on the market.

In the afternoon, Dr. Abdelghani El Asli, Assistant Professor of Biology, monitored the second session in collaboration with Dr. Taib Slaoui (Expert Manager Business Unit Hospital, Cooper-Maroc, Prof. Yahya Cherrah/ Prof. Samir Ihida, from (Faculté de Médecine et Pharmacie, Rabat, Laboratoire Contrôle du Médicament). They talked about both Drug Industry and Drug Control and Pharmacovigilance in Morocco.

The ceremony ended with Synthesis and General Discussion (Chair: Dr. K. Sendide).



Drugs and Pharmaceutical Industry

# First Days at University: How I survived them!

IMANE REMMAL

As a newcomer at AUI, I joined the university with certain expectations; in fact, each newcomer has come with some of his own. Some of us were sure we would go through the hazing tradition. Some others were excited to finally experience living on campus. Others just brought their teddy bears, hoping for the best and expecting the worst. Living on campus is a step that some students have wanted to make for quite a long time. For some of the newcomers, it was a dream come true.

So there we were, on August the 27th, with big smiles on our faces, walking all over the campus and picturing ourselves enjoying our time. In fact, it smelled like enthusiasm all over the place but

there was still some insecurity floating in the air. That's when these guys in green came along; yelling and running around, making us discover every single thing we needed to know. Later on, they were happy to join us for dancing and singing activities they had prepared to make us "break the ice", meet people, and feel at home on campus.

These were the "student ambassadors", an army of "grown-ups" who were there to guide us, and they rocked at that! They also had a saying written on their t-shirts, "ask me!" and almost all our questions made them smile, reminding them of their arrivals as freshmen, or just making them laugh at our obvious questions. Sometimes, we were

just curious to know what being a student at AUI felt like, and we got answers that varied between "Oh, AUI is just the best place ever" and "there are good days and bad days." Regardless of the questions and answers, most of the students ambassadors shared their experiences and gave advice to everyone

Thanks to them, the first

four days on campus were full of activities; we learned a lot about our prospective lives and tried to adjust. Just before sleeping, I had to remind myself, "I am living on AUI campus! I really am!", for such a change wasn't minor and I had to get used to it.

And then came the first day of class; school had started. We were introduced to our courses

that are much more stimulating and challenging than those in high school. I can tell these classes are going to give us a hard time but I guess that's one of the reasons we all are here. Challenging ourselves, enriching our knowledge, and learning from experience are definitely important for us.

College isn't only about spending some time on campus and graduating, but it teaches us about life in a community, it teaches us tolerance, respect, professionalism, sympathy, team spirit, and it makes us better people for ourselves and for the people around us. So here we are, ready to take the AUI experience and make the most of the years we'll spend here.



Two Student Ambassadors

## A Life at AUI Full of Challenges

SOUHAIL MARGHADI

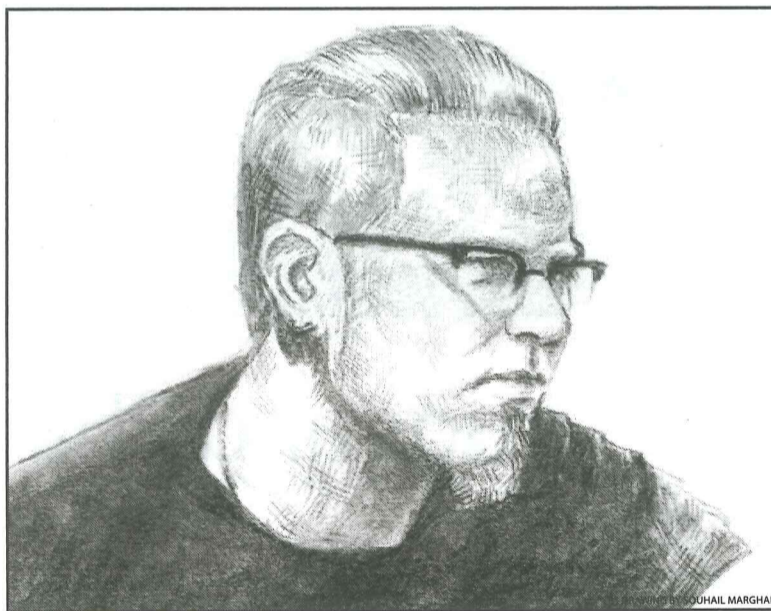
It has been almost 2 years since I joined the AUI community, a period that has been filled with frustrating challenges. I am a person with a disability that became a part of my life just before the start of my time here at Al Akhawayn.

I would like to start with a short description of my life before coming to AUI. Since my childhood, I have always had to hear and deal with one word: Adaptation. I have had to adapt to the way society sees "disabled people" like me, and the way it deals with them. Looks of pity and sometimes mockery have been common in my life. Even now, I often hear phrases like "meskine" which literally means "poor guy" in English. Such instances pushed questions like "why am I this different?" to emerge in my mind. Fortunately, having parents to support me in these moments, helps in getting through such mental challenges. Everything seemed to be going for the best, until certain circumstances occurred that caused my state of health to deteriorate, right before my decision to attend AUI.

Joining Al Akhawayn

University was absolutely my own decision. Everyone expected me to become a doctor or to do business studies elsewhere. However, because I had spent so much time in the hospital and seen so many doctors, I felt I had had enough of that and wanted to see how far I could go if I chose a different path. That was when my long trial started.

During my days at AUI, specific issues clearly defined themselves. First, there is the mobility problem. As a person who permanently needs medical crutches to move around, actions like going from dorms to class buildings are exhausting daily challenges. I would arrive in a sweat and in pain just searching for a seat. On my walk I would see people enjoying their time and hanging around, while I could not afford that. I had to build a strong mental barrier so as not to let these factors influence my mind. Social interaction was minimal, as I would spend most of my time in my room thinking about how tiresome moving outside would be. In fact, I realized how the coming semester would be, living in a community where everything seems okay except you.



In the next year, other problems arose that were still related to my physical condition. The more advanced courses were, the more energy was required. Because I would get tired from walking to classes that were in different buildings, some of which were not on the ground floor, I was unable to fully focus and was less able to perform as well as I wanted to in exams. These were important factors that influenced my mental state as well as my motivation level. No matter how much I would prepare for an exam, I would always be

too tired to focus. Thus, my GPA greatly decreased in my second year. Another disheartening element of my experience was the way some instructors expressed indifference towards me when I would explain my situation. They usually answered with the killing sentence, "I can't do anything about it," which as you would understand destroys what little hope is left inside you. On the other hand, I cannot deny the way other instructors were cooperative and helpful in making accommodations for my situation so that I would do my

exams at the most appropriate times and spaces. These were the main issues I faced, and they show the lack of awareness and compassion that are not specific to a certain social class or type of societies in general.

Nowadays, I've managed to somewhat achieve social integration. Although my situation still affects my academic performance and mental state, I feel the impact decreased. My goal in writing this article is to express my hopes for a better life experience during what is left of my stay at AUI. I also wish to make the proper audience aware of the inadequacies of the access to disabled people who aspire for high quality education on the AUI campus. There is a serious need for special accommodations for people with disabilities. I do not want to sound pessimistic, but I need to describe what is a reality for me. Until there is a brighter future, I would like to thank God for gifting me with supportive parents and would like express my gratitude for all other people who have supported and helped me in the past.

*Exchange from AUI, Pitzer College in California*

## The San Fransisco Bridge

 RACHID JABBOURI

My name is Rachid Jabbouri and this is my ninth and last semester at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane. I am majoring in Human Resources Development with a minor in Business Administration. I would like to share my exchange experience with AUI students and help those who are willing to live this unique experience benefit the most.

Once I arrived in Los Angeles, I joined my host family, who was so friendly and generous. I spent a full week with them before leaving to the dorms. Thanks to the time I spent with my host family, I realized that the US is not only McDonalds and Hip-Hop music. Instead, it is a mixture of cultures and a fusion of traditions and beliefs from different countries around the world.

I did my exchange program in Pitzer College in California. This college is located in an academic area which includes four other private colleges; Pomona, Harvey Mudd, Claremont

Mackena, and Scripps College. As an international student, I had access to the services, facilities, events, and activities in all the five colleges. I was even taking classes at most of them! To clarify the picture, each one of the colleges is as big as our university and each one of them is specialized in a specific area or field of study. I was basically doing an exchange program in five different places at the same time. I enjoyed every minute of my experience. There was something interesting going on somewhere in the colleges almost every day.

My mission as an international student was to represent AUI, Morocco, and the Arab world. Fortunately, I had the chance to do that through the international festival. This was an event organized by the five colleges that gave international students the opportunity to represent their cultures, traditions, and lifestyles. Since there were only three students from Morocco, we got the idea to meet with other Arab students and represent

the Arab world as a single team. During the festival, Morocco was represented amongst the other Arab countries with Moroccan tea and cookies made by the members of our team and Andalousie music. I was really proud of the Moroccan cuisine that day because it was highly appreciated by the guests.

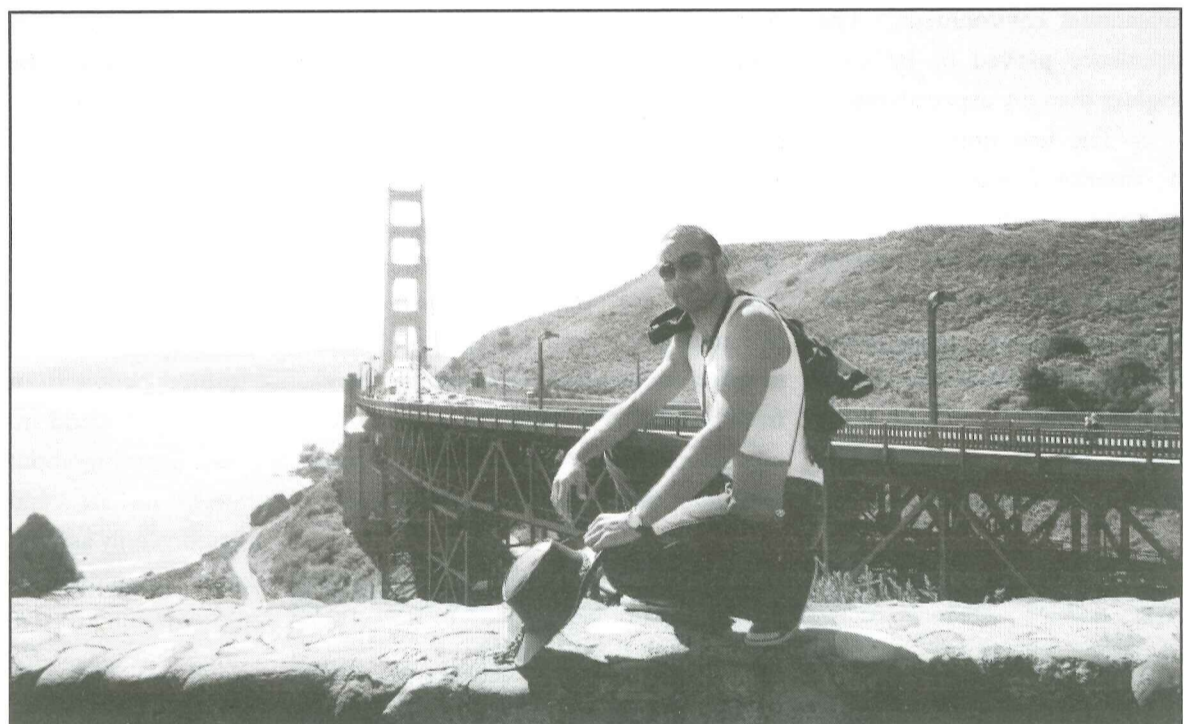
Being a musician also helped me make friends and gave my experience a special charm. I got in the habit of jamming with other guitarists either inside the university, in concerts and

musical events, or even outside on the Hollywood Boulevard. That was really an amazing way to exchange ideas and customs. I learned a lot from these people as they learned from me as well.

