

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Special Meeting of Friday, May 13, 2022

Present: A. Abu-Alfa, H. Abu-Khuzam, F. Afiouni, T. Amin, I. Baalbaki, S. Boujaoude, P. BouKhalil, G. Burris, A. Daou, Z. Dawy, J. Doummar, N. Dumit, S. Elbassuoni, W. El-Hajj, L. Farhoud, T. Ghaddar, A. Ghauch, Z. Harfoush, H. Jaafar, S. Karraki, S. Kharroubi, M. Khraiche, F. Khuri, R. Mabsout, B. Maddah, S. Mallat, N. Melhem, L. Mousawi (for Y. Sidani), L. Musfi, M. Nasrallah, A. Olabi, H. Puzantian, W. Sammouri, A. Sibai, A. Shihadeh, B. Tucker, R. Sawaya.

Regrets: R-M. Boustany, Y. Shaib.

Absent: S. Abdulrahim, A. Al-Hroub, R. Chedid, S. Guler Altug, N. Hwalla, R. Sultan.

1. President Khuri announced the establishment of a scholarship in honor of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh and read a statement from the Board of Trustees.

2. Discussion and approval of AUB -Mediterraneo (AUB-M) Master Plan

Provost Dawy launched the discussion and approval of the academic master plan of AUB-M. He commented that this step is a major milestone in the process of establishing AUB-M in Pafos, Cyprus. He introduced Project Director, Wassim El-Hajj, who then led the presentation of the various components of the AUB-M master plan. He clarified that 14 different applications for different aspects of the master plan are being presented to the Senate in this meeting for discussion and approval. These documents have been prepared using the forms and templates required by the Cyprus Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (CYQAA). The applications presented for approval and were circulated to senators before the meeting are:

1. Main Application
2. Application for Institutional Evaluation - AUB Mediterraneo
3. Application for Departmental Evaluation - Business Administration and Analytics
4. Application for Departmental Evaluation - Computer Science
5. Application for Departmental Evaluation - Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management
6. Application for Departmental Evaluation - Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
7. Application for Departmental Evaluation - Psychology
8. Accreditation Program of Study - Bachelor in Business Administration
9. Accreditation Program of Study - Master of Science in Business Analytics
10. Accreditation Program of Study - Computer Science
11. Accreditation Program of Study - Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering
12. Accreditation Program of Study - Master of Science in Engineering Management

13. Accreditation Program of Study – Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
14. Accreditation Program of Study - Bachelor of Science in Psychology

W. El-Hajj provided an overview of the master plan highlighting the following elements: governance structure; faculty bylaws; senate bylaws; representation on AUB-M committees from AUB; temporary administrative board; the faculties, departments and programs proposed for the AUB-M at the launch. He then introduced the teams that developed the various proposals. He pointed out that representatives of the various teams that prepared the program applications will be providing an overview of each program but first opened the floor for discussion of the aspects of the master plan that he had presented.

One senator asked whether the university will seek NYSED approval for these proposed programs. W. El-Hajj pointed out that AUB already has obtained general approval from NYSED to open a branch anywhere except NY and clarified that we will not need approvals for each program proposed as part of AUB-M. Another senator asked about how appointments will be made and how the Temporary Administrative Board will work. W. El-Hajj pointed out that hiring will happen as it happens in AUB but overseen by the Temporary Administrative Board which will be dissolved three months after the launch of the AUB-M. They will develop and oversee a process of hiring in consultation with relevant departments at AUB who have the appropriate expertise. A senator asked what the timeline will be for identifying and proposing additional new programs for AUB-M. W. El-Hajj responded that planning for the next phase will begin soon and will involve extensive consultation with faculty. A senator asked whether those with a BS in Engineering from AUB-M will be able to apply to the Order of Engineers in Lebanon. Dean Shihadeh responded that they will not and added that MSFEA at AUB is actually working in the direction of having more BS programs here in the Beirut campus.

Presentations and discussion of the specific programs organized by the three faculties then followed

A. Programs proposed for Faculty of Arts and Sciences (AUB-M)

Overview and General Education: T. Amin provided an overview of the programs proposed for FAS (AUB-M) which include a General Education Program, BS in Computer Science, BS in Psychology, and BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE). He clarified how the GE program proposed for AUB-M is a slightly adapted version of the new GE being proposed for AUB (Beirut) scheduled for launch in Fall 2023-24. The PPE is the only new program being offered for AUB-M that is not currently offered in the Beirut campus. The floor was opened for questions and comments.

