

# Mélange

UNITY IN DIVERSITY



## GMU CAREER FAIR 2025



### MESSAGES FROM THE EDITORS' DESK



**Chief Editor: Azima M. Patanwala** (2022BM17)

It has been an absolute pleasure serving the student body with college news throughout the year. To those who read our editions faithfully—thank you. Your support means the world. I'm also incredibly grateful to everyone who volunteered for our interview segments, and to all those beyond our core team who contributed in one way or another. As we dedicate this edition to the graduating class, we bid you farewell with warm wishes. May life treat you kindly beyond these walls.

I'm truly excited to present this final edition to you all—I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed putting it together.



**Assistant Chief Editor: Lovina Mathew** (2021BM01)

Hey there! And just like that — we've arrived at the final edition of Mélange for the year! It's been an incredible ride along with Azima bringing together voices, stories, and snapshots of student life through these pages. As Assistant Chief Editor, I've had the joy of working with a team full of passion and creative ideas— and none of this would've been possible without them. As I complete my final semester at GMU, I'm grateful to have been part of this journey. It's been a privilege to help shape something so special to our student community. Wishing the next team all the best as they carry this legacy forward.



# New Appointments in University Leadership

We are pleased to announce the appointment of our new Acting Chancellor and Acting Vice Chancellor at Gulf Medical University.

## **Acting Chancellor – Prof. Manda Venkatramana**

**Prof. Manda Venkatramana** has been appointed as the Acting Chancellor of Gulf Medical University. A seasoned surgeon and academic leader with over 29 years of clinical and teaching experience, he has played a pivotal role in advancing GMU's curriculum, research, and simulation-based training initiatives.

His visionary leadership continues to shape GMU's growth as a premier medical institution in the region.



## **Acting Vice Chancellor - Prof. Hesham Marei**

**Prof. Hesham Marei** is currently serving as the Acting Vice Chancellor of Gulf Medical University. With extensive experience in dental education, academic leadership, and research, Prof. Marei brings a forward-thinking approach to advancing the university's mission. His leadership is set to foster innovation and academic excellence across all colleges.



These appointments mark a significant transition and reflect our university's commitment to strong, visionary leadership. We extend our warmest congratulations to them both and look forward to the continued progress and prosperity of Gulf Medical University under their guidance.



# GMU Events

## RESEARCH DAY

Research Day at Gulf Medical University was a two-day event held on April 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, where both professors and students came together to share their research work. The event included presentations from faculty on important topics in healthcare and science, creating a space for learning and discussion. It was a great opportunity for students to see real examples of research and understand how it connects to what they learn in class.

One of the main highlights was the display of over 100 student-made research posters. These posters covered a wide range of topics, from clinical studies to public health issues. Many students got the chance to explain their research to others, receive feedback, and improve their presentation skills. Overall, the event helped promote interest in research and gave students a chance to connect with faculty and peers who share similar academic goals.



## GMU CAREER FAIR

Held on May 8, 2025, at the GMU campus, the annual Career Fair brought together over 60 esteemed companies, offering students a valuable platform to engage with industry experts, explore diverse career opportunities, and expand their professional networks. Open to students from all programs, the event encouraged career development while fostering connections within the broader healthcare community. It also welcomed GMU alumni, who returned to share their professional journeys and offer insightful guidance to the next generation.

The day featured a dynamic itinerary, including several panel discussions focused on healthcare education and industry trends, as well as a hands-on portfolio-building workshop that proved especially beneficial for students preparing to enter the workforce.



## AOUN PROJECT

Over the course of this academic year, the Nur Al'Amal team, under the Aoun Community Service Initiative, has successfully carried out a diverse range of events aimed at improving the well-being of labor workers in Ajman. From health screening camps and first aid training to educational sessions on tuberculosis, urinary stones, and hygiene, each event was designed to empower, educate, and engage. They also hosted interactive programs like art therapy and a large-scale sports event featuring cricket and tug of war competitions, which brought joy, recognition, and a sense of belonging to the participating workers. Their initiatives were supported by the Emirates Red Crescent, Gulf Medical University volunteers, and community sponsors who made these efforts impactful and sustainable.

