

THE NEW STAR

ISSUE 4

FEBRUARY 9, 2024



photo taken from Student life office

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My Diversity Week experience

Every year, Diversity Week contributes to a few of the brightest and most memorable days of the academic year at AUCA. It is an event where students present different cultures through various performances, foods, games, attributes, and many other activities and aspects. During this week students get to experience the unique spirit of AUCA as well as express themselves and their talents. This year, the students organized many delegations that showcased the diversity of people. Delegations have been diligently preparing for each day of Diversity Week for a long time: Presentation Day, Games Day, Food Day, and the last, but also the most astonishing one: the Final Concert.

I have enrolled as a member of the American delegation and not once have I regretted my decision. For a month, our delegation has been industriously preparing for the performance in order to surprise and delight themselves and all the spectators. We created a fascinating and wonderful performance that consists of various dances. Each member of the delegation heavily contributed towards creating a bright performance, especially the head of the delegation, who

organized everything and brought the whole team together. However, the preparation for Diversity Week is not only about hard work and a large number of rehearsals, but also about having fun and meeting new people. This delegation made its members experience both aspects, because during long rehearsals all the members were able to make new friends, exchange ideas, help each other open up, have fun, dance, sing, and create a lot of memories.

It is the third time I have enrolled in a delegation during my studies at the AUCA, and with every year I look forward to this holiday even more. This event helped me learn more about different cultures and become part of them. Moreover, Diversity Week is a chance for me to express myself in various ways, feel the spirit of AUCA, and create new memories. This event will always remain in my memory, and I will always remember it with warmth. I highly recommend that each of the students would become part of one of the delegations at least once and feel all of these emotions.

Kibrie Kadamshoeva
JMC-121



Amazing leading experience ever

Leading the delegation for Diversity Week is a role that demands immense potential and passion. It comes with significant responsibilities, requiring strong support and collaboration. The individual in charge must gather people, persuade them to stay committed, and, above all, listen to each person's viewpoint.

Deciding to undertake such a significant responsibility required numerous negotiations with my friends. After careful consideration, I finally made up my mind to take on the challenge. Initially, I assumed it might be an easy task, but later I realized the various stressful points and

brain-draining stages involved. However, seeing the result and witnessing the beautiful outcome and the team's collective effort made every bit of stress and effort worthwhile.

The path leading the delegation for Diversity Week was a remarkable experience and stands out as one of my most memorable team endeavors. Naturally, the journey had its share of advantages and disadvantages, like encountering moments of demotivation and witnessing the unwavering dedication and support of individuals within the team. All these together made the experience unique and highly educational.

I express my gratitude to all those who diligently worked hard for our beautiful country's delegation (the Afghan delegation), as well as those who supported us in the final days. Special thanks to the AUCA for making it possible for us to showcase the rich and diverse culture of Afghanistan during this beautiful and vibrant week.

Maryam Rahimi
LAS-122



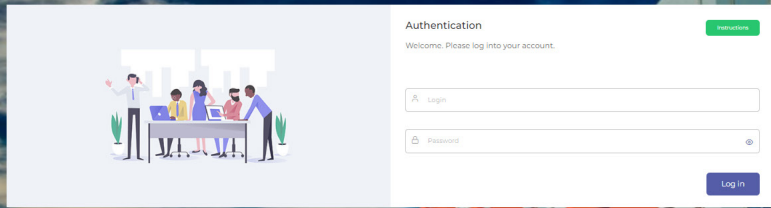
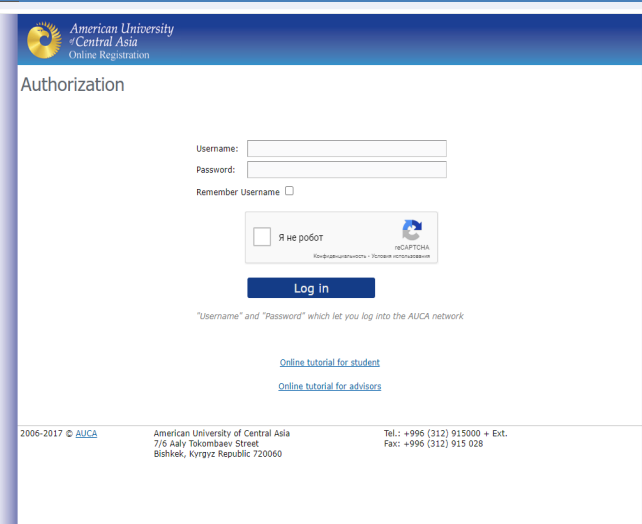


