



*Higher Education as it should be*

## **Rafik Hariri University**

### **Strategic Plan**

**2015 - 2020**

*This strategic plan was developed during the 2014-2015 academic year by a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) appointed by the President. An electronic version is available at <http://www.rhu.edu.lb>.*

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## President's Message

### خصوصية التخطيط في جامعة رفيق الحريري بقلم رئيس الجامعة الدكتور رياض شديد



لقد استلمت مهامى كرئيس لجامعة رفيق الحريري في 1 شباط 2014، وقدمت بعد مرور شهر تقريبا تقريرا استكشافيا لمجلس الأمناء تضمن تحديدا للتحديات الماثلة امام الجامعة على المستويات الادارية والاكاديمية والمالية والطلابية والبنى التحتية وغيرها. ولقد تبين لي في حينه ان الجامعة بحاجة ماسة الى التخطيط المتوسط الأمد، والى تحديد لا لبس فيه حول رؤيتها واهدافها وطرق تحقيق تلك الأهداف.

لذلك كان من الضروري أن ابدأ بوضع الأسس التي تسمح بتطوير مخطط استراتيجي للجامعة للسنوات الخمس المقبلة بالتعاون الوثيق مع الهيئات الاكاديمية والادارية والطلابية فيها. ولقد باشرت الى عقد الاجتماع التشاوري الأول مع افراد الهيئة التعليمية والادارية لتحديد احتياجات الجامعة ومشاكلها وطرق معالجتها، والأهم لاستشراف التطلعات حول ما يمكن القيام به للدفع بالجامعة الى المستوى الذي يطمح اليه مجلس أمنائها الموقر. ولقد شكّل هذا الاجتماع العام القاعدة الصلبة التي انطلقت منها لتشكيل لجنة للتخطيط الاستراتيجي في نهاية صيف 2014، والتي عمل أعضاؤها بجدية كبيرة وبتفانٍ ملحوظ لانجاز الخطة الاستراتيجية للجامعة للأعوام 2015-2020.

مما لا شك فيه أن جامعة رفيق الحريري تتميز عن غيرها من الجامعات في لبنان. فمؤسسها هو دولة الرئيس الشهيد رفيق الحريري الذي أعطى لقطاع التعليم ما لم يقدم عليه أحد في تاريخنا المعاصر ايماناً منه بالدور الريادي للتعليم في بناء الاوطان. فبعد توفير التعليم من دون مقابل لعشرات الآلاف من الطلبة اللبنانيين في أرقى الجامعات المحلية والعالمية، كانت للرئيس الشهيد أيداً بيضاء في دعم الجامعات المحلية. فقام بتشيد الأبنية لها، وبدعم الأبحاث فيها، وساهم في تدريب اساتذتها وتطوير امكاناتهم العلمية والبحثية. لذلك كان من البديهي أن تنطلق رئاسة الجامعة من هذه الحقائق، لتقدم خطة استراتيجية تؤكد من خلالها عزمها على مواصلة اعلاء قيمة الجامعة وتحفيز دورها في خدمة مجتمعها كجزء من التراث الحي للرئيس الشهيد.

ان الفهم العميق لخصوصية هذه الجامعة، يجعلني اتمسك اكثر من أي وقت مضى بالتميز والجودة والفرادة، كخصائص نريدها ملازمة لعملنا لكي تضفي على الجامعة قيمة مضافة لدورها السامي في خدمة مجتمعها. ويقيني ان جهدنا المشترك في حسن تنفيذ بنود هذه الخطة الاستراتيجية، سوف يبلور دور جامعة رفيق الحريري في صناعة النخب الوطنية وفي بناء بلدنا على أسس حديثة وديمقراطية. فجامعتنا يجب أن تتحول الى منظومة فكرية وثقافية واجتماعية تساهم في رسم المستقبل، بأفق يتعدى نشاطها الاعتيادي في تخريج مهنيين يلبون احتياجات سوق العمل الى ما هو اشمل من ذلك بكثير. وأخص بالذكر مهام بناء الهوية الثقافية والوطنية وانتاج النخب وتقديم نموذج حي للحدثة المرتكزة على القيم الانسانية.

ويأتي استطراداً التأكيد على أن جامعة رفيق الحريري هي مؤسسة تعليمية لا تبغي الربح، بل يتمحور عملها حول التوجه النبيل للرئيس الشهيد في توفير التعليم المميز ولكن الميسر لجميع شرائح المجتمع. غير أن تحقيق هذا التوجه دونه عقبات تتمثل في كيفية تأمين الموارد المالية الضرورية في ظل انخفاض قيمة الرسوم والاقساط الجامعية بالتناسب مع الانفاق على التطوير. فاذا كان انشاء الصناديق الوقفية وجمع التبرعات واستقطاب الهبات المالية يشكلون أسس استدامة عمل الجامعات، فإن تفعيل مثل هذه السياسات يرتدي طابعاً ملحاً لدى جامعة رفيق الحريري التي تحتاج كما هو مبين في هذا المخطط الاستراتيجي الى استثمارات كبيرة لا يمكن تأمينها من خلال موازنة الجامعة فقط. وفي هذا المجال، يمكن الاستنتاج بأن تأسيس جمعية متخرجي جامعة رفيق الحريري كان عملاً صائباً نتوخى منه ان يبادر الخريجون الى دعم جامعتهم من خلال تأمين التبرعات والهبات الضرورية لحسن سير العمل فيها.

