



# New Star

## Big Freshman

Why have you decided to come to Kyrgyzstan?

There are around 3500 universities in United States and probably I could have become a president of one of them, but there will be many other people who could do it just as well as me. And here, I believe I can really make a difference and make a contribution to the student's education.

What makes you capable of contributing to change?

Well, first of all, because I have ideas on how to make this university better, based on my experience of working in different universities. Also I have been researching and studying post Soviet countries for a long time, which gives me an understanding of what these countries are and what their challenges are. And I believe, that it's important to entail the local culture and those changes that we would like to bring into society, but I recognize that the university's goal is not just to accept the local culture, but to change and to enrich the culture by what we do. And I believe if one has reasonable understanding of how such changes work, then one has better chances to accomplish it.

Did the current political situation in Kyrgyzstan influence your decision to take this position, and if yes, then how?

As I have told, I have been working and studying in the Balkans for a long time, so I am familiar with situations like the one in Kyrgyzstan, and I think that what happened on April 7th are positive for a long-term future of Kyrgyzstan, and I don't think that Bakiev's regime was good for the country. I was neither surprised nor unhappy to see Bakiev go. In general, my reaction towards things that are happening is more analytical, than emotional, because I am a scholar of such matters. Though, what's happening in the South of the country is horrible, but quite typical for the countries in similar situations and with certain characteristics. But the mission of AUCA is to try to share ideas of civic democracy with public, such as that the country is for all the people who are citizens of it, regardless of their ethnicity.

How do you see AUCA at this moment?

I think this is the university that has achieved certain level of validity and image as a Liberal Arts institution, but it has a long way to go to become a great university in terms of understanding by both students and staff what the philosophy of university is. The philosophy of this university is that it is not just the place to study. It's a concept of both Central Asian and European Universities, that if you come to university to study anthropology, that's what you do there, but it's not the American concept of university. One comes here to learn how to

understand and view the world, and as a result we teach people a lot less about one thing, but a lot more about many different ways of thinking, to try to make their minds flexible and creative and questioning, and to think outside of the box.

How is it possible to achieve it? And what reforms are you planning to implement to achieve those changes?

Starting with programs that AUCA offers, which are in my mind are too rigid and not creative enough. I would like to see more programs that are much more fun and interesting than what we have now, like Development Economy or Tourism and History. Also there will be changes in the work of the professors, because now professors are overloaded with teaching here, they teach more than one can teach successfully, and don't have time to think and one can't teach well if one doesn't think about his teaching. I believe



that professors come here with their own intellectual quests and they should have more time for thinking and developing, so they could teach better. Therefore within the next six months there are will be changes in models of teaching. We are going to need more people to teach. We will also try to get more foreign professors to Kyrgyzstan, at this moment it also depends on stability of the country, and on how soon the country will get out of newspaper pages. It will require more money, but it's my job to find the money, at least we know what we need it for. AUCA shouldn't just image differentiation; it should be different, from other higher education institutions in this country. It should offer education that you can't get anywhere else. Because another goal is to make the university more internationally based, so students from OMSK, Mongolia and other countries will come here, because they can't get such education anywhere else in the world: let's say Central Asian Studies and may be some others.

How can the students reach you to offer suggestions or simply to ask a question?

My door is open, I would not want students to come to discuss lack of cola in vending machines, but if you have suggestions on how to make things better, you are welcome. I am also bad at sitting at my desk all day long, so I will probably be wondering around the university. Of course I won't be in my office for 52 hours a week, because we need to raise money and most of the funds won't come from Kyrgyzstan, but from places like Turkey and the US and other countries.

What are the plans with building a new campus?

We are planning to start making public presentations on the campus in September and October, when we will know what it's going to look like and where it's going to be located, so we will be open to suggestions and recommendations. The major change is that we will have more facilities on the new campus for both students and the faculty. The building will be probably not as close to Jogorku Kehesh, which is good at this moment, but in the city. I hope to keep the library to use it for the part time students.

What challenges do you see when working here in AUCA?

I have never worked in Liberal Arts College, and I know the concept, but that's something new. And what we are trying to create here is something different from what is university in cultural difference, but it's a challenge to convince people in ways of doing education differently from what is their local ground. And to do that you have to work hard. And it's the same for those who have been working in the university for a long time, because people are often reluctant to change.

Tell us about your life, family, and academic career.

I have three sons at school, and a wife, who is a psychiatrist, we have decided to leave them where they are, because they like the schools and there aren't any good English schools here, and I expect that you will see them at various points. I am easily bored and one of the things I like about this position is the ability to do many interesting things.

