



Towards a New Generation of Engaged Universities: *The Need to Act, Adapt and Transform*

16th– 18th April, 2024 | Kempinski Central Avenue
(Formerly the Address Dubai Mall), Dubai, UAE

Student-Centered Approaches to Career Development : the Case Study of ULS Career Center



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Track 1 : Innovation for Societal Impact



Challenge:

Insufficient support and resources for current and former students to navigate career decisions and secure employment in a rapidly changing job market.



Case study objective:

Impact of the strategic relaunching of the ULS Career Center.



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ULS:

Lebanese, Catholic, private and non-profit institution founded in 1875 by the Maronite Archdiocese

Mission of the ULS:

Prepare generations of Lebanese youth for the changing labor market and to support active members of society in their quest for knowledge.

ULS nurtures the entrepreneurial spirit in the youth, facilitating their professional integration.

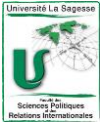




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ULS houses eight faculties across its two campuses:





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ULS Figures :

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS 2023 - 2024	3927
TOTAL NUMBER OF ALUMNI	10 000
NUMBER OF STAFF	114
NUMBER OF FULL TIME FACULTY MEMBERS	47
NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	68
CERTIFICATIONS	1





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Main issues:



Skill Mismatch:

Students' Struggles with Relevance and Readiness in the Job Market



Employment Hurdles:

Challenges Faced by Graduates in Securing Suitable Jobs



Gap between Academic Backgrounds with Professional Realities



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Solution:

Creation of a Career Center office with an innovative, student-centered approach and incorporation of a new technological tool: the Symplicity job platform.



Mission:

Empower students and alumni and prepare them for a competitive job market





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WHAT is a Career Center ?

The career center is a centralized office functioning as a pivotal hub for all matters related to career development.

HOW is the strategic approach of the ULS Career Center?

Emphasize on the “whole student” approach.



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Two pillars to reach the goal

Pillar 1

Enhance professional
development of ULS students

Pillar 2

Bridge academia and industry
by building enduring connections
with esteemed companies





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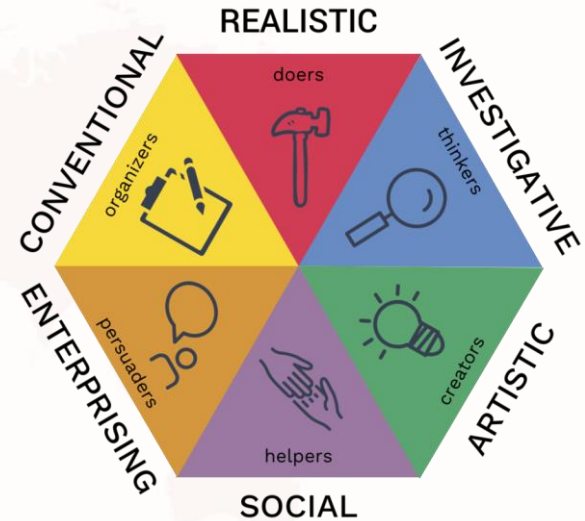
Pillar 1 : Empower Students and Alumni

Strategy 1: Self assessment Tests and Career Center Library

- SDS Tests : Six personality types.
- Books and tools to delve into values, skills, and interests.

Impacts : Students are able to:

- Select the appropriate major
- Map out their career trajectories accordingly
- Draw the path that:
 - . Maximizes their strengths
 - . Stimulates their interests
 - . Fits their personality.





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Pillar 1 : Empower Students and Alumni

Strategy 2 : Emphasize on skills identification through engagement in diverse experiences:

- Volunteering activities
- University Competitions
- Entrepreneurial Ventures
- Field experiences : Job Shadowing, Internships, Bootcamps

Impacts: Students are able to highlight their skills





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Pillar 1 : Empower Students and Alumni

Strategy 3 : Conduct workshops on various topics

- CV Writing techniques
- Job Interview and Body Language skills
- LinkedIn Profile Optimization
- Time Management and Work Under Pressure
- Mental Health in the Workplace

Impacts: Enhance students and graduates employability skills





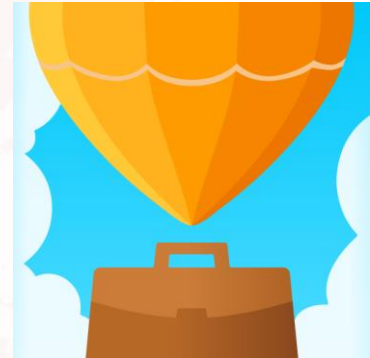
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Pillar 1 : Empower Students and Alumni

Strategy 4 : Integrate an innovative Technical Tool : Symplicity Application for

- Job Posting
- Career Center Events : Workshops, Presentations, Job Fair
- Mock Interviews,
- Career Guidance session booking
- Portfolio : CV and Cover Letter booking
- Professional Experience Update
- Graduate and Alumni Surveys



Impacts: Engage the students with the university and connect them with the employment market



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Pillar 2 : Bridge Academia and Industry

Strategy : Establish strategic partnerships with companies across diverse industries

- Signature of MOUs
- Hosting of Guest Speakers and Companies presentations at ULS
- Invitation of Managerial Leaders on Faculties Advisory Boards
- Participation in ULS Job Fairs

Impacts: Involve representatives from companies and provide valuable opportunities to ULS students and alumni in a highly competitive market.



