



# **STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS**

## **AND ROADMAP**

**2018-2022**

**SP1822**

Approved By USEK BOT  
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## INTRODUCTION

USEK strategic planning 2018-2022 “SP1822” is based on several strategic orientations reflected in the University mission. Based on a higher education and cultural tradition in the Lebanese Maronite Order (OLM), this SP1822 is a step forward in USEK’s evolution as an institution of distinction.

Strategic choices can have big impact that would contribute to the University advancement in the years to come.

Since its founding, USEK journey has been marked by many wonderful accomplishments. Greater achievements are still to be celebrated in the future.

New trends have raised the expectations of university students in Lebanon and have created a very competitive higher education market. Consequently, USEK must provide opportunities for more and more diverse students to enroll and succeed. It must produce talent to drive productivity and engaged citizens to sustain a thriving democracy, as it must offer lifelong learning to help graduates adapt to changing times, etc.

This revised strategic plan offers a roadmap for the future, a framework to help us make choices, ensuring that our students will become men and women of impact nationally, regionally and globally. This updated strategic planning allows us to ask questions to which the University must respond:

What are our strategic priorities and directions? Do our institutional and unit-level activities support the achievement of our strategic directions and goals? How to ensure the enabling resources? What are the external opportunities and threats? How will we monitor our improvements?

These questions pave the way for more specific mission-driven questions that USEK, as an OLM institution, would raise:

- How will USEK best serve its students, its community, and the broader global society over the next five years?
- How do we respond to the demands of pursuing wisdom and learning in the 21st century in conformity with our passion for ethics and the service of justice and faith? And how can we ensure that students and society fully understand the importance and relevance of these pursuits?
- How do we embrace, support, and promote more fully our role as a higher education institution particularly in terms of research, teaching and learning and in terms of innovative and interdisciplinary initiatives that directly address critical societal problems and needs?

The SP1822 is divided into seven strategic areas that contain each a set of goals to lead the institutional debates and activities.

Many years of success stories shaped by internal and external community commitment and an agile dynamic governance framework allowed USEK to be proactive and responsive to local and global challenges.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In the policy making of USEK, planning has become an integral part of governance and managerial framework. The Strategic Planning of 2015-2018 contributed a lot to the alignment of schools (Faculties) strategies and activities to the institutional planning. This alignment was facilitated by the use of appropriate software for planning and assessment watermark – previously TK20.

The SP1822 goes in line with the previous Strategic Planning. This new strategic planning is a unique one since it is the first to be debated and adopted in the first BOT in the history of USEK. As a matter of fact, it integrates a more shared vision since it emerges with the support of the Board of Trustees created in 2015 giving USEK an integrated global perspective.

- July 2017: BOT decision to review and update the SP1822 for a new cycle 2018-2022 and charging the Sustainability and Institutional Planning Committee to lead the process.
- September 2017: Report USEK horizon 2022 gathered the University senior officers' perspective on challenges and priorities.
- September - October 2017: First Draft of the SP1822 submitted by the SIPC to the BOT for approval.
- October 2017: First draft approved, recommendations were received and adopted.
- March 2018: Final version approved by USEK BOT.

## **USEK VISION**

The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) seeks to be the leading Higher Education institution in Lebanon and one of the leading Higher Education institutions in the MENA region by 2022, recognized by its educational excellence, international recognition, and commitment to serving the society.

## **USEK MISSION**

Since its founding, USEK seeks, in accordance with the Article 92 of the Constitutions of the OLM (ed. 2012) and the social teaching of the Catholic Church on universities, to contribute to the development of all its students through quality educational programs and research in various fields of study. By providing a high quality American-style education to its students, USEK intends to prepare future leaders for innovation, professional growth and life-long learning, in Lebanon, within the Middle East and throughout the world. USEK is committed to a faith-based educational development of its students rooted in the Catholic tradition whereby spiritual values and ethics as well as respect for cultural and religious pluralism are promoted.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

As USEK's experience continues to grow and evolve, the university has become now more than ever, committed to providing a world-class education for all its students in a productive and nurturing environment where each and every member of the community can thrive.

### AREA A | IDENTITY AND MISSION

Throughout the coming years, USEK will continue to affirm its Catholic identity while offering American-Style education and adopting international high quality standards. USEK will build a diverse and inclusive community where students, faculty, staff and alumni can develop a distinguished ability to adapt, work, learn and live in diverse environments.

### AREA B | GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

USEK will enhance its governance structure that leads to an enhanced performance and remarkable institutional effectiveness, benchmarked with international standards. The university will maintain its continuous improvement culture on the level of academic and administrative units, as built in the past years, while improving its data-driven decision making process, and communication, marketing and dissemination strategies. Moreover, USEK will create a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to become a top academic destination for those who are looking for opportunities to learn, conceive, collaborate, launch, and lead in new endeavors.

