

**American University of Beirut**  
**Minutes of the University Senate**  
**Meeting of Friday, February 27, 2015**

**Present:** H. Abu Khuzam, T. Amin, Y. Asfour (by invitation), J. Chaaban, S. Chahine, M. Clinton, A. Dallal, Z. Dawy, P. Dorman (chairing), I. Elhajj, N. Farajalla, N. Ghaddar (by invitation) C. Harb, H. Huijer, D. Jaalouk, S. Jabbour-Khoury, D. Jamali, S. Kanj-Sharara, A. Kayssi, V. Khamis, F. Maalouf, P. McGreevy, W. Nasr, L. Nasreddine (representing Dean Hwalla), T. Nizameddin, S. Ramia (representing Dean Nuwayhid), M. Salameh, S. Saleh, M. Sayegh, E. Shammass, M. Suidan, A. Taher

**Absent:** M. Al-Ghoul, G. Araj\*, V. Araman, J. DeJong\*, H. Diab, A. Dietrich, S. Harb\*, E. Hitti, N. Hwalla\*, H. Muller\*, I. Nuwayhid\*, S. Zeineldine\*

(\* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting came to order at 2:10pm.

**1) Approval of the minutes of January 30, 2015**

The draft minutes of January 30 were approved.

**2) Chair's report**

**a) Update on faculty contract**

P. Dorman said that the faculty contract with an additional paragraph proposed by faculty representatives was sent to legal counsel in Lebanon and in New York and the initial response was that the University could not accept the additional paragraph. He had communicated with SCFA that we should not set a specific percentage for HIP and Pension Plan benefits, but rather ensure that they are adequate pre- and post- changes and retirement. He then proposed to work to modify wording to be acceptable to all. The lawyers do not dictate decisions, but the BOT compensation committee is the body responsible for making a decision on this issue and this will be discussed at the March BOT meeting. C. Harb suggested that perhaps the administration's lawyers could propose new language that is an acceptable compromise. P. Dorman said that he will convey this request to the lawyers. J. Chaaban suggested we go back to the old/current contract which has ambiguous language, but is a better option than moving ahead with the new contract unilaterally, which is not in the best interest of AUB faculty. C. Harb commented that faculty demands for protecting HIP and pension plan benefits are very clear and that this is a priority for faculty regardless of language. P. Dorman clarified that the proposed wording regarding the health plan is acceptable, but the way the retirement issue was worded needs rephrasing. A. Kayssi advised the faculty and their representatives to stop the negotiations because we've been going in circles. J. Chaaban stated that by declining to accept the request to lock in these benefits during the duration of the contract, the BOT and AUB can lower percentages for Plan B because of financial exigency. This is unsatisfactory and faculty reserve all rights to take action to prevent this from happening. I. Elhajj commented that the contract version proposed by the administration can be seen as an "adherence contract that is being imposed on faculty" and he asked AUB Faculty United to syndicate the faculty to protect their rights. W. Nasr said that faculty simply want to ensure that these benefits are not taken away at someone's whim, particularly that we are not requesting fixed premiums for the long-term. P. Dorman responded that the clauses and phrases we have for benefits plan provisions are the

same as the previous contract. J. Chaaban disagreed, because when some are listed as protected and some are not included under that list in the contract, then this is implicit that they would be subject to change. A. Kayssi stated that the senate had approved a faculty contract version that was supported by more than 200 co-signees of the petition and requested to place this contract version on the agenda of the compensation committee. S. Chahine recommended that the BOT compensation committee quantify the cost of retaining these benefits which may not supersede the negative implications of this issue. Dean McGreevy urged the senate representatives who have been negotiating with the administration to think about the repercussions on the faculty at large if they decide to take action. Faculty negotiators have asked for adding benefits in the contract and got them, but now that one fourth of their demands were not approved, they're threatening to take further action, such as going on strike. D. Jamali agreed that improvements have been made and suggested that there is a disconnection between SCFA and the Senate because the additional paragraph was not communicated to the senate in due time. E. Shammais disagreed and said that SCFA was involved whenever it had to be involved. S. Saleh inquired whether this is a matter of procedure and that from that point forward, SCFA had the right to review it before it goes to the senate. N. Farajalla commented that as faculty representatives we have bent backwards on our demands and we have lost trust because the final contract version was imposed on us. P. Dorman closed the discussion in order to move on with the agenda.

