Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

كليّة اللاهوت المعمدانيّة العربيّة

July 2024 | www.abtslebanon.org

Within the various layers of leadership and governance at ABTS, the leadership team lies at the core. This team is entrusted with leading ABTS by planning strategically with the board of trustees, working functionally with faculty, staff, and students, and engaging relationally with various stakeholders and partners. They are responsible for stewarding the mission and resources of ABTS, providing organizational, academic, operational, and spiritual leadership.

As a Christian organization, the leadership team's primary role is to lead in collective spiritual discernment, seeking to understand God's real-time calling for ABTS. Their task is to define organizational faithfulness and cultivate a culture that empowers the community to undertake its work faithfully.

Elie Haddad

President

After a long career in the corporate world, Elie was called by God into the realm of theological education. For the past nineteen years, he has served at ABTS, supported by Canadian Baptist Ministries. He completed a PhD in missional ecclesiology because of his passion for the Church.

Elie oversees and moderates the leadership team, viewing his primary role as empowering and supporting others, beginning with the leadership team. While ABTS is known for its creativity and innovation, people often think of Elie as the innovator. However, he describes himself as the enabler who fosters a culture where innovators can thrive.

Elie acts as the glue that brings coherence to the leadership team. He finds working with this group of driven, passionate, highly qualified, and strong leaders both challenging and immensely fulfilling.

Elie

Walid Zailaa

Academic Dean

Walid's journey at ABTS began as a theology student in 2007, and his academic pursuit continues to this day. He completed his DMin and is now pursuing a PhD in Old Testament. His professional journey has also progressed significantly. While studying at ABTS, he was appointed assistant librarian, then faculty member and head librarian, and later academic dean. Alongside his multiple roles at ABTS, he also pastors Faith Baptist Church, which meets on campus.

As the academic dean, Walid leads the faculty and oversees all academic programs. He was the principal architect behind the transition of our core program from traditional residential format to online and hybrid delivery methods, significantly enhancing accessibility to our programs across the Arab world. Walid possesses a unique blend of skills, combining conceptual and creative thinking with the ability to implement ideas effectively, paying close attention to the intricate details of program design.

Discussing leadership, Walid observes that juggling pastoral and academic responsibilities has shown him that true leadership promotes personal and organizational growth rather than merely exerting authority.

Walid's contributions to the leadership team include instilling structure, ensuring timeliness, and upholding a commitment to excellence in all aspects of the team's activities.

Walid

Bassem Melki

Director of Peacemaking and Non-formal Training

Bassem joined ABTS in 2008 as the dean of students. With seventeen years as a pastor of a local congregation, Bassem used his pastoral insights to support ABTS's residential students throughout their academic journeys. During his tenure at ABTS, he completed his PhD in peace studies, which equipped him for his current role.

Leveraging his expertise in peacemaking and his strong connections with local pastors and ABTS graduates, Bassem has been instrumental in initiating and expanding the non-formal training programs at ABTS. Initially focused on peacemaking, these programs now encompass all the material taught by our faculty, adapted for use at the congregational level. Bassem continues to work with ABTS faculty to bring theological training to the masses, in Lebanon and across the Arab world.

Bassem's contributions to the leadership team are marked by his extensive networks and relationships, while his pastoral heart ensures that the team considers the human implications of all its decisions.

Bassem

Our Vision

To see God glorified, people reconciled, and communities restored through the Church in the Arab world.

Rana Wazir Zailaa

Registrar and Director of Quality Assurance

Rana joined ABTS in 2008 as an academic assistant and quickly advanced in her career, becoming the Registrar in 2012. While serving at ABTS, she completed her MA in educational administration and emerged as the institution's expert on accreditation and quality assurance. She has successfully ensured that ABTS and all its programs maintain full accreditation and actively contributes to quality assurance at a global level. Rana serves on the accreditation commission of the European Council for Theological Education (ECTE) and chairs the accreditation commission of the Middle East and North Africa Association for Theological Education (MENATE).

Her team oversees the entire student journey, from admission to alumni relations. With her exceptional management skills, Rana also oversees ABTS's conference center and guesthouse.

Speaking about the leadership team's efforts, Rana noted: "As a team guided by God, we navigate challenges through prayer and discernment. Our aim is to ensure that our successes glorify His name across the Arab world, reflecting His grace and wisdom."

Rana brings a wealth of both academic and non-academic administrative expertise to the leadership team, coupled with an extraordinary capacity to retain and recall knowledge vital to the ABTS operation. Additionally, her pastoral sensitivity greatly enriches her interactions with both students and staff.

Rana

Loulwa El Maalouf

Director of Partnerships and Organizational Development

Loulwa joined ABTS in 2017, equipped with a Master's degree in pure mathematics and extensive experience in teaching and operations. She is currently pursuing a PhD in organizational leadership, with a focus on steward leaders within Christian organizations in Lebanon. Loulwa initially took on the role of leading partnership development at ABTS, where her team manages partner relations and communications. Her exceptional systems thinking skills led to her appointment as the head of administration and finance as well.

Loulwa travels extensively to foster connections with ABTS partners and share about what God is doing in the region. She also serves on the European Baptist Federation's Theology and Education Commission and on the board of IBTS in the Netherlands. Reflecting on her role, Loulwa remarked: "I'm grateful to God who led me to ABTS where I can serve Him through the gifts and skills that He gave me."