Throughout this journey, they remained committed to inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and meaningful service. Sessions were conducted in multiple languages to ensure understanding, and striving for diversity in documentation through bilingual reports, photos, videos, and feedback analysis. The team not only grew in leadership, planning, and collaboration skills but also gained a deeper appreciation for the power of empathy in healthcare. The Nur Al'Amal experience has been more than just a competition, it has been a heartfelt mission to bring light, care, and community to those who need it most.



# Running on Empty: Navigating Burnout and Uncertainty After University

Mikaela Agustin (2024MI31)

University life is filled with its fair share of ups and downs. Navigating it is both a privilege and an adventure—an experience that shapes not only one's academic path but also personal growth. This stage of life serves as a crucial training ground, where students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for their chosen careers before stepping into the real world. Yet, the journey is far from easy. Beyond the immediate challenges of coursework and deadlines lies an even more daunting question: What comes after this phase of preparation?

Students are often expected to show up with unwavering energy, driven by their hopes and dreams, to push through the never-ending cycle of demanding workloads and responsibilities. However, behind the scenes, many are silently running on empty. Burnout frequently stems from prolonged and unmanaged stress—a stress that pushed the mind and body beyond their capacity to cope.

For students, burnout is not a rare occurrence—it's a shared experience. The pressure to constantly keep up, meet expectations, and perform at high levels can be overwhelming. There's a silent narrative that students must endure it all for the sake of a "bright future." But that constant drive, without time for rest or reflection, often leaves them mentally drained, emotionally detached, and physically exhausted.

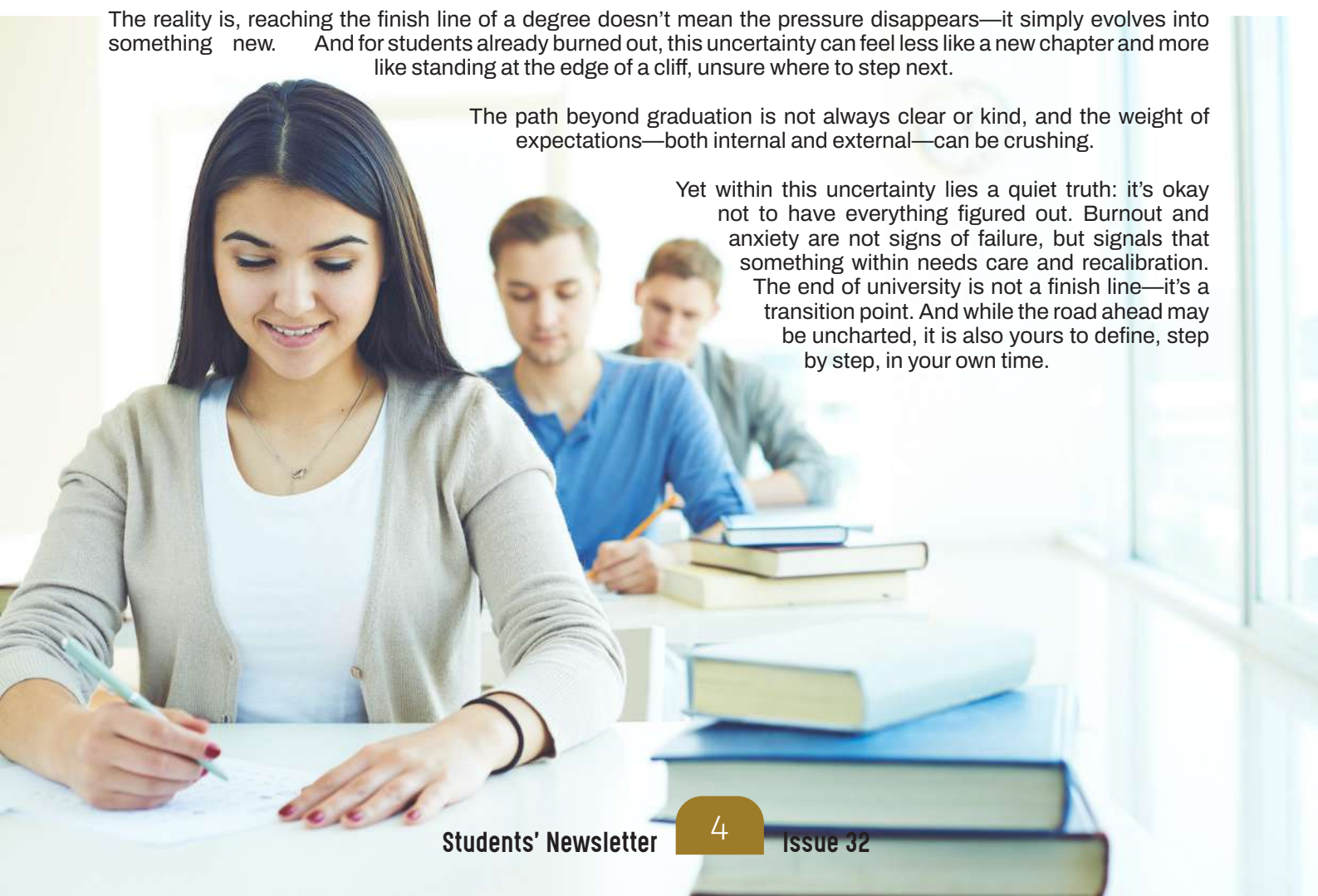
But what then? What happens after reaching the long-awaited goal post—graduation? For many students, the end of university doesn't come with the relief they imagined. Instead, it opens the door to a new kind of pressure: uncertainty. The job market isn't always welcoming, especially to fresh graduates with little to no experience. Competition is fierce, and rejection becomes part of the process.

