



Executive Summary
Renewal of Licensure
American University of Sharjah

April 22-25, 2019

An External Review Team (hereafter ERT) visited the American University of Sharjah (AUS) from 22 to 25 of April, 2019 to evaluate the *Self-Study* for Renewal of Licensure (hereafter the *Self-Study*). The exit interview was held on April 25, 2019.

AUS was founded in 1997 by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah. AUS is an independent, not-for-profit, coeducational institution that models itself after American institutions of higher learning. AUS is located in the University City and occupies a major part of it. The University City is located about 12 kilometers from the center of Sharjah City. There are four colleges: College of Arts and Sciences; College of Engineering; College of Architecture, Art, and Design; and College of Business and Management. The University offers 26 undergraduate programs at the Bachelor's level, 13 graduate programs at the Master's level, and one PhD program. In spring 2019, the University enrolled 4800 students (4375 undergraduate and 425 graduate). AUS has 81 active student clubs and organizations: 29 cultural and 52 non-cultural clubs. The total number of full-time faculty members in the University during spring 2019 is 357, of which over 70% hold PhD degrees from the USA and Canada. Forty-eight nationalities are represented among the faculty. The faculty to student ratio is approximately 1:14.

AUS has been accredited in the USA by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education since June 2004. The Bachelor of Science degree programs in Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Industrial Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering are accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET. The Bachelor of Science degree program in Computer Science offered by the College of Eng is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET. The Bachelor of Architecture program of the College of Architecture, Art and Design is accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB) of the United States. The School of Business Administration is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

In support of its application for Re-Licensure, AUS has submitted a comprehensive *Self-Study*

covering all sections required by the *PGRL* with appropriate supporting documentation.

Through its consideration of AUS' *Self-Study*, examination of other documentation, and interaction with administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, employers and others, the ERT identified many strengths at AUS. These include the following:

- the University's commitment to research, as evidenced by the creation of research institutes and the funding of research groups within these institutes;
- highly qualified, motivated, enthusiastic, and competent administrators, faculty and staff;
- exceptionally dedicated and enthusiastic students and alumni;
- exceptional facilities and infrastructure,
- very satisfied employers, and
- a very good level of community engagement.

Matters that need addressing to bring the programs into compliance with the *Standards* can be grouped into three thematic areas:

1. Inconsistent and/or incomplete documentation: Examples include inconsistent descriptions of the organizational structure in various documents; inconsistent references to institutional objectives versus goals; and lack of policies on various topics.
2. Research-Related Issues: The strategic direction of research at AUS is currently uncertain given the recent departures of the Chancellor and the Engineering Dean. Not surprisingly, therefore, faculty were unable to articulate the University's research strategy.
3. Vacant High-level Positions: The large number of vacant high-level administrative positions throughout the organization will adversely impact the university's ability to accomplish its mission, and will impede progress towards its desired elevated stature among the world leading universities. These positions must be promptly filled.

The ERT makes its requirements and offers its suggestions in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the *Standards* are met, and to aid the AUS to receive Re-licensure. The ERT requirements and suggestions can, and should, be viewed as "Opportunities for Improvement" as AUS progresses towards excellence in education, research, and service.