

Charter of the University

May 20th 1975

CHAPTER 1: MAIN OBJECTIVES AND MISSIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY

Article 1: *Constitution*

The Université Saint-Joseph, founded and administered by the Compagnie de Jésus, is a Lebanese private university, with Head Office in Beirut. It is constituted in conformity with Article 10 of the Lebanese Constitution on freedom of education and with the Law of the 26th of December 1961 organizing the higher education field in Lebanon on the basis of pluralism.

Article 2: *Professional Concern and Cultural Mission*

Thanks to its diversified networking of higher education institutions, the Université Saint-Joseph intends to accomplish the functional and cultural mission which is that of any university. With its teachings, it makes it easier for its students to acquire an education that allows them to practice an activity that is useful in their society, an education that is adapted to the professional life that they wish and deem accessible. This functional mission, or professional concern, comes within a more fundamental service that constitutes the cultural mission of the University, which makes it contribute to the promotion of human beings. So the Université Saint-Joseph works on helping its students have access to an authentic culture that is valued by a specialization, a culture that uses a certain technique, this technique being theological, philosophical, scientific, medical, legal, economic, political or literary.

Article 3: *A Role Given to Research*

The Université Saint-Joseph, like any other university, cannot restrict itself to a center of diffusion of acquired knowledge; it tries to be a stimulating place for cultural and scientific research. On one hand, this university research is necessary for the education of students, namely the Master's degree and PHD students, and contributes to the permanent training of the teachers. On the other hand, the Université Saint-Joseph would consider itself as failing to achieve a part of its mission if its members were not participating actively in the realization of research programs, especially those that are of special interest for Lebanon or the Near-East, either in research centers affiliated to the University, or in collaboration with independent centers that have more important means.

Article 4: *Complete Human Promotion, Supportive of Spiritual Values*

The Université Saint-Joseph assumes its teaching and research task with the Christian prospect that has been its own since its foundation. The human promotion that it targets is not limited to the acquisition of a culture and the mastery of a technique; it is open to the fundamental questions that are asked in the conscience of every man about the ultimate meaning of life; this openness is the usual path towards the acknowledgement of a God, transcending all human values, who gives life its full meaning and safeguards human freedom against any oppression. It is to this God that the Constitution of Lebanon pays tribute.

This perspective implies religious freedom. So it entails no obligation of legal nature by the members of the university community; particularly, it would not accept any discrimination among them on a confessional basis. It requires, however, from the part of all those who participate in the life of the University, an engagement to promote a spirit of personal liberty and openness to spiritual life. Members of all confessional communities – multiple confessional communities being one of the characteristics of the Lebanese society – have the vocation to participate together in this promotion, which supposes mutual knowledge and esteem.

Serving a total human promotion, supportive of spiritual values, implies the development and confrontation of all the disciplines to which the university activity is consecrated. The Université Saint-Joseph acknowledges the right of every discipline to develop in the freedom that is that of research, according to its principles and particular methods. It does not however consider that this necessary autonomy of principles implies a simple juxtaposition of these disciplines within the University. On the contrary, it estimates that “the University” has the vocation to promote an interdisciplinary collaboration at the service of the human being and his/her unity.

Article 5: *Biculturalism*

The “university pluralism”, as is the rule in many countries, has a specific character in Lebanon: it responds to the will of the Nation to safeguard and develop the richness of its cultural personality. The Université Saint-Joseph, faithful to its history, intends to promote especially the Arabic language culture and the French language culture as apparent in the Lebanese cultural identity. The University, being aware also of the risks that a unilateral engagement of each university in its own cultural line entail for Lebanon, it declares itself ready to collaborate to any association of universities in Lebanon that can promote a national cultural policy.

This mentioning of the French language next to the official Arabic language is in conformity with Article 11 of the Lebanese Constitution; it does not exclude, at the Université Saint-Joseph, studying other languages and using them in teaching and in research.

Article 6: *Confessional and Political Independence. Freedom of reception and judgment*

The Université Saint-Joseph does not accept to be at the exclusive service of a social class or an ethnic community; that is why it attached a special importance to the diversification of its teachers and students’ recruitment. It does not accept either to be subjugated by an ideology and intends to safeguard on its campus freedom of information and dialogue as long as this does not harm public order and teaching activities. As it belongs to a certain society, it hopes it can be the ferment for this society.

Article 7: *Promotion of participation structures*

Participation is a necessity not only for the atmosphere of the University, but also for the type of society it intends to promote. The structures of the Université Saint-Joseph is thus open to the participation of all those that form the university community. The teachers participate in the management of the University; the students participate in the development of their curricula; the researchers participate in the creation of research teams and the definition of their projects; the employees participate in the organization of their working conditions.