من ناحية أخرى، يواجه التعليم العالي في لبنان والعالم تحديات غير مسبوقة تتمثل في اعادة النظر بطرق واساليب التعليم التي يجب أن تأخذ بعين الاعتبار الامكانات الخلاقة التي وفرها التطور التكنولوجي، وفي تطوير البرامج الأكاديمية لمواءمتها مع مقتضيات سوق العمل وحاجة مجتمعاتنا لاختصاصيين مثقفين ومواطنين مسؤولين. لذلك تولي الجامعة في خطتها اهمية قصوى للشراكات الفعالة مع الجامعات المحلية والخارجية، ومع المدارس ومراكز الابحاث، والادارات الحكومية والمنظمات غير الحكومية، كون تلك الشراكات تؤسس لميادين من التعاون البناء في خدمة قضايا المجتمع، وتفتح الأفق امام الباحثين والطلاب للمساهمة في إنتاج ونشر المعرفة، وتشجيع الابتكار والالتزام بثقافة الجودة.

وفي سعينا الدؤوب لتحقيق الأهداف السامية التي تتضمنها هذه الخطة الاستراتيجية، سوف تترتب علينا جميعاً مسؤوليات جمة تجعلنا نبتعد عن المقارنة مع الجامعات الأخرى، إن على مستوى الرؤية والاهداف، او على مستوى إتباع اساليب وطرائق العمل المتعارف عليها. فجامعة رفيق الحريري يجب أن تكون لنفسها شخصية مستقلة تؤهلها لكي تكون نموذجاً يحتذى به بين مؤسسات التعليم العالي في لبنان والمنطقة.

فليكن سبيلنا الى النجاح تعاوننا، واتحادنا، واقتناعنا بأن ما نسعى الى تحقيقه هو مهمة نبيلة تستحق العناء.

والله ولي التوفيق.

## Executive Summary

### ملخص تنفيذي

يقدم هذا المخطط الاستراتيجي لجامعة رفيق الحريري للسنوات 2015-2020 أفكاراً قيمة تبلورت خلال جلسات النقاش العديدة التي جرت خلال العام 2014-2015 بين مكونات اسرة الجامعة. ويشكل مجموع هذه الافكار خطة طريق تهدف الى الانتقال بجامعة رفيق الحريري الى مرحلة متقدمة تؤهلها لكي تكون بحق جزءاً من التراث الانساني للرئيس الشهيد رفيق الحريري وتمكنها من فرض نفسها على الساحة اللبنانية كمؤسسة تعليم عالي ذات وثوقية عالية.

مع انطلاق عمل الادارة الجديدة في جامعة رفيق الحريري ابتداء من شباط 2014 كان من الضروري وضع الاسس التي تسمح بتطوير خطة استراتيجية للجامعة للسنوات الخمس المقبلة وذلك بالتعاون مع الهيئات الاكاديمية والادارية والطلابية. ولقد شكل الاجتماع التشاوري الاول الذي عقد في ربيع 2014 وضم الى رئاسة الجامعة كافة اعضاء الهيئة التعليمية وبعض الاداريين القاعدة الصلبة التي انطلقت منها الجامعة لتحديد احتياجاتها ومشاكلها وطرق معالجة تلك المشاكل وكذلك لاستشراف التطلعات حول ما يمكن القيام به للدفع بالجامعة الى المستوى الذي يطمح اليه مجلس امنائها الموقر. فكان ان شكلت لجنة التخطيط الاستراتيجي في نهاية صيف 2014 والتي عمل اعضاؤها بجدية كبيرة وبتفانٍ ملحوظ لانجاز الخطة الاستراتيجية للجامعة للاعوام 2015-2020. ولقد تضمنت الخطة اعادة تحديد لرسالة الجامعة ورؤيتها وكذلك لاهدافها وللقيم الاساسية التي تنطلق منها. نورد في هذا الملخص رؤية الجامعة ورسالتها بجلتهما الجديدة :

**رؤية الجامعة:** تسعى جامعة رفيق الحريري لأن تصبح نموذجاً في المعرفة وعلامة فارقة في التميز الاكاديمي وقوة في التغيير الهادف من خلال الالتزام بثقافة الجودة وايجاد الظروف الملائمة للتعليم الواقعي ودعم الابحاث الهادفة الى تطوير العلوم وتحضير النخبة القادرة على دفع عجلة التطور والمساهمة في اغناء المجتمع في الفترة الراهنة وفي المستقبل.

