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AUC APPOINTS TWO NEW DEANS

September 28, 2021, Cairo – The American University in Cairo (AUC) appointed two new deans to lead the School of Sciences and Engineering and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. AUC has named Lotfi Gaafar the new dean for the School of Sciences and Engineering and John Meloy, the new dean for the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Lotfi Gaafar, Dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering

Gaafar comes into his new role with extensive experience, both within AUC and internationally. He earned his bachelor's in mechanical engineering from Ain Shams University and his master's and PhD in industrial engineering from Arizona State University. Prior to joining AUC, he taught at Clemson University in the United States and then at Kuwait University. He first joined AUC in 2000 as a professor of mechanical engineering and eventually served as chair of his department between 2017 and 2019, before taking on his most recent role as associate dean of undergraduate studies at SSE. Beyond his work in academia, Gaafar also built experience working in the field as a production engineer and then factory manager of El-Ameen Company for Plastics in Cairo.

"It is a huge responsibility to lead the largest school at AUC and to synergize its activities with the rest of the University," Gaafar said. "We are currently at a point where the school is poised to take a huge leap forward. Coping with COVID-19 has opened new learning and teaching avenues that positively impacted, and will continue to impact, the school."

Gaafar's priorities over the coming years include enhancing the working environment to foster collaborative work in all fields and improving the school's three core activities: education, research and community service. "Internationalization will be another priority to maintain our growth and competitiveness," he added.

To address these priorities, Gaafar is confident he can leverage the school's existing strengths and the expertise of its faculty members. "SSE has excellent researchers, and recently, more than 10 of them were cited as part of the top 2% influencers in scientific research worldwide," he explained.

As dean, Gaafar hopes to maintain and strengthen the school's relationship with its students by continuing to amplify their voices in discussions around the future of the school.

As he looks to the future of SSE, Gaafar is also motivated by his pride and confidence in the way AUC and the School of Sciences and Engineering have been able to position themselves within both the global and local arenas. He is committed to supporting the school and University in retaining their reputable status and fueling positive change. "SSE has a unique talent pool and distinct facilities that are above and beyond our local competitors and most regional ones," he said. "This is significantly strengthened by the liberal arts approach to education and cocurricular activities that are unique to AUC. All these factors put our University in a distinct position locally and regionally. This, of course, places a larger responsibility on our shoulders to maintain that position, while helping others improve their systems as part of our leadership responsibilities."

John Meloy, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Meloy earned his PhD in history from the University of Chicago and has a track record of academic achievements, including a record of research and publication in Islamic history with a specialization in the Mamluk era.

Furthermore, previously serving as chair of the Department of History and Archeology, associate dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and director of the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies at the American University of Beirut, Meloy brings with him years of exemplary higher education experience to AUC.

Meloy's vision reflects the school's vision statement: excellence in teaching, research and creative expression. "Given the diversity of disciplines within HUSS, we are well-positioned to serve as the nexus of the local and the global in manifold ways." He added that the critical skills that the students acquire from AUC's various disciplines give them the means to continue learning after they graduate. "It's not so much teaching them what they need to know now, but rather teaching them how to figure out what they need to know and giving them the skills and traits to teach themselves: sharpening critical thinking, cultivating curiosity and creativity, fostering individual and social awareness, and strengthening effective communication," he said.

Meloy's priority is the people in HUSS. "I hope to ensure that the faculty have the support they need to achieve their scholarly objectives, the students are getting the most out of their education, and our curriculum gives them the best possible springboard for their success."

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Founded in 1919, The American University in Cairo (AUC) is a leading English-language, American-accredited institution of higher education and center of the intellectual, social, and cultural life of the Arab world. It is a vital bridge between East and West, linking Egypt and the region to the world through scholarly research, partnerships with academic and research institutions and study abroad programs.

The University offers 40 undergraduate, 52 master's and two PhD programs rooted in a liberal arts education that encourages students to think critically and find creative solutions to conflicts and challenges facing both the region and the world.

An independent, nonprofit, politically non-partisan, non-sectarian and equal opportunity institution, AUC is fully accredited in Egypt and the United States.