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LEBANESE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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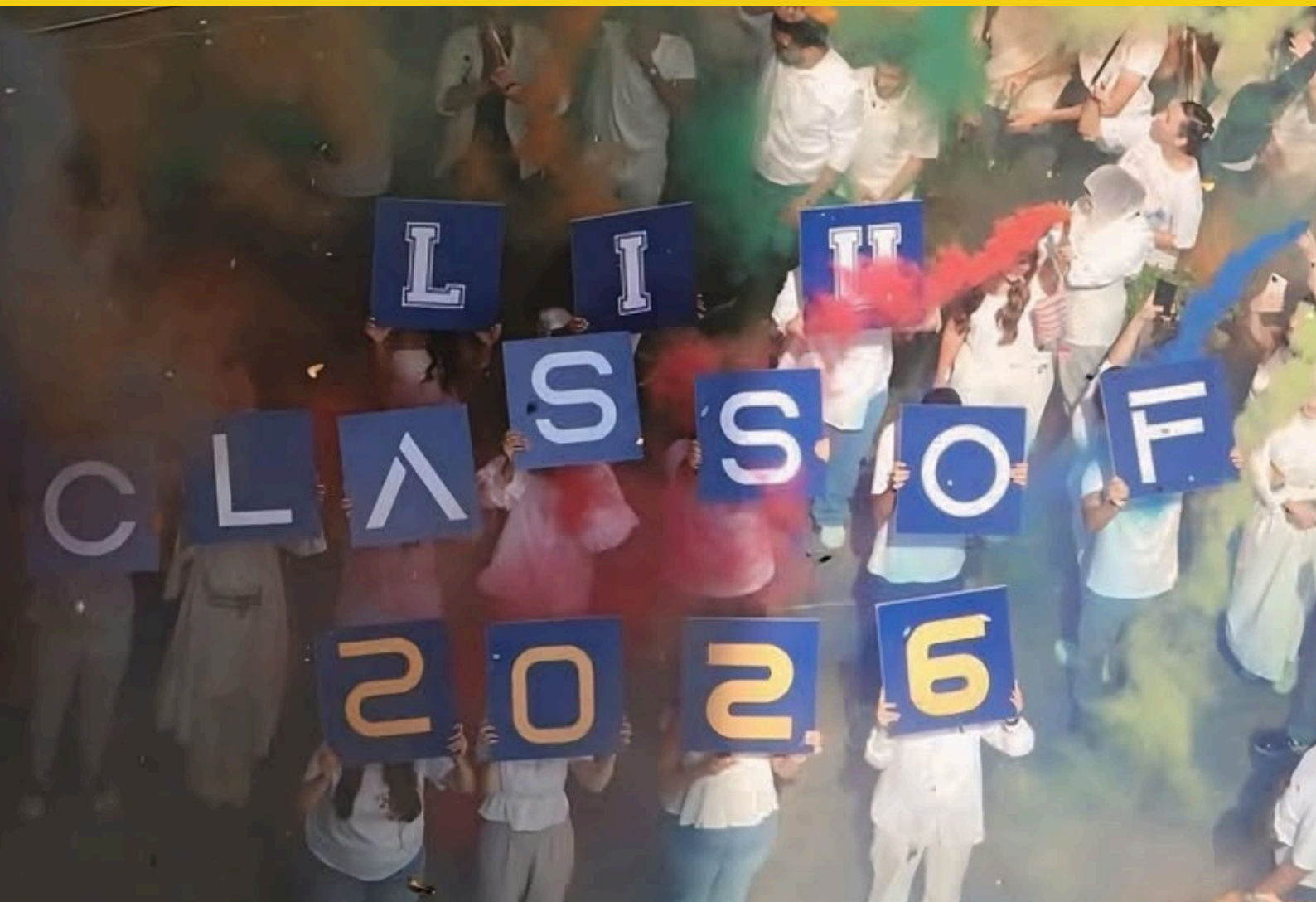




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An Interview with the Dean Dr. Adel Daaboul

As the School of Business steps into a new chapter under the leadership of the Dean, Dr. Adel Daaboul, the conversation about the future takes on new significance. What does it mean to build a future-ready School of Business at a time when artificial intelligence is reshaping how we learn, work, and lead? In this opening interview, Dr. Daaboul shares his vision for the School—from strengthening quality, accreditation, and academic standards to embracing AI responsibly, preparing students for an evolving labor market, and ensuring that innovation is matched by sound judgment and integrity. His perspective sets the stage for this edition’s theme, **“Future-Ready Business: Adapting, Innovating, and Leading in an AI-Driven World,”** and for the conversations that unfold throughout the pages ahead.

Q1. As the School of Business enters a new academic phase, what are your main priorities and the direction you would like the School to take in the coming years?

My main priorities fall under three titles: compliance with Law 285, working towards accreditation with ACBSP, and developing our internal quality assurance processes, policies and manuals.

These three are not separate tracks. Compliance gives us a solid legal and academic foundation, accreditation sets an international benchmark to measure ourselves against, and our internal quality assurance system is what turns both into daily practice rather than paperwork. To move this forward we have formed a set of committees, including curriculum review, PLO-CLO assessment and faculty ranking, together with four task forces, each responsible for producing a manual: one for faculty, one for students, one for role clarification, and one for the School calendar, setting out what has to be done and when.

The direction I would like the School to take is simple to state and demanding to deliver: a School of Business where quality is documented, consistent across all our campuses, and visible to anyone who looks at us, whether that is a student, a parent, the Ministry, or an international accrediting body.

Q2. Why are accreditation, quality assurance, and compliance with Ministry requirements important for both students and faculty members?

They are important because together they give our students the reassurance that their education meets local and international standards. A degree from our School should carry weight in the labour market, and that weight comes from being able to show, with evidence, that our programmes are well designed, well delivered and properly assessed.



For our faculty, the benefit is just as real. Accreditation and quality assurance help our colleagues to develop their skills, maintain their academic standards and see the results of their own teaching through clear learning outcomes and structured assessment. Compliance with Ministry requirements works in the same direction. Meeting the full-time and doctoral qualification ratios that MEHE requires strengthens our academic body, supports research, and moves us in the same direction that accreditation expects of us. It is an investment in the School, and one we welcome.

Q3. What steps is the School taking to strengthen its accreditation readiness and maintain consistent academic standards across all campuses?

The School has formed new committees and appointed Dr. Mohammad Knio as our accreditation lead to prepare the files needed for accreditation. We are currently in candidacy status with ACBSP, and our attention now is on preparing the self-study report and building the body of evidence that has to sit behind it. Accreditation of this kind is driven by evidence rather than by dates. It asks for several complete cycles of assessment results, properly collected and acted upon, and we would rather submit when that record is complete and convincing than work to an artificial timetable.

Alongside this, the committees and task forces are building the documentation that holds the School together: curriculum review, PLO-CLO assessment, faculty ranking, and the manuals for faculty, students, role clarification and the academic calendar. Once these manuals are in place, every campus is working from the same reference.

As for consistency, the School has always maintained the same academic standards across all campuses through its excellent academic and administrative team. What we are adding now is the documented evidence of that consistency, so that our standards are not only practised but also demonstrated.

Q4. What role can students and faculty members play in supporting quality and continuous improvement across the School?

A quality system that lives only in committees does not work. It becomes real in the classroom, and that means every member of the School has a part to play.

For faculty, the contribution is in the everyday details: aligning what we teach with the intended learning outcomes, taking course assessment reports seriously and acting on what they show, keeping records complete and on time, sharing good practice with colleagues, and taking part in the committees and task forces rather than waiting for their output. Our colleagues know their courses and their students better than any document does, and their feedback is what keeps our processes practical.



For students, the contribution is engagement and honesty. Course evaluations, student representation, and direct feedback to instructors and department chairs all tell us what is working and what is not. I would encourage our students to give that feedback specifically and constructively, and to hold us to it. Improvement is a shared responsibility, and continuous improvement simply means that all of us keep asking how we can do this better next semester.

Q5. What improvements would you like to see in teaching, assessment, and daily academic practices to support this drive for quality?

In teaching, I would like to see us move further towards active, applied learning: less time spent transmitting information that students can find themselves, and more time spent on analysis, case work, problem solving and real business situations. Our graduates will be judged on what they can do, not on what they can recall.

In assessment, the priority is alignment and fairness. Every exam, project and assignment should map clearly to the course learning outcomes, and those outcomes to the programme learning outcomes. Well-constructed test banks, clear grading rubrics, and moderation of exam papers across campuses all serve that purpose. Assessment results should then feed back into how the course is taught the following term, which is the whole point of the PLO-CLO assessment work.

In daily academic practice, I am asking for consistency and timeliness: syllabi issued and followed, office hours honoured, feedback returned to students quickly, and records and reports submitted on schedule. These are not bureaucratic demands. They are the habits that separate a good School from an excellent one, and they are what an accreditation team will look for.

Q6. Building on those academic practices, how should the School adapt to rapid developments in artificial intelligence and technology to align with our theme, "Future-Ready Business: Adapting, Innovating, and Leading in an AI-Driven World"?

Our starting point is our faculty. The School is preparing a twenty-hour faculty workshop on artificial intelligence, designed to build each faculty member's skills in using AI in the correct and ethical way to improve their teaching materials, presentations, test banks and exams. A colleague who understands these tools can use them to save time on routine work and spend that time on students instead. In parallel, we plan to put in place a clear policy on the use of AI by students and faculty, so that everyone knows what is encouraged, what must be disclosed, and what remains unacceptable. Our academic integrity is not negotiable, and a good policy protects it while still allowing us to innovate.



Beyond that, AI has to reach the curriculum itself. Our courses should reflect how businesses actually make decisions today, with data, analytics and AI-supported tools. Adapting, innovating and leading, as our theme puts it, means we do not simply react to these developments. We prepare for them deliberately, and we teach our students to do the same.

Q7. How can the School better prepare students for the evolving needs of the labour market while maintaining strong academic and ethical standards?

