International Newsletter of the

College of Engineering, University of Tehran

Special Issue on International Activities

Spring & Summer 2026 | Issue 1



Interview with an International Figure: Dr. Esmail Mehrvar

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Issue 1, Spring & Summer 2026

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Editor Message

A New Window to Internationalization

In the Name of God

The International Newsletter of the College of Engineering, University of Tehran, with the aim of documenting the success stories, challenges, and achievements of this institution on the international stage, is pleased to release its inaugural issue. In today's world, the geographical boundaries of science and knowledge have faded, and universities are recognized not only as centers of education but also as bridges of cultural and scientific exchange.

The College of Engineering of University of Tehran, with more than 90 years of heritage in engineering education in Iran, has consistently maintained an active presence on the international stage. Today, with 11 schools and more than 8000 students, this institution is regarded as one of the largest engineering hubs in the Middle East and has, in recent years, taken significant strides toward internationalization.

This inaugural issue of the international newsletter presents a brief overview of the Colleges of Engineering's transition from a "national educational institution" to an "active player in the global knowledge network." In this issue, you will find:

- International activity reports: including conferences, international student statistics, joint publications (papers and books), memoranda of understanding, and international journals of the Colleges of Engineering,
- Other international reports from College of Engineering include a report on Prof. Mojtaba Shariaty Niassar's strategic trip to Uzbekistan and College of Engineering in the 2026 Shanghai Ranking,
- An exclusive interview with Dr. Esmail Mehryar, Iran's Former Scientific Counselor in East Asia,
- An account of the lived experience of a Lebanese student pursuing studies at the College of Engineering, and
- Upcoming calls and announcements.

We hope this newsletter proves useful in serving as a window through which faculty members, students, and both domestic and international institutions may become acquainted with the vast capacities of the College of Engineering of University of Tehran on the global stage. We believe that "knowledge without borders" is not merely a slogan, but an operational strategy that finds a unique expression in every memorandum of understanding, every joint publication, and every international student.

Respectfully,
Dr. Atefeh Hasan-Zadeh





Field Reports





Field Reports

1) Hosting International Conferences

The Second International Conference on Steel Industries and Structures: From University of Tehran to the Global Table of Steel Dialogue

In recent years, the global steel industry has faced profound transformations in the areas of sustainability, carbon reduction, circular economy, standardization of resilient structures, and supply-chain reconfiguration. Against this backdrop, the Second International Conference on Steel Industries and Structures of University of Tehran was held, focusing on strengthening the link between science, technology, and production. This conference was organized by the Specialized Center for the Steel Industry of University of Tehran and in collaboration with the School of Civil Engineering, the School of Metallurgy and Materials, the School of Industrial Engineering, and the Scientific Societies of College of Engineering, on 29 and 30 Ordibehesht 1404 (18-19 May 2025).

The simultaneous presence of professors, researchers, industrialists, officials, and diplomatic representatives elevated the event beyond a domestic scientific-industrial gathering, turning it into a forum for dialogue on Iran's position in the global steel value chain and advanced structural engineering. A specialized industrialists' session, hosted in the Shahid Soleimani Hall and, with the participation of Dr. Mohammad Saeed Seif, Director General of the Office of Industry Relations at the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, was devoted to direct dialogue between industry professionals and students.

The presence of foreign guests was a notable indicator of the conference's growing international dimension. Tamakolo Ouattara, Ambassador of Côte d'Ivoire, and Hac K rang ç, Ambassador of Turkey, accompanied by lhan So an G z, Turkey's Trade Attaché, were present at the ceremony. Their participation, beyond expressing interest in scientific and commercial relations, underscored the role of steel in economic diplomacy, the development of technological cooperation, and international dialogue in the fields of materials, structures, and industry.

Dr. Mohammad Hossein Omid, President of University of Tehran, delivered a speech that was both data-driven and cautionary, describing steel as the country's "second industry" after oil. According to him, the industry produces 40 million tons annually, with a value of approximately 2,000 billion tomans, and offers a unique combination of advantages: rapid construction, seismic resistance, recyclability, and lightweight performance. Dr. Omid highlighted the 25-to-30 percent share of steel structures in Iran, compared with 80 percent in Japan and over 40 percent in Saudi Arabia, and emphasized the urgency of closing this gap through the adoption of cutting-edge knowledge, technology, and standards.