اما رسالة الجامعة فتقوم على تكريس ثقافة الجودة من خلال الالتزام بالسياسات الجامعية والقوانين والتفوق الاكاديمي والعمل الجاد وتوفير الظروف التعليمية التي تسمح بتحقيق تطلعات الطلاب وبتحفيز الخيال وبانماء الشغف لمواصلة التعلم. وتشمل رسالة الجامعة غرس قيم المسؤولية وقبول الآخر واحترام حرية التعبير والتفكير وتصويب المخرجات التعليمية باتجاه حاجات المجتمع من اجل تحفيز امكانيات الطالب وقدراته ومساهمته في محيطه بما يتعدى عوامل الوقت والمسافة.

لقد بُني المخطط الاستراتيجي على مرتكزات اربعة وهي:

1. **التميز الاكاديمي:** ويتضمن وضع خطة طريق للحصول على الاعتمادات الاكاديمية من جهات دولية ومراجعة وتطوير البرامج الاكاديمية وتحسين مخرجات البحث العلمي واستخدام الطرق الحديثة والتكنولوجيا في تعليم الطلاب والتأكد من جودة التعليم وتطوير المختبرات ومواصلة تحسين التعبير باللغة الانكليزية.

2. **تطوير الجامعة:** العمل على تطوير الجامعة من خلال زيادة عدد الطلاب وتنويع البرامج وتكثيف حضور الجامعة في المجتمع وايجاد علاقات متينة مع القطاعات الانتاجية والمجتمع المدني واطلاق حملة لجمع التبرعات والهبات وانشاء صندوق وقي لتمويل مشاريع الجامعة وتوسيع وتطوير العلاقة مع الخريجين.
3. **الجودة والتجديد والتحول:** اعتماد التكنولوجيا الحديثة في التعليم وعقد اتفاقيات تعاون مع الجامعات الاجنبية وتحسين طرق الحوكمة والشفافية وايجاد مناخ من الانتماء لدى العاملين والطلاب وتوسيع النشاطات الاجتماعية والثقافية والرياضية والعمل على تحقيق التنوع في الجسم الطلابي وهيئة التدريس والموظفين.
4. **اثراء المجتمع:** تقديم برامج تدريبية للمتخصصين وللمبتدئين وتفعيل وتوسيع التواصل مع المدارس الثانوية ومساعدة الطلاب على تحسين قدرتهم على التواصل خاصة باللغة الانكليزية وتنظيم ورش عمل ومؤتمرات في مواضيع تخص المجتمع بشكل دوري.

لقد تم تطوير المخطط الاستراتيجي بناء على مقاربتين:

- **التخطيط على مستوى الجامعة:** فقد تم تشكيل لجنة عليا مولجة بوضع التوجهات الاساسية للجامعة مثل الرسالة والرؤية والاهداف واسلوب العمل والاولويات للمرحلة المقبلة.
- **التخطيط على مستوى الكليات:** فقد تم تشكيل لجنة في كل كلية لوضع مخططات استراتيجية للكليات تعمل ضمن السياق العام الذي وضعته اللجنة العليا. وعليه فقد وضعت هذه اللجان العديد من الخطط والمبادرات لكل كلية وبوبتها تحت كل من المرتكزات الاربعة التي سلف ذكرها.

وبالتالي يكون المخطط الاستراتيجي للجامعة قد انجز على اساس توليف دقيق لاعمال اللجان المذكورة اعلاه وبموجب طريقة التخطيط المعروفة من "الاعلى الى الاسفل" (Top-down) و كذلك الطريقة الاخرى من "الاسفل الى الاعلى" (Bottom-up). لقد لحظ المخطط برنامج زمني لكل مبادرة على حدة وموازنة تقريبية وكذلك تم تحديد مصدر التمويل. بالاضافة الى ذلك تم تحديد الجهة المسؤولة عن تنفيذ كل مبادرة وعلاقة تلك المبادرة مع احد او بعض الاهداف التي تم الاتفاق عليها تحت كل مرتكز من المرتكزات الاربعة التي اشرفنا اليها.

