

# Students as Partners:

Capitalizing on Student Active  
Involvement to Inform and  
Enhance Institutional Teaching  
and Learning

Azza Awwad & Caroline Mitry  
The American University in Cairo

جامعة الأخوين  
AL AKHAWAYN  
UNIVERSITY

**AMICAL 2023**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introducing the topic</li></ul>	<b>5min</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ice breaker</li></ul>	<b>7-10 min</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing results from the pre session survey on experiences of student involvement in participants' institutions</li></ul>	<b>5 min</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussing examples from AUC</li></ul>	<b>15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: audience fill in a template</b> for a selected idea for a student collaboration project identifying enablers, opportunities and challenges. <b>Audience identify criteria, considerations, opportunities and challenges</b></li></ul>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>ACTIVITY: Troika Consulting:</b> audience get consultation(s) from peers in their small groups</li></ul>	<b>20 min</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Discussion:</b> Facilitators moderate, answer questions and provide consultations and feedback as needed</li><li>• <b>Questions?</b></li></ul>	<b>20 min ++</b>

# CONTENTS OF THIS TEMPLATE

## Session Learning Outcomes

By attending this session, participants will be able to:

01

Discuss the relevance and value of collaborating with students to enhance Teaching and Learning

02

Identify projects in their institutions that could benefit from student input & collaboration

03

Assess opportunities and challenges of involving students in designing or enhancing elements of their learning experience.

01

## **INTRODUCTION**

Capitalizing on Student Active Involvement to Inform and Enhance Institutional Teaching and Learning

02

## **SHARING SURVEY RESULTS**

From pre-sessions survey

03

## **SHARING AUC PROJECTS**

Overview and facilitation notes from different CLT projects/events

04

## **CRITERIA AND CHALLENGES**

Lessons learned and tips

05

## **PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Work with provided template on potential projects



# Students as Partners

01



# ICE BREAKER

- **Question:** *What is the most insightful feedback you have received from students? How can it be implemented?*

**Response via 1-2-all format:** Start alone, then in pairs, and finally as a whole group

- Silent** self-reflection by individuals - 1 min.
- Generate and discuss in pairs, building on ideas from self-reflection - 2 min
- Each group shares one important idea that stood with all - 5 min.

A photograph of a modern building with a facade of alternating light and dark horizontal stripes. The building has several balconies with blue metal railings and large windows. A large palm tree is in the foreground on the right. The sky is clear and blue. A dark blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Pre-session survey' in white.

# Pre-session survey

02

# Participant Input

## (pre-session survey results)

Have you designed or attended any event or participated in a project that involves students as contributors to inform and enhance institutional teaching and learning at your institution? (3 unsure, 2 Yes)

- **Focus Groups for First Year Experience** (FirstBridge program)  
*Questions about experience, connections and suggestions.*  
*Plan for next year: other focus groups to compare the results and assess the new model of FirstBridge courses.*
- **Course Design Workshop** (Faculty members and faculty developer)  
*Students as silent observers (documenting own perspective)*  
*Actions taken: workshop refinement*
- **Library sessions with academic mentors** (unsure)

5 responses  
4 institutions





A photograph of a modern building with a facade of alternating light and dark horizontal stripes. The building has several balconies with blue metal railings and large windows. A large palm tree is in the foreground on the right. A dark blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing white text.

# Sharing Examples from AUC

03

The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern, multi-story university building with a mix of stone and concrete facades. Several palm trees are visible in the foreground and to the right of the building. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangle is overlaid on the left and center of the image, containing white text.

## About AUC

Liberal Arts Institution

Founded in 1919

Instructors: 400+

Undergraduates 5000+

Graduates 900+



# Learning Spaces (LS) Initiative

Active Learning and Dual  
Delivery Classrooms

# Student Contribution: Input and Insights

## LS Initiative

- Strategic initiative started in Fall 2019
- Active Learning classrooms to enhance interactive teaching and learning
- Dual Delivery classrooms for mixed (face-to-face and remote) student participation and interaction in courses
- Student & faculty feedback collected regularly to inform implementation and future design
  - Formats: surveys & classroom visits

- By Fall 2022
  - 124 classrooms for Dual Delivery (DD) and
  - 3 Active Learning (AL) classrooms and 1 Faculty Sandbox.
- Fall 2021 through Fall 2022
  - 78 faculty members and 1351 students used AL classrooms
    - 60+ faculty received pedagogical and technical support.
  - 86 faculty members and 3650+ students used DD classrooms
    - 150+ faculty received pedagogical and technical training.