### AREA C | ACADEMICS

USEK will strongly prioritize the academic experience offered to all its students, by providing them with best educational programs and by inspiring them to seek knowledge throughout their lifetimes, not only while they are at the university. Also, USEK will be working towards international accreditation and recognition of its academic programs and services.

### AREA D | FACULTY, TEACHING AND LEARNING, AND RESEARCH

USEK will make university education more personalized, more interconnected, and more efficient by hiring Faculty who are world class leaders in their fields, by adopting best teaching and learning practices in higher education, and by developing the skills of all Faculty through training and development opportunities. USEK aims to be leading and be widely recognized for achieving excellence in research and creativity in all fields of studies.

### AREA E | STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

USEK will cultivate an exceptional learning environment in which students are challenged to identify their need to learn more, supported with appropriate resources and adequate environment. Also, USEK will encourage students and graduates to pursue a high quality of life, and will graduate students not only career ready, but also life ready.

## AREA F | ALUMNI, FUNDRAISING, AND INTERNALIZATION

USEK will focus on building tight relationships with its Alumni network by engaging them in different activities and events and by offering them valuable services. The university will strengthen its relationships with world-class mission driven education institutions outside the borders of a traditional campus, while respecting and serving its mission and goals. In addition, USEK will focus on improving its national and international positioning to become a university of a first choice for local and foreign students seeking high quality education.

## AREA G | CAMPUS

USEK will become a residential campus serving a diversified population of students, and will prioritize the development of spaces that can meet the new learner expectations. It will provide the faculty and the community adequate resources allowing them to grow in a quality life environment. USEK will also maintain its positioning as one of the most sustainable and green universities in the MENA region. Furthermore, the university will be adopting cutting-edge technologies to improve the overall university experience, while making its campus resources available to serve the community. Also, USEK will explore the opportunities to invest abroad to serve its mission and vision.

## AREA A | IDENTITY AND MISSION

*Nourish Reflection and Inspire Actions*

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Throughout the coming years, USEK will continue to affirm its Catholic identity while offering American-Style education and adopting international high quality standards. USEK will build a diverse and inclusive community where students, faculty, staff and alumni can develop a distinguished ability to adapt, work, learn and live in diverse environments.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

- A.1. Continue to internally and publicly affirm USEK identity and educational vision through a compelling reputation and brand that raise awareness and communicate achievements and excellence.
- A.2. Study and analyze the perception of USEK identity and mission within all segments of Lebanese society and abroad.
- A.3. Continue to ensure the adopted American-style educational system by pursuing US/International accreditation.
- A.4. Emphasize on continuous quality assurance and situate our work in strategic context, to value and celebrate our endeavors.
- A.5. Emphasize on diversity and inclusiveness in USEK strategic thinking and priorities.
- A.6. Foster catholic educational activities as service learning, local outreach, etc.
- A.7. Foster and continue to engage in research, academic and non-academic activities linked to support Maronite and Lebanese heritage.
- A.8. Design, develop, and initiate activities for students and alumni on topics related to extending the continuity of the OLM and catholic values into personal, professional and family lives.
- A.9. Establish a committee of ethics able to support the University mission and guide institutional, academic and research decisions when needed.
- A.10. Foster and continue to expand collaboration with national and international compatible mission driven organizations.
- A.11. Capitalize on our leadership role in Lebanon in promoting cultural diversity, social responsibility, dialogue, citizenship and peace.

## AREA B | GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### *Inspire Efficiency, Collegiality and Stewardship*

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will enhance its governance structure that leads to an enhanced performance and remarkable institutional effectiveness, benchmarked with international standards. The university will maintain its continuous improvement culture on the level of academic and administrative units, as built in the past years, while improving its data-driven decision making process, and communication, marketing and dissemination strategies. Moreover, USEK will create a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship to become a top academic destination for those who are looking for opportunities to learn, conceive, collaborate, launch, and lead in new endeavors.

#### STRATEGIC GOALS

- B. 1. Continue to sustain the University mission and institutional effectiveness through an adequate governance structure.
- B. 2. Review and update USEK2015 bylaws, when needed, through the Governance and Trusteeship Committee.
- B. 3. Promote and sustain the highest standard of governance, characterized by accountability, responsibility and commitment to our institutional mission, prudent and ethical leadership
- B. 4. Adopt a holistic governance approach at USEK to promote its identity and its mission, in its local context.
- B. 5. Ensure a tight collaboration between the Supreme Council, the BOT and the leadership of the University especially on the budgetary and strategic issues.
- B. 6. Ensure effective and transparent management and data driven decision-making communicated to the community.
- B. 7. Continuously evaluate and reconfigure university support services for efficiency and effectiveness.
- B. 8. Develop metrics and measure annual progress in achieving University and unit-level strategic objectives and take appropriate corrective action to address deficiencies and unforeseen complications.
- B. 9. Develop financial policies and statements to embrace international and accreditation standards.
- B. 10. Build a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and thoughtful risk-taking throughout the University.
- B. 11. Enhance the management and effectiveness of our external and internal communications.
- B. 12. Create and implement a multi-year communication and marketing plan that identifies and prioritizes target markets.
- B. 13. Enhance institutional efforts for students' recruitment and enrolment through strategic partnership and collaboration with key stakeholders.