بالاجمال فقد تضمن المخطط الاستراتيجي 149 مبادرة ومشروع تتطلب حوالي 64 مليون دولار يتوقع الحصول على 51 مليون دولار منها عن طريق التبرعات والهبات و13 مليون من ميزانية الجامعة. كما اقترح المخطط مبلغ 100 مليون دولار تجمع تدريجيا خلال خمس سنوات لانشاء صندوق وقي للجامعة من اجل تأمين استدامة العمل فيها وتغطي عائداته الخسائر التشغيلية السنوية في الجامعة خلال السنوات الخمس المقبلة (على اعتبار ان العجز المالي المرتقب في السنوات الخمس المقبلة هو بحدود 4 مليون دولار سنويا) ولاحقا يساهم في تأمين الاستقرار المالي للجامعة في المستقبل المتوسط والبعيد. ولقد تبين ان 70% من الانفاق سيكون في مجال التشغيل و30% سيصرف على البنى التحتية والتجديد.

ان المخطط الاستراتيجي للجامعة لا يشبه اي عمل انجز في السابق، وقد يبدو للبعض غير واقعي بالنظر الى المقترحات الطموحة الواردة فيه. الا ان التشبث باعتماده وحسن تنفيذه يعود الى ثلاثة حقائق راسخة: الحقيقة الاولى وهي ان الوقت ليس لصالح الجامعة التي تشهد منافسة حادة من الجامعات الاخرى خصوصا بعد مرور 15 عاما على تأسيسها. الحقيقة الثانية وهي ان التخطيط في فترة الازمات والمراحل الانتقالية يختلف كليا عن التخطيط في مراحل الاستقرار التشغيلي لجهة القبول بالمخاطر وبتائجها. اما الحقيقة الثالثة فهي انه بالرغم من غياب المؤسس الرئيس الشهيد رفيق الحريري وفقدان الجامعة احد أهم اعمدتها الا ان افكاره النبيلة في مجال التعليم المجاني والميسر وطموحه الجامح لتعليم طلاب لبنان لا تزال تقدم زخما كبيرا في رفع سقف التحديات التي ترغب الادارة في مواجهتها على مستوى قيمة الجامعة وموقعها المتقدم في مجتمعها.

واننا نعتقد صادقين أن تنفيذ هذا المخطط يتطلب تضافر جميع المعنيين من مجلس الامناء الموقر ورئاسة الجامعة والعاملين فيها من اكاديميين واداريين بالاضافة الى السعي المكثف لتأمين الاستثمارات اللازمة من اجل توسيع الحرم الجامعي وتشبيد الابنية اللازمة وانشاء المعاهد والمراكز البحثية وخلافه. وإدراكا منا بأن نجاح هذا الجهد يتطلب التنفيذ الدقيق والفعال للخطوات العملية المقترحة في الخطة، فسنقوم بالمتابعة الحثيثة والتقييم الدوري لعملية التنفيذ من خلال وضع آلية محددة لهذا الأمر. وبقيننا أنه مهما بذل من جهد فانه من غير الممكن تخطي عامل الوقت بحيث ان الاهداف التي وضعها هذا المخطط لن تتحقق وتاتي ثمارها الا تدريجيا وبالتالي تترسخ لدينا القناعة بان الالتزام بدعم الجامعة هو التزام طويل الامد وان الحفاظ على هذه الجامعة هو مهمة نبيلة تستحق العناية.

## The Callings that Matter Most

### A Legacy worth Preserving

The progress of a society depends on the continuity of purpose and the efforts of individuals whose unselfish acts of philanthropy, inspiring ways, ingenious discoveries, and creative thought spanning all life's dimensions push boundaries beyond what seem possible. Great achievements need generations of contributors to achieve the scalable impact imagined by the initiator of the fundamental idea. Great institutions are built on the shoulders of magnanimous individuals who see the future beyond their life's span and invest money, time, sweat and blood to advance their vision of a better world. Examples are abound - Duke, MIT, Vanderbilt, Cornell - to name a few. RHU was conceived on the premise that education is fundamental to transforming lives and contribute to incremental progress of Lebanon. The beauty of that premise is not exclusively based on the generosity of the founder during his lifetime but in the promise its continuity offers for generations to come. Now more than ever, RHU's continuity is at risk and preserving the legacy of the man behind the institution is of historical values not only to the immediate family but to the nation as a whole. Surviving the difficult years ahead, RHU is poised to restore faith among the youth that the dream they were promised lives on and shall become a shining example of how great ideas are nurtured and carried on to become great achievements of a nation.

### A World on the Move

Higher education (HE) is in transition. Being a bridge to a better future, Higher education institutions (HEI) need very much, as a physical bridge, continuous maintenance to prevent sudden collapse. While demographic, social, and economic factors are at play in determining the future of HE, the plethora of technology tools in particular is driving HEIs to undergo fundamental structural changes. Technology, totally embraced by the generation that is born in its midst, is influencing almost every vital university function and experience: management of resources, design of the classroom, purpose of the library, , life on campus, planning of space, modes of communication between students and instructors, teaching methods, learning styles, modes of knowledge attainment, and so on.