# Input and Insights

## LS Initiative - AL Classrooms

- Positive faculty and student Feedback
- 94% of students prefer AL classrooms to regular ones
  - 98% Interested to attend all/some classes there in future
- Insightful recommendations to enhance teaching and learning experience, feedback around:
  - Appropriateness for teaching style/activities
  - More training and orientation needed on available devices and softwares
  - Number and placement of projectors, podium, etc.
  - Room lighting, airing, and acoustics

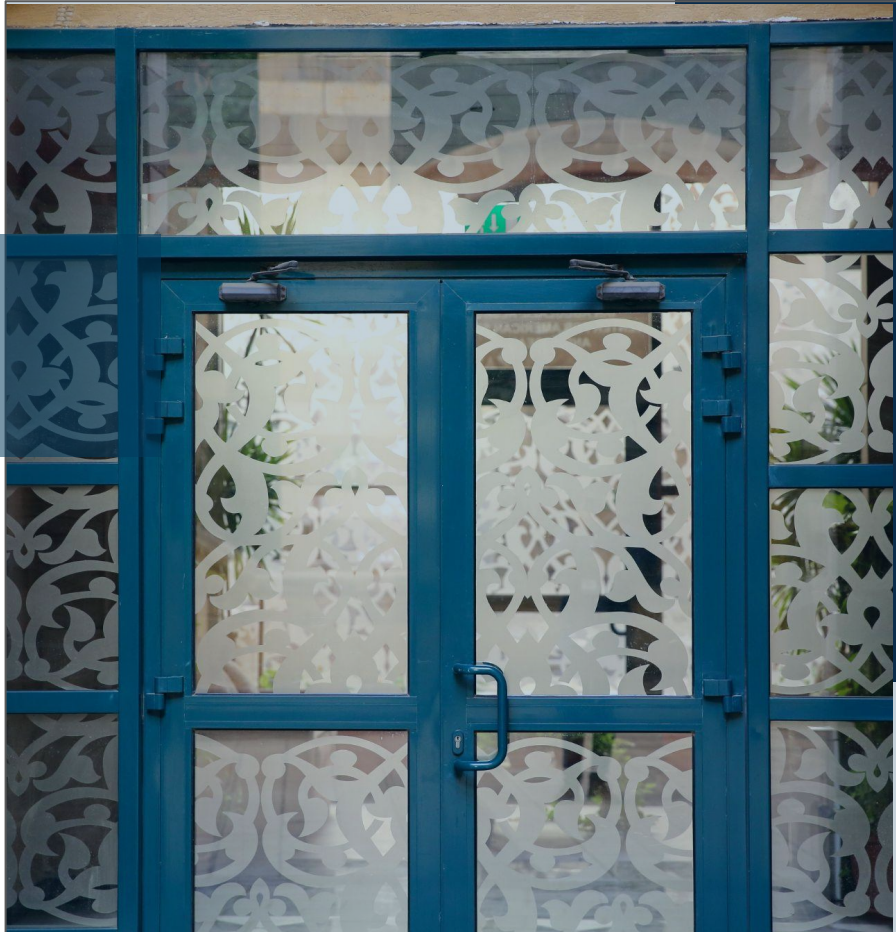


# Input and Insights

## LS Initiative - DD Classrooms

- **Faculty and Student Feedback:**
  - 81% rated interaction between instructor and students excellent or good (combined)
  - Faculty quote: “The DD option is a good one should we mostly return to online learning; but I don’t think it offers much to students who are in the remote classroom.”
- **Insightful recommendations to enhance teaching and learning experience:**
  - DD for graduate classes -international students and those working full time or away from Cairo
  - DD Policy
  - Faculty need more tips on engaging remote/online students and on supporting interaction
  - Tech enhancement





# Mid-Semester Course Assessments

# Student Contribution: Input and Insights MSAs

- Online surveys or focus-group like activities (Small Group Instructional Diagnosis- SGIDs)
- CLT designs and administers surveys
- SGIDs facilitated in class - Anonymous student contribution
- Confidential reports shared **ONLY** with the course instructor
- Impact?