photo taken from wikipedia



Understanding Change: Assessing the Pros and Cons of The New Online Registration System

The American University of Central Asia, recognized for its dedication to advancement and modernity, has begun an important journey with the implementation of the new online course registration system. The new approach, which was devised by a team of skilled programmers to improve efficiency and accessibility, has prompted a wide range of opinions from the university's community, from positive to negative.

The new system has numerous innovative elements, including a “waiting list” option, which provides students who were unable to get a spot in a course with an alternative. This reduces the need for multiple signatures from several offices for add forms, simplifying a previously time-consuming procedure. The new website design, praised for its contemporary aesthetics and mobile performance, replaces the outdated UI of the old system. Real-time information on

course availability, on-the-spot course scheduling and adjustments are a noteworthy aspect of an online registration system, allowing students to make informed choices about their academic routes.

However, despite its accomplishments, the new system has received criticism. Despite the promises of a simplified procedure, technical issues still persist, with server outages and slow loading times frustrating many students. Faculty members, in particular, have expressed worry over the removal of a one-click option to copy the students' emails for a course, which was present in the previous system. Unresolved issues, such as students being unintentionally permitted to proceed to the second half of a course despite failing the first, highlight just a few existing problems with the new registration system. Students

and professors agree that, if more time for development was given, the system might have worked more efficiently. As AUCA continues its digital transition, it is essential to consider both the advantages and disadvantages of the new online registration system. This continuing discussion encourages active engagement from all stakeholders—students, faculty, and administrators—by establishing an environment where feedback is not only valued but also essential to improving and optimizing the system for the benefit of the whole AUCA community.