AI will transform jobs in the market in a way similar to what we saw in the eighties and early nineties, when the personal computer was being introduced into every aspect of work. Those who learned to use the new tools moved ahead; those who did not were left behind. The difference this time is that the change will be deeper and faster.

So we must prepare our students to use AI in an ethical way to improve their productivity, their efficiency and their creativity, because employability in the future will depend on real AI skills and not on a simple chat with any AI tool. That means teaching them to frame a problem, to judge the quality of what a tool gives back, to verify it, and to take responsibility for the result.

This is where our academic and ethical standards protect our students rather than restrict them. Employers will value graduates who can use these tools well and who can be trusted with them. Strengthening our links with the market, through internships, guest speakers from industry and projects drawn from real companies, keeps our programmes close to what employers actually need.

Q8. What message would you like to share with the students and faculty members of the School of Business?

The world is changing fast, and we need to adapt and change in a positive way so that we stay at the forefront, equipped with what we need for a better tomorrow.

To our faculty: the work we are doing on quality, compliance and accreditation is not paperwork for its own sake. It is how we protect the value of the degree we award and the profession we belong to. I am grateful for the effort our colleagues are already putting in, and I count on that effort in the years ahead.

To our students: you have chosen a School that is holding itself to international standards, and that is done for you. Take advantage of it. Be curious, be disciplined, learn the new tools without losing the judgement and integrity that make you trustworthy, and you will be ready for whatever the market becomes.

We have a strong team and a clear direction. Let us move forward together.

Beyond the Classroom:

Preparing to Shape the Future of Business



In a world drowning in raw data, the ultimate competitive advantage isn't just possessing the information, it's having the ability to architect it into a brilliant strategy. When I first stepped onto the grounds of the Lebanese International University, I chose Management Information Systems because I wanted to master that very architecture. Being recognized by the School of Business for maintaining a 4.0 GPA isn't just a huge honor, it is an accurate reflection of a deeper truth: when you love learning about the business world, excellence follows naturally. This journey hasn't just been about mastering the blueprint of how businesses innovate; it has been a major milestone of stepping into the digital autonomy of Information Systems that can evolve our LIU community.

Achieving academic excellence in Management Information Systems requires more than just memorizing fundamental techniques; it demands a drastic shift in how one perceives problems. The rigorous curriculum at LIU's School of Business taught me precisely how to adopt a mindset based on reasoning, analyzing and problem-solving. In our lecture rooms and computer labs, I studied how to transition my way of thinking from a simple consumer of technology to a master builder of information systems. I learned how to transform these complex technical systems into workable corporate decisions used in real life. Having mastered how to navigate through major courses like Database Management, Systems Analysis and E-business, I gained valuable experience which I can harness in work environments, like when I deployed an exceptional database on MySQL Workbench for one of my projects, or learned how to design and build my own website. Such valuable skills acquired in these major classes helped me further understand that data without context is meaningless, and systems without strategies are useless. This academic journey has effectively armed me as a business student with a dual language: the logic of a developer and the vision of an executive, ensuring that I am not just preparing for the future of business, but actively capable of shaping it.



However, true education extends beyond personal achievements and high grades; it is ultimately defined by the impact we leave on those around us. Throughout my time at LIU, working alongside my peers on complex case studies and technical group projects made me realize that individual talent wins classes, but collaboration transforms communities. Mastering the complex logic of MIS compelled me to give back to the School of Business community. Whether I was breaking down a complex coding system for a fellow struggling classmate or explaining a relational database structure to another in a computer lab, I discovered that knowledge expands when it is shared.

To any student currently struggling or hesitating to enter the world of MIS because it seems too daunting: remember that mastery is a process, not a prerequisite. It is easy to look at complex databases or lines of code and feel overwhelmed, but if you truly put your mind to it, embrace consistency, and ask for help, you can master absolutely anything.

As I continue my journey at the Lebanese International University, I feel deeply grateful to the School of Business faculty and my friends who have fueled my passion. I am excited to carry these lessons forward, using my education not just to navigate the future of technology, but to innovate it.

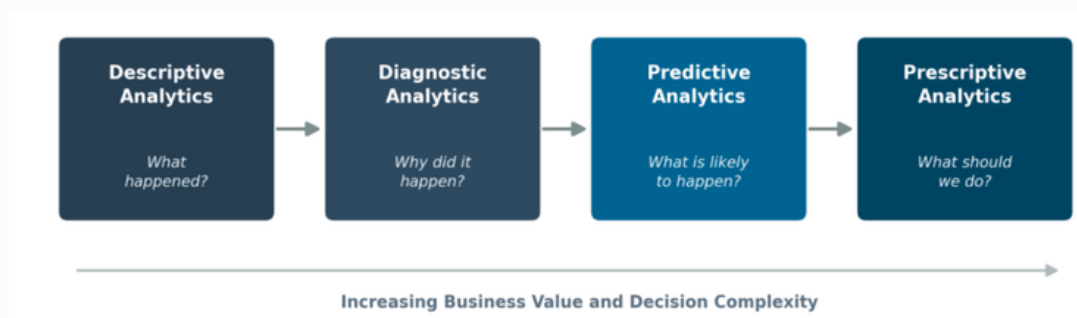
Alaa El Meslmani
Student at Saida Campus

From Data to Decisions:

Business Analytics as the Backbone of AI-Driven Enterprises

The talk of artificial intelligence dominates all discussions about the future of businesses; however, as headlines go, they can often be deceptive. Artificial intelligence does not have the ability to think, make decisions, or generate value by itself. Rather, AI relies on learning from data, while the process of transforming data into actionable insights is supported by business analytics—a discipline focused on organizing and analyzing data. As businesses are in a rush to be “future-ready”, it is important to recall that the intelligence of artificial intelligence is based on the quality of analytics.

Business analytics consists of a set of increasingly complex questions posed to data by an organization. Descriptive analytics focuses on past events, summarizing the outcomes of the operations by means of dashboards, reports, and key performance indicators. Diagnostic analytics uncovers the causes behind observed trends or abnormalities. The process continues to include predictive analytics, making use of statistical methods and machine learning algorithms to predict future developments. The final step is to suggest the exact decision that should be made; thus, prescriptive analytics offers advice based on previously obtained data.



The Importance in a World Run by AI:

Today's AI solutions such as machine learning systems and AI assistants depend on the data pipelines and analysis that are used to support them. A machine learning system that depends on data that is incomplete or uncontrolled will make wrong suggestions despite its confidence. Similarly, a prescriptive algorithm will execute the wrong decisions just as effectively as the right ones. This is why business analytics is not a secondary issue in adopting AI technologies; it is actually foundational. Companies that pay attention to their data, metrics, and analytics will be in a better position to adopt AI in a responsible manner and generate value from it.



From Insight to Action

In all sectors, there is a common trend associated with the move towards analytics-based decision making. While retailers make decisions about future demand based on their customers' purchasing behavior rather than seasonal predictions, financial institutions employ analytics tools to identify potential fraud cases or credit risks. Moreover, healthcare organizations make use of analytics to predict patient volume for better resource management. The thing that connects all of the above examples is not the complexity of the algorithm applied; it is the approach to using it – well-formulated questions, trustworthy data, and people in charge of decisions who know how to utilize these insights correctly. Analytics creates value only when its output influences decisions that would be different otherwise.

How to Build an Analytics-Ready Company

Being future-ready has more to do with forming habits around data rather than having the latest and greatest in artificial intelligence. It requires the company to work on data quality and data governance to make sure that data entering a model is accurate and reliable. It also involves developing a company-wide practice of using analytics literacy to interpret the results produced by data scientists and to actually use them rather than disregard them. The practice of questioning decisions made and supporting them with hard facts also needs to become a norm within such a company, and so should the recognition of the limitations of a certain model – its assumptions, blind spots, and potential biases.

Conclusion

In a time when AI is revolutionizing the way organizations work, it is also business analytics that quietly paves the way for intelligent automation. If organizational leaders wish to make sure their organizations are ready for the future, they could ignore the hype about AI and first build the analytical foundation behind it - the data, the methodology, and the people capable of asking pertinent questions to both. Ultimately, it will not be those organizations that have access to cutting-edge algorithms that will survive and prosper in an age of AI but rather those that will develop the ability to use them effectively through analytical judgment.

Mr. Mohamad Yehia Majed
Instructor



Generative AI as a Creative Assistant:

The Importance of Design Knowledge

Coming from a visual design background, I used to eye generative AI with contempt. I still recall the time I decided to try it out for the first time. I wanted to challenge it and make it “know its place” and give myself the satisfaction that it cannot replace me as a designer. I confidently typed, “Create a coffee shop poster. Make it modern, appealing, and professional”. In a few seconds, it produced something that would have taken any average graphic designer longer to create manually. I am not going to lie and say I was not impressed, but at the same time, I was assured that Generative AI remains a tool and not a replacement.

Generative AI has fundamentally transformed how visual marketing content is produced. Today, almost anyone can generate advertisements, social media posts, product mockups, illustrations, logos, or even short promotional videos simply by describing what they want. If you think about it, it is more efficient and effective, especially for small businesses and start-ups. It feels almost like having a graphic designer who never complains about deadlines or asks for coffee breaks (which I formerly did). However, there is one important misconception that deserves attention: Using generative AI because you lack practical design skills does not make you or AI a better designer.

Many people assume that because AI can generate attractive visuals, everyone has suddenly become a designer. In reality, operating a design tool and understanding design are two completely different things. We must not forget that to have AI generate visuals for us, we must command it using a prompt, and what we describe and write in that prompt is what the AI tool will generate. Thus, if you write something while lacking understanding about it, the results may not be as satisfactory, and you may blame the AI tool for being lousy while it was just doing what it was supposed to do. Thus, we must discern between having practical design skills and design knowledge.

Practical design skills involve creating visuals using software, editing images, and producing layouts. Design knowledge, on the other hand, is much deeper. It includes understanding color psychology, typography, visual hierarchy, branding consistency, composition, audience perception, accessibility, and communication principles. AI can produce an image with just a prompt, but it does not always understand why one design communicates effectively while another completely misses the point. This is why human expertise remains essential. A marketing professional or designer does not simply ask AI to “make something pretty.” They evaluate whether the visual matches the brand identity, appeals to the target audience, communicates the intended message, and supports the marketing strategy.