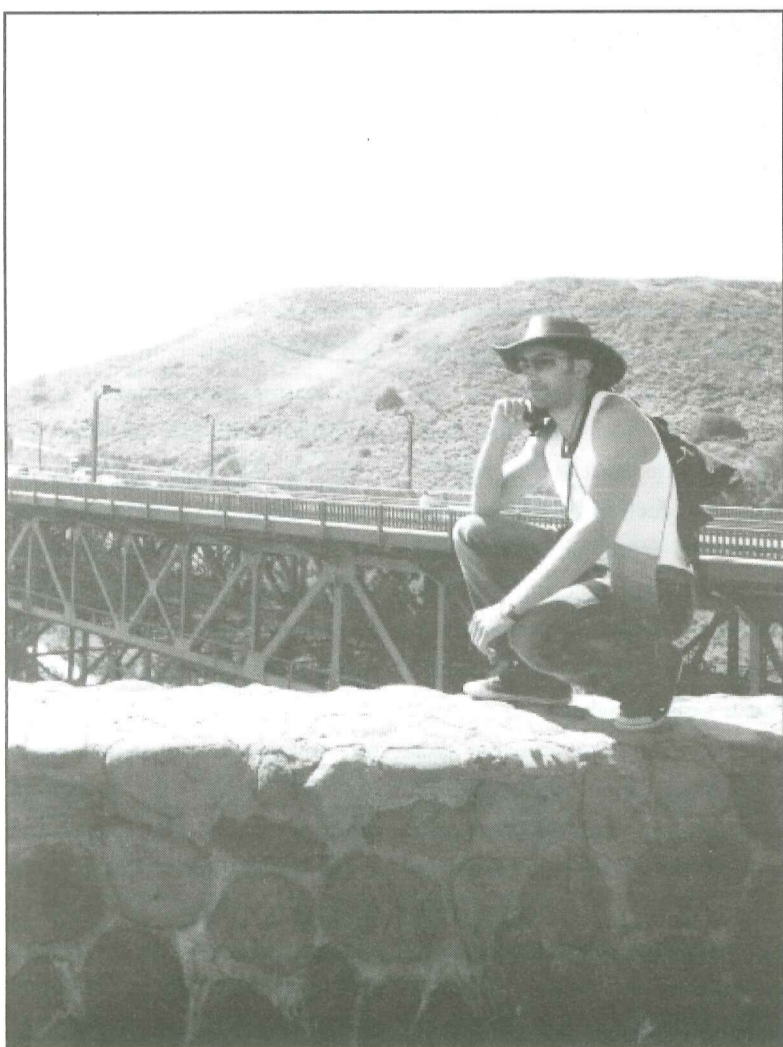
The exchange program was a good opportunity to travel around the country. One thing I can say about the cities in the US is that each one has its own magic; San Francisco with its very high hills and magnificent bridge, Los Angeles with the Universal Studios and Hollywood streets, and Las Vegas, the "City

of Lights". Among the things that I enjoyed so much during my travels was staying in hostels. They were exceptional places that gather people from all over the world. They include social spaces and common rooms where residents can hang out and get to know each other.

The last message I want to transfer to AUI students who are considering the exchange experience: I urge you to go for it because you will never regret it, it is an amazing experience!



*Rachid enjoying his exchange experience*



*Exchange from AUI, West Virginia University*

## An Experience to Remember

LAILA EL ATIKI EL GUENNOUNI

This article is not to tell you what the exchange experience is or what change it will bring to your life, but to tell you about the change it brought to mine. My name is Laila El Guennouni and I am currently taking part of an exchange program at West Virginia University. When I first applied for the exchange program, I had thousands of lively and exuberant images in mind. I had an eagerness to meet thousands of people, travel to different destinations, and most importantly to experience a new educational environment. The experience proved to be even brighter than my expectations!

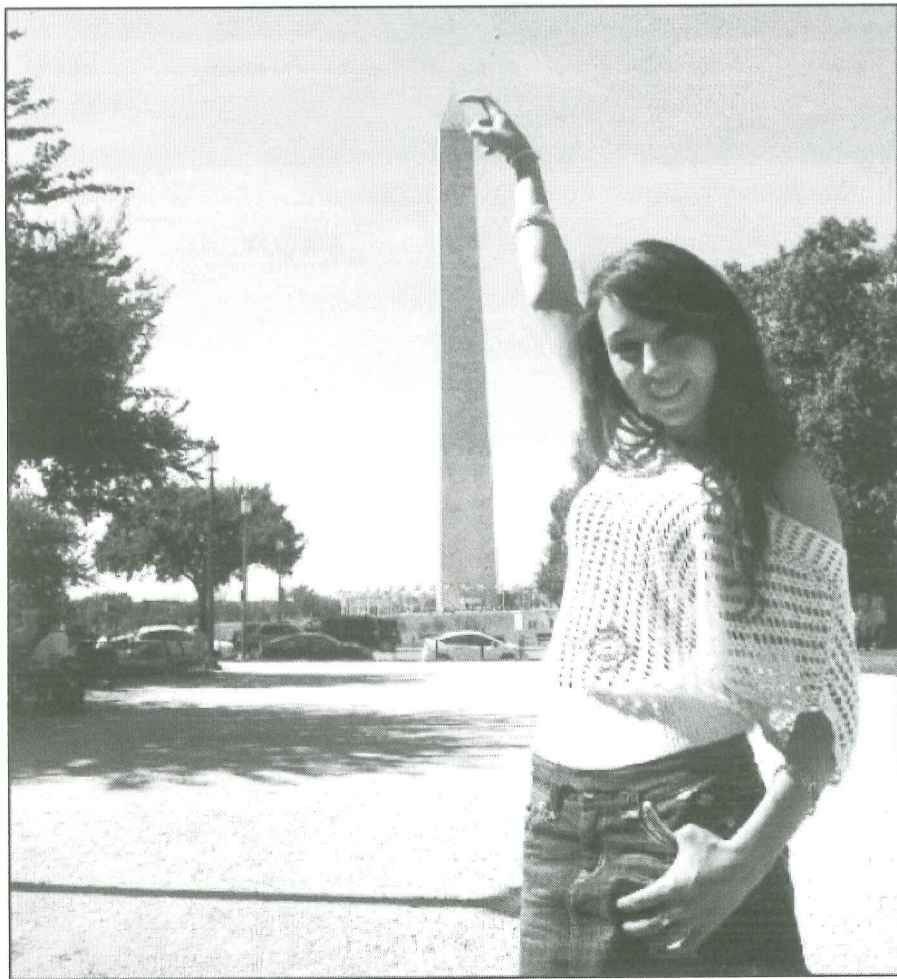
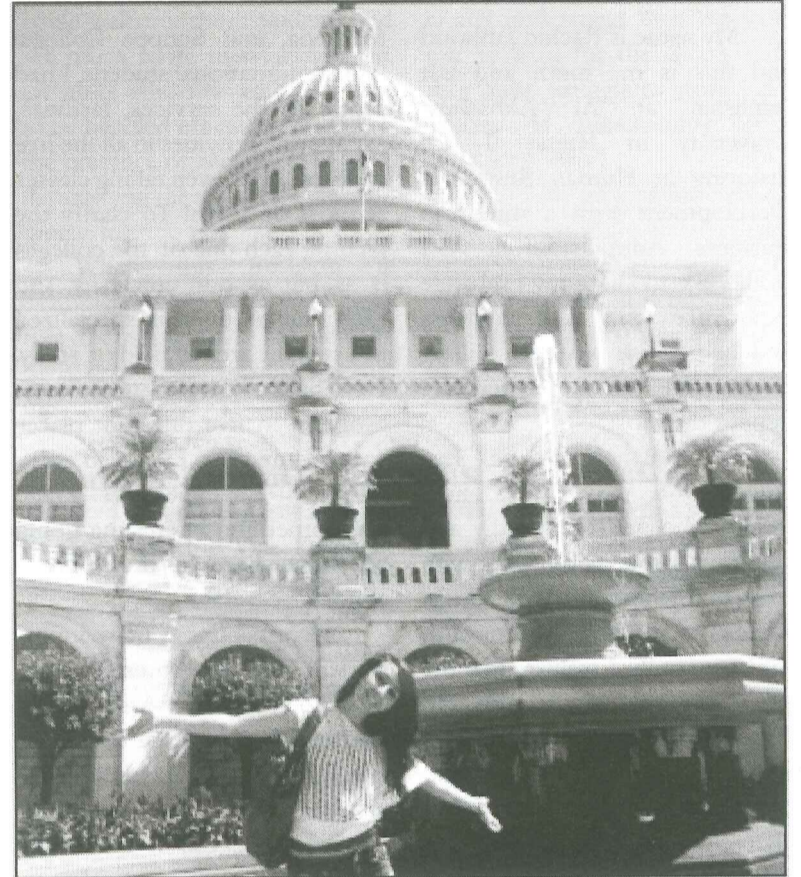
The first time I set foot in America I was stopped by immigration officers for two hours in a room with mostly Hispanics and Africans (because of a missing paper). I was worried, alone, and vulnerable. My parents were not there to interfere and I had no friends to support me. I had to depend on no one but

myself. Suddenly, I thought that independence doesn't come only with liberty but also with responsibility, and I was terrified that I didn't have the strength needed for independence. With God's support, everything worked out.

After many hours of waiting, three flights, and a lot of patience, I arrived at West Virginia University. This is a US academic institution which features 15 colleges, offers 185 degrees, and has more than 30,000 students. I moved from being in class of only 20 to 30 people to a class of 275 students. From an environment where I used to know every person by first and last name to a different environment where I have a hard time remembering the faces. Going to class is no longer an easy task that takes five minutes; I used to do this in a few moments when moving from building 26 to building 11; I now have to take Personal Rapid Transit (a small train) to reach

class in the other part of the city. More importantly, the system of education is different. In addition to the books and lectures, quizzes and books are accessed online and projects are practiced on special software (such as country manager and wileyplus). Moreover, class sessions are recorded and put on a university website for students' access. Here, the university realizes the importance of cultural and sport activities in students' lives. More than a hundred clubs are available for students to join. One of which is the Muslim club. In many cases, classes tend to be cancelled because of important games (in particular, football games).

