

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Present: M. Abiad, H. Abou Araj, M. Chaaya (replacing I. Nuwayhid), E. Al-Chaer, T. Bazi, J. Chaaban, A. Chalak, L. Choueiri (by invitation), L. Daouk, Z. Dawi (by invitation), H. Diab, N. Dumit, S. El Fakhani, N. El-Cheikh, W. El-Hajj, M. Farah, N. Ghanem, M. Harajli, A. Harutyunyan, S. Harvey, E. Hitti, S. Isber, M. Jurdi , K. Kaban, S. Kanj-Sharara, F. Khuri, N. Melhem, R. Mohtar, G. Saad , M. Sayegh, A. Shihadeh

Absent: A. Abu-Alfa, I. Baalbaki, H. El Rassy*, C. Fugate, C. Harb, H. Huijjer*, H. Muller, T. Nizameddin, I. Nuwayhid* (replaced by M. Chaaya), E. Shamma, R. Sharara, S. Sadek*, N. Saliba*, F. Talih

(* = regrets notified before meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

1) Approval of Senate minutes of February 22, 2019

The minutes were approved unanimously.

2) Report on the BoT meetings of March 2019

The president gave a summary of the BoT meetings of March 2019. The board had a panel discussion on the role of the university on developing long-term relationship with its students and alumni. The Deans of FAS, FAFS, and MSFEA presented their visions and mapped them to the university growth. The provost briefed the board on the MSCHE reaccreditation process and outcome. The EVP also gave an update on the medical school and the medical center. The BoT discussed and approved: the capital budget, policy for emeritus status, one faculty member in OSB and three in FM, the appointment of two trustee emeriti, the changes to the BS in agriculture, the change in the naming from BE in Electrical Engineering to BE in Electrical and Computer Engineering, the amendments to the MBA program, incorporating the document "Promotion and Tenure Guidelines during Transition Phase" as an Appendix to Policy on "Academic Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion", appointing trustee Dr. David R. Bickers as Acting Vice Chair for Medicine and Health, the revised Information Technology Charter, election of William Zoghbi as a trustee for a three year term, the FY 2020 Capital budget, a resolution on the debt ceiling and explorations of local land acquisition, as well as the revised WAAAUB bylaws.

A senator asked whether the capital budget should have been discussed and approved first by the senate before being approved by the BoT. The president noted that only the operating budget is discussed in the senate, and not the capital budget. Another senator asked whether the Letter on FAS Faculty Members salaries was discussed. The president answered that the letter will be discussed in the June 2019 BoT meeting.

3) Presentation of the accreditation process

The provost provided a summary of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) reaccreditation evaluation visit, which was conducted on March 3-6, 2019. The provost stated the seven standards and the composition of the working groups that worked on each standard. In total, 150 AUB members participated in preparing the Self-Study report, each standard having two co-chairs and 15 members on average. The Self-Study report concluded with 13 recommendations across all standards and was submitted in December 2018 to the MSCHE evaluation committee, then slightly revised based on the committee's feedback and was resubmitted 6 weeks before the committee's visit. On March 3-6, 2019 the committee visited AUB and met with many AUB constituents including students, staff, faculty, administration, and trustees. The committee consisted of: (1) Dr. John

DiNardo, Chair of the MSCHE Evaluation Team, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Professor of Physics, Drexel University; (2) Dr. Fadi Pierre Deek, Provost and Senior Executive Vice President, New Jersey Institute of Technology; (3) Dr. Atta Gebriel, Associate Professor and MATESOL, Program Director, American University in Cairo; (4) Dr. Karen L Pennington, Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life, Montclair State University; (5) Mr. Tomaso Rizzi, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Franklin University Switzerland; (6) Dr. Joan Tilghman, Chairperson, Doctor of Nursing Practice Program, Coppin State University. The committee conducted more than 50 meetings during its visit and reported the findings on March 6, 2019 as follows:

- 1- AUB meets all 7 standards for accreditation
- 2- AUB is commended on the areas of strength in each standard
- 3- No recommendations are mandated on AUB
- 4- The committee endorsed the 13 recommendations included in the Self-Study report and which should be addressed during the coming three years
- 5- The committee suggested some non-binding suggestions, which AUB committed to address

The provost added that Middle States will submit the official report and their comments on April 19, 2019. AUB will have one week to reply if needed. The chair of the evaluation committee will then present the case to the Middle States Commission Office, which will make its final decision on June 4, 2019. If granted, the next reaccreditation visit will be conducted after eight years (in 2027). The provost thanked everyone involved in the reaccreditation process. The senate applauded the positive outcome of the evaluation visit.

4) Updated “Policy and Procedures for Tenure and Promotion Appeals”

The provost noted that the senate committee composed of E. Al-Chaer (SSC Chair), J. Chaaban (SCFA Chair), and N. Dumit (senate at large) met with the provost and associate provost and discussed possible amendments to the policy. The agreed on amendments were incorporated in the policy, circulated, and are to be discussed in this meeting. The major updates include:

- Making it clear that this policy is exclusive for tenure and promotion
- Changing the period when an appellant may file an appeal from 45 days to 60 days.
- Explicitly mentioning whether the Conflict of Interest is explicit or actual.
- Majority was noted to be “simple” and updated accordingly
- The Tenure and Promotion Appeals Committee (TPAC) final report can include one or more minority reports
- Increase the president’s period for making a final decision on each appeal case from 10 to 30 days
- For each appellant, TPAC will have access (a) to the Due Process Monitors’ (DPMs) reports/checklists and (b) to a summary report prepared by the provost or the provost’s designee, which includes the votes and recommendations at the various stages of evaluation.
- TPAC composition: thirteen (13) tenured faculty members, three (3) at the rank of associate professor and ten (10) at the rank of professor.
 - Seven (7) members are elected from the faculties/schools, as follows: First, each faculty/school elects two (2) members; and then, the Senate selects, by a simple majority vote, one (1) member out of the two (2) from each faculty/school.
 - Six (6) members are appointed by the President, in consultation with the Provost and the Board of Deans.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the policy as presented. A senator requested to remove “so” from the sentence “The decision to deny promotion and/or tenure is so inconsistent ...”. Dr. Z. Dawi and the provost argued that the “so” is needed to indicate that the decision was actually arbitrary and capricious and this follows the benchmarks that were researched. The rest of the discussions focused on two items: (1) whether TPAC can have access to the whole promotion/tenure

file immediately once an appeal is submitted, and (2) the composition of TPAC. Regarding the first items, some senators argued that TPAC should have access to the whole file immediately once an appellant submits an appeal because there are a whole set of evidence that cannot be figured out from the DPM reports/checklists and the provost's summary report. Add to that the provost's summary might miss some important clues. It was agreed that the proposed amendments regarding this item be adopted with the agreement that the provost's summary includes the verbatim recommendations at all stages. A senator added that TPAC members should be trained on the evaluation process, and noted that extra implantation of procedures should be put in place to complement the guidelines mentioned in the policy.

As for the TPAC composition item, a senator asked about the process of selecting the three associate professors. Hence, which faculty will elect the associate professors and how will the coordination between the faculties occur. Another concern was raised regarding the inclusion of associate professors on TPAC where pressure might be exerted on them given that they still have to go through tenure and promotion themselves. The president noted that from the six TPAC members he will appoint, he will pick the three associate professors. On another item in the TPAC composition, many senators voiced against the two election levels that was proposed i.e. faculties elect two members, then the senate elects one of the two. It was then agreed to eliminate the two levels of election and have the seven TPAC members be elected directly by the faculties, one TPAC member from every faculty. A substitute motion was made to approve the policy as amended (associate professors are appointed by the president, and the 7 faculty members are elected directly by the faculties).

A substitute to the substitute motion was made to yet update the TPAC composition as follows: TPAC consists of thirteen (13) tenured faculty members, three (3) at the rank of associate professor and ten (10) at the rank of professor.

- Seven (7) members at the level of full professors are elected from the faculties/schools,
- Four (4) members are appointed by the President, two (2) at the rank of associate professor and two (2) at the rank of professor,
- Two (2) members at-large elected by the University Senate, one (1) at the rank of associate professor and one (1) at the rank of professor

Vote 2018-25. The motion passed by a vote of (19, 3, 4).

A senator raised a motion to incorporate in the denial of tenure or promotion letter, the reasons in general terms for the denial. **Vote 2018-26. The motion passed unanimously.**

The senate congratulated the president for being renewed for another 5 years term.

5) Proposal to waive a number of course credits of the requirements in the Master of Urban Design and Master of Urban Planning and Policy programs in the Department of Architecture and Design for holders of Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Engineering, or Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees

Dr. M. Fawaz from the department of Architecture gave a presentation on the rational behind the proposal for waiving a number of course credits for the Master of Urban Planning and Policy (MUPP) and the Master of Urban Design (MUD) programs, for students who have completed a Bachelor of Architecture degree, a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree, and a Bachelor of Engineering degree. The number of course credits' waiver depends on the major the student graduated from and the MS major the student is apply to. The large number of credits taken during the bachelor degree is the main reason behind the proposal. A senator mentioned that a similar arrangement is working out well for other departments in engineering and supported the proposal. **A motion was made to approve the proposal. Vote 2018-27. The motion passed unanimously.**

6) Update of AUB's disclosure of student records to meet FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines

Interim Registrar Dr. H. Abou Arraj presented on FERPA - The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational record. FERPA grants eligible students the following rights: (1) The right to inspect and review their educational records; (2) The right to seek the amendment of their educational records; (3) The right to consent to the disclosure of their educational records; and (4) The right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education. The presentation focused on the amendments to the current policy, in compliance with MSCHE accreditation requirements.

A senator asked about the amendments that were incorporated. Dr. Abou Arraj indicated that the updates were minor and mainly included changes to the directory information and the period by which a student is allowed to inspect and review his/her educational records. A senator asked whether a professor is allowed to share student's grades with his/her parents. The president answered that this is not allowed without the student's consent, unless the grades' fluctuation is hinting to a serious risk on the student. Another senator asked whether grades are shared with donors. The president indicated that no grades are shared with donors. He added that some scholarship programs do that as part of their policy.

7) Discuss the opening hours of Charles Hostler Parking

Mr. Ghorayeb joined the meeting to discuss the opening/closing hours of the various parking spots across AUB. A senator noted that all AUB gates with car access are closed at 11:00 pm and open around 6:30 am. The problem with this arrangement is that faculty members running experiments late at night or needing to be present on campus at late hours, do not have the ability to park inside campus and might be subject to security risk. A request was made to keep two gates accessible for cars at night, one in the lower campus and one in the upper campus. Other requests were made to facilitate entry to hostler parking after working hours and on weekends and to facilitate access to OSB parking on weekends. A decision was reached to appoint Dr. S. Isber as the liaison between the senate and the protection office in order to relay faculty requests and reach an agreement on possible actions. Some senators commended the quick and professional response of the protection office on issues occurring in the medical center and on campus.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

(Minutes recorded by W. El-Hajj, Secretary of the Senate)