To test this theory, I have commanded the AI tool ChatGPT to generate a logo for a seafood restaurant called “Big Fish.” Assume that this restaurant wants a brand image that communicates quality, premium pricing, and luxury. Thus, I have written two prompts, one that lacks design knowledge and one that does not. The results are shown in the first figure below. Next, I wanted to create a special promotional flyer for the restaurant, so I also commanded ChatGPT by writing two prompts as seen in the second figure. Comparing the results, the first logo and flyer generated lacked design knowledge and would be perfect for a fast-food restaurant that perhaps does not mind being labeled as generic. However, given that the seafood restaurant wants to attain a certain brand image, the second logo and flyer generated, combined with design knowledge, would be a much more satisfactory result.

SAME AI TOOL. TWO VERY DIFFERENT RESULTS.

The difference isn't the AI. It's the knowledge behind the prompt.

1. AI USED FREELY	2. AI + DESIGN KNOWLEDGE
PROMPT: "Create a logo for my new seafood restaurant" 	PROMPT: "I want the logo icon and word mark to be hand illustrated with a vintage font preferably serif and the colors to include sea blue, navy blue and medium grey. Make the logo icon at the top and the wordmark at the bottom" 
✗ WHAT'S MISSING? • Generic cartoon style • Too many elements (bubbles, banner, anchor) • Weak typography choice • Lacks a clear sense of brand personality • Feels more "clipart" than crafted • No vintage or premium feel	✓ WHAT MAKES IT STRONGER? • Hand illustrated = authentic and timeless • Vintage serif font = personality + credibility • Limited, intentional color palette = cohesive and professional • Clear visual hierarchy: icon at top, wordmark at bottom • Cleaner, more memorable, and brand-aligned • Feels like a real restaurant, not a stock graphic

Again, generative AI offers superb advantages. It considerably reduces production time, lowers design costs, fosters creativity by generating multiple concepts instantly, and enables businesses of all sizes to create professional-looking marketing materials. For small businesses with constrained budgets, this technology can be a game changer. At the same time, several challenges remain. AI-generated visuals may unintentionally resemble existing artwork, which may cause legal disputes, emphasize stereotypes, create unrealistic expectations, or produce incorrect representations of products. There is also the growing concern that overdependence on AI could undermine individuals' practical design abilities if they stop practicing and experimenting themselves.

SAME AI TOOL. TWO VERY DIFFERENT FLYERS.

The difference isn't the AI. It's the knowledge behind the prompt.

1. AI USED FREELY

PROMPT: "Create a flyer for my restaurant Big Fish promoting a weekday discount"



✗ WHAT'S MISSING?

- Too many elements and fonts
- No clear focal point
- Discount not visually emphasized
- Cluttered layout, hard to scan
- Weak visual hierarchy

2. AI + DESIGN KNOWLEDGE

PROMPT: "Design an a web flyer ad for the restaurant Big Fish using the same color scheme but highlight the discounted amount 20% with a bright color perhaps a magenta color. Also don't make the visual and written content in the flyer too messy and in clutter, but respect the less is more concept in the layout while highlighting the discount during weekdays message"



✓ WHAT MAKES IT STRONGER?

- Clear visual hierarchy with strong focal point (20% OFF)
- Clean, minimal layout (less is more)
- Consistent color scheme with one bright accent
- Easy to read and quick to understand
- Professional, on-brand, and more memorable

Rather than replacing creativity, I believe generative AI is changing the role of creativity. The competitive advantage is no longer simply knowing how to use a design tool. Instead, it lies in knowing what should be designed, why it should look a certain way, and whether the final result truly achieves its communication objective. In the end, AI is an incredibly talented assistant, but it is still an assistant. It can generate hundreds of beautiful images in minutes, but it still needs someone to tell it what beauty means for a particular brand.

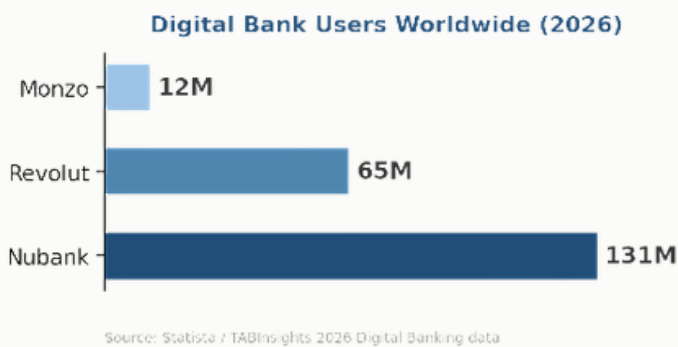
Ms. Jana Mezher
Instructor



The Fintech Disruption:

Digital Banking's Next Chapter

Not long ago, "going to the bank" meant exactly that: a branch, a queue, a teller. Today, an entire generation is banking without ever stepping inside one. Fintech didn't just add an app to an old system, it rebuilt the system, and the pace of change shows no sign of slowing.



From Disruption to Default

Digital-only banks, mobile wallets, and peer-to-peer payment platforms have gone from novelty to norm. Brazil's Nubank now serves over 130 million customers, more than half of Brazil's adult population, while Revolut has crossed 65 million users worldwide and recently secured a full UK banking license.

What once branded a company as "disruptive" is now simply expected: instant transfers, real-time balances, a card that lives on a phone. The disruptors haven't just entered the market, in many segments, they've become it.

Open Banking, Open Doors

Open banking, letting customers securely share their financial data across providers, is quietly rewriting the rules of competition. A budgeting app can now see your spending across five accounts. A lender can assess your creditworthiness without months of paperwork. The bank is no longer the only gatekeeper of your financial life, and that shift is forcing traditional institutions to compete on service, not just access.

Finance You Don't Notice

Perhaps the biggest shift is embedded finance: lending, insurance, and payments quietly built into non-financial apps. Klarna's buy-now-pay-later button at checkout is the clearest example, now a routine part of online shopping rather than a novelty. The financial transaction disappears into the product experience itself, and the companies winning are the ones customers barely realize are in finance at all.

What This Means for You

- Understand platforms, not just products: today's competitive edge often lives in the ecosystem around a service, not the service alone
- Watch the regulators closely: open banking and embedded finance are moving faster than the rules meant to govern them
- Think like a customer first: the winning fintechs succeed on frictionless experience, not just financial engineering

The next chapter of banking won't be written by the biggest balance sheet. It will be written by whoever removes the most friction, and makes finance feel invisible.

Digital banking's disruption phase is over. Its default phase has begun, and the students who understand that shift will be the ones shaping what comes next

Dr. Ahmad Ashaal
Assistant Professor



Who Guards AI? Why Human Oversight Matters

An online artificial intelligence training I attended this past July, hosted by AUF (Agence universitaire de la Francophonie), kept coming back to one moment. The trainer was clearly excited while introducing a variety of updated versions of AI tools: Genially, Gamma, ElevenLabs, Wayground, Canva, and others; some are helpful for modernizing our classroom teaching methods while others are suited for writing academic papers, promising to save hours, even days of work and effort. Every so often, the trainer would stop and repeat the same line: “Recheck the given AI content before publishing it.” However, his warning of “AI hallucination” made it clear that it was not mere background noise anymore, but almost a wake-up call for all AI enthusiasts.

Fears raised by attendees during the discussion stuck with me more than any of the tools did. Universities lean heavily on assessments, and sometimes on online exams, trusting students to use AI tools responsibly. Nevertheless, the actual risk isn't the technology itself; it's the students who are submitting AI output blindly and unverified, forcing us as educators to shift the warning from “stop using AI” to “at least review your work first.” With all the excitement surrounding AI, the main question is: Have we rushed into trusting it? Have we overestimated its powers in replacing human judgment?

The Trust Gap

The dilemma is bigger than one training session can fix. A massive number of academic papers, articles, and research studies are submitted daily with AI doing much of the writing, a fact that's hard to overlook. In October 2025, one of the most widely used research repositories in the world, arXiv, had to set new protective rules against the vast flow of AI-generated submissions, demanding computer science review and position papers to show proof of having passed peer review elsewhere before publishing them. To be clear, I highly value these tools, and what they can accomplish is actually impressive. Even with funding poured into next AI generations, human oversight must be the primary checkpoint to detect fabricated data before it becomes the groundwork the next ten papers are built on.

Beyond a Feeling

I tested this myself while preparing for a conference on participatory budgeting in Lebanese municipalities. Leveraging AI tools, I rapidly searched various Lebanese legislations, aiming to highlight the shortcomings, or the total absence of the participatory budgeting concept. On the same point of law, one AI tool confidently affirmed one thing while the other stated the opposite.

To my surprise, most of the information provided was inaccurate and falsely attributed to the Municipalities Law. Even when it was correct, the tool cited the wrong article numbers. Eventually, I ended up manually checking every cited article and statute using Google Search. This isn't merely a rare and isolated anomaly either. In 2023, in *Mata v. Avianca*, two New York lawyers filed a legal brief with a federal court based on six cases all generated by ChatGPT, including fake citations and invented quotes. Nobody noticed it before it was filed. Once the fabrication came to light, the judge imposed sanctions on both lawyers and ordered them to notify every judge whose name had been falsely attached to one of the fabricated opinions.



The court made it clear: the problem wasn't that the lawyers used AI; the problem was that they never checked whether what it told them was true. If that can bypass legal professionals in a courtroom, it can easily go unnoticed by a researcher, a journalist, or a student in any context where no one is required to double-check the information before it is passed on and cited by others.

Putting Theory into Practice

This requires a few specific actions, none of which assume AI rejection:

1. Open the original source and inspect it yourself. Not spot-check. Open it yourself. This is literally what caught the problem in my Lebanese law research, and what would have caught six fake cases in *Mata v. Avianca* before they reached a judge.
2. Treat disagreement between AI tools as a signal. If two tools disagree, something I experienced first-hand, that's the moment to step in and manually verify the facts.
3. Ensure human review before publishing. Don't count on AI as your final step. Accuracy isn't something you trade for speed. Be the final checkpoint every single time, no exceptions.