Darika Bolot
JMC-121

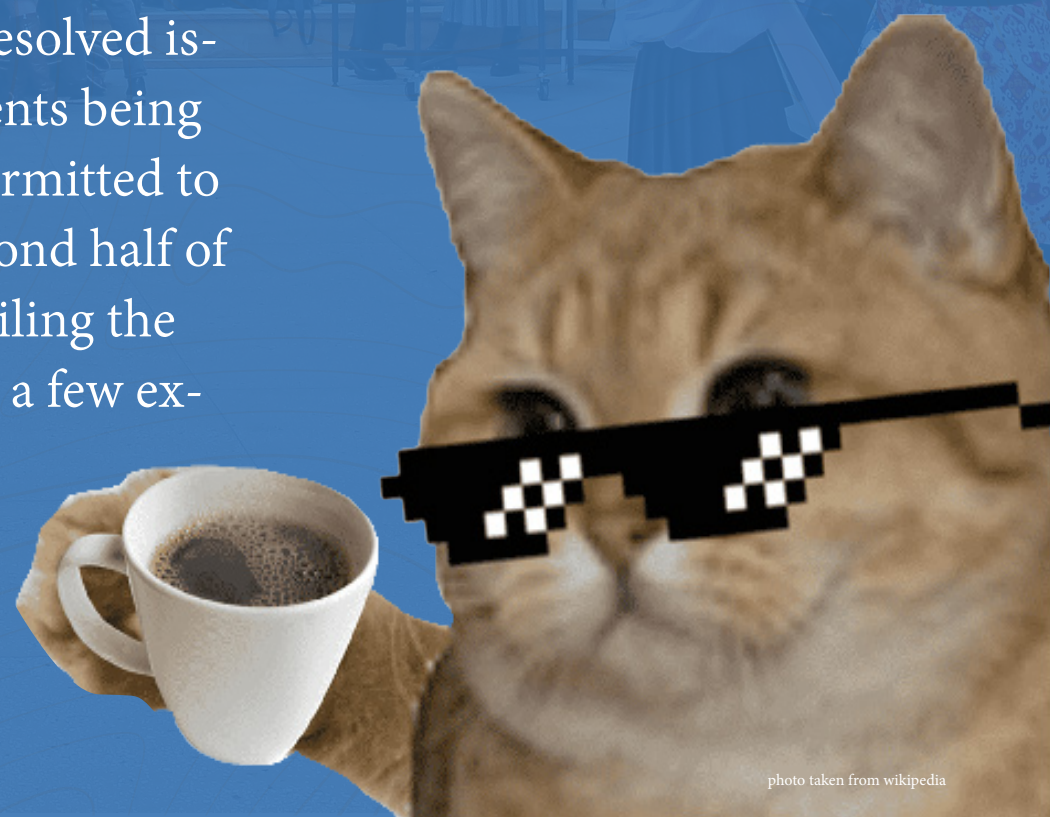


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The wonderful power of extracurricular activities

Benjamin Franklin once said that, "By failing to plan, you are preparing to fail." And the first step in planning is defining smart goals. I am in my first Master's year; at the beginning of the fall semester, I decided to write down some specific goals and drew the roadmap towards them. At the end of the semester, I decided to honestly evaluate my academic achievements: identify my weaknesses and strengths, and measure the valuable experiences I gained throughout the semester. When I listed my achievements, indeed, my GPA showed my astonishing academic performance; but compared to my achievements in extracurricular

activities: the difference surprised me. I figured out that, inside the class, I improved my critical thinking and gained some specialized knowledge in my field of study; outside the classroom, I shaped lasting memories and friendships. Moreover, I realized how participating in excursions, cultural trips, club meetings, guest lectures, vocational trainings, and book-launch seasons had helped me to expand my network of friendships, boost my leadership and communication skills, learn about team building and the spirit of working in a team, approach cultural relativism, and, finally, understand the philosophy of living while

working and studying. Considering the significant role of participating in extracurricular activities, I decided to set apart some of my time for extracurricular and civic-enjoyment activities, and include them in my spring semester's goals and plans. I strongly believe in the power of participating in extracurricular activities and encourage everyone to consider them as part of their academic life. Note that what you read inside classical academic texts is not always true out there – so go beyond the class and enjoy the wonders of life and friendship.

Farhad Ehsani
MA-ANTH



OTTO
VON
GUERICKE

UNIVERSITÄT

MY EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE AT OVGU

Studying at the respected Otto von Guericke University (OVGU) through the Erasmus+ exchange program, an opportunity provided by the Sociology department of the American University of Central Asia, has been a transformative journey for me, enhancing both my critical thinking and global communication skills. The program not only provided a rich academic environment, but also

facilitated a delightful setting for cultural exchange. Otto von Guericke University's (OVGU) students come from a diverse set of countries, and working in teams on different group projects facilitated friendship and a social bond among us, which not only allowed

us to deepen our connections, but also added an element of fun to our experience. This Erasmus exchange opportunity was amazing, unveiling new layers to self-discovery throughout this academic adventure. The program enabled me to see sociology from a "peace and conflict studies" perspective and expanded my worldview, while simultaneously allowing me to focus on my inner goals. The encounter with new people, places, professors, and academic approaches surprised and challenged me to adapt to diverse environments and emerge as a stronger version of myself by the jour-

ney's end. Most importantly, this exchange program was a life-changing event for me, as I was struggling to decide whether to give up my master's studies or try to find a way to continue. Therefore, the program not only helped me with my academic achievements and provided the exploration of new opportunities, but also positively supported me mentally.

I truly owe my gratitude to the AUCA Sociology department and the Otto von Guericke University in Magdeburg for arranging this life-changing experience. Over the five months spent in Magdeburg, I not only gained new knowledge but also formed lasting friendships and explored exciting places. This experience has not only contributed to my academic growth but has also fostered personal development, marking the Erasmus+ exchange program as one of the most profound experiences in my academic career.