This transition—stepping out of the structured world of academia into the unpredictable world of adulthood—can be jarring. The safety net of deadlines and semesters is gone, replaced by the unknown. The stress doesn't end at graduation; for many, it only shifts form. It's no longer about getting the grade, but about proving your worth, finding direction, and building stability in a world that doesn't wait.

The reality is, reaching the finish line of a degree doesn't mean the pressure disappears—it simply evolves into something new. And for students already burned out, this uncertainty can feel less like a new chapter and more like standing at the edge of a cliff, unsure where to step next.

The path beyond graduation is not always clear or kind, and the weight of expectations—both internal and external—can be crushing.

Yet within this uncertainty lies a quiet truth: it's okay not to have everything figured out. Burnout and anxiety are not signs of failure, but signals that something within needs care and recalibration. The end of university is not a finish line—it's a transition point. And while the road ahead may be uncharted, it is also yours to define, step by step, in your own time.

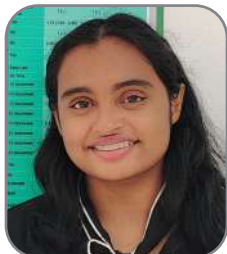




# "Take it From Us..." Senior Interviews

Shafna Mohamed Ali  
2022BM22

What has been the most valuable lesson or biggest takeaway from your time at university that has shaped who you are today?



**Anugraha Lisa Ciju 2022pcs28**

I've learned that it's okay to have hard days and not have everything figured out; what matters is showing up. Letting go of comparison helped me grow at my own pace and be kinder to myself. Most of all, stepping up instead of waiting has pushed me to grow in ways I couldn't from the sidelines.



**Aysha Moossa 2021mi10**

The most valuable lesson I've learned is to take university seriously from the very beginning and always be prepared for what comes after graduation. These four years lay the foundation for your future, so staying focused and determined is essential. No matter how tough things get, never give up—persistence truly pays off.



**Maryam Abid Ali 2021bm05**

Don't get caught up in petty things, the world is so much bigger and full of opportunities- don't let a silly little argument take a toll on you. One thing university taught me is to move on quickly because life is fast- the years go by in the blink of an eye. So enjoy your time, forgive, take an occasional break, and let your biggest competition be yourself.



**Ghenwa Ghayad 2020ph18**

One of the biggest lessons I've learned is that growth happens outside your comfort zone. Taking on leadership roles, presenting in clinics, and working with diverse peers taught me resilience and confidence, shaping me into someone who embraces opportunities rather than fears them.



**Saif Omar Kitaz 2021ns01**

Surprisingly, the most impactful part of university has been the friendships I've made. Supportive friends can shape both your personal and academic journey, so choose them wisely. I'm truly grateful to those who've been part of mine.