I strongly believe that there is no better place to experience cultural diversity than the United States of America. You have the chance to meet people from different parts of the world no matter how far. Learning about others' cultures, morals, and traditions only assured me of how similar we are. We might have different names for holidays or celebrate them differently, but the joy, the smiles and the laughter are all the same. Wishing a happy Ramadan or staying up all night for Mexican Independence Day doesn't matter as long as joy is brought along. However, it is important to mention that an exchange experience teaches you more about your own than other's culture. You get thousands of questions about rituals, practices, religion, and culture as a whole. Sometimes,



things that one can passively practice become troubling to explain or present to foreigners. Why don't you eat pork, why do you fast, if God loves you than why does he want you to starve? You just feel bombarded with questions from all sides, and many times you just find yourself saying, "because God said so," or "because it's Moroccan culture." But no matter what your culture is, what religion or country you come from, others appreciate you for who you are and what you bring to the group as a whole.

All in all, I believe that the exchange experience is a celebration of senses. I have had the chance to taste different

foods, hear different languages and music, see different places, and even smell cultural variety. No matter how amazed I am by others' cultures or lifestyles, I find myself more appreciating of my own. My patriotism was reinforced and I yearn to go back to Morocco. I unconsciously refer to AUI as "back home" and talk about it in every conversation. I wholeheartedly appreciate AUI for giving me the opportunity to live such an enriching experience that has taught me to be independent, introduced me to new educational methods, allowed me to live cultural diversity, and more crucially expanded my sphere of thought.

## Exchange from AUI, Binghamton University

# In the Land of Uncle Sam

 SAMIR ELKHAOLANI

The exchange program is a great opportunity for students to reach out to others from a different cultural setting. Not only in this true in terms of studies, but also in terms of social life. Currently, I'm doing an exchange program at Binghamton University in New York, which is considered one of the largest universities in the U.S. Also, it is one of the safest areas of the country. Like at AUI, most students here feel safe anywhere, both on and off campus.

Binghamton is a multinational university, so students get to know many students from different countries. It is a chance to learn from other cultures, and to introduce them to yours. As a result, students have the opportunity to acquire the essential knowledge and skills of socializing and cross-cultural dialogue that will definitely be

usefullaterinlife. Another aspect of this exchange experience is about the discovery of the world's diversity in terms of religious beliefs, cultural norms, and social values that tend to be different from one place to another.

Thanks to the B-Line, which is the e-mail notification system that alerts students of all events being organized on campus, I became aware of the numerous clubs available to join, many of which I found very interesting. I proceeded to join MSA (the Muslim Student Association), in which Muslim students can interact and get to know each other. Other clubs, of course, exist to satisfy people from different religious disciplines.

One aspect of academic life I have noticed is that every class has a discussion section in which students can apply or



*On my way to class*

test their knowledge. Teacher's Assistants (TAs) are obliged to attend classes and constantly interact with students and teachers at the same time. Moreover, TAs work with students of different cultural

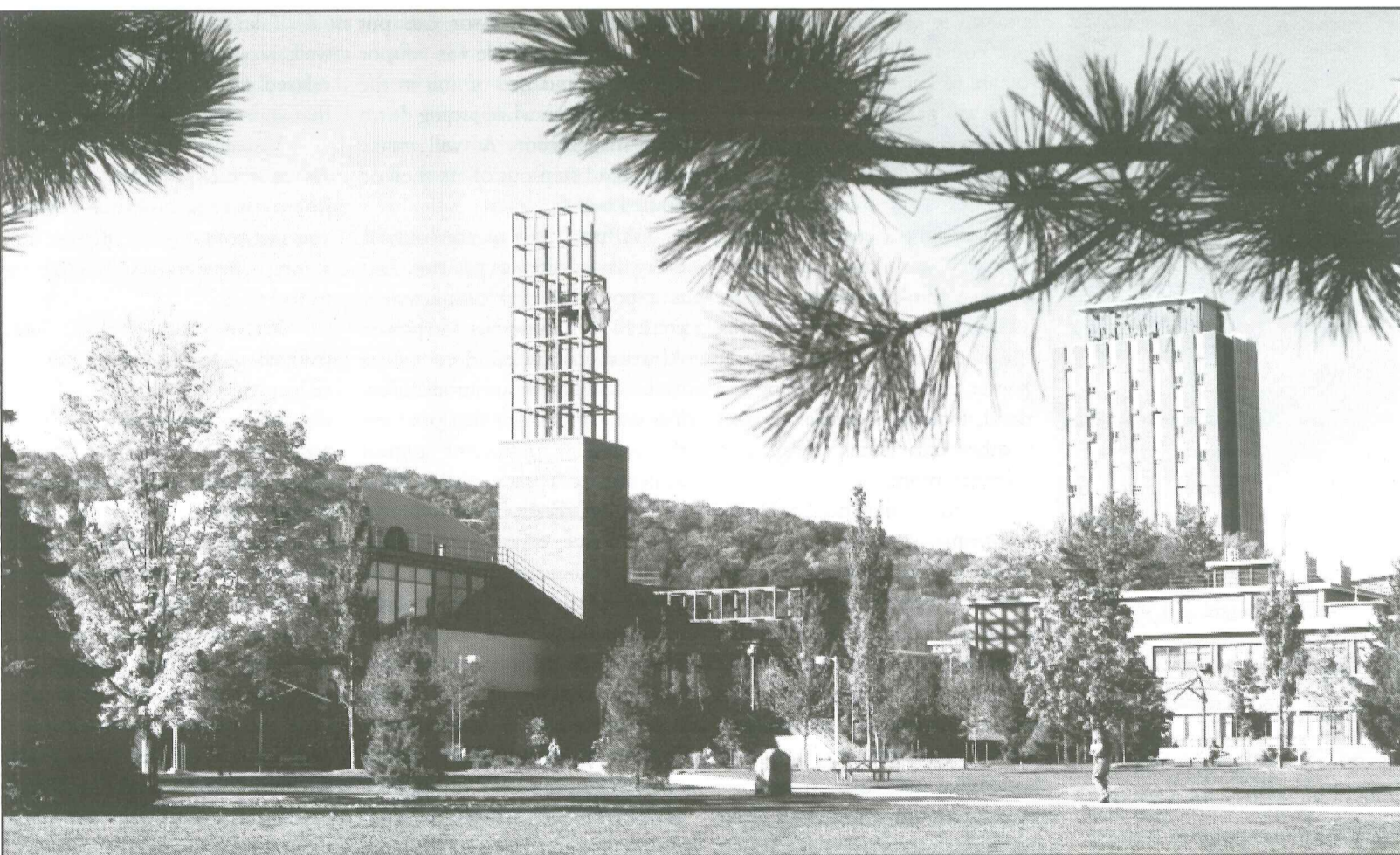
backgrounds in order to help them overcome any barriers faced in their studies.

Registration is an easy task at Binghamton University since everyone is provided with a

specific registration time. Like AUI, this is calculated on the basis of the number of earned credits. As for everyday life, university and city buses are free for all Binghamton University students. Moreover, student's IDs allow discounts on buses around city areas.

The thing I like most about Binghamton University is its modern equipment, especially in terms of functionality. The computer labs are modern, the lecture halls are large and well-lit, the science buildings are constantly being upgraded with new equipment, and the different schools continually add new features to the campus. As a result, students get motivated to study and double their efforts for success.

All in all, my semester here is going well and I take every opportunity to enjoy it before I get back home. I invite my fellow AUI students to consider an exchange program in order to enjoy a unique experience in a different culture.



*A view from campus area*

## Exchange at AUI

## My Life in Morocco

MARIA HAYDEN

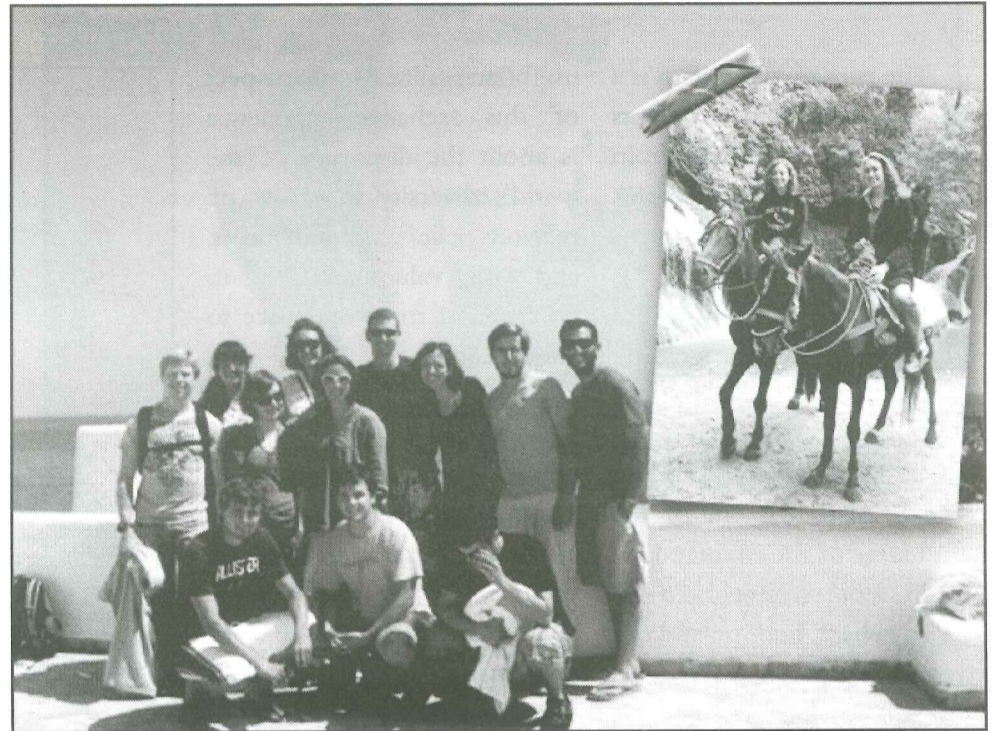
The first conversation I had with my fellow exchange students upon arrival at Al Akhawayn University started with, "What do you mean there's no food?" While we had been advised by our home universities about the holy month of Ramadan and done our own research, none of us honestly expected to be affected right off the plane!

What a learning experience it has been. From being respectful (or hiding) food and drink during the day and breaking the fast with my roommate and her friends, to navigating the different business hours and learning the religious significance of different aspects of Ramadan from Moroccan students, being dropped into this country in the midst of such an important month has been fascinating. Having lived in America my whole life, there is certainly something refreshing about an entire society observing religious practices together.

The entire group of International Exchange students studying at Al Akhawayn this semester is phenomenal. While a few study full time at Georgetown with me,

the majority are from places I have never been. Despite various upbringings, ages, languages, and political or religious views, we all elected to take a semester out of our regular lives and spend this time in Ifrane. This has forged a very unique bond and gave us something in common instantly. Every weekend we have split into groups and explored Morocco piece by piece. So far I have spent weekends in Tetouan, Fez, Ifrane, Rabat and Barcelona. Each weekend I find myself practicing every language I know, trying new foods, making great friends, and exploring non-stop.