Interview conducted by Nargiza Ryskulova



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## Dean of Students Column



### “You are responsible for those who you have tamed!”

I guess I'm not very original, when I repeat the Saint-Exupery's words.

But in my view they most accurately reflect what happened during the orientation week.

We have tamed you, freshmen! Can anyone possibly argue on that?

Now we are responsible for you. All your problems become ours:

If you are going to mess the toilets - this will be our common problem.

If you forget your ID, and have fights with the security staff, it will be your yet another mutual trouble. If you copy your first papers from the Internet - this will also be our common problem...

**BUT!** You have tamed us too! You charmed us with your activeness and your talents.

From now on you too are responsible for everything:

For the professors - they teach you the things which you do not know, but you must in turn teach them what they do not know yet.

For ensuring that vigorous fresh blood appears in our common body

For becoming better than your predecessors and for coping with new demands of the new curriculum

For ensuring that we do not forget the truism - «If we are not ahead of time - we'll be behind it.»

We say to each new freshman, «You are the best out of all those who came before you.»

Sometimes we might be mistaken, but we are sincere when saying so. We are not lying. This is our main zest.

We do not want to be just the university. We want to be the unique University.

For achieving this, WE should be unique.

Be responsible for yourself! Set high expectations and do not be afraid of these heights, because high above is only the sky!

Dean of Student Affairs  
Shulgin N.G.

Dear Freshmen!

It is my special pleasure to welcome you at the AUCA and congratulate you with one of the most significant achievements in your life – entering the best university of Central Asia!

Your studies at AUCA will be challenging, but interesting and cognitive. Tune yourself to become the part of the exciting academic environment, where we foster risk taking and intellectual growth. It will become the place where wonderful world of knowledge and wisdom will open its doors especially for you. This place will give you new and true friends, not just your fellow students, but professors and staff members as well! This place will become your second home!

So, take this challenge and don't be afraid of difficulties and problems! We are here to help you in pursuing the wisdom – the wisdom of knowledge and wisdom of life! AUCA professors and staff members will be always happy to guide you through your studying time and direct you towards your most daring goals!

Once again, congratulations and all the best for you during the most exciting time of your life – your AUCA time! Build your future!

Good luck and best regards,

**Lira Djuraeva,**

**Director of Advising and Career Services**



Здравствуй Новый Человек!

Вот и пришла твоя студенческая пора!

Хочу похвалить тебя за правильный выбор! Университет, в котором ты будешь учиться 4 года, подарит тебе друзей, даст тебе знания и научит тебя быть ответственным за принятые решения. Одной из особенностей АУЦА является возможность выражать свое мнение открыто, и возможность быть услышанным.

Как координатор студенческой газеты, хочу рассказать тебе о нашей студенческой газете.

Даже если ты не студент факультета Журналистики и Массовых Коммуникаций, ты можешь стать репортером нашей газеты. Все что тебе нужно – это желание поделиться информацией с другими людьми и желание учиться новому.

Для тех кто не хочет быть репортером, но, тем не менее хочет увидеть свои слова напечатанными в газете, могу предложить постоянную рубрику BOXES. В этой рубрике мы печатаем оставленные вами сообщения в нашем боксе, который висит возле комнаты 104.

Буду рада видеть всех в студенческой комнате!

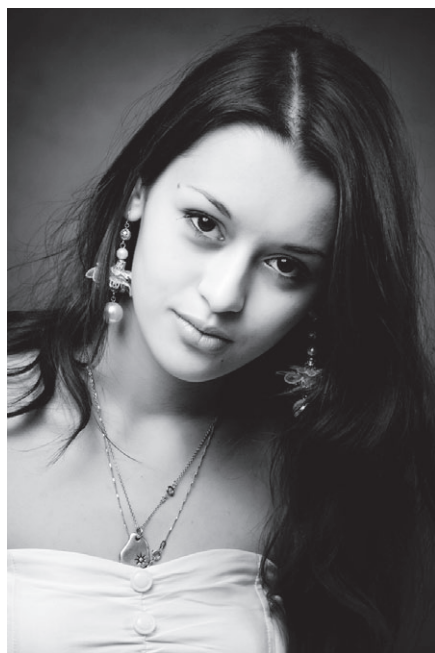
Приходите, задавайте вопросы, создавайте новые клубы и сохраняйте уникальный дух АУЦА!