Another prominent point in Dr. Omid's remarks was the environmental and sustainability dimensions of the steel industry. Pointing to the environmental impact of this industry on Isfahan's water crisis, he deemed the relocation of the steel industry to the Makran coast essential, noting that past environmental damage is irreparable and that there is a risk of this crisis spreading to Yazd and South Khorasan. He also highlighted the key role of universities, spanning from exploration to supply and waste reduction, and identified challenges such as price volatility, shortage of skilled labor, and weaknesses in standards and technology as obstacles which the industry faces in competing with global benchmarks.

Government officials, including Dr. Abdolhossein Khosropanah, Chair of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, Eng. Mohammad Aghajanlu, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade and Chairman of the Board of IMIDRO, and Eng. Mehdi Chamran, Chair of the Tehran City Council, emphasized strengthening university-industry linkages, the interdisciplinary transformation of academic fields, and the formulation of the "Knowledge-Based Steel Document", with the government serving in a facilitator role. They also highlighted steel's 17 percent share of non-oil exports and Iran's high ranking in the sector, urging industry professionals to be the driving force behind change and calling on universities to design lighter, more ductile, and more earthquake- and fire-resistant steel structures.

Dr. Mehdi Ghasemieh, Dean of College of Engineering referred to the country's steel self-sufficiency achieved in the 1980s and 1990s and the industry's resilience in the face of sanctions. He presented a production outlook of 50 million tons per year, contingent upon the adoption of alternative fuels such as hydrogen in response to energy imbalances. He also announced the construction of University of Tehran Innovation Center with a steel structure and identified a production capacity of 600 steel-frame units as the key to ending the housing crisis. The emphasis on hydrogen and alternative fuels links the conference to one of the defining axes of the global steel industry's future: green steel and carbon reduction.

Dr. Amirreza Qiyami Azad, Secretary of the Conference and Head of the Specialized Center for the Steel Industry, concluded the event by expressing gratitude for industrial support and voiced the hope that this gathering would mark a "turning point in university-industry synergy."

The conference closed on a positive note for all parties: two cooperation memoranda of understanding were signed between University of Tehran and the companies Mega Machine and Barbod Fanavareh Civil Engineering Industries a practical step whose seeds were sown during the four-day event. Although these memoranda were signed within a domestic framework, given the international standards and export capacities of both companies, they could pave the way for indigenous technologies to enter regional and beyond-regional markets.

From an international perspective, the conference took place at a point in the history of the global steel industry at which three critical axes have cast their shadow over the global agenda: first, green steel and carbon reduction, which under pressure from the European Union, Japan, and South Korea has become a competitive necessity; second, the standardization of resilient structures, which, in the wake of the devastating earthquakes of the past decade, has made the redefinition of design norms in seismically active countries imperative; and third, the reconfiguration of global steel supply chains, which, amid sanctions, trade wars, and logistical crises, has driven developing countries toward technological self-sufficiency.

The presence of diplomatic representatives from Côte d'Ivoire and Turkey at this conference, even though a modest event compared to the grand scale sends a clear symbolic message: Iran's steel industry, beyond being a domestic concern, can serve as a platform for scientific-industrial diplomacy with African nations and Middle Eastern neighbors. Turkey, as the region's second-largest steel producer, and Côte d'Ivoire, as a key steel consumption market in West Africa, could both be natural partners for Iran in technology transfer, the export of pre-engineered structures, and research collaboration.

What endures from this event goes beyond the speeches and memoranda: it was a gathering in which policymakers, industrialists, professors, students, and diplomatic representatives sat at one table to chart the course of an industry worth 2,000 billion tomans, whose future is bound to today's decisions from geographic relocation to bridging the university-production gap, and from green steel to resilient structures. In a landscape where Japan, with 80 percent steel structures, South Korea, with hydrogen-based steel, and China, with a one-billion-ton capacity, define global competition, Iran must shift its position from "raw producer" to "producer of knowledge and technology." The Second International Conference on Steel Industries and Structures at University of Tehran, though still in its early stages, is a sign that this transition is not merely an aspiration but an actionable program provided that scientific diplomacy, environmental sustainability, and university-industry synergy are woven into a coherent governance framework and translated into long-term policy.