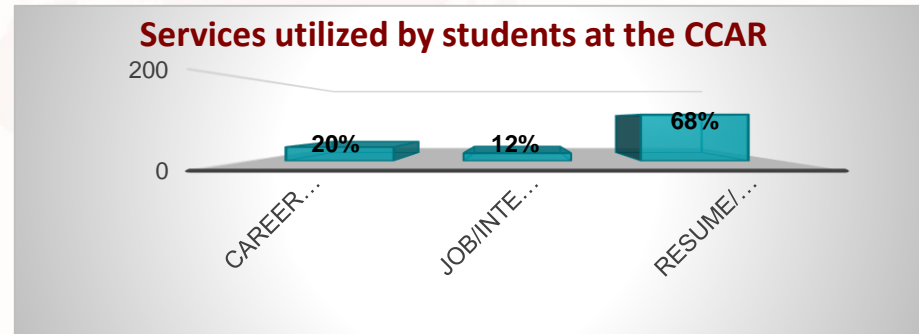
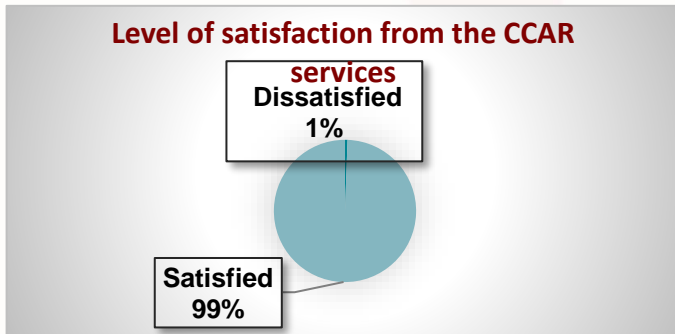


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Career Center Main Successes: Career Center Services

More than 200 students visited the Career Center in 3 months reporting a high satisfaction



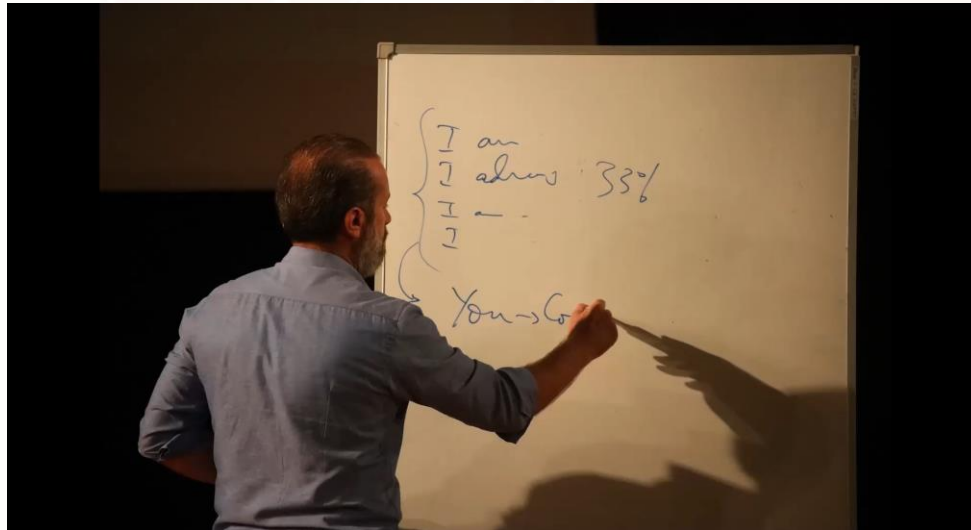


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Career Center Main Successes: Workshops

More than 250 students attended with an 88% average satisfaction rate based on the workshop surveys.





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Career Center Main Successes: Companies Presentations





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Career Center Main Successes:

- Increased network of companies : from less than 10 companies in September 22 to more than 150 partners in January 24.
- Growing Opportunities with increasing Internships and Job Openings for ULS Students, Graduates, and Alumni
- Achieved career goals: Over 100 students successfully completed their internships, landed their first jobs and even rerouted their career paths by getting positions, well aligned with their ambitions
- Exceptional Company Satisfaction: ULS Students serve as Ambassadors in Lebanese and International Markets





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Career Center Main Successes: Job Fairs

2 Job Fairs conducted in May 2023 and 2 Upcoming Job Fairs on April 24th and 25th





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Career Center Main Challenges

- Uncertainty and instability of the Lebanese employment market causing a “wait-and-see” approach from companies
- Financial struggles: Students opting for part-time jobs over major-aligned internships to cover tuition costs
- Lack of engagement of students
- Navigating the rapidly evolving employment landscape, especially with AI





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Recommendations :

- Engage in ongoing research on employment market trends to align with current vacancies available in the market.
- Regularly assess and adjust academic programs, and professional skills in response to the evolving needs
- Foster collaboration higher education through consortiums in order to always adjust the supply to the demand on the labor market.
- Acknowledge the Higher Education institution as a structure where the vision, mission, and objectives are seamlessly integrated into all services.





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The successful launch of the ULS Career Center and Alumni Relations Office was based on these pillars :

- Our ability to empower students
- Our belief in the importance of the Employer engagement
- Our commitment to bridge the gap between academia and industry
- The introduction of the Symplicity platform and application





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At the ULS Career Center,

We believe in our students ; they are ULS ambassadors

We go beyond providing them advice : we actively guide them in aligning their career choices with their passions.

Drawing inspiration from these wisdoms:

Choose a Job You Love, and You Will Never Have to Work a Day in Your Life

You can remove a mountain by carrying away small stones





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THANK YOU !!!





Center for Learning Innovations &
Customized Knowledge Solutions

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