Many friends from Georgetown are also studying abroad, largely in Europe. I admit I almost did the same, the nightlife and tourism and famous exhibits that are all a part of the typical "abroad" experience were tempting. However, the decision to branch out and head to North Africa was the best decision I could have made. The experience of living in a non-Western world is one that is irreplaceable. Adaptability, open-mindedness and a willingness to learn are crucial to living



here, and I feel I am improving in all of these areas rapidly. The semester is nearly halfway over, and time is flying as I knew it would. I consciously make the

most of every moment because before I know it I will be back on a plane to the USA. Insha'Allah I will have many more extraordinary memories made before then!

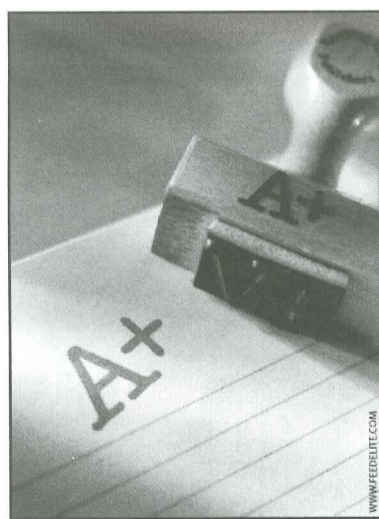
## Academic Life

## Great Tips for Top Grades

MAHA LHAROU

How do you define success? Does university success mean learning useful content without an obsession with grades? Does it mean getting the maximum of learning with straight A's? Does it mean Dean's list, or simply decent knowledge with an average GPA? And then how do you define failure? Does it mean being on probation? Getting only C's? Or are you one of those to whom failure is the opposite of perfection that is, getting that one malicious B that would prevent you from ending up on the President's list?

Deep inside, are you really satisfied with your current academic records? No matter what your definition of failure is, is such failure ok for you; or rather, do you feel capable of something different? Is there that somebody in you who is always seeking better, higher and more? If you have chosen to be comfortable with failure, you can just turn the page and quit reading. The following tips are intended for those of you who are fed-up



with underachievement.

**Make a choice:** Start by deciding what it is that you truly want to achieve, be specific about it and make it your long-term goal. Accept and understand that you are about to make sacrifices in order to achieve academic success. Stop seeing life as something happening to you. Always keep in mind that under or overachievement is a matter of choice, not a matter of destiny.

**Get exposed:** Exposure is

anything that would make you more involved in or more familiar with your courses. The more exposed you are to a course, the more your mind will get used to it, and the better you will be at approaching relevant material. There are countless ways to get exposed, such as asking a question in class, reading your material before sleeping, thinking about it while queuing, checking your syllabus, solving exercises at the end of the chapter, explaining something to a friend, looking at similar courses in other universities' web pages, and many more.

**Divide and conquer:** Divide your primary goals into sub-goals. Get a planner and tackle your classes by week. Try to accomplish everything in the weekend so that you can breathe during the week.

**Grow:** Overcome limitations and expand possibilities. Think about the abundance of knowledge and grades that are out there, about the resources there are in the internet, and about how many millions of students in the

world are getting A's. Think about how easily a professor can put an A as a final grade for you, or just the abundance of ink in the professor's pen while jotting down that magnificent A will make your mind step out of its shell of limited beliefs.

**Affirm:** Affirm to yourself every day as often as you can. This is a powerful tool that activates your subconscious power. Affirmations are mind energizers to be used without moderation. You can tell yourself that you have the potential to become a great achiever, for if many people did it before you, then why can't you? In fact, it's true, every human being has an unlimited potential. The powers of the human brain have never been measured. You are not lying to yourself; you are reminding yourself of facts that have already been proven true. While you're at it, stop making statements like "I don't know what's wrong with me", "I can't get it done", or "I am always procrastinating." These are affirmations too, and they work,

just in the wrong direction!

**Take it easy:** Smile, tell jokes, walk around, and be happy. Get relaxed and confident, and trust that your success will happen.

**Visualize:** We have all made A's at some point in our lives, just remember how it felt when you got your first A. Revive that feeling whenever you are starting to feel tired.

**Please yourself:** don't limit yourself if you feel like ice cream or hanging out with friends. Please yourself as if you would if you really were the winner you are about to become. Put on nice clothes, style your hair, be gentle and caring about others. Be the best person you can, and success will follow through.

Last but not least, get over the myths! Setting a rigid time management schedule is not the right method. If you train your mind to succeed, everything will fall into place and you will find yourself unwittingly becoming timely and effective.

With the best of luck!



## It is All About Sharing...

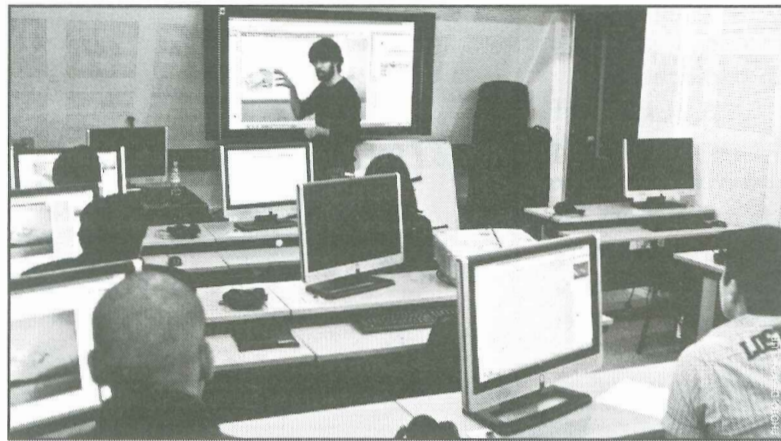
MERYEM BASKOUN

The Design Club was founded on the principle of sharing. Once one becomes a member of the club, they must be ready to share their knowledge, experience, and talent.

Students who join the club are not all particularly skilled in designing or using specific software. What they all do have in common is a willingness to learn from each other. The club began offering workshops to members; these workshops included either basics of image editing in Photoshop and the creation of flyers.

Starting this semester (i.e.

fall 2009), Munir Sayegh, an exchange student who is majoring in design, joined the club. He suggested the idea of offering workshops to members. In fact, a schedule was set for the whole



During the workshop

semester to have workshops every Wednesday from 8:30pm to 9:30pm covering different topics including: Illustrator, design principles, flyer creation, and more.

The first sessions were a success, and other students on campus became interested and wanted to benefit from those workshops as well.

As a nod to the concept of sharing, the club made the workshops open to all students based on a "first come, first served" basis due to the limited seats in the labs and classrooms.

The schedule for all the workshops is posted everywhere on campus and was sent by email to all AUI community. To make these workshops even more accessible, the club made a deal with the CITI, supervised by Dr. Hassan Darhmaoui, to use their labs. These are equipped with cutting edge technologies, and will make the classes even more current.

The workshops provided by the club to members and students are just the start of many services designed to make student's lives easier and more enjoyable.

## AUI Policies: to what Extent are they Applied?

GHASSAN ESSALEHI

As students join AUI, they are introduced to its different Schools, Departments, and policies. Once students spend a few semesters at AUI, they realize that all AUI policies are not applied as stringently as one would think. There are other policies that are very strictly applied. The issue that has arisen amongst students is that some of these policies are only applied to the student body and not all members of the AUI community.

First, the attendance policy allows students to have five unexcused absences for classes that meet twice a week, and seven for classes that meet three times a week. Some instructors apply these policies on a very strict basis, but others are reported to pay little attention to attendance at all. As a result of these discrepancies, some students have actually started to consider instructor's profile and reputation regarding the attendance policy when choosing classes. There are differing opinions on this issue. One can argue that an instructor should have the final word regarding the management of their class and its policies. To a large extent, this is a valid argument. However, until this changes, the University Academic Affairs Department's decisions regarding the attendance policy

should ensure that all students get equal treatment.

Another policy, concerning Public Displays of Affection, or PDA, is one that largely affects student life. It has long been regarded as a policy that reflects the Moroccan culture and way of life. The PDA Policy is mainly concerned with respecting other community members when interacting with a close friend of the opposite sex. The problem here is the ambiguity regarding the extent to which two people showing their emotions and affection may go. There is no easy answer, for the PDA policy is not clear in terms of its limitations, with only a few specific examples. More importantly, it glances over the liberties given to students on a multicultural campus who are trying to enjoy their academic life independently from any superfluous constraints of their rights.

Another more recent policy regarding cars on campus issues a 200Dhs fine for parking in a prohibited area. The parking spots that are available exceed the number of cars owned by AUI community members, including students. Thus, there is no excuse for parking in a prohibited area.

"If there is someone who

should not pay fines, students should get this special treatment and no the staff or faculty members," angrily declares a student, who prefers to remain

anonymous.

This SBA senior student explains that she has seen many staff and faculty members park their cars behind the restaurant. According to this student and others, this "prohibited" area has become a de facto private space for a few cars that regularly park there for as long as they wish.

"I sometimes have my breakfast, go to classes, come back for lunch and would still find the same car parked in the same area behind the restaurant," explains another SBA student.

No one wants to point fingers, but it is important to reflect on these remarks. Students should not feel victimized by Security agents



and spread the value of equal opportunities among AUI community members," stated one student.

"The question is: are all of AUI's policies applied?" wondered Ouïam El Asri, a Computer Science sophomore student.

Ouïam is definitely not the only student who asks this question. However, students should ask these questions to the people who are supposed to ensure the application of AUI's existing policies.

Before closing this article, I have to admit that I did not make any efforts to find out about the official say of AUI with regard to these rumors and accusations that some students make. Instead, I'd invite any official party at AUI to provide their opinion and views to this issue. Perhaps, they'll turn out to be mere rumors, with no factual basis. However, hearing about the other side of the story can also be as interesting as reading the above mentioned rumors.

who fine them for small infringements, while professors, for example, remain exempt.

These students preferred to remain anonymous because they also have cars and do not feel comfortable disclosing their identities.

"I would better keep silence and hope that AUI policies are applied to everyone in order to show the spirit of community

# The International Composition Course

GHASSAN ESSALEHI

The International Composition Course (ICC) is an online course offered by Dr. Keith Geekie from Johnson County Community College (JCCC), located in the American state of Kansas, since 1999. This course was designed to help students practice and develop the writing skills required to write effectively on a variety of subjects and to foster cross cultural communication between American and international students worldwide.

In spring 2009, Dr. Latifa El Mortaji, from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) was chosen by Dean Dahbi to represent Morocco by partaking in the ICC.

Dr. Latifa El Mortaji received her Bachelor's degree in English from Chouaib Doukkali University in El Jadida, after which she moved to the UK for a Master's degree and a Ph.D. in Descriptive and Applied Linguistics, respectively, at the University of Essex. Dr. El Mortaji's doctoral research is entitled "Writing Ability and Strategies in two Discourse Types: A Cognitive Study of Multilingual Moroccan Students in Arabic (L1) and English (L3)". In 2002,

Dr. El Mortaji joined AUI as the Coordinator of the Writing Center and SHSS faculty member. She is currently a professor of English Composition I and English Composition II.