Scientific Diplomacy at the Heart of Tehran: The College of Engineering Hosts a Global Geospatial Event The ISPRS International Geospatial Conference 2025 at University of Tehran

At a time when the pressures of sanctions and complex regional conditions have rendered scientific exchange more difficult than ever, the School of Surveying and Geospatial Engineering of the College of Engineering, University of Tehran once again emerged as a hub for the convergence of global elites. The School hosted the ISPRS Geospatial Conference 2025, held from 15 to 17 December 2025 (24-26 Azar 1404) in collaboration with the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS), conducted entirely in English. The convening of this event sent a clear message: University of Tehran's scientific diplomacy does not pause even under the most arduous circumstances, and the College of Engineering continues to drive the nation's scientific authority on the international stage.

The response of leading researchers worldwide to the call for papers was remarkable. Although the call was issued amid wartime conditions and U.S. sanctions, scholars from more than 13 countries—including France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Canada, Australia, the United States, Russia, New Zealand, Denmark, Luxembourg, India, Pakistan, Belarus, Lebanon, and Türkiye—traveled to Tehran to share the latest advances in geospatial technologies and artificial intelligence. The thematic scope of the conference spanned the breadth of the discipline: from geodesy, UAV-based photogrammetry, and radar remote sensing to GIS, cadastre, hydrography, geospatial data science, natural disaster management, and sustainable development.

The numbers and figures of this event speak for themselves. In total, 203 papers were submitted to the conference secretariat; after thorough screening by 69 scientific referees from prestigious domestic and international universities, 154 papers were selected for presentation: 62 technical oral presentations and 92 posters. In parallel, 8 keynote lectures (seven international and one domestic) and 4 workshops were delivered on the cutting edge of applied global knowledge.

The keynote addresses mirrored the ongoing revolution in geospatial technologies. Professor Roberto Laurini (Honorary President of Universities Sans Frontières, France) addressed the transformative applications of artificial intelligence in urban planning, while Professor Maria Antonia Brovelli of Politecnico di Milano delineated the role of GeoAI in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Professor Mir Abolfazl Mostafavi of Université Laval, Canada, presented on digital twins and AI for building inclusive and livable cities, and Professor Sisi Zlatanova of University of New South Wales, Australia, introduced 3D voxel modeling for urban digital twins.

Along similar lines, Dr. Yasser Maghsoudi of University of Exeter, UK, elaborated on continental-scale Earth monitoring using InSAR technology—from tectonic plate boundaries to aquifer subsidence—while Professor Jalal Amini of University of Tehran, the domestic keynote speaker, presented on structural displacement monitoring using ground-based SAR sensors. Professor Christian Heipke of Leibniz University Hannover, Germany, offered perspectives on the role of AI in photogrammetry and remote sensing, and Professor Saeed Homayouni of the INRS Centre, Canada, examined the applications of UAVs in precision agriculture and crop sciences.

The conference's side program was oriented toward application and industry. Dr. Ali Ghandour, Head of the GeoAI Research Group and Assistant Research Professor at the International Center for Remote Sensing in Lebanon, conducted a workshop titled "Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) for Earth Observation: From Theoretical Concepts to Practical Demonstration," while Dr. Mehdi Panahi, a postdoctoral researcher at the same school, delivered training on natural hazard modeling with artificial intelligence under climate change conditions. Alongside these two academic workshops, supporting knowledge-based companies were also prominently featured: Aratec introduced photogrammetric technologies based on multi-frequency GNSS receivers, specialized image processing, and next-generation SLAM-based 3D scanning, while Raymand offered a comprehensive training program titled "From Zero to 100: Working with Multi-Frequency Receivers." Financial supporters of the event included the Geographical Organization of the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces, the Center for Transformation and Progress Cooperation of the Presidency, and the aforementioned knowledge-based companies.