**AY 21-22**

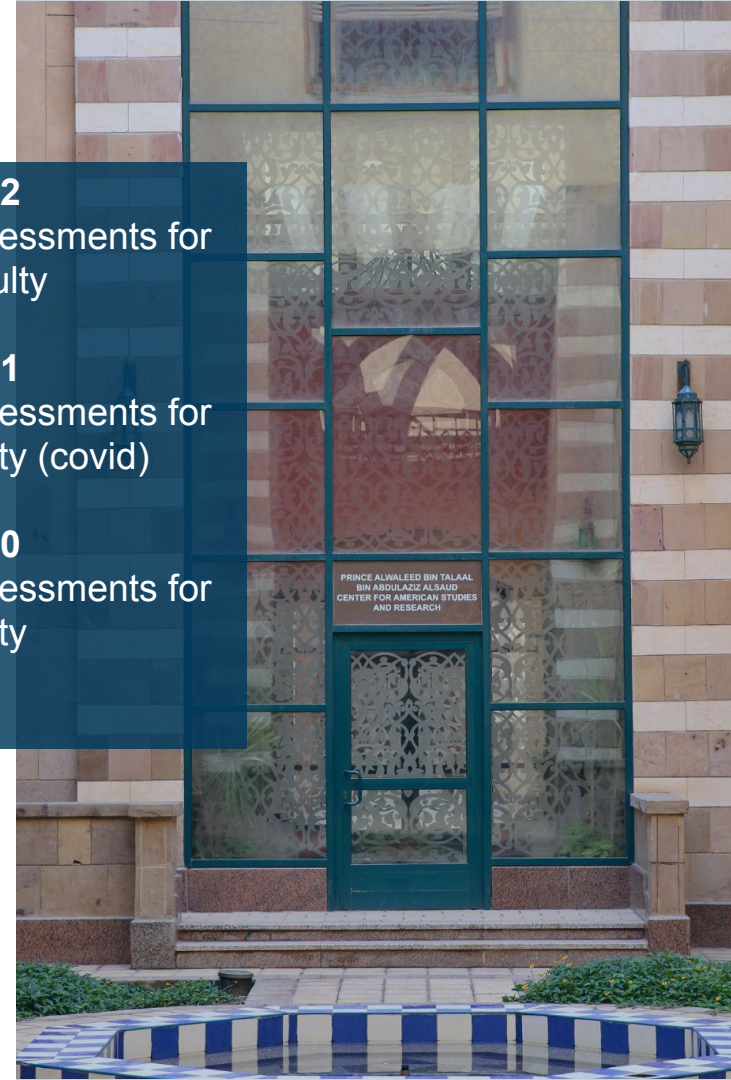
278 assessments for  
136 faculty

**AY 20-21**

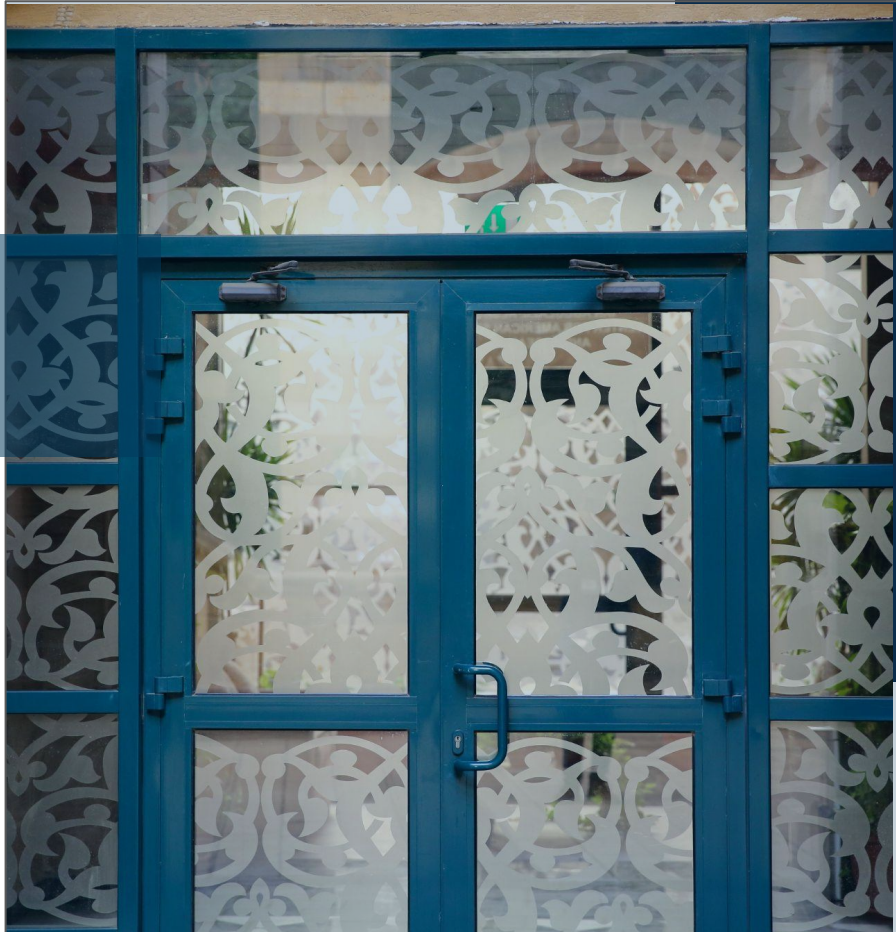
150 assessments for  
74 faculty (covid)