**Haseena Parveen 2021bm09**

The most valuable lesson I've learned is that it's okay to ask for help. Reaching out to friends or professors made tough times easier and reminded me I don't have to do everything alone. It also taught me the value of supporting others, building mutual trust and growth.



**Salwa Nishat 2021MI23**

The most profound lesson I learned was the power of intellectual humility, knowing how much I don't know sparked a lifelong curiosity and drive to learn. It built resilience, adaptability, and a mindset that sees challenges as growth. True intelligence lies in the pursuit of understanding, not just in knowing.



**Sondous Eksheir 2023mph05**

I learned that failing faster also means growing faster. You have to trust yourself even when no one else does and keep going anyway. Even when things felt heavy or uncertain, I kept going and that's what changed me.



**Tehniyat Hammad 2020m016**

If there's one piece of advice I could offer after these incredible years at university, it's this: always make connections beyond your immediate circle. Some of the most inspiring lessons I've learned weren't from textbooks, they came from conversations in corridors, late-night study sessions with newfound friends, and unexpected encounters that turned into lifelong memories.

# The Neuroscience of Peak Performance: Lessons from Athletes and Artists



Maha Al-Jabri 2022MD31

Peak performance, whether in sports or the arts, is a fascinating intersection of physiology, psychology, and neuroscience. Both athletes and performing artists push their minds and bodies to extreme limits, often entering a state of effortless action described as «flow.» Understanding how the brain processes peak performance offers valuable insights not only for those in these fields but also for medical students and healthcare professionals striving for excellence in their own demanding careers.

The term “flow state” was first described by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi as a condition in which an individual is completely immersed in an activity, experiencing heightened focus, effortless execution, and a loss of self-consciousness. Neuroscientific research shows that flow is associated with a balance between the prefrontal cortex, responsible for rational thinking and self-monitoring, and the release of neurotransmitters such as dopamine, norepinephrine, and endorphins. During peak performance, the brain enters a transient hypofrontality state, where activity in the prefrontal cortex diminishes. This temporary reduction in self-monitoring and inner criticism allows for fluid, precise movements in athletes and seamless creativity in artists. Functional MRI (fMRI) studies have shown increased activation in the striatum, the motor control center, and enhanced connectivity between the basal ganglia and motor cortex, which facilitates automativity in movement execution.

One of the most intriguing aspects of neuroscience in peak performance is the power of mental imagery. Athletes often use visualization techniques to rehearse movements before executing them, a strategy also employed by musicians, dancers, and actors. Studies have shown that mental imagery activates the same neural circuits as actual movement, reinforcing neural pathways without physical exertion. The PETTLEP model (Physical, Environment, Task, Timing, Learning, Emotion, Perspective) suggests that mental imagery should be as realistic as possible, incorporating sensory details and emotions to maximize its effectiveness.

Neuroplasticity, the brain’s ability to reorganize itself by forming new neural connections, plays a critical role in skill mastery. Both athletes and artists engage in deliberate practice, which involves focused, repetitive training that strengthens specific neural pathways. This principle is evident in musicians who develop enhanced motor coordination and auditory processing or in athletes who refine muscle memory for precision-based skills. Similarly, medical students can benefit from deliberate practice, engaging in simulation-based learning to refine procedural skills and improve decision-making under pressure.

Medical students and healthcare professionals can learn valuable lessons from athletes and artists regarding peak performance. Mental rehearsal, deliberate practice, and stress management techniques such as mindfulness and controlled breathing can enhance focus and efficiency. By integrating these principles, individuals in high-pressure professions can optimize their performance and develop resilience, ultimately improving patient care and decision-making in critical situations.

# White Coats, New Beginnings: First-Year Medical School Wrap-Up

Faiza Tasnim Badhon 2021bm40



## Now that you've completed your first year, how would you describe your overall experience?

University life so far has been really awesome and enjoyable for me. The atmosphere is warm and nurturing, so it is easier to maintain student life plus academic life. I feel like a sense of belonging exists. Group studying and hanging out with friends in events makes connecting with other students quite easy. Our seniors also played a huge role in shaping this experience. They are always approachable and willing to help with academics, campus life adjustment, or general advice. All of this made the transition into university smoother than I expected.