This major gathering came to fruition under the guidance of a distinguished team of faculty members from the School of Surveying and Geospatial Engineering: Dr. Mehdi Hassanlou, Dean of the School and Chair of the Conference Coordination and Executive Committee; Dr. Mahmoud Reza Delavar, Conference Chair; Dr. Saeed Farzaneh, Secretary of the Steering Committee; Dr. Parham Pahlavani, Scientific Secretary; Dr. Tayyebeh Managhebbi, Executive Secretary; and Dr. Ali Zare Zardini, Secretary of the Student Committee.

The ultimate message of the event was unambiguous: the successful convening of this conference demonstrated that the scientific bonds and technological diplomacy of University of Tehran extend well beyond national borders, and that the College of Engineering remains an unrivaled driver of sustainable development and the nation's scientific authority on the international stage.



2) International Activities in Numbers (Students, Articles, Books, MoUs, and Journals)

International Student Recruitment

To provide a comprehensive overview of the international student population at the College of Engineering, overall statistics for the academic year (2026-2027), including key demographic details and breakdowns by constituent faculties, have been compiled and presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Statistics by Nationality, Gender, and Level of Study

No.	Nationality	Total	Male	Female	Bachelor's	Master's	PhD
1	Afghanistan	36	24	12	17	17	2
2	Iraq	15	10	5	1	2	12
3	Lebanon	8	7	1	5	0	3
4	Syria	7	7	0	3	0	4
5	Palestine	1	1	0	0	0	1
6	Bahrain	1	1	0	0	0	1
7	India	1	1	0	0	0	1
8	Pakistan	1	0	1	0	0	1
9	Russia	1	1	0	1	0	0
Total		71	52	19	27	19	25

Table 2. Statistics by School

No.	School	Number of Students
1	Electrical and Computer Engineering	24
2	Civil Engineering	12
3	Surveying and Geospatial Engineering	5
4	Chemical Engineering	3
5	Mining Engineering	3
6	Mechanical Engineering	12
7	Metallurgical and Materials Engineering	2
8	Engineering Science	0
9	Industrial Engineering	0
10	Fouman Faculty of Engineering	10
11	Caspian Faculty of Engineering	0
Total		71

Joint Publications with International Researchers

According to verified reports from the Research and Technology Information System (RTIS), the number of international collaborative publications is detailed in Table 3. It should be noted that the statistics for the year 1405 (2026-2027) are preliminary and subject to revision, as the data entry process in the system remains ongoing.

Table 3. Share of international joint papers out of total faculty papers (2021-2026)

Year of Publication	Total Number of Papers	Joint Publications with International Researchers	Percentage of Joint Publications
2021 (1400)	1460	381	26%
2022 (1401)	1407	405	29%
2023 (1402)	1215	344	28%
2024 (1403)	1245	379	30%
2025 (1404)	1098	306	28%
2026 (1405)	328	88	27%

Joint Books with International Researchers

Faculty members at the college of Engineering have published 30 co-authored books with international researchers and publishers. Details are available on the college of Engineering International Relations website at the following address:

https://enginter.ut.ac.ir/en/book

International Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)

To elucidate the scope of international collaborations at the College of Engineering, Table 4 presents the geographical distribution of the 42 concluded international Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs).

Table 4. Current Status of Active MoUs (2025-2026)

Geographic Region	Number of Active MoUs
Europe	27
Asia	9
North and South America	4
Oceania	2
Total	42

International Journals of the College of Engineering

A list of reputable international journals published by the College of Engineering at University of Tehran is available on the College's International Relations website and is summarized in following Figure. These journals are published in collaboration with the various constituent schools across specialized fields of engineering and play a significant role in enhancing the College's scientific standing worldwide.



International Journals of the College of Engineering

For further information, please visit the International Affairs website of the College of Engineering at: https://enginter.ut.ac.ir

A Brief Report on Dr. Mojtaba Shariatianiasar's Strategic Trip to Uzbekistan



In the context of strengthening regional scientific diplomacy, Prof. Mojtaba Shariaty Niassar, Dean of the school of Chemical Engineering, College of Engineering, University of Tehran, undertook a strategic visit to Uzbekistan. Central Asia, and particularly Uzbekistan, given its shared civilizational heritage and grand national programs, offers considerable potential for the export of scientific services, student exchange, and the implementation of joint engineering projects. During this visit, strategic negotiations were held with a few leading universities in Uzbekistan.