**b) Update on data leaks investigation**

P. Dorman stated that the administration continues to look at how the data leaks happened. It has been discussed at audit meetings, but no conclusion has been reached at this point and there is nothing to report on this issue since the last senate meeting.

**3) Voting of degrees, February 2015 graduates**

The registrar stated that there were in total 340 expected graduates, including 214 undergraduates, 121 graduates (Masters Degree) and 5 PhDs. Dean McGreevy, Dr. Huijjer, Dean Sayegh, Dean Suidan, Dr. L. Nasreddine (on behalf of Dean Hwalla), Dr. S. Ramia (on behalf of Dean Nuwayhid), and Acting Dean Chahine presented motions recommending the awarding of degrees to graduates in their respective Faculties/Schools: (Attached list of expected graduates February 2015).

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FAS graduates and graduates with distinction**

**Vote 2015-20: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FM NURSING graduates**

**Vote 2015-21: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FM graduates**

**Vote 2015-22: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FEA graduates and graduates with distinction**

**Vote 2015-23: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FAFS graduates and graduates with distinction**

**Vote 2015-24: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to FHS graduates and graduates with distinction**

**Vote 2015-25: Motion approved (unanimous)**

**Motion: Recommend to senate and president awarding degrees to OSB graduates and graduates with distinction**

**Vote 2015-26: Motion approved (unanimous)**

#### **4) Request for special senate meeting on draft budget presentation**

P. Dorman said that the senate will have a special meeting in April to discuss the operating budget for next year. In response to a question about when the BOT will vote on the final budget, P. Dorman stated that the BOT will discuss the draft budget in March and vote on the final budget in late May. J. Chaaban expressed a strong reservation on the timeline and commented that if benefits are altered in the draft budget, the BOT will see changes prior to the senate viewing them. P. Dorman assured him that the benefits were not altered.

#### **5) Update on IT from the CIO**

Dr. Yousif Asfour gave a presentation on the "IT Roadmap" to build capacity and provide exceptional IT service and project delivery. They have looked at mitigating risks to stabilize the IT team, improve governance, and stabilize infrastructure. Now they are looking to improve and focus on staff development, service development, and platform consolidation. He went on to elaborate on the tasks that have been performed including people assessment, process assessment, and systems assessment. The current focus is on optimizing organizational structure based on needs and performance, addressing titles and compensation inequities, investing in training and reskilling, and encouraging synergy and teamwork. Regarding the process update, he elaborated on the initiation of a structural framework for project delivery, stakeholder engagement, implementation of the ITIL framework in various IT units, cleanup and review of IT policies, and refining governance. Regarding the network upgrade, the project has been funded and the contract signed. The project includes core network, wireless, edge network, bandwidth, and cell phone network (eventually moving from 3G to 4G). The IT team is also addressing all the issues that have been brought up by auditors and identified by the task force and the target due date is end of March 2015.

I. Elhadj inquired if we have revenue from vendors due to fixing antennas on campus and the CIO's answer was yes. W. Nasr inquired whether they did benchmarking and he said yes and mostly to those in the USA. S. Saleh said that the main questions of faculty are: when the internet will get better, data security, and the use of applications. The CIO answered that within 6 months to a year we should see improvements with internet reliability, more coverage and more reliable coverage, better bandwidth, and faster internet. Regarding security, we are plugging the holes and that one is never 100% assured,