The fast pace of these changes, exacerbated by the high cost of integrating technology, changing public perceptions about quality education, growing number of HEI and knowledge providers, shrinking conventional markets for graduates, ineffective accountability measures, and the narrowing window to make important decisions leave HE planners perplexed. To keep pace and stay ahead of the competition requires wisdom, tenacity, and new thinking. Claims of quality education, stories of past successes, magical ads and spirited slogans are no longer adequate for people to beat a path to an institution's door. To thrive, RHU has to generate the light toward which future hopes gravitate or risk existence on the margins.

*To thrive, RHU has to generate the light toward which future hopes gravitate or risk existence on the margin.*



At a time our communities are becoming unrecognizable distant fragments of unforgiving unknown, threatening what is essentially human, the strategic plan is an opportunity to decode the rapidly changing world around us, imagine a future we dream and cultivate pathways to reach it. In the midst of tumultuous changes and challenges that threaten the existence of our society as we know it, we hope as the plan culminates, the students who witness the transformation would be convinced that RHU was truly the “unforgettable choice” they made, where: The aim is symbiotic with the hopes of the nation; the purpose is clear – nurturing hopes and shaping dreams; the outcome that matters most is students’ success; and the learning experience prepares for a lifetime of meanings.

### The Driving Spirit

Confronting the intricate web of resource stretching challenges and seemingly disruptive tools, one may think, requires complex solutions that are yet to be innovated. This is a reasonable conjecture in light of complex issues planners have to contend with. But, while adapting and integrating new technologies in a meaningful way requires a fresh approach to the management side of the learning process, the role of the “classroom”, the center of the learning process, is forever fixed. The classroom here is just the physical space, but a medium that extends to cover every possible learning opportunity leveraged by a teacher. From Plato's Academy to the contemporary university, the classroom remains the space that engenders transformative experience, provokes intellectual curiosity, inspires meaningful inquiry, and fosters the flexibility of the mind. And so being the center of life changing medium, the core theme of our forward moving strategic plan is simple - amplify and transcend the classroom experience.

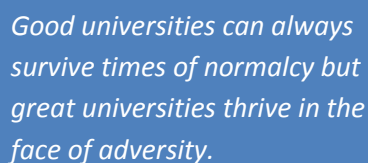
*The classroom remains the space that engenders transformative experience, provokes intellectual curiosity, inspires meaningful inquiry, and fosters the flexibility of the mind.*

In fact, this is the “spirit” that had hovered over the discussion tables in the departments, colleges, and units while the various elements of the 2015-2020 strategic plan were concocted. The outcomes of all deliberations are a set of actions that are meant to bridge the meaning of that “spirit” into the erudite that we want RHU graduates to become: competent in confronting complex problems and career challenges, responsible citizens wanting to make an enduring impact in their communities, believing in themselves and daring to take risks to advance an idea or a cause, willing to right the wrong that happens to cross their life's path, motivated to leave a legacy of achievements. It may sound like a dream, so be it.

For RHU to become the institution we aspire, everyone involved, irrespective of position, must believe in its mission and be ready to wield an extraordinary effort that is commensurate with the challenges ahead. Good universities can always survive times of normalcy but great universities thrive in the face of adversity. If we are successful in navigating the dense clouds along the way, we would have set an example in tenacity and continuity of purpose, and build the foundation on which a great institution emerges, one that is worthy of the cause the founding father had

advocated - bridging hope to future generations.

And so, the 2015-2020 strategic plan is like no other in the history of our university and may appear to some unreasonable. However, when the existence of the institution is at stake, normal planning is no longer adequate. We need to redefine our identity, purpose and commitments and create the path that assures our arrival to our imagined destination. Therefore we cannot afford to do just a few things in the best way based on what is financially reasonable, but to implement all the vital actions in the right way to achieve our collective vision before the sun sets and a “dream” is forever lost.



*Good universities can always survive times of normalcy but great universities thrive in the face of adversity.*

### Beyond Normal

In building the institution that will assert itself as a provider of quality education many proposed actions may not be conventional. It is essential to explain the drivers behind those unconventional ideas.

University education is not about acquiring a degree with its trappings we call skills, but the springboard that catapults someone into a promising life itched with meanings. It is the net sum of the little experiences that one acquires, not just inside the classroom but also outside. RHU needs to prepare the environment that promotes this incremental building of the whole experience. So that wherever students wander - the library, the living quarters, the classroom, the athletic facilities, the cafeteria, offices, etc. – they are safe, comfortable, inspired, intellectually stimulated, able to interact with peers in a meaningful way, and above all they feel that RHU cares.

Learning opportunities and diversity of knowledge attainment settings are no longer restricted to face-to-face instruction. While the online alternative to face-to-face education through the MOOCs experiments is yet to build the traction that was hoped for, current efforts to resolve credentialing issues will make it a viable option to a large cross section of education seekers around the globe. However, ameliorating face-to-face education with elements of online tools is a sensible direction RHU need to gradually pursue. RHU will build the infrastructure to create learning hubs in remote areas to enable students to engage in a face-to-face like experience from a distance.