In the first phase of the negotiations, technical and strategic discussions were conducted with the Tashkent Institute of Chemical Technology (TICT). During this meeting, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed covering four key areas: faculty exchange, student exchange in postgraduate programs, joint applied research, and the organization of international conferences. Within the framework of these negotiations, collaboration in the fields of decarbonization, water treatment, waste management, and the oil, gas, and petrochemical industries was discussed in the context of Uzbekistan's USD 5 billion national project. The University of Tehran was also invited to participate in the Oil and Gas Conference (in collaboration with Politecnico di Milano) and the International Artificial Intelligence Symposium. The presence of Iranian faculty members at TICT was identified as a capacity for sustained linkage between the two countries, and a feasibility assessment was conducted.

In the second phase of the visit, Tashkent State Technical University, the largest technical university in Uzbekistan with over a century of history, 20000 students, 1000 faculty members, and five faculties (Energy, Oil and Gas, Mining, Mechanical Engineering, and Electronics), was visited, and the necessity of developing a targeted framework for bilateral cooperation in the areas of power and energy industry optimization and mining industries was emphasized.

Position of Engineering Disciplines in the 2026 Shanghai Ranking

The results of the 2026 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) have been published. In this evaluation, the University of Tehran was ranked in the 501-600 band among world universities and was represented in 21 specific disciplines in the global subject ranking.

This ranking system evaluates universities based on six key indicators:

1. Number of Nobel Prize laureates;
2. Number of Fields Medal laureates among faculty members and alumni;
3. Number of highly cited researchers;
4. Number of publications in Nature and Science;
5. Total number of papers indexed in the Web of Science; and
6. Per-capita scientific performance per faculty member.

The most prominent subject rankings of the University of Tehran in engineering fields are presented in Table 5. This achievement further affirms and consolidates the position of College of Engineering, University of Tehran, as a pioneer of engineering and industrial higher education in Iran and at the international level, compared with other industrial universities in the country.

Discipline	Global Ranking
Water Resources	49
Mining & Mineral Engineering	76-100
Instruments Science & Technology	101-150
Civil Engineering	101-150
Metallurgical Engineering	101-150
Automation & Control	151-200

Table 5. Ranking of Top Subject Areas in Engineering at University of Tehran


دانشکدهٔ فنی

Interview with an International Figure: Dr. Esmail Mehrvar

From Lived Experience in East Asia to a Roadmap for Iran's Scientific Collaborations



1. Introduction of the Interviewee

Dr. Esmaeil Mehryar, faculty member in Biosystems Engineering at Isfahan University of Technology and former Scientific Attaché of Iran in China and Supervisor of Iranian Students in East Asia, presents a detailed account of his nearly 32 months of lived experience in East Asia in an in-depth interview with the International Newsletter of the College of Engineering, University of Tehran, while also proposing a roadmap for Iran's international scientific collaborations. The central thesis of the conversation is clear: the internationalization of universities is achieved not through the sheer number of memoranda of understanding, but through sustainable institutional mechanisms, the targeted concentration of resources, and mutually beneficial collaboration. What follows is an excerpt of its most significant sections.

Since 2019, Dr. Mehryar has been a faculty member at Isfahan University of Technology, where he held several key leadership roles, including Head of two units at University of Applied Science and Technology (1399 or 2020), Director of Industry Relations (1400 or 2021), and Vice President for Research (1401 or 2022). In Farvardin 1402 (March 2023), he was appointed as Iran's Scientific Attaché to China and Supervisor of Students in East Asia. Upon his return to Iran, he assumed management of International Cooperation at the Isfahan Science and Technology Town and served as the Secretary of the China Specialized Desk at the Ministry of Science. This unique blend of academic expertise and scientific diplomacy has rendered his interview a valuable resource for higher education policymakers.

2. Genuine Internationalization: The First Lesson from Nanjing

His initial encounter with China began in Farvardin 1402 (March 2023) in the city of Nanjing an experience preceded by prior engagements with universities in Japan, Germany, Denmark, and Canada. What stood out upon arrival was the precision, discipline, and integrated workflow of international student admission: from airport reception and escort, through dormitory accommodation, to bank account opening, medical examination, residency procedures, and course registration, all completed within the first week and without delay. The reception by the highest-ranking university officials and the transportation of belongings in a ceremonial vehicle signaled that the admission of non-local students at this university is a "protocol", not merely ceremonial protocol.