This is not a call to boycott AI tools. They have already proven their worth, particularly in speed. Even while generating the image for this article using Gemini AI, I was stunned by how quickly it produced results, and still had to check whether they were original. AI generates in instants what used to take hours, yet it still can't tell you, on its own, whether any of it is true. That's the gap human oversight has to fill now, shifting from writing the draft to ensuring its integrity.

That's what truly stayed with me, after the four days of “AI training for Higher Education” ended, more than any single tool the training aimed to introduce. Not a new impressive AI tool, but rather a heightened sense of exactly where my own judgment still needs to show up, and a quiet relief that, for now, it still does.

Dr. Andira Araji
Lecturer

Hospitality in the Age of AI: Why the Human Touch Still Matters

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the hospitality industry by forecasting demand, optimizing staffing, automating reservations, and personalizing guest offers. Yet hospitality is not defined by efficiency alone. It remains a people-centered industry built on trust, empathy, flexibility, and meaningful human interaction. Guests remember how they were welcomed, how problems were resolved, and how staff made them feel valued. The real opportunity is not to replace people with technology, but to use AI to improve operations while strengthening the human touch that defines exceptional hospitality.

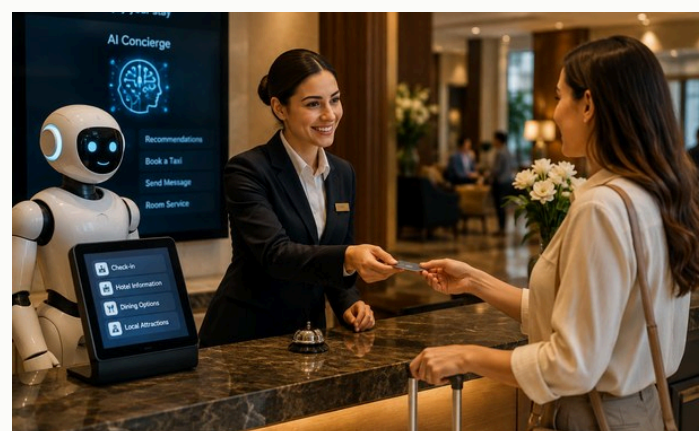
AI Delivers Operational Excellence

AI performs exceptionally well in routine, data-driven activities, helping hospitality businesses forecast demand, optimize staffing, manage reservations, support revenue management, and automate repetitive tasks. These capabilities improve efficiency, reduce costs, and support better decision-making. However, operational excellence is not the same as hospitality excellence. While AI can improve processes, memorable guest experiences depend on human relationships and meaningful interactions. Hospitality is created through relationships, not algorithms.

AI improves efficiency. People create experiences.

Recognition Goes Beyond Personalization

AI can personalize hospitality services using customer data, recommending room upgrades, dining experiences, or special offers based on previous visits and purchasing behavior. However, there is an important difference between personalization and recognition. Personalization relies on historical data, while recognition requires understanding the guest's needs in the present moment.



A returning guest may have different priorities, and a business traveler may now be travelling with family. While AI can identify patterns, it cannot fully understand emotions, intentions, or changing circumstances. True recognition therefore depends on employees who can observe, listen, and respond with empathy and professional judgement.

Personalization remembers preferences. Recognition understands people.



When Things Go Wrong, People Matter Most

Service failures are inevitable in hospitality, from rooms not being ready and delayed luggage to reservation errors or disappointing meals. The way organizations respond to these situations can have a greater impact on guest satisfaction than the failure itself. AI can support service recovery by identifying issues, retrieving guest information, recommending compensation, and alerting managers. However, guests also need acknowledgement, reassurance, and genuine understanding. Successful service recovery therefore depends on empathy, communication, emotional intelligence, and professional judgement—human capabilities that technology can support but cannot replace.

Technology solves problems. People restore trust.

Human Judgement Creates Exceptional Service

Exceptional hospitality requires flexibility, as employees often manage situations beyond standard procedures, such as early check-ins, dietary requirements, or unexpected changes. While AI generally recommends standardized responses based on previous patterns, hospitality often requires thoughtful exceptions that reflect individual guest needs. AI should therefore empower employees by reducing routine work and providing useful insights, allowing them to focus on building relationships, solving problems, and creating memorable experiences.

AI supports decisions. People exercise judgement.

Finding the Right Balance

The future of hospitality will depend on balancing artificial intelligence with human intelligence. AI is highly effective at analyzing data, improving operational planning, and supporting managerial decisions, while people remain essential for empathy, flexibility, creativity, cultural awareness, and ethical judgement. The challenge for hospitality organizations is therefore not simply to adopt more technology, but to determine where AI creates operational value and where human judgement creates the greatest guest value.

Technology should strengthen hospitality—not redefine it. Guests may appreciate seamless digital experiences, but they remember employees who welcome them warmly, resolve problems with empathy, and create meaningful experiences. Technology can enhance efficiency and support decision-making, but it cannot replace empathy, trust, professional judgement, or genuine human connection. The industry's greatest competitive advantage remains its people, and success will depend on combining technological innovation with authentic human service.

AI powers operations. People power hospitality.

Dr. Imad Wazni
Lecturer



Accounting in 2040: Are We Ready?

Throughout history, the accounting profession has been reshaped with every wave of technological innovation. Accounting has evolved from paper records to spreadsheets, spreadsheets turned into cloud accounting systems, and now we are in an era driven by artificial intelligence (AI). Today, new technologies can handle thousands of financial transactions in seconds while also detecting unusual patterns, preparing financial reports, and completing many routine tasks. So, technology in accounting is becoming more prevalent; the accountant role is rapidly changing, and it is vital that you stay ahead of the curve. This situation highlights an important question: what will accounting look like in the future? A new report, “Rise 2040,” issued by The Association of International Certified Professional Accountants (AICPA and CIMA), provides insights on how the accounting profession will evolve in an era defined by artificial intelligence, data expansion, and growing complexity. The report predicts that the accounting profession may look very different by 2040.

Accounting in 2040

According to the Rise 2040 report, the work of accountants is already changing. Accountants are taking on more strategic responsibilities rather than spending most of their time recording transactions and preparing reports. Accountants are expected to spend less time entering and auditing data, and more time reviewing artificial intelligence (AI) systems, interpreting data, assessing the business situation, and helping managers to make better decisions. Technical accounting knowledge will always matter, but employers will additionally value skills such as critical thinking, communication, leadership, ethical judgment, and problem-solving. These are the skills that technology cannot replace. Businesses will be in need of accountants who can explain financial information, identify risks, and support planning for the future. As AI becomes embedded in everyday business processes, accountants will have an important responsibility to ensure that automated systems deliver reliable information and meet professional and legal standards. Trust is one of the great strengths of the accounting profession, and that won't change.

Businesses are currently facing and will face cybersecurity threats, sustainability reporting, changing regulations, and increasing amounts of data. That means accountants will be less about preparing information, and more about understanding it, explaining it, and helping businesses make better decisions. A 2025 Stanford Graduate School of Business study of 277 accountants and 70 small and medium-sized enterprises using AI-powered accounting tools proved that AI is taking over repetitive tasks, such as transaction classification, thus freeing accountants to focus on higher-value work.

According to the study, accountants who use AI support more clients per week and finalize monthly statements 7.5 days faster than those who use traditional methods. They also spend 8.5% less time on routine back-office processing. Instead of grinding through transactions line by line, they can redirect that time toward business communication, quality assurance, and client-facing advisory work.

Preparing for the future

A strong understanding of financial reporting, auditing, taxation, and management accounting will always matter. At the same time, accountants need to become comfortable with data analytics, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and business intelligence tools. Communication skills, critical thinking, and professional ethics will become even more valuable because these are the areas where human judgment makes the greatest difference. The profession's unwillingness to change may be the biggest obstacle to advancement rather than technology per se. Accountants who welcome change will be in the greatest position to stay relevant and enhance their position as reliable advisors as automation picks up speed and expectations shift.



Looking toward 2040, AI will continue to improve, and so will accounting. Many of today's accounting systems may no longer exist. The future will belong to individuals who have the curiosity for lifelong learning. The willingness to learn may become one of the most valuable professional skills an accountant can have. Ultimately, the main question isn't whether there will be accounting in 2040; it sure will. The real question is whether today's students are ready to receive the knowledge, skills, and mindset to take the profession into its next chapter. Technical competence opens the door, but continuous learning will determine long-term success.

Dr. Samia Youssef
Assistant Professor

Beyond Oil and Algorithms:

Can AI Truly Diversify Arab Economies?

Across the Arab region, artificial intelligence (AI) is moving from conference stages into everyday business. Banks use chatbots, hospitals test tools that read medical images, delivery firms plan faster routes, and factories spot problems before machines break. These gains matter: work can become quicker, cheaper, and more accurate. Yet a more productive economy is not automatically a more diversified one.

The Wrong Question

The easy question is, "How much AI are we using?" The better question is, "What can our economy now make, sell and earn from that it could not before?" Using AI in an existing activity can raise productivity, lower costs and strengthen competitiveness (World Bank, 2025; IMF, 2026). Diversification adds a second test: does AI also help create new products, services, businesses or sources of income? Economic diversification means not depending too heavily on one product, sector or source of income. Think of a family supported by one salary. If that salary stops, everyone is in trouble; several reliable sources of income make the family safer. The same is true of a country. For oil exporters, diversification does not mean abandoning oil. It means building strong activities beside it, from manufacturing and logistics to tourism, finance, healthcare, renewable energy and digital services.

