

HIGHER INSTITUTE OF INSURANCE SCIENCE (ISSA)

HISTORY

Established in 1977 through a collaboration between the Saint Joseph University of Beirut and the *Association des Compagnies d'Assurance au Liban* (ACAL), which serves as the official representative of insurance companies in Lebanon, the *Centre d'Études d'Assurance* (CEA) was founded on the François Debbané Social Sciences Campus. Initially designed to provide training for employees of insurance companies, the program later expanded to include students aspiring to pursue careers in insurance. In October 2000, the CEA was transformed into the Higher Institute of Insurance Science (ISSA), becoming a fully integrated institution within the University and awarding degrees (Bachelor and Master) under its official seal.

Following a series of crises that impacted Lebanon, ISSA suspended its activities in 2022 for two years. However, in 2024, the institute reopened to address the growing needs of the market. The program has been updated, and the collaboration with ACAL has been further strengthened. A board comprising both ACAL members and USJ faculty now makes the Institute's strategic decisions.

MISSION

Article 2 of the Charter of the Saint Joseph University of Beirut stipulates the following “Through its teaching programs, it makes it easier for its students to acquire an education that allows them to engage in meaningful activities within their society, preparing them for the professional life they aspire to and consider attainable. This functional mission, or professional concern, comes within a more fundamental service that constitutes the cultural mission of *Université Saint-Joseph de Beyrouth*, which is dedicated to the promotion of human beings.”

ISSA's mission is derived from Article 2 of the University Charter. It is rooted in the recognition of the insurance sector as a key pillar of the economy, requiring specialized expertise to function efficiently and thrive. In response to this need, ISSA has partnered with ACAL to develop programs designed to meet the demands of the sector's labor market, which urgently needs qualified professionals. Through these initiatives, the Institute aims to contribute to the growth of the Lebanese economy.

As the only institution in Lebanon and the surrounding region offering specialized insurance programs, ISSA is committed to ensuring that its graduates are not only knowledgeable but also immediately operational and productive upon entering the workforce in Lebanon and the MENA region. The goal is simple: no graduate should be unemployed.

Although programs focus on technical expertise, they also place significant emphasis on broader education. Graduates will gain comprehensive knowledge in areas such as risk management, emerging trends in insurance, law, economics, management, and quantitative analysis. In addition, like all USJ students, they will undertake a General Education Program designed to enhance their transversal skills. This holistic approach aligns with the Institute's commitment to the “promotion of human beings,” as outlined in the USJ Charter.

ADMINISTRATION

Director: Toufic RIZK (Interim)

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Academic Affairs Administrative Coordinator: Cynthia MAALOUF

FACULTY

Professor

Irma MAJDALANI

Lecturers

Elie ACHKOUTY, Elyane EID, Michel FAKHOURY, Ziad GEMAYEL, Elie HASHASH, Esq., Aline NEHMÉ, Esq., Rock ROUPHAEL, Carine SAAD, Oussama SALMAN, Esq., Pierre SEBAALANI, Rita (El) SOKHON, Selim YARED

Faculty members of another USJ institution

Charbel NASR, Lara GHORAYEB, Nicole BEJJANI, Liliane KARAM, Youssef NOHRA, Cynthia MAALOUF, Nisrine SAADÉ

DEGREES, DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES AWARDED

Bachelor in Insurance Science
Master in Insurance Science

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

This degree opens up various career opportunities in a highly competitive and dynamic job market, including insurance companies, insurance brokerage firms, banks, financial institutions, public works companies, engineering offices, consulting firms, portfolio management companies, hospitals, and more.

TUITION FEES

Bachelor in Insurance Science, Master in Insurance Science: 96 Fresh US Dollars and 3,670,000 Lebanese Pounds (for semester 1), equivalent in Fresh US Dollars to 137 (exchange rate = 89,500 LBP)

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS OF THE INTERNAL REGULATIONS OF STUDY

Article 2 bis

ISSA offers a Bachelor in Insurance Science with a minimum duration of 6 semesters and a Master in Insurance Science with a minimum duration of 4 semesters.

Article 13 bis

In addition to the Lebanese Baccalaureate, ISSA accepts the Lebanese Technical Baccalaureate - Business Management option.

Article 25 bis

a- At ISSA, the final exam accounts for 50% of the final grade, while ongoing assessment accounts for the remaining 50%, and consists of an objective assessment based on 2 or 3 written or documented elements. This may include a midterm exam, which contributes to 25% of the final grade and lasts at least 1 hour and 15 minutes. Participation and attendance may raise the final average of the ongoing assessment by a maximum of one point. Students must strictly adhere to deadlines for submitting assignments as instructors may refuse work submitted after the due dates.

At the beginning of the semester, instructors communicate to both the administration and students the planned assignments and their respective weighting.

In the Master's program, the assessment of learning outcomes is flexible. It may consist of a project presented at the end of the year. Students may also be subject to elements of ongoing assessment.

b- A mandatory internship of 100 hours is required. Students can only register for it once they have already completed 45 required credits. An internship agreement outlines the expected learning outcomes as well as the conditions for validation. It is signed by the ISSA administration, the host organization, and the student.

Article 28 bis

a- At ISSA, students must submit a written excuse within three working days after returning. Failure to do so, or if the excuse is rejected by a committee comprising the instructor, the student's supervisor, and the Institute Director, will result in a grade of zero for that assessment. If the same committee deems the excuse valid, the instructor will decide either to exempt the student from that assessment component or to schedule a make-up assessment as soon as possible.

b- Absence from the final exam shall result in a grade of zero for that exam.

Master Thesis Regulation

- At ISSA, a thesis of 80,000 characters is required to obtain the Master's degree.
- The thesis must include both a theoretical part (literature review of the topic) and an empirical part, preferably focused on Lebanon or the MENA region. In this part, the student may use existing data or generate new data through surveys, case studies, interviews, etc. All parts and chapters must present a balanced structure.
- After registration in the “Research Methodology” course, students must:
 - Define the research problem,
 - Choose 3 to 5 bibliographic articles for approval,
 - Summarize and present the articles orally,
 - Draft a provisional outline.
- The thesis must be written in Arial font size 12, with 1.5 line spacing. The bibliography must follow standard citation norms.
- Once approved for defense, the thesis must be electronically submitted to the Director of the Institute and the thesis supervisor, along with 2 printed copies to the secretariat.
- Plagiarism is severely penalized as follows:
 - More than 40% plagiarism: second session required.
 - Between 25% and 40% plagiarism: modifications within a deadline specified by the instructor.
 - Less than 25% plagiarism:
 - If plagiarism from a single source exceeds 2%: modifications within a deadline specified by the instructor.
 - Otherwise, the thesis is accepted.
 - If the modifications are deemed unsatisfactory, students must present their thesis during the second session.
- During the defense, students have up to 15 minutes to present their work, followed by a discussion with the jury. The jury will assess the quality of responses, presentation clarity, and adherence to the time limit.
- The defense jury, appointed by the Director of ISSA, is usually composed of the Director and two instructors: the thesis supervisor and a second reader.
- Grades are allocated as follows:
 - “Research Methodology” course: 20%
 - Content of the written thesis: 50%
 - Defense: 30%