A significant point of interest lies in the cultural and religious infrastructure provided for Muslim students; Muslim communities are vibrant, Friday prayers are conducted, and prayer halls and Halal restaurants are integrated into reputable universities in China and South Korea. Based on these observations, Dr. Mehryar asserts: "Genuine internationalization requires universities to establish a smooth, integrated, and supportive framework for international students, spanning from enrollment to graduation and beyond." Put differently, student recruitment or the signing of agreements is only the beginning, not the ultimate goal. Furthermore, he notes China's exceptional strengths, including its rapid decision-making and implementation processes, as well as its view of education as the foundation of development and the application of Confucian heritage in tailored education.

3. Scientific Attaché: University Leadership with a One-Person Staff

He likens serving as Scientific Attaché in East Asia to "managing a university with thousands of students but a one-person staff." The duties range from following up on academic affairs (scholarships, comprehensive examinations, dissertations, tuition, and residency matters) to liaison with host universities, networking with elites, and consular affairs within the framework of the embassy. The human experiences of this period ranging from the death and accidents of students to wedding celebrations and academic achievements reflect the breadth of responsibilities. His principal emphasis, however, falls on the strategic function of this position: the Scientific Attaché should not be merely an administrative officer; his principal duty is the "strategic monitoring of the science and technology ecosystem of the host country", diagnosing challenges, and offering operational policy packages for development of bilateral relations.

According to the figures presented in this interview, currently some 5,700 to 6,000 Iranian students are studying in China, approximately 350 in South Korea, and roughly 220 in Japan. Students studying in China are primarily concentrated in medical fields, while those in Korea and Japan are largely focused on technical engineering disciplines and medical sciences. In Dr. Mehryar's view, the principal challenges facing this student community are, in order of priority: financial issues and exchange rate volatility, cultural matters, language barriers, and administrative-residential complexities. The difference in academic calendars is another significant managerial consideration: the academic year in China begins in September, while in Japan and South Korea it begins in April. His approach to crises has been to provide legal and consular support while strengthening the student's independence and capacity for problem-solving, so as to prevent the emergence of organizational dependency.

4.Correcting Prejudices, and the Technological Capacities of East Asia

A portion of this conversation is devoted to correcting stereotypical and reductive images of China. Dr. Mehryar explains that the image of "eating insects" is merely a tourist or regional phenomenon, and that the assumption of low quality across all Chinese goods no longer corresponds to reality. Today's China is the cradle of metro systems, high-speed rail, electric vehicles, artificial intelligence, digital infrastructure, and advanced manufacturing supply chains. Such prejudices, he notes, can obstruct the formation of serious scientific cooperation.

In mapping out the scientific and technological capacities of the region, China is identified as a leader in artificial intelligence, big data, transportation infrastructure, and most importantly the "scalability" of industrial projects, while Japan and South Korea are at the forefront of semiconductors, advanced electronics, precision engineering, and robotics. His fundamental principle in cooperation with these countries is unequivocal: "Iran must not appear in the position of a mere consumer or a weak supplicant." Scientific collaboration becomes sustainable only when it is grounded in mutual benefit, shared data, and precisely defined problems, so that both sides experience equality and gain. The interview's ultimate thread reaches the cultural commonalities between Iran and East Asia a shared ground that, in his view, smooths the path of trust-building.



5. China's Higher Education Development Model and Its Lessons for Iran

The analytical core of the interview lies in his exposition of China's higher education development model. According to Dr. Mehryar, China never dispersed its resources evenly across hundreds of universities; through targeted projects such as "Project 211", financial, laboratory, and human resources of the highest caliber were concentrated on approximately 25 leading universities to make them internationally competitive, with knowledge spillovers subsequently benefiting other institutions.

He enumerates the success factors of this model as follows: the concentration of financial, human, and research resources and avoidance of redundant efforts; the establishment of a single command center and data-driven monitoring, along with coherent coordination among the Ministry of Education, the Academy of Sciences, and universities; clearly defined missions for each university based on the needs of its respective province; and a win-win model of university-industry linkage featuring substantial tax incentives for industries in exchange for equipping universities.