Всегда ваша,

Координатор студенческой газеты “The New Star”

**Лазарина Кучменова**

### Column name: IMHO (In MY humble opinion)



So coming after summer holidays, I noticed already for orth time that the crowd of freshmen in AUCA is always running around. Your first week at AUCA, dear freshmen, already let you feel like you are very welcomed. So this is true. And no matter what lousy things you will read from me this year, now I am standing in a friendly smiling row that welcomes you to your new home, your Alma Mater (or party place for some, if you want). I am glad to greet you on the first pages of your first New Star issue during your very first academic week at AUCA. And I want to tell you that deep inside I envy you, for this year is my senior year, and who knows – maybe it will be the last one.

“Just enjoy your first fresh year  
at the university; because once it is  
gone, you will change.”

I won't write that AUCA is a wonderful house of ideas and discussions, the place, where you will learn to think and to write, to observe and to analyze, the company, where you will learn to party, party and party.... Because that's what you read in the rest of this issue. But this is also true and you will really enjoy it.

Maybe, you'll also come across something that might offend you. One of this is the usual attitude of some students towards freshmen. That is because

we are used to hear your loud talks in English, showing off with your great American pronunciation, we used to see you dancing in Bravo and doing other things that are aimed to receive everybody's attention. Concerning this, I will advise you only one thing: do all the weird things that will come to your mind and never listen to what they say. You are beautiful now, just being who you are – noisy, excited, embarrassed and curious yesterday's high school students. Just enjoy your first fresh year at the university; because once it is gone, you will change.

It was nice to meet you,

**Dina Karabekova.**

Current mood: relaxed  
Current time: 23'06 p.m.  
Current track: Alanis Morissette – Hand In My Pocket





This year 97 international students have entered AUCA. 20 From Tajikistan, 2 From Uzbekistan, 14 from Kazakhstan, 23 from Afghanistan, 6 from Turkmenistan, 8 from South Korea, 3 from China, 1 from Ecuador, 2 from Iran, 1 from Mexico, 1 from Netherlands, 6 from Russian Federation, 1 from Switzerland, 1 from Turkey, 6 from USA, 1 from Macedonia. We are very happy to welcome in our family all international members. And hope that they will enjoy their time in Kyrgyzstan.

### Why have you chosen to study in Kyrgyzstan?

- One of the reasons I came here is to seek real knowledge.
- I like Kyrgyzstan because people are friendly and kind.
- I like nature of Kyrgyzstan, especially mountains and trees
- “У Мазая” makes great cocktails
- For variety reasons: revolution, nature, mountains.
- To learn English language
- To have fun!



### Dear freshmen!

First of all, I would like to welcome you all and wish a smooth beginning of your first semester at our AUCA. You may find the university life a bit more challenging compared to the one at your high school. However, we know that we have some best ones of all freshmen in the country and we believe you will take best out of what AUCA will offer you.

As an AUCA student, you should expect an environment that stimulates intellectual growth, encourages critical thinking and helps you learn how to learn. We are committed to respect and promote freedom and diversity at AUCA, and we strongly encourage you to ask questions, seek answers and share your views with others. Our faculty members are always be ready to help you explore ideas and develop skills, which will serve as a stepping stone towards your further personal and professional development.

At the same time we believe that freedom must be used in an honest and responsible way. We expect a help from all students in upholding the value of academic honesty within and outside the classroom. AUCA students have traditionally been known for genuine respect for fellow students and the whole community as well as for active demonstration of social responsibility, and I deeply believe our incoming freshmen will uphold these remarkable characteristics.

I call all students to take full advantage of academic advisors, faculty members and department chairs, the Registrar's Office, the Office of Student Affairs and the Office of Advising and Career Services that would gladly address any sort of issues that may arise. Within weeks you will be able to find out much more resources and opportunities at AUCA that will help you with academic personal development.

Welcome again, and we all look forward to a very successful year!

**Shairbek Juraev,**  
Dean of Academic Development



## University Adjustment and Value Orientations among AUCA Freshmen

(Abstract of the senior thesis research)

The research focuses on finding the relations between the different value orientations and college adjustment. The college adjustment was described by four dimensions – academic, social, personal-emotional, and attachment to the university. By the value orientations were viewed the different components of the goal-oriented values (also called terminal), some of which are exiting life, mature love, social recognition, etc; and of the process-oriented values (also known as instrumental), some of which are courageousness, independence, obedience, etc. Namely, it was hypothesized that the prevalent terminal value orientations scores of the participating freshmen will positively be linked to the university adjustment. Consequently, students with stronger marked instrumental values will have weaker adaptation. 100 freshman students of the American University of Central Asia were the target participants, for they were the most revealing group in terms of adaptation – they had changed the educational settings more evidently than students of any other year.