Nasima Puya Habibi
MA-SOC



“День, который никогда не наступит”

День, который никогда не наступит. К сожалению, или к счастью, но не наступит тот день, когда все звезды сойдутся и всё то, о чем вы так долго мечтали, надеялись, грезили, одновременно и без ваших усилий появится в вашей жизни. Нет, такого никогда не произойдет. Не осознавая того, мы живём надеждами на чудо, на везение фортуны



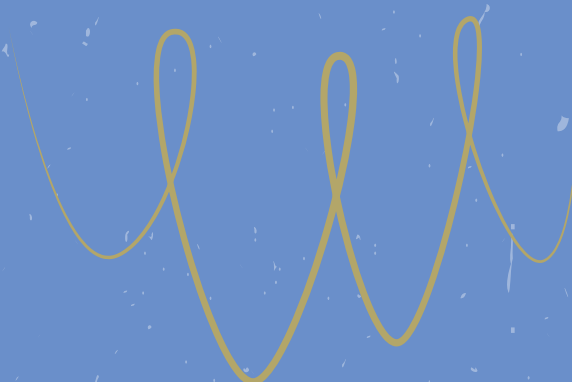
в нашу сторону, на удачу и случай. А надежда- это самая страшная тварь из всего содержимого ящика Пандоры. Это нежный яд, комфортный капкан нашего бездействия и перекладывания ответственности за нашу жизнь на случай, вселенную, волю Бога. Представьте себе свой пример того, чего вы давно хотите, но в сторону чего не осмеливаетесь сделать шаг.

Представьте, что никогда не наступит тот день, когда

это что-то само появится у вас на пороге. Вот ни-ког-да и точка, без всяких НО. И это не демотивационная идея, призванная разрушить мечты, а освежающая, бодрящая истина, которая смывает иллюзию розовых очков и позволяет трезво смотреть на вещи. Велик соблазн сбежать в оправдывающие примеры других, кому как вы думаете просто повезло. Не лезьте в чужие жизни, мы никогда не можем знать про других, какая плата может стоять за то или иное, как нам кажется, "везение", мы про себя то толком не знаем. Да, это может быть совсем не просто встретиться с принятием своей собственной ответственности за свою жизнь, за свою лень, за свои страхи и комплексы. Легче, конечно, найти виновного и самолично переложить ответственность на мир, который по факту Вам ни-че-го не должен. Отвернуться от всего и сделать из себя жертву. Обвинять мир в чём-то бессмысленно, ему всё равно. Если знаешь, чего ты хочешь, то идешь и ищешь пути, а если не знаешь сам, то людей, которые знают пути. Жизненный сценарий победителя (по Э.Бёрну), не предусматривает поблажки на чудо. Человек

в роли победителя и есть чудо, он сам творец своего счастья. Само понятие счастья у нас стало чрезмерно таргетированным, материальным. Другими словами, для многих людей счастье/успех - это время, место и обстоятельства, которые нужно достичь. Жизнь-это не маршрут от точки А до точки С - счастье, а гармония в первую очередь с самим собой во время этой прогулки по жизни. Быть самому себе источником счастья и не боксировать с Богом за право распоряжаться кому как лучше и как что должно быть, и есть здоровая позиция. Ну а для этого нужно научиться встречаться с самим собой, что является той ещё эпопеей, ведь не только приятные аспекты мы встретим в своем Я. И нужно быть поистине смелым человеком, чтобы ухватить свою собственную фортуны за хвост.