From this model, two sets of recommendations are derived for Iran. In the field of engineering education: reviving the genuine tradition of "apprenticeship and mentorship"meaning the career and skill coaching of students decentralizing resources from the capital, assigning regional missions to universities based on local agricultural, industrial, and mining capacities, creating a shared network of key national laboratories instead of purchasing redundant and expensive equipment, and implementing mission-oriented budgeting. In the domain of skills training, he highlights China's experience since around 2012: redesigning obsolete fields of study, training a new generation of instructors, establishing applied skill laboratories, engaging industry through tax incentives, and avoiding degree-worship. This is a model in which research must revolve around solving tangible societal problems rather than the mere production of papers.

6. A Roadmap for University of Tehran and Concluding Remarks

Dr. Mehryar's specific recommendations for institutions such as University of Tehran and the College of Engineering rest on two fundamental principles. First, "quality orientation over ostensible memoranda": one must move beyond the fever of signing fruitless agreements and define, for each cooperation document, a designated officer, a timeline, a budget, and transparent output indicators (ranging from joint publications and research visits to patents, student exchanges, and technological products). Second, transitioning from "lone stars" to "sustainable constellations": collaborations based on individual relationships between prominent professors come to a halt with their retirement or relocation; relations must therefore be progressively upgraded from professor-to-professor to laboratory-to-laboratory, then to group-to-group and school-to-school, and ultimately to sustainable institutional networks.

His concluding message recapitulates the strategic philosophy underlying the interview: time is the most precious capital; as the words of Imam Ali (PBUH) remind us, "Opportunities pass like clouds," and Chinese wisdom similarly holds that great undertakings begin with small steps. In his view, scientific development is neither episodic nor an individual endeavor; it is an interconnected chain comprising professors, students, industry, government, and society. With clear objectives, realistic planning, and national synergy, the attainment of scientific and technological authority is well within reach.



Students' Column

Interview with an International PhD Student from Lebanon

Research at the Intersection of Artificial Intelligence and Cognitive Neuroscience



Nour al-Zahra Fazil, a PhD student in Computer Engineering at the University of Tehran, is a Lebanese researcher whose work lies at the intersection of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cognitive neuroscience. She was ranked first in the M.Sc. program in Computer Science at the Lebanese University and is currently conducting research under the supervision of faculty in the Artificial Intelligence and Robotics Group at College of Engineering. In an interview with the International newsletter of College of Engineering, Ms. Fazil discusses the scientific foundations of her work, her research trajectory, the educational and research challenges faced by an international student, and the potential for scientific cooperation between Iran and Lebanon. The following is an excerpt of the main themes discussed in this interview.

1. Research Area: From Cognitive Neuroscience to Spiking Neural Networks

Fazil's research foundations are built on the synergy of biology, mathematics, and computer science. During high school, she was a member of the robotics team in the FLL competition and later moved toward cognitive neuroscience, a field that aims to model human cognitive and behavioral processes and reproduce them in intelligent systems.

The main topic of her PhD dissertation is the analysis of neural spike signals and decoding of electrical pulse patterns in neurons. This analysis contributes to understanding how neural signals are transformed into perceptual, cognitive, and decision-making processes, and it can be used to draw inspiration from the structure and function of the brain in the design of intelligent systems. Her current research focuses on spiking neural networks (SNNs) and their mapping to EEG signals.

Fazil views her research path as the result of gradual learning: from participation in a robotics team, through university projects, to an interdisciplinary transition and advanced research at the intersection of artificial intelligence and neuroscience.

2. Research and Educational Challenges of an International Student

For Fazil, the main challenges of being an international student have included language barriers, interdisciplinary transition, and coordinating educational and research activities. The strategies she has employed include recording and translating lectures, studying before class, consulting primary sources recommended by faculty, and rewriting material in her own words.

She believes that the interdisciplinary nature of research can be a strength rather than a limitation. Moreover, research setbacks are a natural part of the learning and scientific development process; more important than obtaining grades is a deep understanding of concepts and problem-solving ability.