Until recently, AUI students could only use some of the technology the academic world has access to, including white e-boards, computers, and internet research. Dr. El Mortaji has taken the initiative to add one more to this repertoire, the ICC. The goal of the course is mainly to gather students from across the globe and invite them to interact with each other and reflect on these interactions with respect to their own personal experiences.

In Kentucky, Dr. Geekie (from Johnson County CC) offers an English Composition II equivalent class to his American students. He came up with the idea of initiating a project to offer the same course content to other overseas international students. The project quickly became a reality, involving 5 different countries from around the world: the USA, Morocco, Israel, Russia and Japan. While American students pay for the course, overseas students are enrolled for free. At the end of the

semester, the overseas students that turn in the majority of the assignments will receive a certificate of participation.

"A lot of interaction is actually involved in the course" explains Dr. El Mortaji, regarding the six students now involved, "They actually were 7 but a student had to withdraw for time constraint reasons."

Since students in the class receive no credit, there are no make up sessions. Accordingly, the participants have to be highly motivated for the completion of the requirements. However, this doesn't mean that the course is less interesting than other AUI courses. The course has its own website and a chat and email system with which the participants can interact with the instructors and assess other students' pieces of writing.

The ICC is not a class that is just about writing or showing up twice a week in the lab to reflect on one chosen topic. The ICC



Dr. El Mortaji in her office

requires the participants to reflect on aspects of Moroccan culture and express these reflections to other students from Russia, for example. Then, they would learn from the Russian students in turn.

Each assignment has its specific writing and cultural goals. For instance, for the Song Lyric Analysis essay, under the genre of Popular Culture, the students were required to select a Moroccan song with interesting lyrics, translate, and type them up in the form of a poem. The analysis involved background information, definition of concepts, description, audience, annotations, with reflection on

one's cultural values. The students chose songs reflecting on a variety of Moroccan music genres produced by different artists, such as Idir (Berber), Nouaman Lahlou, Fnaire and Hoba Hoba Spirit.

Despite only being in its beginning stages here at AUI, the course seems to be promising for the student community as a whole. Students who wish to benefit from the program or want further information should contact Dr. Latifa El Mortaji, either by email ([l.elmortaji@aui.ma](mailto:l.elmortaji@aui.ma)) or phone extension: 2150.

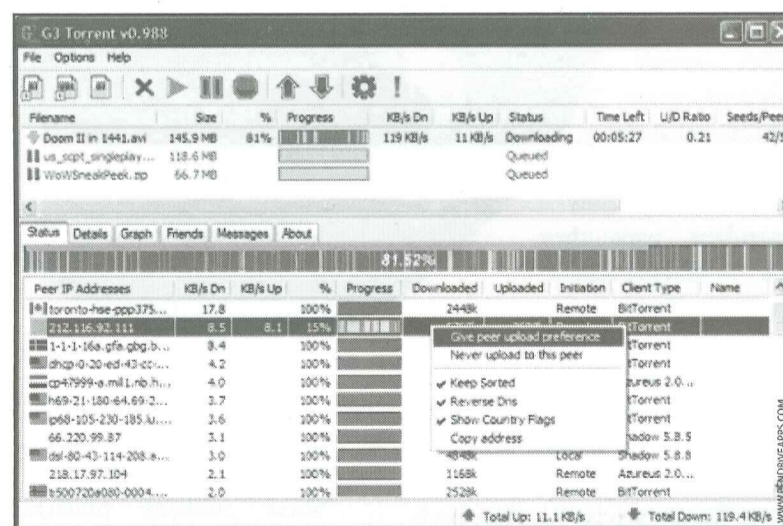
# Internet's New Personality

SALMAN AL HUMAM

Al Akhawayn has done its share of redecoration for Fall 2009; the student lounge (commonly known as the game room) has been relocated, pool tables were moved out of the cafeteria, and some new students were moved to the off-campus residence. Last but not least, AUI has now upgraded its internet speed. By now, everyone's computer is probably looking like the one illustrated in the photo.

Al Akhawayn students have welcomed this change with open arms and are making the most of it. This is because the previous connection we had was not just slow, it was frustrating.

"I had days in which it took me over 20 minutes to buffer up a 2 minute video," recalls Thami El Kortbi, a senior SBA student, "but now; it takes me 2 minutes to



watch a 20 minute video!"

Mounir Assali, a junior SBA student, has another story regarding the benefits of the new internet, "Unfortunately I had to format my computer and I ended up losing over 100 Go worth

of information; but 4 days later, thanks to the new connection speed, I now have 150 Go and counting."

When Mr. Said Benhammou, the ITS manager, was asked why Al Akhawayn

University waited this long for something that was promised a few semesters ago, he replied by saying "before, as you most probably know, the internet speed was 34 Mb per second" (it is currently topping out at 150) "AUI was paying 120k Dhs per month, but when they wanted to improve the quality of the connection to anything over 100 Mb per second, the price was over 240k per month, which of course was steep." These were the prices that Maroc Telecom had to offer. At one point the price dropped to 200k Dhs per month, but this was still too expensive. "Then Wana came along with an offer that could not be refused; they offered to give us the connection speed we were looking for (150 Mb per second) for the price of 150k per

month and AUI jumped on the offer."

The contract with Wana was signed and the initial plan was to hook up a network via a wiring system. This was supposed to be done by July, before the summer session ended. That was not the case; however, because Wana had no base in Ifrane to operate from, thus the additional months were needed to prepare the installation.

"At this very moment, Al Akhawayn University is the first to incorporate a speed of 150 Mbs in Morocco," Mr. Benhammou added. It was also the first to get 34 Mb per second.

As Al Akhawayn continues to make technological strides, the students can only wait at the edge of their seats to see what is yet to come.

# AUI's Leadership Development Institute

JIHANE MOUSSAOUI

The entire AUI community can gain from leadership courses provided by the SHSS and the SBA, according to the Leadership Development Institute (LDI). The goal of these programs is to spread leadership knowledge amongst the students. The program is made up of one to two hour workshops that combine practice of skills, interaction in discussions, and application of learning in a community or club. Members of the LDI are required to attend a series of workshops, including topics such as Emotional Intelligence, Ethics in Business, and other issues related to enhancing student leadership. The ultimate goal of the Institute is to help AUI students become better leaders in Morocco, to develop student organizations, and to get alumni involved in this project as mentors to assist in the leadership improvement.

The Leadership Development Institute accepts faculty and staff

that want to participate in one of the programs and allows membership to 30 students per year. Acceptance of members is based on their motivation, high academic standing, and achievement of the AUI Social Internship with a recommendation from faculty. The certification is given only after the student completes eighty percent of the offered workshops, all of the required workshops, and has attended three of the speaker-discussion meetings. They must also demonstrate active and positive contributions in one student organization or community group.

In an interview with SHSS professor Dr. Rinehart, he explained the important role that the LDI plays both in AUI and in Morocco since it is the first project of this kind in the country. Dr. Rinehart explained, "Many universities, colleges and community colleges in the US have student leadership development

programs. One line of thought is that since AUI is the American model university in Morocco, what better place to start a similar program?"

Based on research done in the US, leadership development programs both improve the students' academic success and raise their performance. Another reason for the programs is that Morocco will need highly skilled leaders in the future, especially in the face of problems that obstruct its development, including unemployment, illiteracy, access to health care and clean drinking water, among others. In fact, all citizens must help the government and local associations to solve these problems and develop the country.

According to Dr. Rinehart, "the type of leadership that the LDI develops builds students into citizens who have the skills and motivation to change the world they live in for the better."

Dr. Rinehart's advice to

AUI students is to complete the 60 hour Social Internship requirement as soon as they can in order to be aware of what is really needed in Morocco and know how to help.

"The LDI also will require students to have completed their Social Internship requirement before being admitted to the LDI program," he confirmed. Students should be involved in clubs, committees, and community service, not only for the career development they offer, but for the leadership experiences they will get because leadership is not dependent on position, but rather it is the nature of interaction. Anyone can be a leader, as Dr. Rinehart said, "you need not be the president of a club to be a leader."

Finally, if the student finds out what needs to be done in Morocco, then they can practice leadership by working with other people in groups. In a top leadership book, "The Leadership Challenge" (Third

edition, 2002, Jossey-Bass), Kouzes and Posner state that the first law of leadership is DWYSYWD (do what you say you will do). That is to say, without commitment and the ability to follow through, leaders cannot maintain credibility. Without credibility, people will not willingly cooperate with a leader. Without willing followers, you aren't a leader (though you may still be a boss or a manager).

Dr. Rinehart concludes, "Leadership is not easy. Leaders become role models. As such, your behavior is always being watched. People look to leaders to see what behavior is acceptable. As such, leaders can elevate many people through consistent ethical and humane actions. Gandhi was a great example of this. The world needs more of this kind of authentic transformational leadership." This will be a new and exciting opportunity for AUI students looking to lead in the future.

# Get to Know the OIP (Part 2 of 2)

GHASSAN ESSALEHI

As promised in the first part of this article, the second part shall deal with some other questions related to the mission of AUI's Office of International Programs. Mrs. Amy Fishburn kindly answered the newspaper's request for another interview which investigated some students' concerns- sometimes, exhaustive answers were provided.

The first question concerns the different partnerships that AUI has established with other university networks around the world. "There are four major categories of partnerships for AUI" answered Mrs. Fishburn. In her explanation, she stated that the partnerships are governmental, non-governmental, corporate, or academic. For the OIP, only the academic partnerships are relevant for consideration. This category consists of making connections with academic institutions of higher education from various places around the world. The majority are in the USA, but more are being established in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and even South America. Collaboration with well placed academic institutions of distinction helps AUI improve its quality of education and the overall experience for the AUI student and community at large. The networking of current partners has led to new partnerships. For example, ESSEC and Binghamton University are now talking to each other having sought AUI's advice about potential collaboration. "Who knows", said Mrs. Fishburn, "if we can't work out some kind of a program in the future

for the three institutions on three continents."

For students, this kind of partnership is usually reflected by a common use of language in an agreement or a memorandum of understanding, such as student, faculty and staff exchange; joint research, conferences, and exchange of information and publications. All these and other aspects make up the academic partnerships which have actually attracted many students and faculty to AUI. To illustrate, 25% of 2007 graduate cohort took part of an exchange program during their stay at AUI. In addition, Mrs. Fishburn pointed out that there is a trend in higher education in Europe and the USA: "some students actually attend 2 to 3 institutions before they get a university degree". Such a remark is quite interesting to consider in order getting an awareness of how attractive and appealing an exchange program can be. "The majority of AUI students want to go to the USA, but we try to encourage exploration of other areas of the world."

The OIP has recently been working on the development of more opportunities for new study and work experiences abroad. CCUSA (Camp Counsellors USA), for example, is one of the recently approved programs that allows students to go abroad and gain work experience during summer time. Several other opportunities for summer will be announced in the new semester.