**AY 19-20**

188 assessments for  
86 faculty







# Program Assessment by Graduating Students

## **FOCUS GROUPS**

# Student Contribution: Input and Insights Graduating Seniors Focus Groups

- Initiative started in Fall 2019 - TFQE Findings and Action Plan
- Plan is to cover all departments within a two year period
- Range of impact: small to whole program revamping
- Average of 7-8 focus groups per term
- 6-12 randomly selected students per group

## Overview



# Student Contribution: Input and Insights Program Assessment by Gr. Students

- Planning and coordination
- Neutrality and no contribution of opinions
- Student anonymity and balanced participation
- Two facilitators per focus group
  - Reporting and compilation of themes & highlights (department/school level)
  - Recurring Themes

**Facilitation**





# Planning and Aligning Program Tracks

## Co-Design Sessions

# Student Contribution: Co-Design Planning and Aligning Program Tracks

- For a program in HUSS - Fall 2022
- Two new program tracks and to complete the whole degree within a reduced number of study semesters (8 terms instead of 9)
- Faculty and students decide together on order and scope of track courses

## Overview

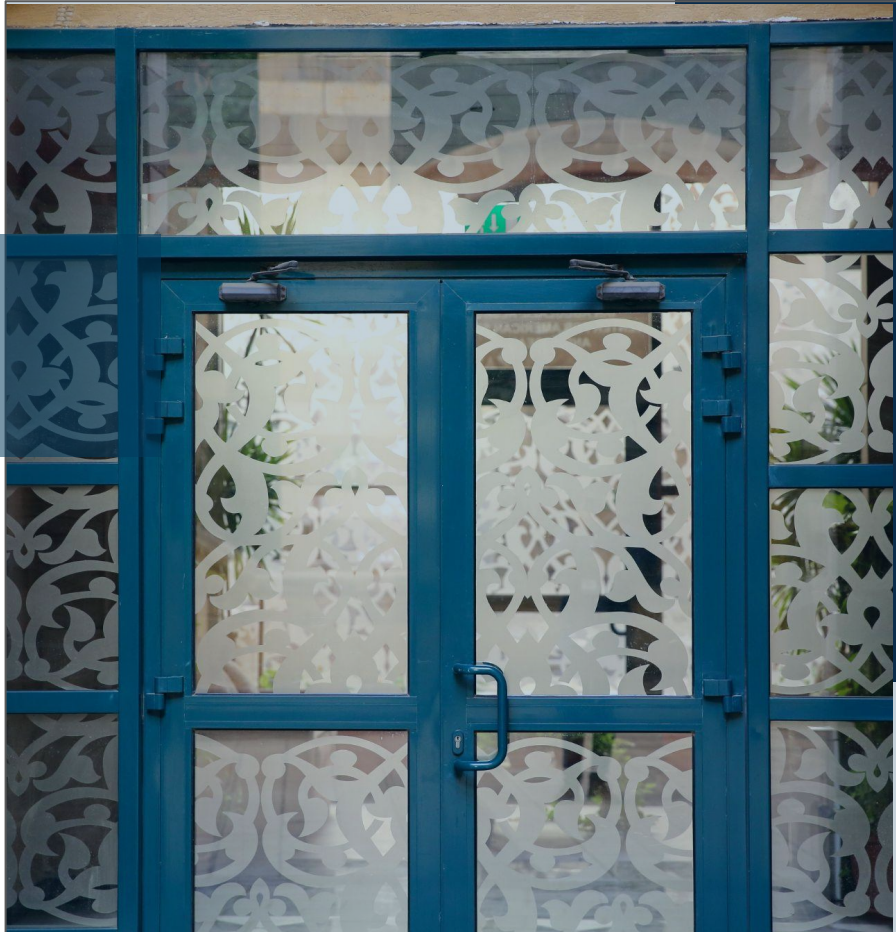


# Student Contribution: Co-Design Planning and Aligning Program Tracks

- Identify and prioritize targeted graduate student skills
- Differentiate between must-have and good-to-have skills
- Minimize overlap and modify existing courses as needed or introduce new ones
- Faculty and students worked in two parallel groups and produced a comprehensive plan.