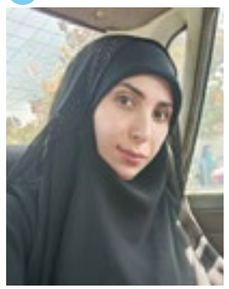
3. Scientific Cooperation between Iran and Lebanon: Potential and Recommendations

Despite administrative and procedural challenges, Fazil assesses the potential for scientific cooperation between Iran and Lebanon as high. She proposes three approaches to strengthen this cooperation: first, remote data-driven collaboration through the exchange of code, EEG data, and research models on cloud platforms; second, the establishment of laboratory-to-laboratory networks to reduce dependence on lengthy administrative procedures; and third, the creation of stable and direct scientific channels between researchers in the two countries.

Her assessment of the University of Tehran has two aspects: on the one hand, the presence of competent faculty, well-equipped laboratories, constructive faculty engagement, and a suitable environment for publishing in reputable journals; on the other hand, the need for greater transparency in administrative processes, particularly in stages related to degree conferral. The solution she proposes is to develop and make available a clear guide to administrative procedures from the beginning of the student's academic journey.

4. Future Applications of the Research

Fazil believes that cognitive neuroscience will move closer



to clinical applications over the next ten years, including early detection of dementia before the emergence of clinical symptoms, brain-computer interfaces (BCIs), and cognitive rehabilitation. Her research can be seen as a bridge between the theoretical modeling of neural



signals and their diagnostic applications in intelligent systems.

5. Outlook for Research Cooperation between Iran and Lebanon

Fazil also outlines a vision for the future of scientific cooperation between the two countries: leveraging Iran's laboratory infrastructure in artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, and biotechnology, and combining it with Lebanon's research networks and global connections, could lead to the formation of an interdisciplinary research hub. In this path, the role of young researchers will be prominent through joint online projects, the formation of interdisciplinary teams, and the establishment of knowledge-based startups. These collaborations can be presented as a way to strengthen the culture of scientific dissemination and collective growth in international academic environments.

Overall, Fazil considers interdisciplinary research, procedural transparency, laboratory collaboration, and the dissemination of science to be the main pillars for strengthening scientific cooperation between Iran and Lebanon.

Announcements and Calls

1) Call for Contributions to the Newsletter

The International Newsletter of the College of Engineering, University of Tehran invites all faculty members, students, and researchers to contribute actively to the forthcoming issues of the Newsletter by submitting their papers, reports, interviews, and international experiences.

2) Call for Papers: Issue 2

The International Newsletter of the College of Engineering invites researchers, faculty members, and other interested individuals to submit their work related to the international activities of the College of Engineering, in accordance with the guidelines below:

Item	Details
Featured Topic of the Autumn Issue	Artificial Intelligence and the Engineering of the Future
Paper Submission Deadline	21 November 2026 (30 Aban 1405)
Submission Procedure	Via the Newsletter's email address: enginter@ut.ac.ir

3) Forthcoming International Conference

- Researchers, specialists, and enthusiasts in the fields of mining engineering and earth sciences are hereby informed that the 15th Iranian Conference on Mining Engineering will be held on 29 and 30 December 2026 (8 and 9 Dey 1405) at University of Tehran, in collaboration with the Iran Mine House and the Iranian Society of Mining Engineering. This event provides a valuable opportunity for direct engagement among all stakeholders of the mining industry academic faculty, students, researchers, managers, and industry experts to convene, exchange views, and share their recent challenges, activities, and accomplishments.
- For further information, please visit the conference website at: https://imec15.ut.ac.ir

4) Other International Opportunities for Faculty and Students

To stay informed about the latest international calls and opportunities available to faculty, students, and alumni, please refer to the following official channels:
University of Tehran, Office of International Relations: https://international.ut.ac.ir/fa
College of Engineering, International Relations Website: https://enginter.ut.ac.ir
College of Engineering LinkedIn Profile: https://www.linkedin.com/company/college-of-engineering-university-of-tehran

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End of Issue 1

The forthcoming issue (Spring & Autumn 2026 / 1405) will be dedicated to the featured topic "Artificial Intelligence and the Engineering of the Future".