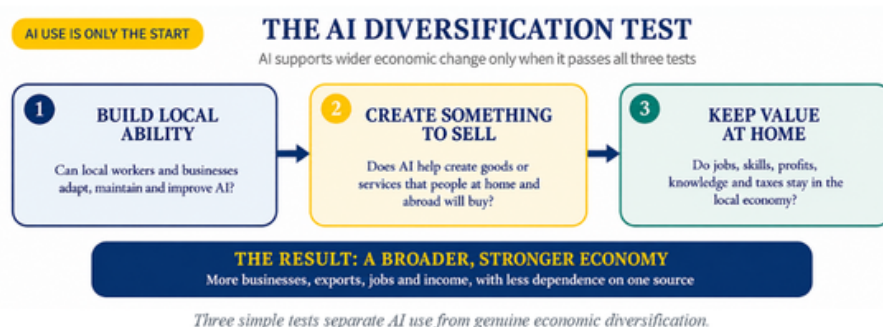
Three Tests That Matter

Test 1: Can We Build on the Technology?

Importing AI is not the problem. A hospital may buy a foreign system, but the impact is wider when a local company adapts it for Arabic, trains staff, maintains it and later sells support abroad. The World Bank (2025) identifies four foundations for useful AI: reliable internet, computing power, locally relevant data and skills. Without them, an imported tool may leave little local knowledge behind.

Test 2: Can We Sell Something New?

AI begins to support diversification when it helps businesses create something customers at home or abroad will pay for.



Imagine a Lebanese team developing an Arabic-English-French learning assistant and selling it to schools across the region. This is more than using AI: it is a digital export that can create work for developers, teachers, translators, sales staff and support teams. AI can also add value to logistics, finance, tourism, farming, healthcare and energy. A study covering more than 80 countries found a link between AI specialization and the ability to produce different goods and services, although education, infrastructure, finance and strong institutions still matter (Mishra et al., 2023).

Test 3: Who Keeps the Value?

An economy gains less when foreign license fees flow out while profits, data, knowledge, and ownership remain abroad. More value stays locally when small and medium-sized businesses take part, workers gain skills, profits circulate, and new activity contributes taxes. Uneven access to infrastructure and skills can widen the gap between those who benefit from AI and those who do not (ILO & ESCWA, 2026). Real transformation should reach more businesses and more people.

One Region, Different Roads

GCC countries can connect AI to strengths they already have in energy, logistics, finance and infrastructure. This could create smart-port services, energy-management software, industrial maintenance systems or water-saving technologies that can later be exported. Countries with smaller budgets do not need to copy expensive mega-projects. A simple phone app that helps farmers identify crop disease may spread more value than a giant data center with few links to local businesses. Lebanon can take a different road. A strategy built around multilingual professionals, universities, entrepreneurs, and diaspora links could support exportable services in education, health, finance, tourism and creative industries. Yet a good idea is only the beginning. It also needs reliable electricity and internet, finance, useful data and stronger links between universities and businesses (World Bank, 2025). A university project supports diversification only when it becomes a reliable product, reaches customers, and creates local income.

From Buying AI to Building an Economy

Governments, universities, and businesses all have a role. Education should combine technical skills with knowledge of real industries. Public contracts can give capable local firms a first customer. Clear data rules can build trust, while finance can help small firms turn good ideas into reliable products (World Bank, 2025; ILO & ESCWA, 2026). The goal is not to make every company an AI company. A bakery can remain a bakery and still use AI to predict demand, reduce waste and serve customers better.

The future-ready Arab economy will not simply buy the most AI or build the largest data center. It will turn AI into useful skills, competitive businesses, exportable products, and several reliable sources of income. The most important question is not, "Do we use AI?" It is, "What can our economy produce and sell tomorrow that it could not produce and sell today?"

Ms. Nermeen Ishker
Instructor

When AI Says "Approved"

Why Finance Students Matter More Than Ever

Fintech can make a decision in seconds. Finance professionals make sure it is a good one.



Picture a student in Beirut who needs a laptop but cannot pay the full price today. The store wants to make the sale, but it also needs to know: can this customer repay in installments? A fintech app may answer in seconds. Behind that simple "approved" screen is one of the biggest changes in finance: AI is starting to support decisions once made only by people.

A Lebanese idea, built for a Lebanese gap

This is already happening close to home. Slideit, a Beirut fintech founded in 2025, offers buy now, pay later (BNPL). According to a July 2026 profile, founder Bahaa Daouk noticed shoppers returning items at checkout because installment options had largely disappeared after Lebanon's financial crisis. The company says it built an AI and machine-learning engine called Credit Brain to assess applicants using signals such as repayment behavior, spending patterns, and platform activity when standard credit histories are limited. The technology can find patterns quickly. But someone must still decide which patterns matter, how much risk is acceptable, how to price that risk, and how to protect customers from borrowing more than they can afford. Those are finance decisions.

AI BRINGS SPEED	FINANCE BRINGS JUDGMENT
Scans data spots patterns predicts risk	Checks assumptions balances risk explains decisions

The real job begins after the prediction

Across banking and fintech, AI can flag unusual payments, summarize reports, forecast cash needs, test investment ideas, and personalize services. It can do in seconds what once took hours. But speed is not the same as wisdom. A model can learn from biased data. It can produce a confident answer from weak assumptions. It can be statistically accurate yet unsuitable for a particular customer or business.

Example: building an investment portfolio with AI and fintech

Fintech provides access, AI analyzes choices, and finance keeps the portfolio suitable for the investor.

Imagine a young investor in Beirut with \$1,000 to invest for a long-term goal. Through a fintech platform, she answers questions about her time horizon, income needs, and tolerance for market swings. AI can scan market data, company results, news, and past relationships among shares, bonds, cash, and international assets. It may suggest a diversified portfolio and monitor it, warning when risk rises or the mix drifts away from the plan. That recommendation is a starting point, not a guarantee. A finance professional must still ask whether the data are reliable, the valuations are reasonable, the fees and liquidity are acceptable, and the suggested risk matches the investor's real life. If the investor may need the money next year, an attractive long-term forecast may still be the wrong answer. Fintech delivers access and speed; AI organizes the evidence; finance connects the portfolio to the person.

Your Finance major is the advantage

Finance students do not need to become software engineers. They do need to become confident users and careful reviewers of AI. Learn to work with data, write clear prompts, test assumptions, verify numbers, and explain a decision in plain language. Then combine those skills with the core of finance: understanding value, risk, and responsibility.

Lebanon needs smarter tools for small-business finance, remittances, payments, savings, and investment. The students who connect AI with real financial needs will not be replaced by technology. They will decide how technology should be used — and help build financial services that are faster, fairer, and more trusted.

"AI can calculate an answer. A finance professional decides whether it is the right answer."

**Dr. Mohamad Saad
Chairperson**

Food Poisoning in Lebanese Restaurants:

Can AI Make Dining Safer?

As the core engine of Lebanon's broader hospitality and tourism network, the restaurant sector plays an important role in boosting the sector as a revenue source. However, reputation for food safety is the key of attracting tourists towards these restaurants.

The Hidden Risk behind the Plate

Lebanon's vibrant culinary scene is a source of national pride, from mezze spreads to charcoal-grilled delights. Yet, food poisoning remains a recurring concern in restaurants, often linked to improper storage, cross-contamination, or lapses in hygiene. For diners, one bad experience can tarnish trust in an establishment and damage Lebanon's reputation as a hospitality hub.

AI Meets Food Safety

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is emerging as a powerful ally in tackling food safety challenges. Unlike traditional inspections that rely on periodic checks, AI-driven systems can provide real-time monitoring and predictive insights. For example, smart sensors can track fridge temperatures and alert staff before food spoils; computer vision can detect improper food handling practices through surveillance cameras; predictive analytics can forecast contamination risks based on supply chain data. These tools don't replace human expertise but enhance it, ensuring that chefs and managers act before problems escalate.





Real-World Insights from Lebanon

Several Lebanese restaurants have begun experimenting with digital safety solutions:

- Beirut boutique eateries are piloting AI-powered refrigeration monitoring to reduce waste and protect diners.
- Eco-conscious cafés in Batroun use AI to track ingredient freshness, aligning with their sustainability ethos.
- Large hotel kitchens are exploring AI-driven hygiene audits, combining staff training with automated alerts.

Such initiatives show that AI is not just futuristic, it's already reshaping hospitality practices in Lebanon.

Food Poisoning Effects

Food poisoning incidents don't just harm individuals; they ripple across the economy. A single outbreak can lead to reputational damage, financial losses, and even legal consequences. By integrating AI into food safety, Lebanese restaurants can:

- Protect public health by reducing contamination risks.
- Boost tourism confidence by assuring visitors of safe dining experiences.
- Strengthen brand loyalty through consistent quality and transparency.

The Human Touch: A Part of Restaurant Development

AI is a tool, not a substitute for hospitality values. Staff training, ethical sourcing, and cultural respect remain at the heart of Lebanese dining. Technology should empower, not overshadow the warmth and authenticity that define Lebanon's food culture.

Conclusion

Food safety is no longer just about compliance, it's about innovation. By blending Lebanon's culinary heritage with AI-driven safeguards, restaurants can serve not only delicious meals but also peace of mind.

Dr. Mohamad Fahes
Lecturer



Professional Judgment in the Age of AI:

What Will Make Future-Ready Accountants Indispensable?

Imagine obtaining, within seconds, a detailed review covering thousands of transactions, a list of unusual and infrequent events, and a forecast of future and projected performance. The answer is delivered by the technology, but should it be simply accepted by the accountant? The profession's new reality is captured by this question. In this context, the artificial intelligence (AI) can process data, automate repetitive transactions, detect anomalies, and provide insights at a level that was once considered impossible. However, the more quickly technology generates answers, the more crucial it becomes to ask whether those answers are reasonable, ethical, and relevant. In fact, this transformation is no longer a future prospect; it is already underway. Supporting this shift, a 2025 global survey conducted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (AICPA & CIMA) gathered responses from 1,446 senior finance and accounting leaders and managers. Notably, 88% of respondents viewed AI as the technology most likely to transform accounting and finance during the following 12 to 24 months. Therefore, the real challenge goes beyond acquiring new systems. It also involves developing professionals who can use these systems wisely and responsibly.