**Facilitation**  
4 hours  
6 faculty members  
4 students





# A University wide Concept-focused **Co-Design Session**

# Student Contribution: Co-Design

- Academic Integrity as an Institutional Challenge and a Strategic Priority
- Purpose: faculty and students working together to co-design approaches to deal with enhancing academic integrity at AUC (challenge)
- **Structured, detailed** and timed during a campus wide event
- Facilitator **Guidelines** + invitations

## Overview





- Exploring AI concept + digging deeper into **WHY?**
- Evaluating current practices
- Focusing on **WHAT** might AUC do differently?
- Identifying **WHO?HOW? WHEN?**
- Determining the needed resources
- Anticipating Challenges
- Exit tickets (most insightful + suggestions)

**Report:** Results categorized/themed for suggestion to be implemented across campus, within courses, with the focus of equipping students

## Facilitation

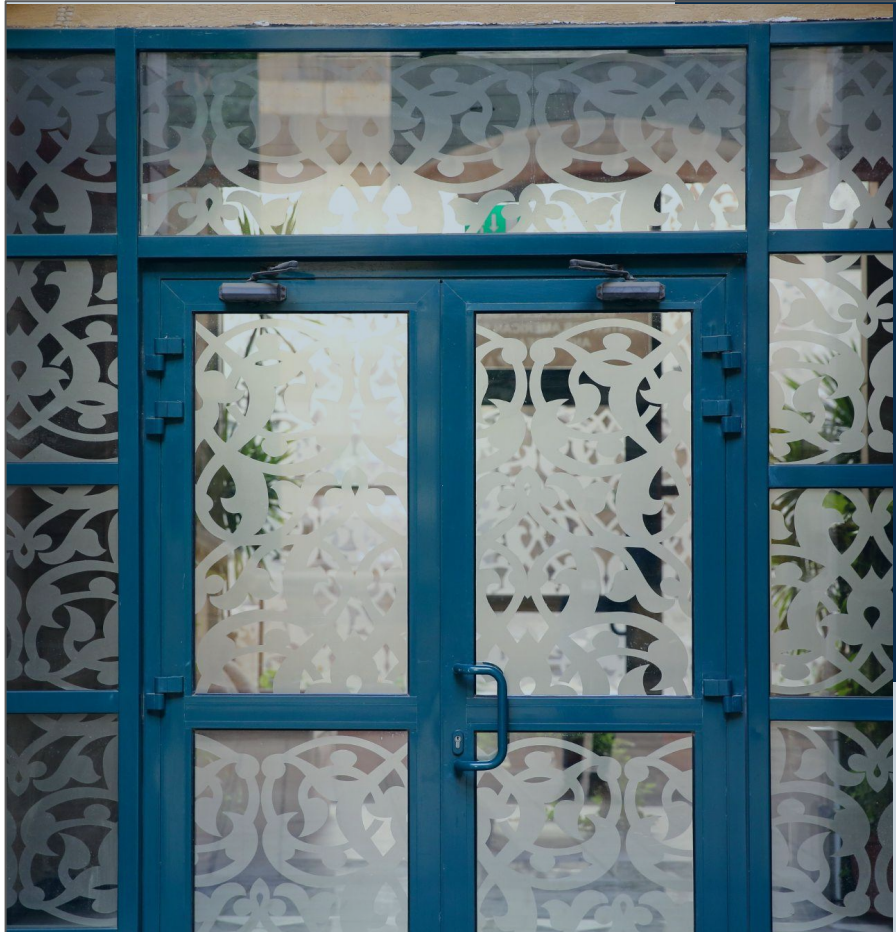
90 min

4-5 tables

1-2 faculty & 4-5 students

+ 1 CLT facilitator per table

+ 1 CLT general moderator



# Participatory Fora

# Student Contribution: Input and Insights

## Unprepared Students

CLT teaching challenges survey in 2017 reported **“having students come unprepared to class”** as the most challenging for 47.7% of the courses they teach (n=101 responses for 283 courses)

- Get an insight on both student and faculty perspective on “student engagement” and preparedness for class
- Explore alternative options for dealing with “unprepared” students aimed at ensuring a beneficial learning experience

Overview

# Faculty Challenge: Unprepared Students

- How often? How does this affect instructors' teaching? **Why?**
- **Perceptions** and perspectives on "preparedness"
- Student **motivation** issues
- Sharing successful strategies: Student and faculty experiences.
- If/when students come unprepared, how can we ensure a beneficial (and fair) learning experience regardless?

