

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, December 22, 2017

Present: M. Abiad, H. Abou Araj, I. Baalbaki, B. Bashour, J. Chaaban, A. Chalak, Z. Dawy (by invitation), H. Diab, N. Dumit, N. El-Cheikh, W. El-Hajj, M. Harajli, C. Harb, A. Harutyunyan, E. Hitti, H. Huijjer, S. Kanj-Shararah, C. Karam (for S. Harvey), R. Karami, A. Kayssi, F. Khuri (chairing), N. Melhem, H. Muller, I. Nuwayhid, A. Olabi, S. Saleh (by invitation), S. Sadek, M. Sayegh, E. Shamma, R. Sharara-Chami, A. Shihadeh

Absent: A. Abu-Alfa*, F. Abu Salem, E. Al-Chaer*, A. Chehab, L. Daouk-Oyry*, S. El Fakhani*, D. Gubara, S. Harvey*, M. Jurdi, G. Kanazi*, P. McGreevy, W. Nasr*, T. Nizameddin, S. Zeineldine

(* = regrets notified before meeting)

The meeting came to order at 2:08 p.m.

1) Approval of the minutes of November 24, 2014

The minutes were approved with minor amendments.

2) Announcement

The President made an announcement about ongoing efforts to expand HIP coverage based on recommendations made by the HIP Working Group formed by former COO Ramin Sedehi and chaired by CFO Drew Wickens. He said that an important goal is to take on suggestions about what additional implementations and procedures would be added to what is covered by insurance: three examples are biopsies, CT contrast dye, and speech therapy. As a means of partially, but not completely, offsetting the additional cost to the system of adding such coverage, premiums will go up 5% in January. The chair of SCFA added the clarification that this 5% is the first step of three, with additional 5% increases being added in each of the next two years. Many of the services to be covered are among those listed in the final report of the HIP Working Group: Report on Premiums and Uncovered Items, dated June 9, 2017, prepared by Drew Wickens.

3) Voting of degrees for FM graduate

EVP Sayegh recommended awarding a degree to an FM student. **A motion was made to award the degree. Vote 2018-15. The motion was approved unanimously.**

4) Presentation on University Research Board (URB) Research Grants

Dr. Zaher Dawy gave a presentation to the Senate on the various sources of internal funding available to AUB faculty (**see Appendix I**). After the presentation Dr. Dawy opened the floor for questions. Senators asked if the referees for grant applications were external or internal; whether there were grants awarded last year to researchers in the arts, humanities and social sciences; and if faculty are required to use some of a grant's funds to hire graduate students as part of the post-GA-stipend strategy discussed in the November Senate meeting. Dr. Dawy replied that decisions about selecting referees are made by research committees in each faculty and not at the level of the URB; the number of grants awarded to researchers in arts, humanities, and social scientists was minimal because the number of applications from faculty in those areas was very low; and grant recipients are encouraged, but not required, to use awarded funds to hire graduate students. Dean Shihadeh

encouraged the URB and the administration to consider increasing the competitiveness of the grant application process as a means of fostering excellence and impactfulness by making it possible to increase the dollar amount of each grant awarded. Dean Nuwayhid stated that while it might make sense to increase the competitiveness at the level of full Professors, it was important to maintain the practice of widely distributing smaller seed grants for junior faculty so that all have a chance to get their research programs off the ground. Dean Nuwayhid also asked whether faculty could use grant money to pay publication fees to journals. He observed that charging such a fee is an increasingly common practice and the cost can be substantial, often several thousand dollars. Dr. Dawy stated that current policy does not allow using grant funds to pay publication fees, but if a Dean made a request to alter the policy the URB would take that into consideration. The Provost concurred.

5) AUB iPark Presentation

The President began with the clarification that he was presenting on an overall innovation strategy, not just the creation of an iPark. Throughout the presentation, he emphasized that it is an unfortunately widespread misperception that only new technology is patentable, when in fact all sorts of innovations can receive protection under laws covering intellectual property. One particular example he gave was an innovative honey extraction technique developed by faculty and students in FAFS. **(See Appendix II)**

6) Presentation on the Global Health Institute

Dr. Shadi Saleh gave a presentation on AUB's Global Health Institute, emphasizing that it is the only entity of its kind in the entire Arab world and, as such, is well positioned to make a substantial impact and very likely to be watched closely by others in the region. **(See Appendix III)**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

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

Appendix I: University Research Board (URB) Research Grants



URB-Senate-December22-2017-Review.p

Appendix II: AUB iPark



AUB Innovation Strategy - Dec 22.pp

Appendix III: Global Health Institute



Global Health Institute.pdf