but we now have a better privacy policy. C. Harb said that it used to be possible to stream a video in class, but not now, and asked if it were possible to prioritize traffic. D. Jaalouk asked if we can limit the number of equipment any given user can employ simultaneously. Z. Dawy asked about fiber optics capacity and the Dean Suidan asked about cleaning the network and increasing bandwidth capacity internally within AUB. The CIO said that all of these issues are being considered including putting quotas on people, increasing capacity internally, and negotiating with vendors and the Telecom ministry on fiber optics. Z. Dawy asked if MTC Touch did safety assessment on the location where the antennas are planned and the CIO said that they did and will redo another safety assessment after installation. As to the issue of email and storage, the CIO said that the disks and servers are very old and that some are beginning to fail and we are running out of space. We need to find solutions as soon as possible and there are some privacy and security concerns with backup and recovery issues; we have a choice to either upgrade our storage system (Exchange and SAN infrastructure) or move to the Cloud. The CIO presented the advantages and disadvantages of these choices and stated that IT team would like to engage with the AUB community to find out what would be their preference. E. Shamma asked if someone is leaking through our network and who is reading our emails? The CIO replied that only you are reading your emails. IT have add - read privileges, but no one is doing that. He added that we need to put policies and agreements in place to ensure that and we'll fix this by March 2015. Z. Dawy said that the privacy policy is incomplete unless these policies are defined. The CIO stated that by end of term, we should start seeing policies coming in for approval. A. Kayssi commented that a 0.5 million dollar cost investment for 300 Megas is way less than the 3 million dollars IT cost the students are paying; accordingly the 3 million dollars should go for bandwidth and not for IT costs. C. Harb asked the CIO as to whether since joining IT, there have been incidents whereby data was removed and if during the investigation that was authorized by the president, the internal auditor came to IT server and investigated without carrying things out. The CIO replied that nothing had left the server and went to an administrator's office since he joined AUB. Dean Suidan commented that we have good IT experts from graduate students to faculty and inquired if there has been any attempt to reach out to them to help. The CIO replied that IT has reached out to the student employment office. A faculty member expressed concern on the issue of privacy if students have access to IT. E. Shamma questioned if the size of IT at AUB is adequate and the CIO replied that we are about 10% +/- . E. Shamma then questioned the CIO if he were satisfied with outcomes since the network contract has been signed. The CIO responded that the new contract was signed after much discussion and we are now at a good place and improving.

## **6) PPRC (Policies and Procedures Review Committee) presentation**

N. Ghaddar presented the "Policy on the Development and Revision of Bylaws" and explained that in October 2014, the president revived the PPRC and asked her to chair it. The committee started meeting by end of October and considered policies available at AUB, identified substantial inconsistencies between related policies and procedures, and found a lack of standardized nomenclature, decentralized process, and manuals reliant on embedded links which sometimes don't work. In addition, the existing policies were not regularly updated, a systematic review process was not in place, and the resources needed for implementation and compliance are not always there. N. Ghaddar explained the purpose of this policy and that it was informed by best practices of ACUPA in relation to policy development process. This policy was already presented to the Board of Deans.

D. Jamali said that this has not been circulated to senate and expressed concern with language in some policies. C. Harb asked if anyone can note that there needs to be a change in policy and take steps to do it. N. Ghaddar said this could be done, but the URO (university responsible officer) can block, but then one can go to a higher URO and can consult with the PPRC. W. Nasr questioned if someone wants to change policy regarding HIP benefits, if the policy on policies will provide guidance as to which person(s) will authorize this change. Provost Dallal said that PPRC will lead people through the process, but not provide or allocate the authority level. C. Harb questioned as to how we will make sure that all people concerned with a policy have enough representation; for example any change to a benefits policy such as HIP should include representation of faculty, staff, and students. Provost Dallal said that this is dictated by pre-existing policies which have to be consulted. There are some existing policies that have contradictory elements and these need to be harmonized. C. Harb asked if there is a mechanism to challenge a particular policy. Provost Dallal replied that we should identify the custodians and get back to them for revision. W. Nasr commented that this presentation confirms his belief that we should insist that basic faculty benefits be protected legally and contractually and not have our benefits dictated by policies that have many contradictions and grey definitions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:11 pm.

Minutes recorded by Diana Jaalouk (on behalf of J. DeJong, Secretary of the Senate).