There is so much emphasis on educating for market needs. Important as it is, preparing graduates for what the market needs today or in the near future is not wise for two simple reasons: What the markets need in the future is unknown as global competitions and innovative technologies are constantly transforming markets and changing needs. Graduates need to learn how to think big to influence markets and create new opportunities. As the future is mainly unknown, we need to ponder on how it should be and prepare talents to realize it. By 2020 graduates would have been endowed with entrepreneurial skills needed to pursue new ideas.

Grades are one indicator of student’s potential to succeed, but other attributes of the character such as curiosity, tenacity, grit, citizenship, drive, fairness, tolerance, and motivation are as important to say the least. In current practices, assessment of students’ performance is based on a convoluted concept of failure which must be rethought. Many students succumb to the crushing and accumulative weight of failure and we just watch and brand those as failures - what a waste! RHU in the next five years will pioneer an approach that will transform failure into potential success.

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### Embracing the Higher Side of Higher Education

The strategic plan aims to bridge the driving spirit and reflective thoughts toward making RHU the unforgettable choice for enlightened men and women of the future. Henceforward, the cluster of the four strategic pillars and the essence of the corresponding strategic actions planned for the next five years are briefly summarized. Details of the specific actions are discussed in the Strategic Planning document.

*Academic distinction:* during the time span of this strategic plan, the academic experience will focus on an overarching outcome - educating the whole person. We believe that an academic experience encompassing the human facet of education is as important as the knowledge and skills dimension in preparing one for success. So the central question is how to endow students with the right stuff that enable them to overcome life’s challenges and prevail. The way to resolve this question is by: designing curricula to embed relevant topics, entice innovation, and improve entrepreneurial aptitude; Improving the general education experience to broaden students’ capacity to reason and participate in constructive dialogue; refining the resources of the learning support centers and strengthening their role in extending students learning opportunities beyond the classroom; incorporating relevant instructional technologies and teaching approaches; engaging faculty in development workshops to improve their teaching performance; emphasizing experiences to exceed market expectations of quality; Improving the lab resources to strengthen the applied component in the curricula; improving the COOP and summative learning project experience and ensuring its relevancy to the community and career aspirations; Transforming the classroom to be comfortable, conducive to collaborative and adaptive learning models, equipped with smart tools to leverage web resources and facilitate interaction between instructors and students; repurposing the library space and refurbishing it with the tools and resources that promote intellectual inquiry; improving mentoring and advising of students to help them avoid academic troubles, complete their degrees in the shortest period possible and make judicious career choices; providing space, tools and curricular outlet to support students to explore ideas;

*Community enrichment:* education exists to improve the human conditions and uplift the human spirit. At RHU embracing the concerns of the community is not an afterthought but an intrinsic pillar of the education experience. This pillar shall be strengthened through: introducing

community forethought as a general education component; threading community concerns throughout curriculum; strengthening communication with community leaders and institutions; increasing financial aid support to help families mitigate rough economic times; offering workshop to secondary school students in areas of science and technology; improving the relevancy of students projects to community needs; participating in civic activities aimed to promote awareness, alleviate threats and improve conditions; organizing national competition aiming to engage university students in solving lingering community problems; offering workshops, seminars and special courses to the public on topics of interest; and organizing cultural events on RHU campus.

*Culture of quality, innovation and transformation:* Quality is not a set of procedural steps one takes to reach an end. It is a habit that the committed and motivated individuals and groups continuously hone to become engrained in culture. In the next few years, RHU will cultivate a culture of quality by: Building trust and instituting appropriate accountability measures; developing and implementing due process and collective decision making in all functions and transactions; nurturing team spirit and promoting oneness of purpose; streamlining workflow processes to eliminate errors and expedite completion of tasks; improving physical conditions to improve productivity, security, success and comfort; rewarding initiatives and ideas that result in improvement; transforming attitudes to serve; developing a quality system to ensure all functions are executed according to standards; creating a stimulating, collaborative, harmonious and responsive work environment focused on the common purpose; improving workflow processes and build toward paperless campus transactions; building competences to embrace best workplace practices and harness technology to ensure accuracy, integrity, security, and timeliness of services and operations; building a culture where employees passionately embrace quality as a shared value and take ownership thereof; developing and implementing transparency and accountability measures; and creating a portfolio of web based procedures to simplify services across the University.