From Processing Information to Interpreting It

In practice, AI systems are able to sort transactions, reconcile the accounts, review full datasets, detect unusual practices, and assist with forecasting. However, analytical power alone does not automatically produce sound and professional decisions. Most importantly, while an algorithm may flag an unusual transaction, it still takes an accountant's professional judgment to determine whether it signals an error, possible fraud, an exceptional business event, or simply a legitimate operational change. Similarly, while a system may generate a forecast, professional judgement remains essential and must evaluate whether its assumptions are still valid and realistic under changing conditions. Ultimately, AI generates the output, but accountants remain responsible for assessing its reliability and consequences. As a result, the accountant's role is therefore shifting from producing information to interpreting, challenging, and clearly communicating it.

Professional Judgment: The Human Advantage

In light of this transformation, professional judgment remains the accountant's most important human advantage. It requires the informed application of technical knowledge, experience, professional skepticism, ethical reasoning, and contextual understanding when rules alone cannot provide a complete answer.



Likewise, reviewing an AI-generated fraud alert requires a clear understanding of the organization's operations, control environment, and underlying incentives. Ultimately, technology may enhance the quality of analysis, but it cannot carry the responsibility that comes with professional judgment; that responsibility remains human; with the accountant. At the same time, human judgment is not without limitations; it may be influenced by bias, overconfidence, time pressure, and incomplete information. Therefore, the most effective approach is not to choose between human judgment and technology, but to use technology to strengthen professional judgment. Accordingly, AI provides speed, consistency, and analytical reach, while accountants contribute professional skepticism, contextual understanding, ethical accountability, and responsibility.

The Future-Ready Accountant

As routine accounting activities become increasingly automated, the profession is undergoing a significant transformation. Consequently, future-ready accountants will move beyond traditional reporting and compliance functions to assume a more influential role in strategic decision-making, corporate governance, risk management, and the enhancement of overall organizational performance. Their professional value will not diminish; rather, it will shift toward higher-level responsibilities that require interpretation, accountability, and strategic insight. Accordingly, future-ready accountants will need strong technical expertise to critically evaluate artificial intelligence-generated outputs, digital fluency to understand how systems collect, process, and interpret data, and ethical leadership to address concerns related to bias, confidentiality, and responsible technology use. They will also require strategic thinking to connect financial and non-financial information with long-term organizational value, together with a commitment to continuous learning in order to remain responsive to rapid technological and regulatory change. Ultimately, professional judgment brings these competencies together, transforming technological outputs into credible, context-sensitive, and responsible decisions.

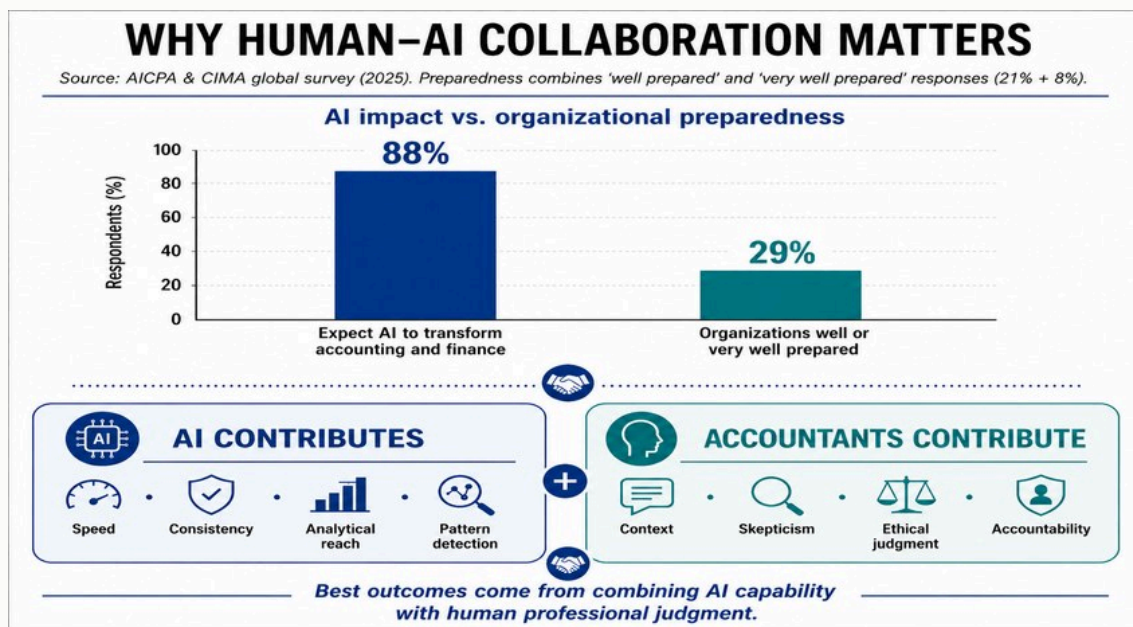
Implications for Education and Practice

Accounting education should not respond to technological transformation by reducing technical rigor or replacing fundamental accounting principles with software-based training. Rather, universities should embed emerging technologies within academically rigorous curricula while requiring students to critically evaluate outputs, test underlying assumptions, address ambiguous scenarios, justify their conclusions, and reflect on the ethical implications of their decisions. In this context, students must learn not only how to obtain an answer from artificial intelligence, but also how to assess its reliability, relevance, and appropriateness.

Similarly, organizations should cultivate a professional environment in which accountants are encouraged to question automated recommendations rather than accept them without sufficient scrutiny. Effective artificial intelligence governance therefore depends on reliable data, transparent review mechanisms, clearly defined accountability, and continuous professional development. Ultimately, the objective is not merely to adopt more advanced tools, but to build wiser and more responsible decision-making systems in which technology strengthens, rather than replaces, informed human judgment.

A Profession Redefined, Not Replaced

The future of accounting is not a competition between accountants and artificial intelligence, but a redefinition of professional value. While AI enhances efficiency and analytical capacity, it cannot determine what is ethically acceptable, strategically appropriate, or worthy of stakeholder trust. Future-ready accountants will therefore remain indispensable by governing technology, challenging its outputs, and transforming information into responsible action. In the age of AI, professional judgment will define the profession's future.



Mrs. Rayane Accaoui
Instructor



AI and the Development Gap:

Will Artificial Intelligence Help Developing Economies Catch Up or Fall Further Behind?

Today, AI is often seen as a shortcut to greater productivity. Small businesses can use AI to translate content, analyze data quickly, design engaging marketing materials, and easily reach customers through smart applications that did not exist a few years ago. For developing economies, this seems attractive: could AI allow them to skip traditional barriers and catch up quickly? The answer is yes, but only under the right conditions. Having access to an artificial intelligence application is never enough to achieve sustainable economic progress. AI does not automatically reduce the economic gap between countries. Instead, it can enhance existing strengths; however, it can also deepen weaknesses.

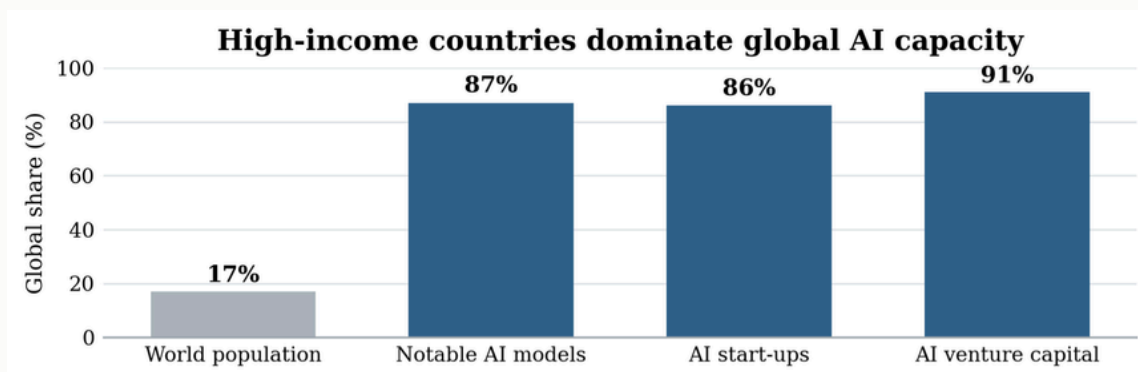
A genuine opportunity, but an uneven starting point

The opportunity is real. The World Bank highlights the rapid growth of small, low-cost AI applications that are easy to use and can run on ordinary devices. These applications can help diverse stakeholders, including small enterprise owners, healthcare professionals, teachers, and farmers. These low-cost solutions will provide access to decision-making support through lower costs for information, translation, analysis and specialized advisory-type services. Further, developing countries do not necessarily require the largest and most advanced AI systems to benefit from their use. Instead, they can modify existing technology to meet the needs of different sectors in their markets.

However, the starting point is highly unequal. The World Bank's 2025 Digital Progress and Trends Report indicates that high-income countries account for 87% of leading AI models, 86% of AI startups, and 91% of AI venture capital funding. These countries just represent 17% of the world's population. This report also identifies four pillars for AI readiness: connectivity (internet access), computing capability, locally relevant data and applications, and human competency. In regions with unreliable power supplies, high internet access costs, limited funding, and a lack of skilled employees to operate effectively in a growing digital economy, organizations will not be able to adopt AI as quickly as companies in more technologically advanced countries. As a result, developing countries may find themselves primarily importing foreign AI services rather than creating local economic value through AI. UNCTAD reaches a similar conclusion in its 2025 report. AI can support development, but it is not inherently inclusive.

The employment paradox

The employment picture is also complicated. IMF estimates that around 60% of jobs in advanced economies are exposed to AI, compared with 40% in emerging economies and 26% in low-income countries. A lower level of AI-related employment might seem like a positive sign, but it could also mean that fewer workers will be able to benefit from the productivity gains that AI offers. Advanced economies are facing disruptions from AI, including changes in the tasks performed by employees, the redesign of business processes, and the possibility that some jobs will need fewer workers. At the same time, many professionals and businesses within them are also equipped to use artificial intelligence as a complement to human work. Developing economies might face a different challenge. They may lose some of the routine work currently outsourced to them while lacking the infrastructure and skills needed to shift into more advanced activities. Even within countries, AI may benefit educated and digitally connected workers as well as large firms more than other groups, making existing inequalities even worse.