A senator disagreed with the proposal to require two courses in Arabic as part of the GE. T. Amin responded that this is motivated by the unique identity of the AUB-M and the unique student profile targeted and pointed out that this will help enrich students experience during the residency in Beirut, which is a requirement of the AUB-M GE.

BS in Computer Science: S. Elbassuoni provided an overview of the proposed BS in Computer Science highlighting differences between the proposed program in AUB-M and the program in the Beirut campus.

BS in Psychology: A. Dietrich provided an overview of the proposed BS in Psychology highlighting differences between the proposed program in AUB-M and the program in the Beirut campus, with a focus on why the proposed program is a BS not a BA.

BA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE): R. Mabsout provided an overview of the proposed BA in PPE highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of the program, the rationale for it and the benchmarking that was conducted.

Discussion of the proposed FAS programs for AUB-M followed. A senator asked whether there was any thought given to offering a program on Middle Eastern or Islamic studies and asked whether there will be a University Preparatory Program. Provost Dawy mentioned that UPP is remedial; whereas what will be included in AUB-M is more of a transitional preparatory program to help those admitted transition to the culture of education at AUB-M despite diverse backgrounds. He added that other programs will be considered in the next phase of the project and faculty will be consulted widely. Another senator asked if the intensive research experience component of the BS in Psychology proposed for AUB-M would be open to students here. A. Dietrich said that the Department of Psychology thinks that that is a good idea and this will help students be more competitive; so this possibility will be explored. A senator noted that on consulting the minutes relevant to the various approvals of programs a vote was not included in the PSPA department meeting minutes on the proposed PPE program and another asked for clarity on the chain of approvals for this program. T. Amin clarified the process in the case of the PPE program, noting that upon consultation with I/Dean BouJaoude, it was seen that for this interdisciplinary program the necessary formal approvals would be from the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee of the faculty and the FAS faculty at large but that the relevant departments (Philosophy, PSPA and Economics) would be presented with the proposal and invited to provide their feedback. The departments of philosophy and economics each held a formal vote in their meetings to discuss the proposed program; the department of PSPA did not. A senator expressed concern that the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies was not consulted. R. Mabsout pointed out that the PPE team consulted widely but maybe not that department as a unit. He reassured the senator that collaboration with that department would be valuable and would be encouraged moving forward.

B. Programs proposed for Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (AUB-M)

BS in Industrial Engineering & MS in Engineering Management: B. Maddah presented an overview of the two programs proposed to be offered at MSFEA AUB-M. In particular, he highlighted how the BS in Industrial Engineering, a four-year degree and a bachelor of science not engineering would differ from the program here at the Beirut campus.

The floor was opened for discussion of the proposed programs at MSFEA AUB-M. One senator noted that CHEM 203 is to be offered and pointed out that that course needs a lab and asked if that would be available. W. El-Hajj pointed out that it is possible that this course will be replaced with a course that does not require a lab or that a lab will be set up and be available after the first two years once space is available.

C. Olayan School of Business:

Z. Harfoush presented an overview of the Bachelors in Business Administration and W. Sammouri presented an overview of the Masters of Science in Business Analytics highlighting key features of the programs, the feasibility of these programs for AUB-M and the differences between the proposed program in AUB-M and the program in the Beirut campus. The floor was opened for questions and discussion. One senator commented that there is a lot of synergy that is possible between the programs.

Motion was made to approve all 14 documents that constitute the AUB Mediterraneo master plan; the motion was seconded. A brief discussion followed in which one senator reiterated that it was important not to force students to take Arabic. Another suggested that it was important to engage faculty as much as possible – e.g. such as those in sociology - in the preparation and implementation of programs at AUB-M. Another senator asked whether student representatives on the various committees would have the right to vote. W. El-Hajj clarified that they are regular voting members.

Vote 2021-42: 28 (in favor) - 0 (against) - 0 (abstentions)

The meeting ended at 4:00 pm

Minutes were prepared by T. Amin