*University advancement:* Constructive change is inexorable to endure continuity of an institution. Furthermore closed systems are bound to self-destruct. The change we aspire in the next five years will advance RHU reputation and footprints by: improving efficiency of operations and optimizing resource utilization to yield a tangible improvement in productivity; establishing an endowment to ensure RHU’s continuity beyond our imagined time; organizing fundraising campaigns to support students scholarship program and expand university assets and services; increasing campus space by acquiring proximal land; building a modern and inviting dorm building and modern student center to attract students from remote areas and abroad; offering new programs based on

Quality is not a set of procedural steps one takes to reach an end. It is a habit that the committed and motivated individuals and groups continuously hone to become engrained in culture.

anticipated future needs and trends; contriving responsive, flexible plan to adapt new technologies in meeting current and future needs; improving IT resources and services – enhanced security, improved Internet speed, campus-wide wifi access; restructuring the library and improving its resources to lure students and faculty and stimulate intellectual exchange; strengthening the applied learning component by improving laboratories; implementing project management best practices to clearly delineate responsibilities, meet established deadlines, reduce mistakes, improve efficiencies, and realize intended goals; restructuring the organization of and re-purposing available resources in light of emerging technologies and "disruptive" changes; recruiting highly qualified faculty members and attracting hordes of qualified students; signing MOUs and establishing exchange programs with reputable institutions in the region and abroad; and activating a guest professor program to invite renowned experts to give seminars, workshops or courses at RHU.

## Strategic Commitments

Rafik Hariri's commitment to education is exemplary and it is this very enduring commitment that guides our efforts to keep the torch lit. Accordingly, the 5-year strategic plan (2015-2020) consists of RHU vision and mission statements, RHU business model, core values, strategic and financial objectives, and the action plans to achieve the objectives, aimed at achieving excellence in all aspects of our work.

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### Vision Statement

*RHU envisions becoming a beacon of knowledge, a brand for academic distinction and a force of meaningful transformation by fostering a culture of quality, instituting authentic learning conditions, and supporting purposeful research to advance knowledge and nurture leaders capable of driving development and contributing to the enrichment of the community - immediate and beyond.*

### Mission Statement

*RHU shall: institute a culture of quality by committing to due process, academic excellence and hard-work; set up learning conditions conducive to farming dreams, stimulating imagination and cultivating passion to forever learn; instill the values of responsible behavior, tolerance, and freedom of self-expression and thought; and align learning outcomes with emergent community needs to ultimately transcend students' potential, possibilities, and contribution beyond time and distance.*

### Business Model

RHU business model is based on the following key characteristics:

- *RHU is a nonprofit university.*
- *RHU offers competitively affordable quality higher education.*
- *RHU offers an American-Style Higher Education model.*
- *While RHU's educational model is based on face-to-face instruction, the University is keen to exploit contemporary educational innovations and practices to advance its brand and broaden access.*
- *Advising, mentoring and coaching are key pillars of the RHU educational model.*
- *While RHU is primarily a teaching university, research is a vital part of its mission.*
- *RHU endeavors to build a culture of quality and excellence in all functions, transactions, and services.*
- *RHU commits to due process, shared governance and collective decision making.*
- *RHU contributes to knowledge transfer through continuing education programs and activities.*

- *RHU involves students in all university functions and decisions that improve their chances of success.*
- *RHU commits to the advancement of green thinking and practices.*
- *RHU embraces community concerns to strengthen the sense of citizenship and promotes development activities.*
- *RHU fosters strong engagement with alumni.*
- *RHU engages students in a relevant and meaningful COOP experience.*
- *RHU encourages competition of ideas and promotes meritocracy.*
- *RHU offers relevant programs and modern learning strategies.*
- *RHU pursues fundraising to modernize its current facilities and build new ones.*

### Core Values

When it comes to values, we do not merely pay lip service. We are indeed deeply committed to a number of core values that we uphold and fulfill:

- **Shared Governance**

*Enable all RHU constituents to participate in shaping the provision of quality higher education.*

- **Excellence**

*Offer a meaningful contribution to the development of knowledge and promoting excellence in teaching and administrative support.*

- **Integrity**

*Operate with fairness, honesty, openness and the highest ethical standards to sustain a community of trust.*

- **Diversity and Tolerance**

*Create a community that advocates and promotes diversity and tolerance as a priority of academic and civic life.*

- **Community Service**

*Show commitment to serving our community through responding to the needs and concerns of all stakeholders.*

- **Purposeful Learning**

*Engage students in a learning experience congruent with the dreams of individuals and the needs of the community.*

### Pillars and Objectives

The objectives corresponding to the four pillars are summarized below. A complete set of the objectives and action plans by the various colleges is outlined in Appendix I.

**A. Academic Distinction.**

1. Pursue program and institutional international accreditation.
2. Revise and update curricula.
3. Improve research output.
4. Increase and invigorate scholarly activities.
5. Adopt best practices in student learning.
6. Ensure excellence in teaching, scholarship and research.
7. Sustain the teaching philosophy of student-based experience.
8. Maintain state-of -the-Art labs and studios.
9. Strengthen the RHU students' communication skills.