About the faculty exchange program, Mrs. Fishburn thinks

that for a small institution there are many potential advantages and some logistical difficulties that the Deans are trying to solve. There have been just a few experiences for faculty over the years. Dr. Driss Maghraoui is currently at Illinois Wesleyan University and Dr. Kelly Coble is at AUI from Baldwin Wallace College. However, for staff exchange, this has been much slower to start but recently has taken off. Mrs. Fishburn proudly presented the recent experience of which six administrative officers benefited: Mrs. Latifa Ouanaim, Director of Enrollment Services; Mrs. Khadija Benmansour, Associate Registrar, Enrollment Services; Mrs. Souad Loukili, Manager of Human Resources; Mr. Abdelhak Benseddik, Acting Director of the Business Office; Mr. Said Nouamani, Director of Purchasing; and Mr. Rachid Laghni, Director of Safety & Security. All had the opportunity to observe and discuss processes with their counterparts as well as discover some social aspects of the educational system in the United States of America on which AUI is modelled. These visits were in the spring and summer of 2009 and more opportunities for other staff are planned for 2010.

One question that was very interesting to discuss with Mrs. Fishburn was about the student couples who like to take part of an exchange program together. Couples here refer to brothers, sisters, boyfriend/girlfriend, or best friends who say that they must go to the same institution together. For

Mrs. Fishburn, the OIP's position in regard to this question is very clear. The students in these couples have to be interviewed separately to make sure that one is not influencing or pressuring the other into a decision. However, one difference to notice here is about the need to pay special attention to these applicants' profiles, motives, and expectations from the exchange program. "It even happens to me that I sometimes receive parents' recommendations to have one couple go together", states Mrs. Fishburn, "but I really have to take every situation very seriously to avoid any conflict of interest and consider the best interests of students" she added. Mrs. Fishburn also has to make sure that these couples understand that they might have to make sacrifices, sometimes, go through the whole process and wait to see if two vacant seats at the same institution are available for them to take after everyone else has been placed. Such choices do not seem to be easy to make.

One last question about course transferability from the exchange host institution to the student's home institution required Mrs. Fishburn to make a statement which can be read as funny. "Rumors are so interesting; I just love to listen to them. They are usually so wrong." In fact, Mrs. Fishburn makes a valid argument which can be witnessed by many of AUI students who tend to circulate rumors about some problems that one of their colleagues had and then everyone takes as

fact. Regarding this question, Mrs. Fishburn expressed her welcome to any student who "heard something" or may have a problem with their course equivalency; "they are very welcome to see me, even though such problems should not exist because the course selection forms are always signed by the student's advisor, the School's Coordinator, the Dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs". Normally, all should go well for exchange students if they get their paperwork done in advance. "Professors and Deans all believe that the experience is very valuable to students and will try hard to work out class equivalency problems as far as possible."

Other problems that may be faced by students during their exchange are always of interest to OIP. To explain, Mrs. Fishburn mentions that she's always urging students to plan ahead for their exchange program, leaving open different class options and considering expenses they will have to face. AUI tries to make the exchange programs affordable in terms of tuition, housing, and meal plans which can be paid at AUI as usual in most situations.

Last but not least, AUI students should now have got a refreshing piece of investigation concerning one of most active university offices. Like the other offices, the OIP's doors always remain open for students to visit and take advantage of its services.

## The Shop: AUI's latest warzone?

YASSINE MAJDI

There are some places on campus that are here purely to make our lives as students easier. However, it is these places in particular that can be the most difficult and inefficient. To make the list short, I might mention the restaurants, the gym during the add/drop process, and finally the shop.

The shop is one of Al Akhawayn's most frequented places. Its function is to allow the members of the AUI community to purchase products that they would normally buy in a classic supermarket outside. The payment is done by cash-wallet for the members of the AUI community and by cash for visitors. The shop is supposed to be a convenient place, adequate for students; but lately due to the growth of the

AUI community, the entrance to the shop can easily be compared to the entrance to a battlefield.

"Lately, it really sickened me to go to the shop. Every time I go there, there are at least 15 or 20 students. Last time, I went there to buy a single bubble gum but I took the queue for 15 minutes because of the crowdedness of the shop" said Yacine Tsouli, a junior SBA student.

This person voices most of Al Akhawayn's students' thoughts. According to a survey conducted with Al Akhawayn students, 78% of those surveyed complained about the time needed to complete their purchases.

We cannot deny that the shop is sometimes empty. But during the "rush hours," the shop is clearly not able to handle the situation. That is why most of

Al Akhawayn students tend to see the shop with a very negative connotation. But some students have to adapt to this situation and come up with strategies to overcome this daily issue.

"In my case I found a really simple solution. I run to the shop right after class in order to pass in front of the other students. Even if it makes me sweat, it is really the best solution that I came up with in order to avoid 'student jams' in the shop," declared Mehdi Bekhti, a junior SBA student.

Some students wonder why the shop has not been moved to a bigger location, especially after the game room was closed.

"AUI is not efficiently allocating its space. The shop could be shifted to the ex-game room for instance," said Yassine Aliat, a junior SSE student.

This student is not completely wrong in the sense that the shop could be expanded to a place that is not even being used. The shop could welcome more students and sell much more merchandise. A lot more students would be able to be handled efficiently thanks to the presence of multiple counters, diminishing the queue line and the time it takes to pay.

When this problem is examined closely, it comes to light that the shop staff has actually been demanding more space for quite some time.

"It's been ten years that we've been requesting for more space. We requested the support of both the SGA and the Vice President in order to have a better reception for the AUI Community, but it was all in vain. We thought about the game room but our request is

still pending" said Imad Ghomai, Bookstore and Campus Store Manager.

The reader can now clearly understand how the work can be hard for the shop's staff; they must struggle to store 1,200 articles of merchandise in a surface of 70m<sup>2</sup>!

This issue is problematic for both the students and shop staff who try to do their best to serve the AUI community. It is problematic for students in the way that some of them prefer to go off campus in order to buy the products they need, and this represents an even more considerable loss of time. In the meantime, this is also a loss of money for the shop, since it is losing those customers to the shops of Ifrane.

## Welcome To AUI

ABDELAZIZ ALAOUI & YASSINE MAJDI

Every semester at Al Akhawayn University brings a new group of exchange students. It is a portion of the students here that is worth mentioning even though they are not numerous. This month, the Bridge decided to take a closer look at them and reveal what most of Moroccan AUI students do not know.

First, what brought these students to Morocco? On the surface, it may appear that there would be similar reasons for most of them, but ultimately each one of them has their own personal motivation.

Albert "Luis" Decall, a senior

student in international relations from San Diego University, declares: "Morocco is unique. It is a mix of both African and Arab Cultures. We can also see traits of European culture. I like this mix between cultures." Hence, interest in the country biculturalism seems to be what motivated Albert to come here.

Anne Marie, a German student from Munich had different motives for coming to Morocco: "I didn't want to go to America. I think Morocco is more interesting. I can also speak English here so it's fine."

Of course these students

do not only come to Morocco for studies; their aim was also to visit our country and get to know more about it through travel and the people. After a month and a half in Morocco, they already visited some of the major Moroccan cities.

"I have already visited Rabat, Fez, Meknes and Tetouan," said Albert.

"In my case, I already visited Tangiers, Fez and Rabat," declared Anne Marie.

These students spend most of their time on the Al Akhawayn campus, which means that they have been able to discover a

certain way of university life that is completely different from the people and classes that they experience at home.

"The quality of teaching is good in this university; some classes, like Entrepreneurship, have had a great impact on me. Al Akhawayn students have helped me also, and I already knew some AUI students in my university in Montana so things went easy for me" declared Tom Gauthier, a super senior student from Bozeman University in Montana.

Other exchange students share Gauthier's opinion, "Al Akhawayn campus life is different

from Morocco, but still I like it. People here made things easy for me since they were friendly. I would clearly recommend to my fellow students back in Germany to pick Morocco for an exchange program," declared Anne Marie.

These students do their best to discover our country and its culture. We should not forget that we local students are part of their everyday life for a certain period of time. Thus, we should make an effort to meet them and get to know them more as they are try to discover our university and beautiful country.



# HRCWEC: Achievements, challenges, and aspirations towards empowerment

RACHIDA EDDASSI & NAJOUA KABBAJ

The Hillary Rodham Clinton Women's Empowerment Center (HRCWEC) was established on April 5th, 2000, after the visit of Mrs. Hillary Clinton, who was the First Lady of the United States of America at that time. She is currently the Secretary of State in President Obama's administration. The Center was founded as a way to pay tribute to Mrs. Clinton, while at the same time addressing one of the university's goals regarding regional development. The Center's objectives are mainly to enhance the quality of life of these women in terms of economic and social development. In spite of little funding, the Center has undertaken a few projects in the framework of the empowerment of women.

One of the first projects performed by the Center was a household socio-economic survey, which covered hundreds of families of 4 areas in the province of Ifrane, namely Timdiqin, Ben Smim, Timhadit and Zaouite Sidi Abdesalem

A number of professors of AUI came together to plan the survey. Dr. Shoup and Dr. Ross, professors from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, trained students in the methods of conducting surveys in the field. The students were able to obtain a picture of the standard of living by determining the services families had access to, their spending patterns, how much money they earned, etc. The results were largely similar across the region. A significant portion of household income was devoted to energy and basic survival needs. Through this survey, it was noted that the percentage of illiteracy was exceptionally high in these areas. From this data came the determination of expanding literacy programs. When the Azrou Center was established, literacy programs among its early actions and continue to today.

A couple of American graduate students were associated with the HRCWEC and have followed up on the household survey. One student from the George Washington University interviewed women in Ben Smim who had participated in the socio-economic survey to inquire further about the reasons for so many literacy programs which did not seem to succeed. There have been a lot of literacy programs, but some of them had a tendency to fail due to several key reasons. Largely, there were timing issues for the women and unpaid teachers who would lose their motivation and enthusiasm after many months. This remains an area of interest of the HRCWEC but there has been a lack of money, due to infrequent fundraising, to support full time personnel.

