

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, February 17, 2017

Present: M. Abiad, H. Abu Khuzam, G. Araj, K. Badr (for M. Sayegh), B. Bashour, A. Chalak, M. Clinton, S. Damluji (by invitation), H. Diab, N. El Cheikh, S. El Fakhani, I. Elhaji, M. Harajli, S. Harvey, E. Hitti, H. Huijjer, N. Hwalla, M. Jurdi, S. Kanj-Shararah, A. Kayssi, F. Khuri (chairing), T. Mehmood Ali, S. Mejcher-Atassi, H. Muller, K. Najjar (by invitation), W. Nasr, T. Nizameddin, I. Nuwayhid, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, S. Saleh, I. Saoud, E. Shammass, A. Shihadeh

Absent: M. Al-Ghoul, I. Baalbaki, J. Chaaban*, C. Harb, D. Jamali, G. Kanazi*, R. Karami*, F. Maalouf*, R. Sedehi, M. Sayegh* A. Taher, S. Zeineldine

(* = regrets notified before meeting)

The meeting came to order at 2:10 p.m.

1) Approval of minutes of January 27, 2017

The minutes of the meeting of January 27 were approved as amended.

2) Sharing of final Senate minutes

A motion was made to continue the current practice of posting final minutes on the Senate website and to formally institute a policy of not including proprietary financial information, information related to disciplinary matters, and information related to personnel decisions. A member of the Senate Steering Committee reported on the findings of a two-person subcommittee that had been tasked with looking into the relevant practices at peer institutions. She noted that AUB's current practice stands decidedly at the full transparency end of a continuum running from no disclosure at all, at one end, to full transparency, at the other end. Some universities do not have a faculty Senate. Among those institutions that do have Senates, some do not make the minutes of the Senate meetings public. Among those universities that do publicize Senate minutes, the standard practice is to publish only decisions points: e.g., motions that were voted on. She concluded the report by saying that her subcommittee found no institution with a policy comparable to AUB's, in which the substantive deliberations of the Senate are publicized. During the discussion several Senators expressed concern that the policy of omitting three categories of information amounted to a decrease in transparency. The President and the chair of the Senate Steering Committee reported that they had read through all the extant minutes from the current calendar year and they found only one thing that might have been changed if the policy currently under consideration had already been in effect. The secretary of the Senate concurred and said that he did not think making this policy explicit would have a large impact on how he wrote the minutes but that it would be a good thing to have a clear statement of the policy so that he and future secretaries can use it as a guideline. **Vote 2017-21. The motion was approved by a vote of 21-5-3.**

3) Voting on the degrees of Fall 2016 graduates

M. Salameh presented the list of degree candidates and statistics on their distribution (circulated list of expected graduates of February 2017). Dean El Cheikh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAS. Vote 2017-22. The motion was approved unanimously.** K. Badr (standing in for EVP Sayegh) recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Medicine (FM). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FM. Vote 2017-23. The motion was approved unanimously.** Interim Dean Shihadeh recommended awarding

degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (FEA). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FEA. Vote 2017-24. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Hwalla recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Sciences (FAFS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAFS. Vote 2017-25. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Nuwayhid recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FHS. Vote 2017-26. The motion was approved unanimously.** Director Huijjer recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Hariri School of Nursing (HSON). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in HSON. Vote 2017-27. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Harvey recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Olayan School of Business (OSB). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in OSB. Vote 2017-28. The motion was approved unanimously.**

4) Proposals for MS & PhD in Architecture

Professor Karim Najjar gave a presentation on a proposal for an MS program in Architecture. **A motion was made to approve the proposal for an MS in Architecture** (see Appendix I). In the course of the discussion Senators asked a range of questions including whether a market study was done to assess demand for graduates with this degree, whether the electives must be in FEA or if they can be in other faculties as well, and what the prospects are for successfully recruiting the new faculty that will be required. Professor Najjar answered that the fact that this will be the only such program in the region with English as the language of instruction means that market demand for graduates will be substantial, students can take free electives in any faculty because breadth of education is an asset, and that the recruitment issue is complicated and so requires some explanation. There are three relevant subfields in the discipline: Regional Architecture, Sustainable & Environmental Design, and Architecture & Digital Tools. AUB is already a recognized leader in post-conflict Regional Architecture and there are ongoing recruitment efforts in Sustainable & Environmental Design. So it is in Architecture & Digital Tools where the biggest challenge will lie, but FEA is confident the challenge can be met. **Vote 2017-29. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Dr. Salma Damluji gave a presentation on a proposal for a PhD program in Architecture. **A motion was made to approve the proposal for a PhD in Architecture** (see Appendix II). In the course of discussion, a Senator asked about the plan to admit three students a year at the start of the program, noting that when MIT began its PhD in Architecture program there was only one student admitted per year. Dr. Damluji answered that since this will be the only PhD program in Architecture with English as language of instruction in the region, there is good reason to expect a high level of demand from both students and future employers and that the Graduate Council looked closely at the market studies in the proposal. Another Senator asked if there are currently adequate numbers of faculty members to form thesis committees. The presenter answered that there are currently five, so yes. **Vote 2017-30. The motion was approved by a vote of 28-1-0.**

5) Proposed new grading system at AUB

After a brief discussion the Senate reached a consensus that it was too late in the day to complete this agenda item. Since this proposal is one that the Registrar and an *ad hoc* committee produced in response to comments and concerns raised by Senators at the 21 October 2016 and 25 November 2016 meetings, Senators are asked to study the proposal carefully (see Appendix III) so that an informed and forward-looking discussion can be had at the next regular Senate meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

(Minutes recorded by H. Muller, Secretary of the Senate)

Appendix I: Proposal for an MS in Architecture



ArDFEA
MArchProposal Revi

Appendix II: Proposal for a PhD in Architecture



ArDFEAPhDProposa
I Reviewed Final 16C

Appendix III: Proposed new grading system at AUB



Letter Grading Feb
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