**B. Culture of Quality, Innovation, and Transformation.**

1. Use modern teaching methodologies and integrate information technologies into the content and delivery of teaching, as appropriate.
2. Conclude cooperation and collaboration agreements with international universities to offer dual and joint degree programs.
3. Enhance governance transparency and sense of ownership.
4. Upgrade advising, orientation and registration services.
5. Initiate high caliber research.
6. Provide and maintain affordable quality higher education.
7. Create an atmosphere of friendliness and strong personal ties between faculty and students.
8. Engage our students and faculty in cross-cultural interactions.
9. Have a diverse student and faculty community that is accepting of differences.

**C. University Advancement**

1. Initiate and develop a network of relationships with industry and private sector trade associations and civil society organizations.
2. Increase enrollment.
3. Expand and diversify program offerings.
4. Upgrade student facilities and services.
5. Improve university marketing efforts and increase RHU's visibility.
6. Seek funding.
7. Strengthen the relation with the alumni
8. Build stronger relationships within the university.

**D. Community Enrichment**

1. Introduce community forethought as a general education component;
2. Thread community concerns throughout curriculum;



3. Offer certificate training programs.
4. Organize and participate in national events, conferences and workshops.
5. Reach out to community schools.
6. Offer support to high school students to enable them make appropriate choice for a major.
7. Become a resource for life-long-learners.
8. Involve RHU students in community service.

### Strategic Plan Execution, Monitoring and Evaluation

The effective execution of the agreed upon action plan and the proficient managing of the entire strategy execution process cannot be overemphasized. In addition to the much needed leadership of such significant undertaking, a host of key areas shall be studied carefully and put in place as requisites for the successful execution of the strategy.

These areas include:

- Staffing;
- Facilitating policies and procedures;
- IT systems;
- Adequate reward and incentive system;
- RHU culture and work climate.

First, a strategic plan is as good as the people who implement it. In this context, staffing comes to the fore as a primary activity to ensure assigning adequate human resources to strategy-relevant activities. A first step in this regard is a strong management team.



Second, well-conceived policies and procedures and due process are a necessary condition for ensuring successful strategy implementation. Of particular importance here is top-down guidance and clearly communicating agreed policies and measures. Enacting and enforcing appropriate operating procedures and standards are vital in instilling confidence and consistency across RHU's working units. Various tasks in the value chain activities must be assigned clear procedures and performance standards.

Third, efficient and competent staff operating IT systems are essential to the provision of adequate RHU services to all stakeholders, especially the quality of teaching as e-education is increasingly becoming a common practice. Effective strategy execution makes it imperative to have in place responsive student registration systems, financial systems, enrollment databases, employee databases, key performance indicators databases, and all data and information systems needed for timely and accurate university decisions.

Fourth, adequate reward and incentive systems for administrators, faculty and staff are of paramount importance as they represent the means through which productivity can be enhanced

and mediocre performance can be avoided if we were to ensure effective strategy execution. Such systems, coupled with the existence of a proper due process, send the right signals needed for good strategy execution.

Fifth, RHU culture and work climate is central to attract students and high caliber faculty. Retention of faculty and staff depends on a conducive working environment. RHU needs to strive towards moving from an insular, inwardly-focused culture to an adaptive high-performance culture. In addition, the students' perception of RHU is a main component of the university's culture and has direct bearing on its image.

The Strategic Planning Committee should form the basis of a future unit to follow-up on the execution of the 5-year strategic plan, monitor and evaluate performance according to preset key performance indicators (KPI). The Chairman shall submit regular reports to the President and discuss the assessment of progress of the execution of the strategy in a changing environment taking into consideration the internal and external forces.

## Afterthought

Proper planning is tantamount to taking a leap into the future and imagine the attributes of an RHU graduate: A thoughtful, purposeful, determined, and truthful to her/his beliefs; a responsible citizen who embraces the worries of the society and seeks to allay them; an upright individual who is ready to stand up for the weak, sow hope and water it with sweat and blood fully aware that the rain will come to replenish what was spent with more vigor, strength and determination, relentlessly chasing a dream to fulfill. The road that points to that dream is unbuilt, the distance unknown, the place is unmarked. The hesitant at heart, calculative of mind, opportunistic in purpose is clueless to its existence. Only the one endowed with a will to travel the distance, free at heart to challenge creativity sucking demarcation lines, the unreasonable driven by reason is ready to take the risk to get there. The destination we aspire reaching in the next few years needs the tenacity, perseverance, grit and commitment and all the same attributes we imagine our graduate to be. So there will be no time to complain of too much work or too difficult of a task. The challenge is to have faith, trust and confidence that reaching the destination is possible and by 2020 RHU will become the fairy tale among higher education providers, the “little” institution “that could”, the unforgettable choice for generations to come

