



Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

كلية اللاهوت المعمدانية العربية

www.abtslebanon.org

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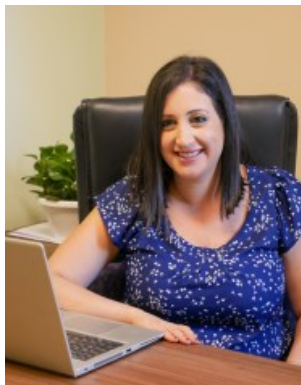
It's another busy day for the Registrar's office. People are constantly coming in and out, and one can hear the phone ringing in the background. Communication and teamwork are key to getting all the work done. Aside from her role as Registrar, Rana is also responsible for the guesthouse and conference center operations. "I'm always kept busy, and I wouldn't want it any other way! I am so thankful for the team because there is so much to do," Rana shared.

The team manages the admissions process for all our programs and helps newly admitted students begin their journey of theological education. They oversee the registration process and the recording of grades. They follow up with students, especially those who are about to graduate, and they work hard on student recruitment. Recently, the team has been focusing their energy on recruitment and alumni relations.

Rana and the team recently shared with us their thoughts on why they like what they do and how they see themselves serving the Arab Church.

Rana Wazir Registrar

I truly believe in what ABTS is doing; otherwise, I wouldn't have been here for fourteen years! I feel that, at the Registrar's Office, we get to



see the fruit firsthand, whether it is through our contact with applicants, students, alumni or sending churches. When more students join our programs, it isn't the growth of our student body that excites us as much as it is reaching places in the region that we hadn't reached before. Then, as our students near graduation, we can see how they have evolved throughout their theological training period.

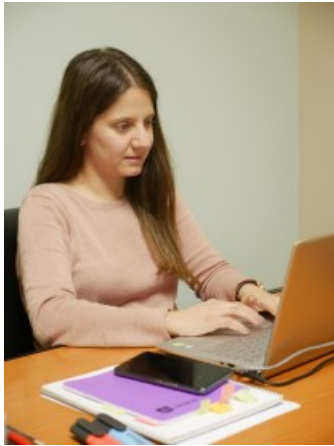
I have grown professionally over the years. I have gained a wider circle of connections with people from all over the Arab Church. More importantly, my understanding of ministry and leadership has changed. Today, I understand more than ever that a leader should not be the center of attention. Leadership is not a top-down dynamic, but we should treat one another equally. ABTS taught me to empower the people around me and invest in their lives— at work, at home and at church.

ABTS is not merely my workplace. It is my ministry and my home. I even met my husband here, and today, we lead a church that gathers on campus.

Rana's role also involves mentoring students and teaching the *Art of Teaching* course. She also serves on the Accreditation Commission of MENATE and on the Council of ECTE. Regarding her work with accreditation, Rana shared:

Accreditation is certainly one of the things I love about my job. I love the challenge of working on the reaccreditation of our programs every five years because we get to assess what we

already have at ABTS and make consequent improvements.



José Sabbagh
Alumni Relations Coordinator

Connecting with graduates over the phone is one of my favorite responsibilities at ABTS. I love getting to know them more and learning new updates about their life, ministry and education. Graduates often express their appreciation of the opportunity to study theology and grow as church ministers

and leaders. They feel comfortable sharing about God’s work through them, and they send us their prayer requests. I am always looking forward to fostering effective alumni relations through continuing oral or written communication with them. I make sure to focus on supporting alumni with opportunities for them to continue their education. In addition to that, I have been recently helping with the recruitment and admissions process. It has been a very encouraging experience.

Since she joined us in April, our Alumni Relations Coordinator has been communicating with graduates from our different theology programs, and, along with Rana, has been working hard on the recruitment process.

Mirella Kazan
Administrative Coordinator

Being part of ABTS is a blessing for me. This has been especially true during the past two years, which have been very difficult for the country. I was able to discover who I really am and how I can be of help to others in these troubling times. Here, I also found a family of faith among whom I can grow in my walk with Christ. Through working at the Registrar’s office, I feel that I am contributing to the vision and mission of ABTS. I love the team spirit that we have. Most of my work is office related, but although it’s a desk job, I feel that I know the students very well because of my constant communication with them.



Mirella makes sure our database is updated and grades are

submitted. She contacts our students and follows up with them, and she works on our Student Information System.

Mathilda (Tina) Vania, Administrative Assistant, also lends a helping hand to the Registrar’s office during their busy work cycles.



Recently, the team has been busy with the admissions process for the new Integrated Theology Program students for the new academic year. It has been an exciting process and, so far, 16 students have been admitted into our program. The new students began to take Arabic classes on November 4. Our new students come from different Arab countries, including Sudan, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt, Syria and Morocco.