Loulwa adds a high level of spiritual sensitivity and a touch of light-heartedness to the leadership team's discussions. She advocates for high standards in all ABTS's operations and, with her dedication to truth and accuracy, serves as the team's resident fact-checker.

Loulwa

Wissam Nasrallah

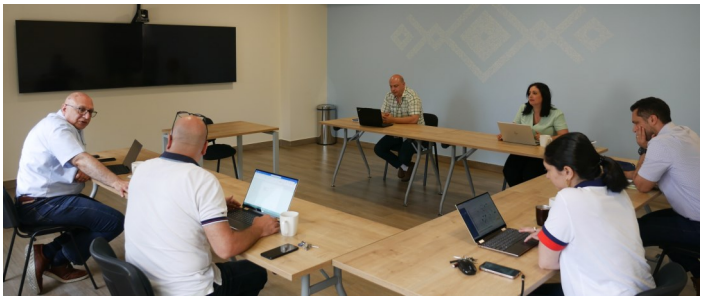
Chief Operations Officer at Thimar

Wissam joined Thimar, the owner of ABTS, in 2017 and leads all shared services. He holds a master's degree in finance and strategy and has gained considerable experience in competitive analytical thinking through his previous work in France. His role on the ABTS leadership team facilitates enhanced communication and alignment with Thimar operations, fostering numerous opportunities for collaboration and leveraging the strengths of all Thimar ministries.

For Wissam, serving the King is a dual blessing—both a privilege and an enrichment, never a sacrifice. His life's work is dedicated to advancing His Kingdom and benefiting others, a commitment clearly reflected in his personal and professional life.

Wissam brings numerous valuable attributes to the leadership team, including deep expertise in the context in which ABTS operates. He serves as the team's socio-political analyst. Wissam also has a unique talent for finding diplomatic solutions to relational challenges.

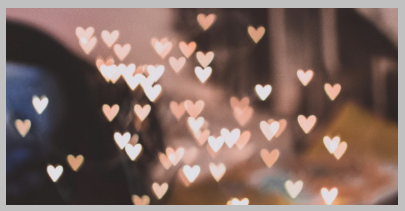
Wissam



What makes the ABTS leadership team exceptionally effective, beyond their passion for God's work and commitment to high-quality service, is the composition of the team itself. The members complement each other beautifully, creating a synergy where their collective capabilities exceed the sum of their individual contributions. This synergy not only exemplifies how collective wisdom can be attained but also underpins their unified approach to leadership.

We praise God for this leadership team and for the life and testimony of each of its members. We pray for their unity and for God to keep them grounded in Him in all that they do.

Check out our latest blog posts:



Logo of Jesus

Christians and Time Management

Our Mission

To serve the Church in our region as it realizes its Biblical mission of having Christ acknowledged as Lord by offering specialized learning resources and equipping faithful men and women for effective service.

Pray with Us!

Prayer Requests For Some of our Bachelor of Theology Students

Hassan | Third-Year student | Morocco
Please pray for God's blessings and protection over the seminary staff, granting them strength and wisdom. Pray for the people of Morocco to deeply understand and embrace the word of the Lord. Also, pray for my successful completion of studies and positive influence in this nation. Pray for blessings on our families and friends, that we may be sources of blessings to others. Additionally, pray for peace in Lebanon and Sudan, and relief from our challenges.

Zarmine | Third-year student | Lebanon
Please pray for the salvation of my family members, that they may know and accept the Lord. I am committed to sharing the message of salvation with them. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide them, so they may join me in paradise.

Sevin | Third-year student | Syria
Please pray for the safety and stability of my country Syria, so that we may continue to live in peace. Additionally, pray for my upcoming tonsils surgery, that it proceeds smoothly and without complications. Lastly, please pray for blessings and guidance in my new church community, so that I may contribute positively and grow spiritually within this community.

Mohamed| Second-year student | Bahrain
Please pray for my seminary and university studies. Also, due to being away from the church where I grew up, I am experiencing spiritual dryness. Therefore, I am asking for prayer to hear the voice of the Lord more clearly, so that I may be encouraged and strengthened.

Ibrahim | First-year student | Iraq
Please pray for peace in Erbil and for my smooth integration into a church where I can serve and minister. Additionally, I seek prayers for success in my studies and for guidance in finding employment, as job opportunities in Erbil are limited.

Prayer for our Graduates and their Churches
Join us in prayer for our graduates, especially those serving in difficult places like Sudan and Algeria, that the Lord gives them wisdom in spreading the Gospel, in discipling people, and planting churches. Please pray for unity among churches.

Prayer for the Middle East
Our region continues to be volatile and unstable, with active wars in Palestine, Lebanon, and Sudan. Please pray for those who are suffering and need hope. Pray that God works in the hearts of the political leaders to navigate with clarity and compassion toward justice, peace, and reconciliation.

MIDDLE EAST CONSULTATION مؤتمر الشرق الأوسط

MEC 2024

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المصالحة بين الأفراد

Practicing Reconciliation in the Middle East

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ABTS since 1960
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Arab Baptist Theological Seminary

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