Клеваков Александр
4 курс факультета психологии



Hard work pays off: from a dream into reality

I want to start by saying that flying to study in the United States has been my dream since childhood. As we know, dreams tend to come true if we put enough effort into realizing them! My name is Parinoz Khojibaeva, and I am a junior student in Sociology. When the first semester of my junior year had begun, I promised to myself that I would make my 2024 unforgettable, and visit at least two new countries before the summer. I am currently in Istanbul, Turkey, and very soon I have a flight to the United States—to New York City! It seems that I was studying in school just recently, and back then it was scary to even think that I would be moving to a neighboring country—Kyrgyzstan—and now I'm in a completely foreign country and absolutely thrilled. I have set a number of goals for myself for the first half of 2024, and I have already achieved two: I visited one new country and I bought myself a new computer. Outside of preparing for my upcoming departure, I am also teaching English, doing Social Media Marketing, and looking for internships in the US! In America, I plan on doing an internship, where my own interests will be taken into account, and where I will also be able to help society. In addition, I have already applied for a job as an SMM specialist at my exchange university, and I was chosen as a finalist! Now, of course,

my days are super busy due to the fact that I am exploring Istanbul every day. I have already visited so many places and seen so many sights! I realized that traveling and meeting new people is exactly what you need to feel and live life in all its colors. I applied for a job at BGIA (my exchange university in New York) in order to be constantly going out and meeting new people. We are living our best years now, and we must live them in a way to regret nothing in the future! I am grateful to AUCA and OSUN exchange programs for such opportunities, and the main promise I have made to myself this year is to experience as many memorable moments as possible!

Parinoz Khojibaeva
SOC-121



photo taken from Freepik



Toguz Korgol: Exploring the Cultural Significance of a Kyrgyz Nomadic Game

Toguz Korgol, a traditional Kyrgyz game, is deeply rooted in nomadic traditions and has been passed down through generations. Each player has nine “wells”, and each well has nine korgols (little balls), which gives the game its name: “toguz” means nine. Nine is a sacred number for nomadic Turkic people, including the Kyrgyz. The goal of the game is to collect as many korgols as possible; the word “korgol” translates as “sheep droppings”. The game was originally meant to develop strategic military thinking for warriors and soldiers, especially in times of peace. The game represents the conquest of wealth, estates, and the enemy troops. Each korgol represents a warrior. The gameplay is dynamic and engaging, promoting social bonding and camaraderie among the players.

As Urmat Niyazbekovich Sydykbekov—a Master of Physical Culture and Sports, a Candidate Master of Sports in Volleyball, and a National Category Judge of the Kyrgyz Republic—states, “The future of our national game, Toguz Korgol, is very promising because it holds great importance in developing moral values, mathematical, and logical qualities in children and students. This game is a national treasure of the people.”

Toguz Korgol and Chess are two games that have endured the test of time, captivating players with their strategic gameplay. Chess is a globally recognized game that dates back centuries. Played on a

64-square checkerboard, players maneuver different pieces with unique abilities to checkmate their opponent’s king. It is renowned for its complexity and is often considered an intellectual pursuit, strengthening cognitive skills and strategic thinking. While both games require critical thinking and planning, they each possess their own distinct set of rules and cultural significance.

While both games share a common goal of outmaneuvering



your opponent, they differ in terms of origins, cultural context, and gameplay mechanics. Toguz Korgol embodies the nomadic spirit of Kyrgyzstan and serves as a reflection of its cultural heritage, fostering connections among players and preserving traditional values. Chess, on the other hand, transcends cultural boundaries and is celebrated worldwide for its intellectual depth and competitive nature.

In terms of gameplay, chess offers an extensive variety of moves and strategies due to the unique abilities of different pieces. The game requires precise calculations and long-term plan-

ning, often leading to positions where players must think several moves ahead. Toguz Korgol, with its fewer holes and simpler rules, emphasizes strategizing on the fly, making quick decisions to gain an advantage and capitalize on opportunities.

Both games offer substantial learning opportunities and countless hours of entertainment. Chess is renowned for its popularity in organized tournaments and prestigious competitions, attracting skilled players from all walks of life. In comparison, Toguz Korgol, while less known outside of Central Asian countries, holds a significant place in the hearts of Kyrgyz people and is often played during cultural events and family gatherings.