Becoming an university student can be a radical change for a young person. Besides it being a twist of the academic and social surroundings, it is a simultaneous crossing a border from adolescence to early adulthood. Thus, university presents many students with opportunities for developing their potential, but it may cause others to find the demands of an institution exceeding their coping resources. Being not able to get used to the new environment rapidly enough might produce complications in their studying and emotional states. Nevertheless, it can be

ameliorated by early and proactive interventions and program design. As Pargetter (2000) states, «Early experiences provide a 'script' of what is to come in the future.» The results of his research showed that the students who were assisted in first semester continued performing better throughout their entire college experience. Acknowledging the above difficulties, American colleges and universities have taken on the responsibility of assisting students with their adjustment to college in multiple ways, according to Sandler (1996). Many standard services contribute to the positive adjustment of students, including academic support programs, counseling services, academic and career advising, living-learning centers, residence halls, campus activities, and health and wellness programs. In addition, there are also services specifically designed to aid in adjustment to college, including new student

orientation programs, and early warning systems.

One of these, the new student orientation program, strives for the primary purpose to help students successfully adjust to college. The programs do this by connecting students to the institution, helping them to set and reach goals, and making them successful in the classroom. While new student orientation programs vary in length, scope, purpose, timing, and content, most aim to give students information about facilities, programs, and services and to give them a chance to meet and make connections with faculty, staff, and students. Another type, such as early warning systems, is designed to identify students who are having difficulty adjusting to the academic and behavioral expectations of college. It is important to identify such adjustment problems early enough in the student's first semester in order to have some chance for a successful intervention. Examples include

providing midterm grade reports early in the semester and having advisers or other staff follow up with all students who fall below a certain cutoff point in grade point average. As mentioned above, adjusting to college is a major transition in a young adult's life. Unfortunately, a large percentage of students are unsuccessful in navigating this transition. Moreover, research has found that students who withdraw often do so for personal reasons such as a lack of adjustment to their new environment. As a result, more recent research has begun to examine the pivotal role of adjustment, especially during students' first year, in predicting college completion.



**Madina Akhmetshina**



# BRIGHT MOMENTS OF





# ORIENTATION WEEK 2010





**Dear  
AUCA Students!**

New Star Student newspaper invites you to try yourself as a journalist and win real money for the best article of this year! The articles can be about any issues that will be interesting for The New Star readers. The articles should be submitted and published this academic year.

**\$ 150 - for first place**

**\$ 100 – for second**

**\$ 50 – for third**

The winner will be selected by an independent committee, consisting of professional journalists in May 2010.





# AYSHA SAID: HOW TO SURVIVE IN AUCA?



Don't miss a single AUCA Party – that's the first step towards success!  
**Bektur, graduate of 2010**



The more you give to AUCA, the more you will get from it!  
**Mirbek, graduate of 2007**



First of all, get yourself involved in extracurricular activities,  
According to my experience the busier you will be, the better, because you will learn how to organize your time, and this is the key to success.  
**Madina, graduate of 2010**



Follow the AUCA fashion, but don't forget to remain yourself!  
**Faruh, graduate of 2013**



Just be yourself and try to find your close friends. From the very beginning all freshman should study very hard, and of course participate in extracurricular activities. But the main advice is to become a volunteer of the Career and Advising Center.  
**Elisa Damirbek kyzy, graduate of 2011 (volunteer of career and advising center)**



In order to adapt to AUCA student life you should put the study in a first place. And after you will have good grades you may participate in some extracurricular activities, different clubs. Do what you really want to do.  
**Esen, graduate of 2011 (Ex Chairman of the Student Senate)**



Be self critical and try to keep up with those who are better than you!  
**Venera Kim, graduate of 2007**



Be positive and everything is going to be great !!!  
**Salkynai, graduate of 2004**



Try not to take classes at 8:00 in the morning!  
**Olesya, graduate of 2010**



Не забывайте выкроить время для сна...  
**Meder, graduate of 2013**



# What have Socrates' and Plato's philosophy taught me?

*Don't be afraid  
 To realize what "true means"  
 To be responsible  
 To think about your own actions  
 That learning isn't just teachers' deed,  
 it's a mutual process between the teacher and student  
 Didn't teach much  
 To make a choice  
 Self-understanding  
 To distinguish reality from unreal  
 Don't take philosophy during the first semester*