This participation has its own limits within the competences of every one and the necessity not to dilute responsibilities. It is the statutes of each one of the university bodies concerned that fix these limits.

Article 8: *Concern of Facilitating Permanent Education*

The Université Saint-Joseph offers continuous training programs or retraining programs to those who are already engaged in a professional activity. It organizes in this regard a status of part time students at some of its learning departments and participates in the establishment and functioning of post-professional training centers.

CHAPTER 2: PERSONALITY AND AUTONOMY OF THE UNIVERSITY

Article 9: *Public mission*

As a private establishment with a scientific and cultural non-profit character, the Université Saint-Joseph assumes a public mission of higher education and research. Therefore, it enjoys a moral personality and an administrative, scientific and financial autonomy.

Article 10: *Moral Personality*

By moral personality, we mean a center of collective interests that are organized and legally protected by the means of the power recognized to its directors to represent it and defend it. Article 1 of the present Charter determines the name, the Head Office and the nationality of the Université Saint-Joseph. Its interests, or missions, are clarified by the other articles of the first chapter of the Charter. The bodies of the Université Saint-Joseph, within the powers they are entrusted with by their statutes, meet the University's obligations, practice its rights and assume its civil responsibility.

Article 11: *Decentralization*

By virtue of the university decentralization principle, the moral personality of the Université Saint-Joseph does not absorb the one also recognized to the institutions that compose it; it gives them the freedom for distinct practice of their interests according to their statutes and within the limits of their independence.

Article 12: *Administrative Autonomy*

By administrative autonomy of the University, we mean autonomy of constitution and autonomy of management. By virtue of the autonomy of constitution, the University Council has the power, at the majority of three-quarters of its members, to amend the statutes of the central organization, provided such amendments are not in contradiction with the provisions of the Charter or those of the Lebanese legislation. The councils of the institutions that compose the University have the power to draft and amend their statutes, under the same conditions, with the help and approval of the University Council. These amendments are, if need be, subjected to the licensure applications foreseen by the Lebanese Law.

By virtue of the management autonomy, the various bodies of the University practice the powers given to them by the statutes without any intervention by any authorities that are external to the University.

Article 13: *Scientific Autonomy*

By scientific autonomy of the University, we mean its autonomy as to the choice of teachers, the selection of students, the definition of its teaching and research programs, the appreciation of the level required for the degrees. When this selection of students, this definition of the degrees or the practice of the corresponding professions are governed by laws or conventions, it can at least ask to participate in the drafting of these laws or conventions and in their amendment in order to express its opinion.

Article 14: *Financial Autonomy*

By financial autonomy of the University, we mean that it is up to the University to manage its patrimony, increase its resources and distribute them into functioning, research and equipment credits. This autonomy does not cripple the right that is always acknowledged to the public or private bodies that subsidize the University to control the use of these funds. This autonomy does not authorize either the University to make profits, these profits being forbidden by Article 9 of this Charter.

CHAPTER 3: RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMPAGNIE DE JESUS AND THE UNIVERSITY

Article 15: *Loyalty to the Charter*

Having assumed the responsibility to found the Université Saint-Joseph, the Compagnie de Jésus cannot remain absent from its life, not to be the only one active there or to prohibit initiatives and developments, but on the contrary, to favor and support them. Such initiatives and developments cannot however constitute a real progress unless they are loyal to the principles – as clarified by this Charter - of intellectual honesty and moral rigor in the teaching and research, respect of freedoms, promotion of social justice, and openness to spiritual transcendence. The Compagnie de Jésus works on the realization of this loyalty.

Article 16: *Teaching and administration*

This responsibility justifies that the statutes of the Université Saint-Joseph reserve Rectorship to a member of the Compagnie de Jésus. It is also normal that members of the Compagnie, without being exempted from the common candidacy conditions, teach at the Université Saint-Joseph or participate in its administration.

Article 17: *Spiritual and Social Activity*

It is important for the Université Saint-Joseph to be capable of offering its teachers as well as its students a favorable place for their blossoming by allowing them to feed their faith and responding to the problems raised by each discipline at the moral and spiritual level. It is also important for the Université Saint-Joseph to be able to facilitate social training of its members and their collaboration to the efforts that aim at concretely improving the living conditions of the deprived environments and modifying the economic structures by driving them by a bigger sense of justice. The Compagnie de Jésus shall watch over this spiritual and social activity.