## Facilitation

4-5 hour session

4 tables with 2-3  
instructors per table  
and 1 STA (student)

CLT moderators and  
facilitators of  
discussion

PRINCE AHMED BIN TALAAL  
JULIYAH AL SAUD  
CENTER FOR AMERICAN STUDIES  
AND RESEARCH

STUDENTS	FACULTY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Poor choice of assigned readings</li><li>● Unclear requirements</li><li>● Difficulty of assigned task/reading</li><li>● Lack of engagement with the course</li><li>● Repetition of material in class</li><li>● Stress, workload</li><li>● Distraction and/or other commitments</li><li>● Forgetfulness</li><li>● Large class size impacts opportunity of participation</li></ul> <p data-bbox="189 933 434 971"><b><u>Document link</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Lack of reading cultural</li><li>● Students want short and concise readings.</li><li>● Poor student time management skills</li><li>● Poor reading skills</li><li>● Nature of the course (pass/fail - non credit)</li><li>● Reluctance to put in effort (laziness)</li><li>● Dependence on the teacher to explain content</li><li>● Outdated readings</li><li>● Lack of interest in non-major related courses</li><li>● Lack of work ethics (problems with academic integrity)</li><li>● Contagious attitude (-ve)</li><li>● Misperception of faculty expectation</li><li>● Lack of visible repercussions for unpreparedness</li><li>● Students ability to work the system</li><li>● Student attendance( late to class/leaving early)</li></ul>

***Faculty workshops:***

*Student Faculty Co-Design :  
seeds of campus conversation*

*The Unprepared Student:  
Designing for Engagement*

A photograph of a modern, multi-story building with a facade of alternating light and dark horizontal stripes. The building features several balconies with blue metal railings and large windows. A large palm tree is in the foreground on the right. The sky is clear and blue. A dark blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Challenges and Lessons Learned'.

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

04

- **Incentivizing students to participate**
- **Time constraints**
- **Response rate**
- **Resources and workload**
- **Impact?**

# Challenges

- **For Co-design:** balanced contribution (fac.stud), focused results
- **For MSA:** conveying negative feedback
- **For DD and AL:** technical issues assessment, ped. Training and diverse needs for classroom setup and features
- **For Sr F grps:** logistics mgmt, maintaining neutrality, conveying difficult/negative feedback, cumulative reporting (effort and time constraints)

**Other?**

## Challenges



- **Incentivizing students to participate**
- **Time constraints**
- **Response rate**
- **Resources and workload**
- **Impact?**

**Considerations  
and lessons  
learned**



A photograph of a modern, multi-story building with a facade of alternating light and dark horizontal stripes. The building features several balconies with blue metal railings. In the foreground, there are several tall palm trees and some greenery. The sky is clear and blue. A dark blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Hands on for Planning and Implementation' in white.

# Hands on for Planning and Implementation

04

## Students As Partners: Activity Planning Template

Goal(s) and  
Topic

Expected  
output(s)



Stakeholders

.....  
.....  
.....

Format and Feedback Collection



.....  
.....  
.....



Resources and  
Considerations

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



Anticipated  
Challenges

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



NOTES

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Working with  
the provided  
template

## TROIKA CONSULTING - Groups of 3

One participant is the “client,” the others “consultants”

- Groups have first “client” **share a question** based on the template you worked on **1-2 min**
- Consultants **ask the “client” clarifying questions** **1-2 min**

“Client” turns around with their back facing the consultants

- Together, the consultants generate ideas, suggestions, coaching advice **4-5 min**
- “Client” turns around and shares what was most valuable about the experience **1-2 min**
- Groups switch to next person and repeat steps

Average 30 m





# Thank You!

Azza Awwad: [aazza@aucegypt.edu](mailto:aazza@aucegypt.edu)

Caroline Mitry: [cmitry@aucegypt.edu](mailto:cmitry@aucegypt.edu)

## CREDITS

Presentation template by **Slidesgo**

Icons by **Flaticon**

Infographics by **Freepik**

Working Template created by **Piktochart**

Images from the **AUC New Cairo Campus**