However, in 2004, AUI welcomed a major training opportunity from the

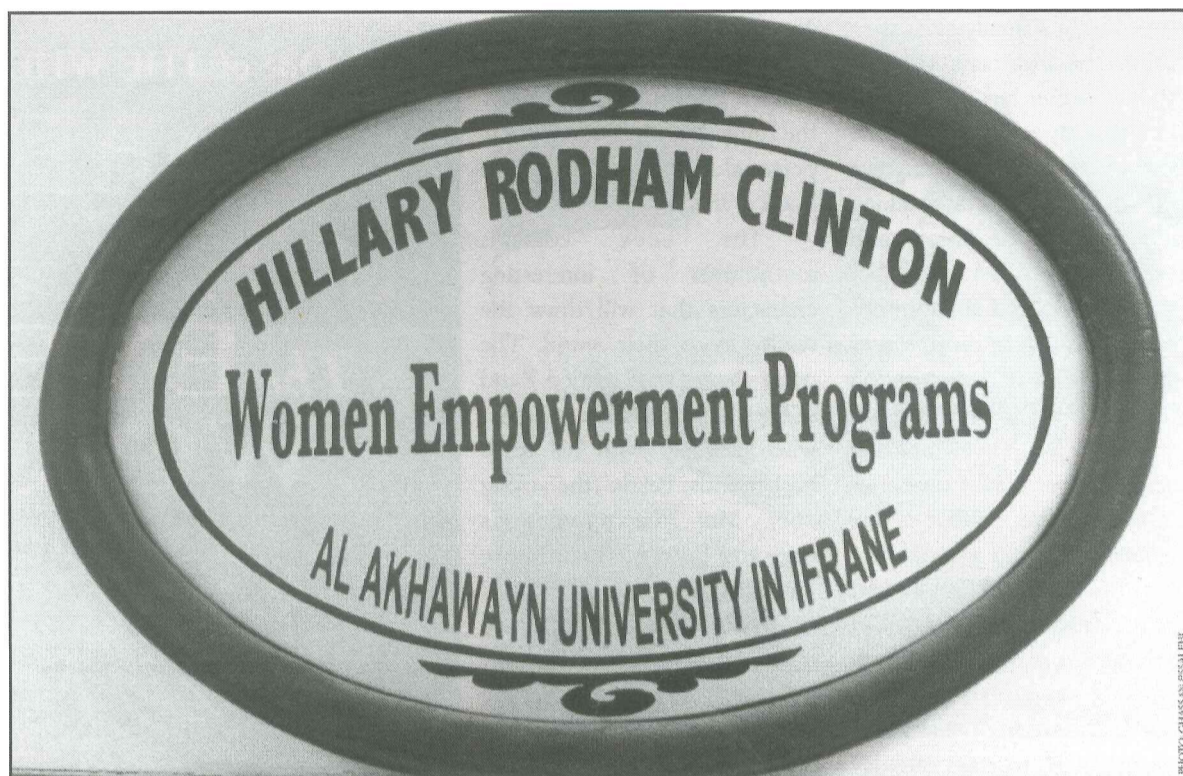
William Davidson Institute of the Business School of the University of Michigan that was armed with expertise for executive training in Eastern Europe. Funded by The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), the project, administered by Mrs. Amy Fishburn, was designed to advance the business skills, particularly among local people owning both small and medium-sized enterprises. The project was carried out in many subjects, most notably accounting and marketing, both taught in French by AUI professors including Ibnou Alkhayat, Wafae El Garah and even the School of Business Administration's Dean, Mohamed Derrabi contributed with courses in Finance. The business people appreciated the program but because the language of instruction was French, many had difficulty in following and many other did not apply to the trainings. MEPI was very pleased with the results of the set of trainings and extended funding for another set of trainings including two recommendations made by AUI. The first was to offer the training in Moroccan Arabic which would allow more local people to participate and to focus on women from established handicraft cooperatives which, like all businesses, use business skills.

This training for Leading Women of Handicraft Cooperatives of the Middle Atlas were selected largely due to the sustainability they had already demonstrated, in addition to their non-dependence on charity. This particularly set them apart from many similar cooperatives that were relying on donations. Women who benefited from this program have already showed that they could be successful and are ready to move forward the next level of development.

Mrs. Fishburn affirmed that "these women were not looking for donations; rather they were seeking help and assistance to move forward". Building networks has been shown to be a useful and the women have kept in touch with each for advice and information sharing. In order to check on their situation, a follow-up with the women was planned who took advantage of additional training and reported on successes of improved products, labeling and expanded markets in Morocco.

"When they came back, they had to report on what they used, had learned and what else would be helpful. We also did a lot of telephone interviews, collected a lot of data; their cooperatives have achieved success. For example, there is a group of women in Fez who do forged iron. They are doing extremely well and now take a lot of special orders", Mrs. Fishburn said.

One of the most important things women gained from the two training sessions was the value of



networking. Indeed, they discovered that they had so much in common, especially the ones that worked in similar areas, and they felt they could use these commonalities to their advantage. Consequently, they started applying one of the concepts they had learned in accounting classes: pulling their resources and buying from the same supplier since they would get a better price when buying larger quantities. The training introduced them to many other resources, in addition to the solutions they gleaned by exchanging experiences with each other. Some still keep in touch with one another today.

Another focus of the trainings was to enhance the quality of the products. Mrs. Fishburn stated, "We worked on quality issues, that a product has to be a certain way or else people won't buy it. If you're trying to sell something because you're 'Meskina', it won't last very long. People will buy once or twice because you seem to be poor but they actually prefer to buy a better quality product." Mrs. Fishburn has recommended that women in new cooperatives talk to her and some other leaders from the MEPI project for encouragement and advice.

In order to build on the network established, Mrs. Fishburn, along with AUI student volunteers, conducted a survey in which they prepared a list of topics that the participants had to rate according to their interests. They also had to determine whether they needed training on the listed subjects, or just more information. The results showed an interest in water, more precisely how to make water clean. These women also indicated that they needed training on first aid, specifically they had questions regarding some simple health emergencies, including how to stop bleeding or how to deal

with burns. Mrs. Fishburn has been consulting with Mrs. Benmokhtar about Hand and Hand's help in collecting or developing information to meet the needs identified by women for their communities. Information is a form of empowerment.

"We're looking at maybe publishing some of the business training materials that we have translated into Darija in a booklet form, as marketing plans, which were already used. These materials continue to be used by Peace Corps Volunteers who work in Small Business Development throughout Morocco. The marketing plan was used in several training programs in the past three years and most recently in Fez where Mrs. Bouchra Hamelin led a workshop for handicraft cooperatives.

Women's lives in the region have changed tremendously after the trainings. They gained more pride and the cooperatives have moved forward. Mrs. Fishburn gave the example of a woman from Sefrou who watched Mrs. Fadwa Bouachrine, a former AUI professor, introduce women to computers. This woman from Sefrou was so taken with the idea of women learning in a friendly environment that she was motivated to start a female-friendly cybercafé. The HRCWEC continues to encourage visitors and researchers to come through and look at the Center's collection of books, magazines, government documents and student papers.

"The real thing I would really like for the next big research would be the indicators of empowerment, a research to understand what empowerment is. Everybody at some point is supposed to be empowered and be in charge with their own lives and work with what they have and think positively about the future",

Mrs. Fishburn said.

The HRCWEC's project in development is the construction of a community library in a village near Ain Mersa, in the hopes that the population may have easy access to books. Mrs. Fishburn again stated, "Access to information is empowering. There is a need for books because a lot of people drop out after primary school; it will enable young adults to keep up their level of literacy. Many people in Morocco and around the world have a primary education but if they don't read or practice, within a few years they lose their functionality". The village currently has the task of identifying a suitable location and to assure basic funding for access to electricity and water before the books and materials will be purchased by a donor in Casablanca. The village must demonstrate determination through a plan for sustainability and for which they have assistance to understand what is required to be considered sustainable.

Finally, there is an AUI graduate student collecting information on all previous literacy programs in the area for which a group of professors will design tests to assess the actual level of literacy in order for improved assessment, future literacy programs, and accurate statements of progress in reducing levels of illiteracy.

The work is not over, and more funds are needed in order to fully meet the mission statement and expand the Center's activities. The HRCWEC has made very modest attempts at empowerment since the year of 2000. Though empowerment cannot be numerically measured in Morocco due to the lack of indicators and research, the Center has received positive feedback for the work it had done so far.

## Book Review

## "The Wheel of Time": A must read!

SALMAN AL HUMAM

We have finally started to endure the slim taste of what Ifrane weather has in store for us. It's only a matter of time before all outdoor activities will be reduced to walking to and from the library and restaurant.

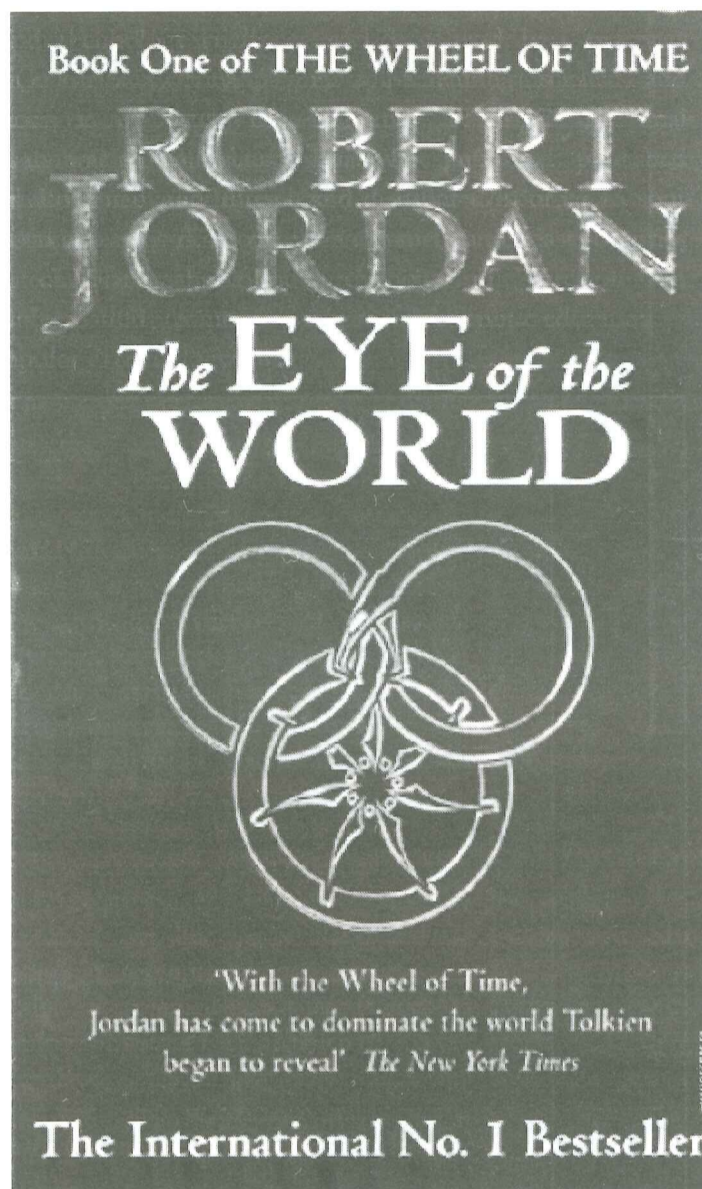
The activity I am about to propose will make those winter days fly by. It will transport you to sunny beaches and far off cities; you will meet amazing people, solve murder mysteries or fall in love. What is my suggestion? Read a book! Not one of your required text books, those you have to read without my advice. Instead, read a book that will play with your imagination so hard that you might go to class one day with an unsheathed sword and dressed in a cloak.

Mind boggling in every sense of the word, The Wheel of Time written by Robert Jordan, is a must-read, and once started it is impossible to put down. Of a similar genre as the world-famous Lord of the Rings series, The Wheel of Time became an international No. 1 bestseller. The New York

Times claimed, "Jordan has begun to dominate the world Tolkien [author of the Lord of the Rings] began to reveal". My personal interpretation of the book is simply "wow!"