In conclusion, Toguz Korgol and chess both serve as testaments to the power of strategy and critical thinking in gameplay. While chess enjoys global recognition and a deep historical legacy, Toguz Korgol preserves the cultural heritage of Kyrgyzstan, showcasing the nomadic traditions and fostering a sense of community among players. Whether one seeks a global challenge or a glimpse into Kyrgyzstan’s rich cultural tapestry, both games offer unique experiences that transcend borders and captivate players worldwide.

Young Leaders of the C5+1 Youth Council Pave the Way for a Better Tomorrow

In a remarkable bid to increase connectivity and nurture leadership among youth from Central Asian countries and Afghanistan, the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) introduced the C5+1 Youth Council (YC) program in 2016. The C5+1 Youth Council program is administered by the American University of Central Asia with a grant from the U.S. Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic. The opinions, findings, and conclusions stated herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States' Department of State. AUCA's Center for Civic Engagement oversees the project.

The C5+1 Youth Council offers an annual membership program, inviting students to apply and thrive within a diverse and gender-balanced cohort. This coveted opportunity grants its participants access to support from the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek, as they embark on social and educational projects aimed at addressing pertinent issues in the region. Currently, the program boasts 36 exceptional members spanning all six countries, including both local and international students. With the inclusion of virtual members, the program enables individuals residing beyond Bishkek to actively engage in initiatives through online platforms. Moreover, upon graduation, its students transition into esteemed alumni, who continue to be engaged in impactful projects.

As Anisa Taigunshoeva, a current member of the C5+1 Youth Council from Tajikistan, states, "I am a member of the Youth Council because it provides me with the chance to be part of the global community, and pursue my goals within it."

Reflecting on personal growth and development, Oybek Turaev, an alumni member of the C5+1

The Youth Council from Uzbekistan fondly

declares, "The Youth Council has served as a pivotal gateway towards my accomplishments and leadership progression, and has played a defining role in shaping the individual I am today."

Alongside membership benefits, the C5+1 Youth Council hosts a range of annual programs, including a leadership academy, an alumni reunion, and a prestigious award ceremony for its members and alumni. To secure funding for their projects, students meticulously propose ideas aligned with the program's priority areas: peace and security, economic growth, energy and environment, and people-to-people connections. From these proposals, the U.S. Embassy selects the most promising initiatives, with up to eight projects receiving financial support each semester from YC members and YC alumni. Applicants submit their projects for review, including detailed proposals, budgets, and logical frameworks. YC staff members thoroughly assess these proposals, providing students with invaluable feedback to refine and enhance their initiatives. Fi-

nally, the C5+1 Youth Council submits the top proposals to the U.S. Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic for final approval and funding.

"C5+1 Youth Council serves as an exceptional platform for youth to cultivate and enhance essential soft skills required to become effective leaders and decision-makers," emphasizes Adina Rashidova is the C5+1 Youth Council Coordinator from Kyrgyzstan.

The impact of these projects extends far beyond academic settings, playing an important role in bringing up critical regional issues according to the agenda of the C5+1 platform. One of the recent projects implemented by the C5+1 Youth Council was the installation of Kyrgyzstan's first wind turbine in Balykchy, Issyk-Kul region. Led by C5+1 YC members and volunteers from the Kyrgyz Technical University, the wind turbine project aimed at reducing Central Asia's dependence on fossil fuels and their negative impact on the environment and health. Every aspect of the windmill, including intricate details, was handcraft-

ed by students of the Kyrgyz Technical University themselves, who worked as volunteers on this project.

The C5+1 Youth Council at AUCA continues to push boundaries, embodying the spirit of collaborative problem-solving and empowering the next generation to make a positive and lasting impact across the Central Asian region. With each new project, these determined students defy regional challenges, driving remarkable and groundbreaking change and setting a new standard for transformation.

Hoda Sadat
JMC-122



To learn more about the exciting activities and initiatives of the C5+1 Youth Council, visit the C5+1 Youth Council Facebook page, or follow @youthcouncil_ca on Instagram. Alternatively, You can explore their link tree here: https://linktr.ee/youthcouncil_ca.

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