## AREA C | ACADEMICS

### *Forge High Quality Liberal and Professional Learning*

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will strongly prioritize the academic experience offered to all its students, by providing them with best educational programs and by inspiring them to seek knowledge throughout their lifetimes, not only while they are at the university. Also, USEK will be working towards international accreditation and recognition of its academic programs and services.

#### STRATEGIC GOALS

- C. 1. Pursue programs US/International accreditations.
- C. 2. Establish the Arts and Science academic unit and foster liberal art education in all undergraduate areas of studies.
- C. 3. Develop the students' perennially valuable skills in effective and professional English communication, including critical reading, analytical thinking, clear writing, and persuasive speech.
- C. 4. Fully align the student learning assessment and grading to the US credit system.
- C. 5. Seek labeling and international recognition for our educational lab activities.
- C. 6. Strengthen the design, architecture and performing arts to ensure they are distinctive in Lebanon.
- C. 7. Ensure that curricular offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels include global perspectives.
- C. 8. Design and implement academic calendars and course delivery methods that better align academic programs with the needs and interests of students, and strive to achieve an optimal educational balance among online, hybrid, and traditional pedagogies.
- C. 9. Create innovative models of doctoral studies that deliver the competencies and skills that our most advanced students need to succeed in a variety of career pathways, within and outside of academia.
- C. 10. Develop academic majors and minors that are responsive to workforce needs of the economy, especially in natural and social sciences, engineering, health science, etc.
- C. 11. Expand continuing education courses on-campus, off-campus and across Lebanon.
- C. 12. Sustain the medical school admission policy based on the MCAT and international standards admission.
- C. 13. Grow our postgraduate learning community by expanding our range of opportunities for postgraduate study, with particular emphasis on lifelong learning and professional certificates.

## AREA D | FACULTY, TEACHING AND LEARNING, AND RESEARCH

*Foster Collegiality, Innovation and a Vibrant Teaching and Learning Environment*

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will make university education more personalized, more interconnected, and more efficient by hiring Faculty who are world class leaders in their fields, by adopting best teaching and learning practices in higher education, and by developing the skills of all Faculty through training and development opportunities. USEK aims to be leading and be widely recognized for achieving excellence in research and creativity in all fields of studies.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

#### Faculty

- D. 1. Recruit, develop, and retain faculty members who are committed to ongoing experimentation, adaptation, and improvement in their perspectives and methods regarding teaching and learning.
- D. 2. Review and develop the faculty performance appraisal system to include, teaching and learning, research, and service to community.
- D. 3. Support faculty members who have the potential to become world leaders in their fields through training, mentoring, effective performance review and international exposure.
- D. 4. Provide high quality and flexible opportunities for Continuing Professional Development and Life-long learning for faculty.

#### Teaching and Learning

- D. 5. Sustain leadership in Teaching and Learning professional development in Lebanon.
- D. 6. Advocate for, demonstrate and embed exemplary practices in teaching and learning.
- D. 7. Significantly advance and embed incorporation of blended e-learning strategies and new technologies in the teaching and learning environment.
- D. 8. Provide equal quality of teaching and learning in USEK main campus and Regional University Campuses.

#### Research

- D. 9. Recruit academic staff with exceptional research and innovation portfolios and those who demonstrate excellent potential.
- D. 10. Develop USEK reputation and increase the visibility of USEK also as a research oriented institution.
- D. 11. Increase research funding and support from external sources to support faculty members and postgraduate students on pursuing research.
- D. 12. Set a research incentive and award policy to support and recognize research achievements.
- D. 13. Foster research collaborations with HEIs, employers, commercial partners, local development stakeholders and public agencies.

- D. 14. Set annual targets for growth in externally funded faculty research and provide effective professional support in obtaining and administering grants and publishing results in peer-reviewed journals.
- D. 15. Maintain and develop resources, and identify and invest in subject areas of long-term worth which have the potential to become world-leading 'key points of excellence'.
- D. 16. Continuously enhance our library infrastructure to fully meet the diversity of needs amongst our learning community and of members of the wider community wishing to share our resources and e-resources.