The book contains a number of interesting characters that will draw the reader in to their world. The main character is named Rand al Thor, and he is a shepherd who grew up with his three best friends: Perrin (the strong one), Mat (the mischievous one) and Egwene (Rand's love interest).

Their simple village life is about to change forever when it is discovered that the fate of the world lies within one of the young men from The Two Rivers. Their journey begins from a small rural area in a vast kingdom, filled with obstacles and led by Moiraine of Tar Valon. Rand and his companions only start to learn of their capabilities they could never have dreamed of. Joining them in their adventure, a true page turner that will keep you reading nonstop.



## Poem

## Life

SOUKAINA OUARAB

Life,

A four worded letter that embraces consequential merit;

A sparkle that opts ease wherein we supplement trepidation

An orb no being can abscond from,

A leisure of ardour and apathy,

An endowment god sends;

And a bequest god ends.

Death is the thoroughfare wherein life delves into

We will all incline in grime, all what will matter is our rectitude not our affluence.

Sitting here beneath the alter ego,

Reminds me of the corridor no one can elude from;

A philanthropic dowry given to us,

Something you may not be triumphant at,

Something,

That will simply loiter by hook or by crook

## AOL Radio powered by CBS

TAHA SLAOUI

AOL RADIO is an Online Radio service powered by CBS. It provides access to all kinds of music including: blues, metal, classical, country, electronic, hip-hop, rock, jazz, indie and more. Not only that, it also provides FREE access to the most famous radio channels in the US, such as Kenny G's station and others according to state.

This radio service is not only complete in every possible way regarding music selection, it is also the most suitable way for any AUI student to access his or her favorite songs and

radio channels. Downloading music to one's computer is not a recommended option at AUI because the internet connection is so slow.

The remaining option for us AUI students is streaming, proof that there always is an alternative solution. Streaming versus downloading also allows the internet to be faster for those who need the internet for research or webmail. For example, the site southparkstudios.com for the South Park TV show, you can stream the show instead of trying to download thirteen

seasons all of which won't even end by graduation.

AOL Radio provides many other features, including presets where one may add favorite stations and have direct access to them. The radio also keeps track of all songs that you have listened to and provides history and a full description of these songs. The AOL Radio toolbar is also available for download for faster access and the similar AOL Radio application for your iPhone.

Between tracks, the user will get some advertisements, which isn't a big deal since

they can be skipped the same way commercials can be skipped using a TiVo.

To access AOL Radio, please visit the following link: <http://music.aol.com/radioguide/bb>. This is a direct link that provides some guidelines about the radio and explains any new features that are updated or added. After entering this link, all that is left for you to do is click on the bar (please refer to the illustration) and enjoy the music! Don't forget to tell your friends!



AOL radio powered by CBS RADIO

LISTEN NOW



# How to Survive your Academic Years

HABIBI YASSINE

Before beginning this article, I would like to welcome all of our freshmen students. I know that some of you are overwhelmed, some others are having fun, while still others are really enjoying campus lifestyle.

I've been a freshman myself and I know what you are going through. Some of you are here by choice, others because your parents wanted you to be here, others because you got a scholarship and a few more because you had no other choice.

Whatever the reason that brought you here, the only thing you should be willing to do is to enjoy your life at AUI, study hard, play harder and live hardest. The first semester away from home isn't always easy for everybody to handle. Even if the majority of students are happy to leave their parents, for many of them, the transition will be much harder than they expected, and this is a very difficult challenge that will mark their entire life.

The one issue that everybody faces is the trial of living in a double or triple room. I don't

think that anybody met the perfect roommate their first year. This is very normal; you have to be able to manage your behavior, your attitudes and your habits. You and your roommate don't have to be the best of friends; you just need to deal with mutual respect, understanding and tolerance. I know it is a lot, but patience will eventually allow you to find THE roommate that best suits you.

With regard to academics, the fact that you were smart enough to succeed in high school does not mean that you can succeed in the university without doing your study tasks. The reason many students fail a class or get put on probation is that even if they are smart, they lack the motivation to do the homework. You have to bear in mind that the university is your job. If you do your job, you will succeed in the university and ever after.

This is not only about studying; you have to take your responsibilities to attend all your classes even if some of them are boring. Also keep in mind that attendance is taken into

consideration in the final grade of some classes, despite the attendance policy.

To be short and concise, here are some tips for your academic as well as personal success:

**Manage** your free time according to your schedule and make plans to follow.

**Avoid** procrastination and try to finish at least one project absurdly early - you will feel great.

**Attend** all your classes; otherwise your grades and performance will suffer

**Take** reliable notes during each class, even if you cannot study for an exam or you get a pop quiz, you will still be prepared.

**Balance** yourself between working, playing, chatting, surfing or watching TV: do a little of each thing without neglecting your studies.

**Work** hard, but not too hard, you will lose motivation.

**Choose** the major and minor that best suit you and the ones that you want to do (not the one that your friend told you was the

easiest).

**Get** a good GPA, succeed in academic life, you will surely get a good job (Yes, with a high salary).

**Build** a good relationship with your roommate (in case you lose your keys).

**Join** a club of your interest or in a field that you would be interested to know more about and attend meetings regularly.

**Attend** different talks, events, debates, shows and competitions in different fields about different subjects.

**Take** care of your health and do sports regularly so that your brain fits your body.

**Meet** new people and make friends (you never know when you might need them).

**Open** your mind (let the light in) and experience new things.

**Go** see the counselors if you have any problems. They are here for you and their services are free.

**Be** aware of sexual harassment.

**Be** careful with your money, the cash wallet makes you unaware of the money you are spending.

**Party** with a lot of moderation

and only on the weekends.

**Don't** go home every weekend; your parents will get fed up with you and it's even harder for them to let you go again, not to mention this makes integrating into the university even harder.

**Don't** be afraid to ask for help, there are always people that are happy to give rather than take.

**Relax** (take it eaaaaasy), feel good, enjoy yourself and be positive.

Last but not least, remember that you are not just learning about computer science, quantitative math or World War II, but you are also growing up. In your time here you will forge your own personality, you will learn critical thinking and study skills and you will find time to socialize. It is my hope that you all learn to cope with different kind of problems that will build the foundation for your experience, making you a frame of reference.

N.B.: This article was inspired from this website: <http://collegeuniversity.suite101.com/>



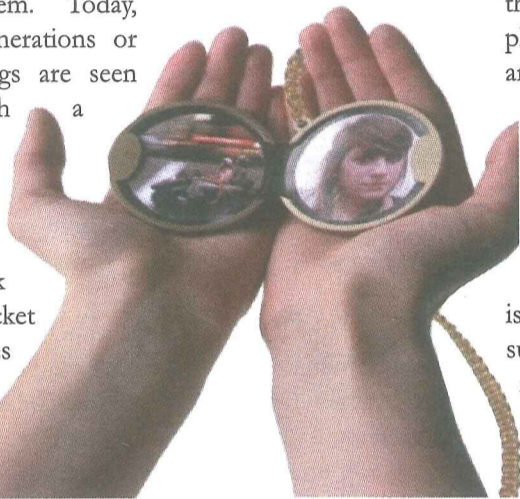
UGot Style

## KODAK 1881: a Digital Necklace with LCD Screen

MOHAMMED REDOUANE KHRIFI

People have always liked carrying around photographs of friends and family. One trend that has become a little outdated is lockets with pictures in them. Today, only older generations or younger siblings are seen wearing such a token. Thanks to Kodak, that is about to change.

The Kodak 1881 is a pocket locket that gives a brand new hi-tech



treatment to an obsolete fashion accessory. It has an integrated camera lens on the locket's exterior, and its interior is fitted with two LCD displays. These displays are designed to showcase your favorite photographs of the best memories.

Just aim and tap the locket to capture or open the locket for a precise photo composition. There are side panels to navigate through the menu and photographs stored in its integrated memory.

The Kodak 1881 is still in a conceptual stage, but its mass production is highly anticipated. I am sure it will be one of the most fashionable gadgets around.

## Io-Jacket

MOHAMMED REDOUANE KHRIFI

Lode Frey, a German clothing designer, introduced the Io-Jacket during the Centrum der Büro- und Informationstechnik (CeBIT; an annual trade show for information and telecommunications technology). This jacket is much more than an article of clothing; it includes an MP3 player, mobile phone, and a GPS all built-in. Only ten of the jackets have been produced, and were all sold in an auction on eBay as part of a fundraiser for the Humans for Humans Foundation.

The Io-jacket is based on Interactive-Wear's "Know-Where Concept Jacket" with its own integrated MP3 player and a Bluetooth mobile phone interface, which is the standard configuration for a decent Wearable Electronic Jacket.

The additional bonus for the io-Jacket is the use of the GPS over IP function made by a German company with the same name. Hybrid GPS technology enables you to look for the person wearing the jacket even



inside a building where normal GPS does not work. With the service from Vodafone, the Jacket wearer can upload in real-time his position and anyone knowing the website can follow the movement.

The Io-Jacket stands apart in that it can actually be bought, unlike previous models. It will still take some time until this Jacket technology becomes mainstream and more affordable.

## Windows 7, What's New?

AYOUB EL MAMOUN

Now that Microsoft launched Windows 7, the company's latest Operating System, computer users are wondering about its new settings, tools, updates, and features. The designers have upgraded some of the product's features that Vista contained, and fixed some bugs and problems that were reported when using XP or Vista.

Windows 7 provides the user with easy access to his or her files, websites, and applications. The Pin option located in the taskbar is used to pin and jump the most used files to a list so that the user can have a quick link to his data. The HomeGroup application offers advanced options of file, photo and printer sharing. The layout itself has not changed much, it remains similar to Vista's, but with more display options and preferences.

Microsoft has tried to make Windows 7 a high performance system. When interviewed by the prestigious American magazine Newsweek, Bill Gates said that Microsoft created a blog in order to gather suggestions about the development of the performances. In addition, he mentioned that a complete change has been made in terms of processes management and the Kernel. The control panel has now more items like Troubleshooting, Workspaces Center and Credential Manager. For people

who care about their PC's security, the Windows Security Center has been improved and renamed the Windows Health Center.

Entertainment is a basic feature of Windows 7. The Windows Media Center has been developed and enables the users to perform new tasks like converting videos, creating movies and recording TV. Some operations like photo and video sharing are easier now. The Internet Spades and Checkers are added to the special version of Internet Explorer. Windows Media Player 12 is included. Some features were removed from Vista and XP and will have no existence in Windows 7 like the Movie Maker, Windows Calendar, and the Classic Start Menu.

No operating system is perfect. This is what the first testers concluded. Windows 7 still has problems with security, especially malwares and spywares. Experts mentioned that it's now easier for a hacker to damage different parts of the system since they are all interconnected. Another problem is that the installation requires high hardware options like 2 Go of RAM and 20 Go as a free disk space.

The ultimate edition of Windows 7 costs \$119 in the United States, but it's just 10 Dirhams in Derb Ghallef (a famous bazaar in Casablanca).

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