Lebanon as a brief test case

Lebanon illustrates both sides of this discussion. It has graduates fluent in multiple languages, university-educated professionals, business owners, and many people who are connected internationally through their diaspora. AI can provide many benefits for businesses in Lebanon, including better marketing, customer service and education as well as improving access to international markets. At the same time, the fact that there are still many constraints such as electrical power, financing, institutional capacity, and retaining educated and skilled workers makes economy-wide adoption difficult. Lebanon's Digital Transformation Strategy, adopted in 2022, identifies opportunities for using digital technologies to enhance economic development and improve government services. However, the primary problem remains implementing these ideas. Although Lebanon has no shortage of creative talent, it struggles to turn these individual talents into sustainable productive capabilities.

**From access to productive capability**

For developing economies, an effective AI strategy should therefore focus on building the capabilities needed to adopt and use AI successfully. Priorities include reliable electricity and affordable internet connectivity, practical digital and analytical skills, cloud computing availability, providing financial assistance to small businesses and universities, locally relevant data, and privacy protection rules that allow innovation. Education and reskilling policies are essential so that AI complements workers rather than replacing tasks. Governments can also use procurement and partnerships to direct AI toward agriculture, health, education, and public administration, where productivity improvements can generate broad social returns.

So, there is no automatic answer to the question posed in the title. AI can help developing economies catch up. At the same time, it may deepen the development gap. The outcome will depend less on the technology itself and more on the institutions, investments, and political choices surrounding it. Countries that move from having access to artificial intelligence to having real capabilities can use it as a development tool. Countries that remain passive risk falling further behind in an economy where knowledge, computing power, and skills have become the main determinants of competitiveness.

Mr. Omar Al Khatib
Instructor

Building Inclusive AI Ecosystems for Future-Ready Businesses

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping how businesses innovate, compete, and create value. Drawing on global evidence and focused on Lebanon's digital future, this article argues that technology alone is insufficient; organizations must build inclusive innovation ecosystems that combine AI adoption with responsible leadership, workforce development, and ethical governance. Future-ready businesses will succeed by investing in people as much as technology.



1. Invest in AI Literacy

Organizations should equip employees across all functions with AI literacy so they can understand opportunities, risks, and business applications. Early exposure, continuous learning, and mentoring expand the pipeline of innovators and improve organizational readiness.

2. Build Trust through Responsible AI

Transparent, accountable, and ethical AI practices increase customer confidence and support sustainable digital transformation. Responsible AI should be embedded into governance rather than treated as a compliance exercise.



3. Address Bias Across the AI Lifecycle

Businesses should assess datasets, monitor outcomes, and involve diverse teams throughout AI development and deployment. Inclusive design improves both fairness and system quality.

4. Empower AI-Enabled Entrepreneurship

AI can help entrepreneurs automate processes, understand markets, and develop new products. However, success also depends on access to mentoring, finance, networks, and innovation support ecosystems.

5. Prepare the Workforce for AI

As AI transforms jobs, organizations should prioritize reskilling and upskilling in critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital skills. Continuous learning strengthens resilience and competitiveness.

Conclusion

Lebanon has an opportunity to build a competitive digital economy by combining AI adoption with inclusive innovation. Businesses that invest in responsible AI, diverse talent, and lifelong learning will be better positioned to adapt, innovate, and lead in an AI-driven world.

Ms. Nada El Mais
Instructor



Beyond the Chatbot: Leading Responsible AI Innovation in the Classroom

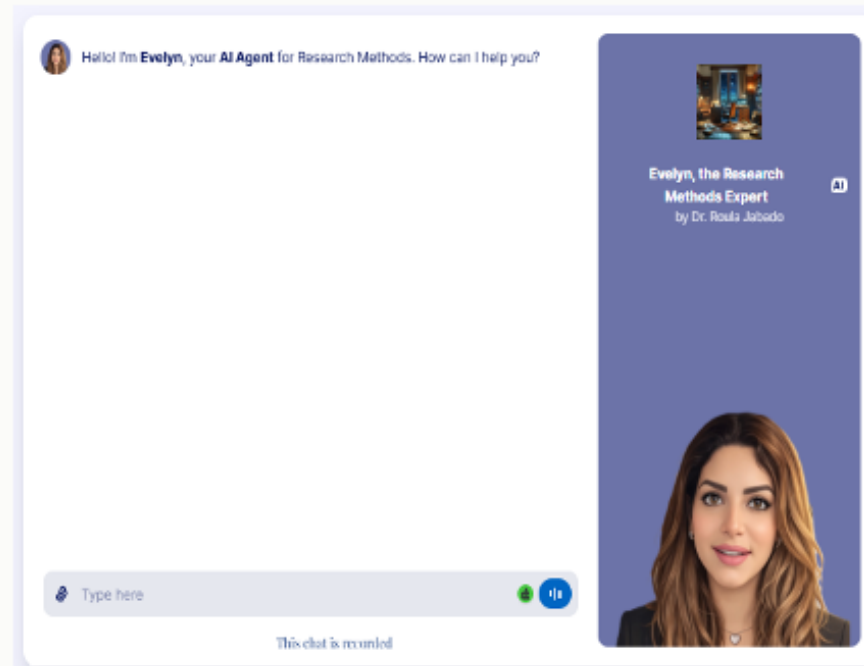
Lessons from “Evelyn,” LIU’s MBA Course-Aligned AI Agent for Business Research Methods

Digital Transformation Initiative: Meet “Evelyn”

A significant step in our School of Business digital transformation journey is the introduction of “Evelyn”, a specialized AI Agent designed and developed by Dr. Roula Jabado specifically for the Business Research Methods course in our MBA program. Evelyn represents a bridge between complex academic theory and practical application, providing students with structured concept clarity and comprehensive research project scaffolding. Operating within a critical ethical framework, this pioneering initiative reinforces academic integrity and data privacy for both students and instructors, setting a new benchmark for responsible educational technology.

AI adoption is a leadership opportunity

In many institutions, AI first appeared informally: students experimented with public chatbots, instructors reacted in different ways, and policies struggled to keep pace. This dynamic created an immediate opportunity for leadership to establish a shared purpose, consistent rules, and clear accountability. As such, a future-ready institution must move beyond the question “Should we allow AI?” and ask a more strategic one: “How can we design its use so that it improves learning while protecting human judgment, privacy, fairness, and academic integrity?”



This shift requires the same capabilities that effective managers use in any transformation initiative: a defined use case, stakeholder communication, staff development, risk controls, continuous feedback, and evidence-based evaluation. In this model, technology can create value through alignment with people, pedagogy, policy, and educational goals.

“Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant technology trend. It is already reshaping how students learn, how instructors teach, and how universities define quality, integrity, and innovation. The management challenge is not simply to adopt AI, but to lead its integration responsibly.”

The Evelyn case: from AI tool to learning partner

During the February–June 2026 semester, the Lebanese International University integrated “Evelyn”—the Business Research Methods Expert—into the MBA Business Research Methods course. The exploratory implementation involved 94 MBA students, six instructors, and six campuses. Unlike a generic chatbot, Evelyn was introduced as a course-aligned learning companion with a clearly bounded role: to explain concepts, support revision, guide research & project development, strengthen academic writing logic, and encourage ethical research practice instead of automated AI generation.

The distinction matters: Evelyn was positioned as a supportive learning partner, keeping the instructor at the center of the educational experience. Students remained fully responsible for selecting and verifying sources, developing arguments, justifying methodological choices, and producing their final work, while instructors retained full authority over standards, interpretation, feedback, and assessment.

What changed in practice? Preliminary insights

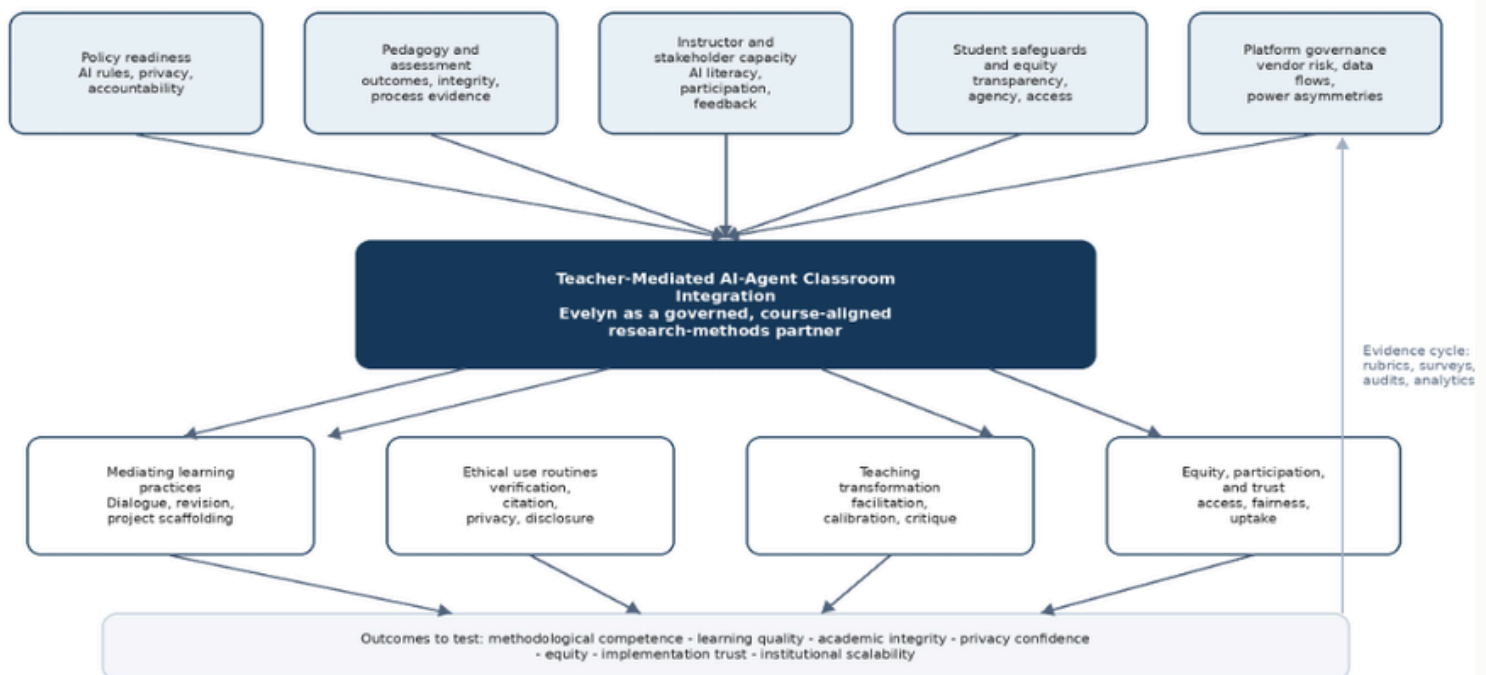
Our exploratory pilot provided preliminary qualitative findings that demonstrate the value of this structured integration, while highlighting that further empirical testing is a critical next step in evaluating long-term educational impacts. Key qualitative results from this initial pilot include:

- Dialogic learning and extended support: Students actively engaged with Evelyn outside of scheduled class hours to request concept definitions, mini-cases, practice questions, and follow-up explanations which significantly extended their retrieval practice opportunities.
- Structured project scaffolding: Instructors observed that complex research projects became significantly easier for students to navigate, as Evelyn systematically structured the research sequence from topic selection to methodology and reporting.