## AREA E | STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

### *Enhancing Students Learning Experience and Cultivating Community*

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will cultivate an exceptional learning environment in which students are challenged to identify their need to learn more, supported with appropriate resources and adequate environment. Also, USEK will encourage students and graduates to pursue a high quality of life, and will graduate students not only career ready, but also life ready.

#### STRATEGIC GOALS

- E. 1. Target successful students/candidates from all segments of the Lebanese society and abroad to meet program enrollment objectives.
- E. 2. Provide more effective orientation, advising and registration services for incoming and continuing students.
- E. 3. Expand the services of USEK dorms in a more gender inclusive perspective.
- E. 4. Maintain labeling and high quality standards in students' services.
- E. 5. Monitor and enhance students' retention, progression and graduation rates.
- E. 6. Recognize and celebrate student achievements and contributions and establish Honors programs in majors offered by the University.
- E. 7. Foster student engagement in spiritual and pastoral activities.
- E. 8. Empower students through clubs, societies and athletics.
- E. 9. Promote a more sustained involvement/representation of students in the University development.
- E. 10. Establish a unit for students counselling and support.
- E. 11. Continue to support students in managing their personal and financial problems in order to reach their educational targets.
- E. 12. Provide student with opportunities and support to develop their graduate attributes and employability.
- E. 13. Expand opportunities for every student to perform meaningful community service and service learning that enrich their educational experience and contribute to the quality of life in our neighboring communities.
- E. 14. Stimulate in our students a lifelong thirst for knowledge and learning and to encourage a pioneering, innovative and independent attitude.

## AREA F | ALUMNI, FUNDRAISING, AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

### *Strengthen USEK Ties to the Larger Community*

#### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will focus on building tight relationships with its Alumni network by engaging them in different activities and events and by offering them valuable services. The university will strengthen its relationships with world-class mission driven education institutions outside the borders of a traditional campus, while respecting and serving its mission and goals. In addition, USEK will focus on improving its national and international positioning to become a university of a first choice for local and foreign students seeking high quality education.

#### STRATEGIC GOALS

##### Alumni

- F. 1. Build a database of friends and supporters, locally and globally, who would contribute to the long-term wellbeing of the University.
- F. 2. Establish a sense of belonging, and nurture a lifelong relationship with alumni as they are the core constituent of the university's financial and non-financial resources.

##### Fundraising

- F. 3. Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy anchored to core institutional priorities.
- F. 4. Engage students and Alumni in fundraising events.

##### Internationalization

- F. 5. Improve the University international ranking and engage all needed resources.
- F. 6. Increase the number of international short-term and full degree seeking students on campus.
- F. 7. Develop an international environment and promote diversity on campus.
- F. 8. Increase research grant and contracts income to levels that improve our ranking and global recognition.
- F. 9. Broaden and deepen our commitment to working in partnership with other HEIs and external agencies through research and global networking.
- F. 10. Strengthen full services for student study abroad and international exchange.

## AREA G | CAMPUS

*Set the Benchmark for Places Designed for the Human Person and Dignity*

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

USEK will become a residential campus serving a diversified population of students, and will prioritize the development of spaces that can meet the new learner expectations. It will provide the faculty and the community adequate resources allowing them to grow in a quality life environment. USEK will also maintain its positioning as one of the most sustainable and green universities in the MENA region. Furthermore, the university will be adopting cutting-edge technologies to improve the overall university experience, while making its campus resources available to serve the community. Also, USEK will explore the opportunities to invest abroad to serve its mission and vision.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

- G. 1. Equip and efficiently use the Byblos Francois Bassil Building (2 Million American Dollars).
- G. 2. Build USEK dormitory areas and services, northern of USEK, to better welcome national and international students.
- G. 3. Build a Health Club (around 43 Million American Dollars) on the current Parking 1.
- G. 4. Establish and equip outstanding labs for arts and design.
- G. 5. Revise and reprioritize the University campus master plan (2012 project: attached document) according to new academic and institutional priorities.
- G. 6. Build a main Church in support to the USEK mission.
- G. 7. Make all campuses friendly to people with special needs.
- G. 8. Equip and redesign the classrooms to meet the digital requirements and academic priorities.
- G. 9. Review current space allocations to maximize opportunities for students to gather while strengthening organizational efficiencies.
- G. 10. Maintain top edge labs for science, engineering and technology.
- G. 11. Develop and increase the indoor spaces for students' well-being.
- G. 12. Plan and establish an USEK Business center that would include:
  - Spaces for the accelerator project linked to the Asher Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship;
  - Labs for Hotel Management programs;
  - A restaurant, hotel rooms, and a conference hall located on the rooftop and managed by USEK Hotel Management department;
  - Commercial shops, Adyar caves à vin, etc.