**Ibrahim Ali Mohammed 2024MD90**



My first year at university was a pretty positive experience overall. I had the chance to meet and get to know people from all kinds of backgrounds, which really broadened my perspective. I made it a point to stay involved beyond academics, whether volunteering, helping with events, or participating in campus activities. Keeping myself busy in different ways helped me adjust and thrive in the sometimes-chaotic university environment. Every professor felt like a new character with their own unique style, and each classmate was a potential new friend. The more people I connected with, the more comfortable and welcomed I felt it slowly started to feel like home. Of course, there were times when things got overwhelming or stressful, but having good company around made those tough phases much easier. I'm looking forward to what the coming years have in store

**Sumayyah Faridi 2024hme09**



## What facilities, services, or opportunities do you feel are lacking or could be enhanced?

The campus facilities are overall excellent. The Body and Soul recreational space in particular is really good - it provides a space for students to relax, exercise and connect with others. One area that could do with some rework is the Blends and Brews in campus. It has potential for improvement as it is a popular place with students. It has a good atmosphere but it becomes too crowded when many students are present. I personally think that it would be much better if it is more spacious or has more seating. Other than that the facilities are quite satisfactory

**Ibrahim Ali Mohammed 2024MD90**

To be honest, one of the first things that came to mind was the condition of the common rooms. They have so much potential to be inviting, comfortable spaces where students can relax and recharge between lectures. However, the current layout and overall atmosphere often make them feel underutilized, empty, and somewhat disorganized. With a few thoughtful changes, such as better seating arrangements, warmer decor, or a designated prayer area, they could become a much more welcoming part of campus life. I genuinely hope we can prioritize this improvement in the coming year.

**Sumayyah Faridi 2024hme09**



# Celebrating World Water Day

**Sadia Binte Monir (2023PCS19)**

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023.

World Water Day, observed globally every year on 22<sup>nd</sup> March since 1993, highlights the importance of freshwater and the need to address the challenges faced by the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. It focuses on taking action to address the global water crisis and contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6: ensuring water and sanitation for all by 2030.

The theme for World Water Day 2025, 'Glacier Preservation' underlines the critical role glaciers play in sustaining life. Glacier meltwater is essential for human life, agriculture, industry, and clean energy. Accelerated glacier loss is disrupting water availability, making global carbon reduction and local adaptation critical.

To mark the occasion, we organized various activities, including a 'Glacial Relay Race' to show the struggle of communities relying on glacier-fed water and how glacier retreat affects water availability. In addition, several informative and visually engaging posters were presented which offered valuable insights into the significance of water in human health, environmental balance, and global sustainability. Topics ranged from exploring the physiological role of water in hydration, metabolism, and waterborne diseases, to emphasizing the threat of glacier melting and its effects on food security, public health, and mental wellbeing. Posters also highlighted technological solutions like AI and satellite monitoring to tackle glacier retreat, and emphasizing the importance of strengthening international cooperation on climate action - highlighting COP28, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the UAE's strategic initiatives.

The day aimed to present our ideas and strategies to address climate change and the global water crisis, with a special focus on glacier preservation- a crucial step towards ensuring long-term water security and sustainability.

We extend our deep gratitude to our professors – Dr. Jayakumary Muttappallymyalil, Dr. Liju Susan Mathew, Dr. Anusha Sreejith, and Prof. Jayadevan Sreedharan – for their constant support and guidance, which made the event more successful. We encourage all the readers and especially our juniors to actively engage in with more such events in the future and continue spreading awareness to build a more sustainable future





MEET  
THE TEAM

MEET  
THE TEAM



### **Chief Editor**

Azima M. Patanwala (2022BM17)

### **Assistant Chief Editor**

Lovina Mathew (2021BM01)

### **Team:**

#### **Events and College News:**

Sumayyah Subakathulla (2022BM07)

Saimah Mohammed (2022MD46)

#### **Interviews:**

Shafna Mohamed Ali (2022BM22)

Faiza Tasnim Badhon (2021BM40)

#### **Writers:**

Mikaela Augustin (2024MI31)

Maha Al-jabri (2022MD31)

### **Art & Design**

Bibily Joseph Chandy



جامعة الخليج الطبية  
GULF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY  
ACADEMIC HEALTH CENTER



Mélange 