- Research projects gained a clearer pathway: Evelyn helped students connect topic selection, the research problem, objectives, questions, literature, methodology, data collection, analysis planning, and reporting as one coherent process.
- Enhanced writing and citation logic: Students successfully utilized Evelyn's structured writing support to improve their research proposal structures and APA citation accuracy while maintaining full personal authorship and academic accountability.
- Ethical routines became more visible and consistent: Student guidance and instructor briefings reinforced source verification, student authorship, transparent AI use, privacy-conscious interaction, and shared expectations across campuses.

“The strongest model is hybrid: AI expands access to guidance, while educators preserve context, standards, feedback, and accountability” – A decision-maker framework for responsible AI-agent integration.

Decision-Maker Framework for Classroom AI-Agent Integration in Higher Education





Five conditions for responsible innovation

1. Policy readiness: Define permitted uses, disclosure expectations, accountability, privacy rules, and incident-response procedures before scaling.
2. Pedagogy and assessment: Connect the agent to explicit learning outcomes and evaluate reasoning, process evidence, source verification, and oral explanation-not only polished final text.
3. Instructor capacity: Equip faculty to calibrate expectations, critique AI outputs, preserve teacher agency, and communicate consistent guidance across sections and campuses.
4. Student safeguards and equity: Protect confidentiality, avoid the upload of private or institutional data, support accessible use, and ensure that unequal infrastructure or AI literacy does not widen learning gaps.
5. Platform governance: Examine data flows, technical dependence, transparency, cybersecurity, and whose values shape the system. Responsible adoption includes the platform around the model, not only the model itself.

A future-ready management lesson

The Evelyn experience offers a wider lesson for organizations facing AI-driven change. Successful adoption is beyond a one-time technology purchase; it is a managed socio-technical transformation. Leaders must clarify the purpose of the innovation, involve the people affected by it, redesign processes where necessary, build capability, and monitor both benefits and unintended consequences.

For the School of Business, “future-ready” should mean that instead of chasing every new tool, or resisting change by default, it is important to build the managerial judgment to innovate with purpose. AI can extend learning, improve consistency, and support students at scale, while educators continue to provide context, standards, feedback, and accountability. Its lasting value, however, will depend on whether institutions keep human agency, ethics, and educational quality at the center of academic transformation. In that spirit, Evelyn represents both a practical classroom resource and a broader model for responsible digital transformation in higher education.

Dr. Roula Jabado
Lecturer



Beyond Graduation: Reflections from the Class of 2026

ISSUE NO. 9

Congratulations 🎓



Graduation was more than just a ceremony; it was a moment I had dreamed about for years, and finally getting to live it felt unreal. Looking around that day, surrounded by the people I love, I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed with happiness and gratitude. Every late night, every stressful deadline, every challenge, every laugh, and every little memory somehow led me to that exact moment.

I was proud of myself, not only for reaching the finish line, but for everything I had experienced and learned along the way. These years gave me memories I'll carry forever, friendships that became family, and moments that shaped the person I am today. Standing there in my graduation gown, I realized how quickly it all went by. A chapter of my life that once felt so far from ending had finally come to an end, and somehow, I wasn't sad. I was simply happy, grateful, and incredibly proud.



If I could go back, I wouldn't change a thing. I would live every moment all over again—the good days, the difficult ones, the laughter, the tears, and everything in between.

Here's to the chapter that made me who I am, and to everything waiting for me in the next one.

Solyana Saneh - BMKT
Mohammad Khamis - BAIS
Issa Nassour - BMKT



My journey was a beautiful chapter filled with growth, laughter, and unforgettable memories. From long nights of studying to moments of joy with classmates, every step shaped me into the accountant I am today. Graduation was the highlight - standing proudly with my friends, celebrating our achievements together, and feeling the bond of shared success. It was not just the end of a degree, but the beginning of a new story built on friendship, hard work, and dreams fulfilled.

As I close this chapter, I'm filled with so many mixed emotions. I'm proud of how far I've come, but it feels strange saying goodbye to a place that became such a big part of my life. I'm especially grateful to all my doctors and professors for their guidance, support, and encouragement throughout this journey. Thank you for being part of my story and for making these years so special. I'll always carry these memories with me.

Ismail Abed - BAIS
Mona Chaiko - BHTM
Rayan Ismailat - BHTM
Hiba Alrabaa - BHTM
Ali Omar - BMGT
Kheir Chkeir - BAIS
Mira Kassem - BAIS
Loubaba Sadaka - BAIS
Rawan Sayed - BAIS
Jana Berjawi - BAIS
Tarek Manasafi - BAIS
Nadine Kain - BMKT
Batoul Al Janzi - BMGT





This year has been an unforgettable experience, filled with meaningful moments, beautiful memories, unexpected challenges, and lessons we will carry with us beyond graduation.

Looking back, we realize how quickly these years passed and how much they shaped the people we are today. What once felt like a distant finish line is now a chapter we're closing with gratitude, pride, and a little nostalgia. Our advice to next year's students: work hard, stay focused, but don't forget to enjoy the journey. Appreciate the people around you, embrace the small moments, and make memories along the way. Because one day, you'll look back and realize that these were the moments you'll miss the most.

One chapter ends. Another begins.



Hussein Herez - BMKT
Mohammad Khamis - BAIS
Mustafa Abu Shaz - BMIS
Ali Msadde - BMIS
Hussein Mohammad - BMGT
Ismail Abed - BAIS



Graduating from university marks the end of an unforgettable chapter and the beginning of a new journey. These years were filled with challenges, growth, lessons, friendships, and memories that I will always carry with me. I'm incredibly grateful for everyone who supported and believed in me along the way. I would like to dedicate this achievement to my parents, who always believed in me and supported me all the way through, and also to our amazing business instructors, who helped make this dream come true and always encouraged my fellow students and me to never give up on our dreams. Here's to new beginnings, bigger dreams, and the next chapter!

Abeer Elhajj - BAIS

If I had to sum up my university journey in one phrase, it would be "growing and learning." It was not only about learning in lecture halls, but also about understanding the world, how it works, and how to navigate it. These three years opened my eyes to so many things, while the friendly and welcoming environment made networking easier than I had expected.

My Marketing instructors were always supportive and encouraging, and I will never forget what Dr. Nadine Abdul Rahman once told me: "One day, I can see you standing where I am, teaching this course." Her words stayed with me and made me believe in a strength I had not fully seen in myself.

Then came graduation day, the day we finally reaped what we had sown. The university worked hard to make it a truly unforgettable memory, a day that will always remain close to my heart. Looking back, I realize that university was never just about earning a degree. It was about growing, learning, discovering myself, and ultimately becoming the person who was ready to earn it.



Eman Sukkar - BMKT



Graduating from our university has been an incredibly rewarding journey filled with growth, mentorship, and lifelong friendships. Beyond the classroom, this community gave me the perfect space to pursue my passions and step forward with confidence. I am deeply grateful to the faculty, staff, and peers who made every moment so meaningful. Congratulations to the Class of 2026—the future is ours to shape! Thank you for an amazing chapter; I will always be proud to be part of this community.



Omar Handam - BMIS
Ali Mounzer - BMIS

Graduation is one of the happiest moments in my life, a day I will always remember with pride and joy. After all the hard work, challenges, and long nights, I finally reached this important milestone.

I feel proud of myself and grateful for everyone who supported me along the way. This moment is not just an ending, but the beginning of a new journey full of dreams and opportunities.

To the students of 2026 and 2027, keep believing in yourselves and never give up on your goals. Your time will come, and when it does, it will be as beautiful and unforgettable as this moment.



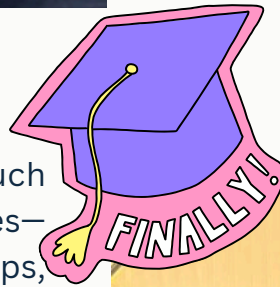
Mustafa Rifai - BMKT





My journey studying Marketing for the past three years has been amazing. I made so many beautiful memories with my friends, classmates, and doctors who were always helpful and supportive throughout my studies. I learned so much, gained new experiences, and grew both personally and academically. Graduation was a very special moment for me, my family, and my friends. Seeing all my hard work finally pay off was such a happy and unforgettable moment. I'm truly grateful for this journey and excited for what's coming next.

Nancy Hariri - BMKT



Looking back, university was so much more than classes, exams, and deadlines—it was the little moments, the friendships, the laughs, and yes, even the last-minute studying we promised we'd never do again. Somehow, all those late nights, presentations, and "I'll start tomorrow" moments led us to graduation, the proudest day of our journey.

Enjoy every moment, take the pictures, make the memories, and don't rush it—you'll blink, and it'll be your turn to walk across that stage.

Mira Al Aridi - IMGT
Aleen Malaeb - BMGT