During the admissions process, Tina follows up with applicants and makes sure that all their files are complete. After receiving the complete applications, the Registrar’s team interviews all the applicants over the phone and contacts their local churches. Then, faculty members help review the applications. The faculty give the admissions committee their recommendations. The admissions committee is made up of the President, Dean of Faculty, the Academic Dean, and the Registrar. If they have more inquiries or feel that there are areas that haven’t yet been covered, the admissions committee interviews the student once again over Zoom, and based on that, they are better able to make a decision.

One of the things they look for in applicants is dedication to Christ. Applicants should have been Christ followers for a few years, they should be active in their local churches and exhibit a potential for leadership. The team also assesses the academic qualifications of the applicants to make sure that they can succeed given the academic rigor that will be

required of them. In addition, the admissions team assesses the applicants' ability to apply God's word to real-life situations and that they have a vision for ministry, although these are two areas that the faculty at ABTS work with them to enhance and refine during their years of study. In all, the admissions committee is concerned in discerning those whom God has called to be better equipped for ministry, and when they join us, we journey with them as they strive towards that goal.

We are thankful for all the hard work of the Registrar's office. We ask you to pray for our newly admitted students that they would be jars of clay that allow the Master to mold them as He wishes through their studies.



How Does Peacemaking Take Shape in a Shame and Honor Culture?

We tend to have a utopian vision of blissful congregations devoid of strife. Our reasoning is that if the early Church did it right, then so should we. But, has the Church ever done it totally right? The inescapable truth is that, where two or more share life, willingly or unwillingly, conflict is bound to surface. However, how can a church deal with conflict in a God glorifying way?

Over the past few months, our peacemaking team has been meeting with local pastors (from eight different evangelical denominations) who genuinely desire to see a change in their congregations and in the Lebanese Church. Previously, the team held most of the sessions virtually, but on October 16, they met in person. This time, they discussed how mediation can happen in a shame and honor culture rather than let time deal with it.

Based on Matthew 18, Bassem Melki, our Dean of Faculty and the leader of our peacemaking work, shared, "We found out that whenever two conflicting sides came to a pastor, the pastor was expected to be their problem solver or judge, and as pastors ventured to resolve the conflict, they unknowingly



became part of it." However, in a healthy peacemaking model, pastors encourage their congregation to resolve conflict on their own as a first step (interpersonal peacemaking), and they coach them on how to do it. If that fails, the pastors and elders work on mediation. If that fails as well, they finally resort to arbitration.



Bassem, who led the workshop series for the past year, explained that the sessions were not a training on mediation but discussions in which the peacemaking team and the pastors explored together what works and what doesn't work in our culture. "What we're doing right now is presenting a preferred or recommended peacemaking and reconciliation model that is biblical and applicable to our context," he shared.

Throughout the meetings, the pastors acquired a new set of vocabulary that they could use to identify things such as the type of conflict, the tools for personal peacemaking, negotiation, mediation, and arbitration. More importantly, there was an openness to try new approaches to peacemaking. These pastors, who already had years of experience, humbly expressed that they were able to learn and evaluate themselves based on the experiences of one another.

Despite all the challenges they face while serving in Lebanon, the most encouraging thing in this journey is seeing how faithful

pastors from different denominations are responding to God's calling as they serve His Church. Pray for the Church in Lebanon to continue learning why Jesus said that peacemakers shall be called children of God.



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Pray with Us: Prayer Requests from the Registrar's Office and Peacemaking Team

Bassem Melki

Dean of Faculty

Please pray that God grants the peacemaking team discernment, strength and wisdom through this difficult, uncertain time in the country so that we seek God's will in all we do.

Kamil Malak

Peacemaking and Church Relations Coordinator

I would like to pray for the peacemaking team, especially for the trainings we are holding at different local churches. Please pray that they may have an ongoing positive effect on the believers and their ministries. On a personal level, I want to ask for strength and guidance from the Lord as I study for my Master's degree in biblical languages.

Reem El Khoury

Peacemaking Field Coordinator

Please pray that we continue to see more fruit in our Khebz w Meleh youth initiative both in Lebanon and Sudan. Pray for me also that I overcome my grief over the loss of my grandmother.

Rana Wazir

Registrar

We're praying for the new students who will be getting into study mode and begin learning asynchronously for the first time. At this stage, they need to reorganize their schedules around their education. So, we invite you to pray for them with us, especially since many of them face challenges in their home countries. Pray also for my pregnancy and the baby we're expecting. It's a new phase in our lives.

José Sabbagh

Alumni Relations Coordinator

Pray for our Sudanese alumni who are going through hard times due to the recent coup in Sudan. Pray for physical, emotional and spiritual protection over them.

Mirella Kazan

Administrative Coordinator

Please pray for me as I look for a good Master's program to continue my education. I also ask you to pray that the Lord gives me strength as I plan three back-to-back regional conferences in Amman in December.