

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

Present: M. Abiad, M. Al-Ghoul, G. Araj, V. Araman, B. Bashour, J. Chaaban, A. Chalak, S. Chahine, M. Clinton, Z. Dawy, J. DeJong, S. Diab (on invitation), H. El-Rassy, I. El Hajj, M. Harajli, C. Harb, A. Harutyunyan (on invitation), E. Hitti, S. Hmaidan (on invitation), H. Huijjer, N. Hwalla, D. Jamali, G. Kanazi, S. Kanj, R. Karami, F. Khuri (Chair), P. McGreevy, T. Mehmood Ali, W. Nasr, T. Nizameddin, I. Nuwayhid, W. Raji (on invitation), M. Salameh, S. Saleh, M. Sayegh, E. Shamma, C. Smith, R. Smith, M. Suidan, S. Zeineldine, A. Kayssi, F. Maalouf

Absent: H. Diab*, I. Seoud, A. Taher

(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting came to order at 2pm.

1) Honoring former AUB President Frederic P. Herter; AUBMC staff members Shawki Droubi and Khodr Alaa Deen

F. Khuri read a memorial statement honoring former President Frederic P. Herter. EVP Sayegh read a memorial statement honoring Mr. Droubi and Mr. Alaa Deen, who lost their lives in the recent bomb attack. In addition, W. Raji, on behalf of the mathematics department, read a memorial statement concerning Dr. Ahmed Chalabi, who served AUB as an assistant professor from 1970 to 76.

2) Approval of the minutes of October 30, 2015

The minutes were approved with minor amendments.

3) Report of Chair on BoT meeting

F. Khuri reported on the recent BoT meeting in New York. The contributions to AUB of former President Herter and of Mrs. Mamdouha Bobst were recognized. The recommendations for honorary degree recipients were approved unanimously. EVP Sayegh gave a report on AUBMC noting good progress in construction and fundraising. F. Khuri reported on plans for the 150th and inauguration, and briefed the BoT about two active searches for the Dean FAS and COO. Much of the meeting was taken up with the discussions on tenure, which culminated in a unanimous vote in favor of the principle of restoring tenure at AUB. Interim Provost Harajli made a strong case building on the work of earlier task-forces, the executive leadership team and the deans. A new working group on tenure consisting of trustee, faculty and administration representatives will be formed to develop recommendations for two different tracks and will take into consideration the entirety of implications and related policies, including those related to early retirement. In response to senators' questions, President Khuri responded that the time-frame of the working group would be 12 months, given that there will be a need for re-approval by the Board of the implementation plan and also given the desire to begin the implementation of tenure during 2017. It is not yet decided if it would be coupled, or not with rank. Initially at least, tenure cases would need to be considered by an external review panel, given the shortage of tenured professors at AUB. President Khuri commented that the BoT vote was a decision of the BoT to partner with the faculty, and he congratulated the faculty. EVP Sayegh thanked the President

and Interim Provost and noted that the discussions took three days and the unanimous vote with only one abstention was a major achievement. In response to a question about whether the faculty contract had been discussed, President Khuri stated that he had updated the Executive Committee of the BoT on progress on the issue, and stated that he expected imminent resolution on the contract. If approved by the Senate, the draft contract could be presented to the BoT Executive Committee no later than late January. E. Shammas concurred that good progress had been made and that discussions were near resolution. Several senators thanked the President for his efforts on the faculty contract.

4) Update on Student Elections

Dean Nizameddin gave an update on the student elections taking place that day. He noted that there were more candidates than last year, but that lower voter turnout was anticipated, possibly because the elections were taking place on a Friday. The new electronic voting system was in effect. He thanked the IT team as well as faculty volunteers. President Khuri thanked the Senate for encouraging the vote, and thanked those involved in monitoring and assisting. A senator commented that there is a need to guide students so that they focus on more substantive issues, although some progress was noted on that issue. I. El Hajj made a **motion endorsed by several senators, as follows:**

The University Senate, reaffirming that student participation, responsibly carried out, enhances the education process which is the principal function of the University; and accepting nothing less than full compliance with bylaws, rules, and regulations, resolves that:

1. The bylaws of the University Student Faculty Committee (USFC) that were presented during the October 25, 2013 meeting of the University Senate were approved for one year only, and were later exceptionally extended for another year. Accordingly, the USFC bylaws that are now in effect, in their entirety, are those posted on the Policies and Procedures website (<http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/by-laws/Documents/USFCBL/USFCBL.pdf>). Similarly, the Student Representative Committee (SRC) bylaws in effect, in their entirety, are those posted on the Policies and Procedures website (<http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/by-laws/Documents/SRCBL/SRCBL.pdf>).

2. The USFC is urged to work immediately and without delay on developing and approving a new set of bylaws, and to present the new bylaws to the University Senate by Friday February 19, 2016. Similarly, the SRCs are urged to work immediately and without delay on developing and approving a new set of bylaws. The University Senate asks the President to officially communicate the text of this motion to all members of the USFC.

Dean Nizameddin expressed reservations about setting a deadline that may result in another failure. He asked if members of the Senate would be willing to be involved in helping students resolve the by-laws issue. President Khuri commented that having faculty advisors outside the USFC is a good idea and they could serve as a liaison to the Senate. Two senators, M. Abiad and I. El-Hajj volunteered. EVP Sayegh made an **amendment to the motion, placing the last sentence of the above motion first.** Dean Nuwayhid asked what the consequences were of the USFC not meeting the deadline. I. El Hajj stated that the motion is clear that if there were no changes, it would revert back to the last non-exceptionally approved by-laws on the website. There was a suggestion that another body could take over drafting the by-laws if the deadline were not met, but it was agreed this would not encourage the students to assume their responsibility. President Khuri stated that after the elections he would request a meeting

with the USFC to take place in December or January. **Vote 2016-08: The amended motion was approved unanimously.**

Action point: a meeting between the President and USFC to be scheduled in January 2016

5) Graduate Program in Art History and Curating

A. Harutyunyan, Department of Fine Arts, presented the proposal for an MA in Art History and Curating. She noted that Fine Arts is the only department in FAS without a graduate program, that there is currently no MA program in Art History in Lebanon and that there is a big demand in the region for such a program. The program would be 30 credits, with two tracks allowing for a choice of different project options. One specificity of the program would be its focus on Islamic, modern and contemporary Arab art. The department has an endowed Chair in Art History and Curating. A motion was made **to approve the M.A. program in Art History and Curating.** In discussion, President Khuri asked if this could in the future become a doctoral program and if so, the timing and the critical mass of faculty needed. A. Harutyunyan responded that there is definitely a need for a doctoral program, and many doctoral students from elsewhere seek their advice and that there is no opportunity to obtain a degree in Lebanon. There could be potential collaboration with universities elsewhere which offer Global Art but lack collaborations in the region. However, she noted that the MA is a first step. It was remarked that the Ministry of Education requires that a new program must first have MA graduates before a doctoral program can be established. Questions were raised about the number of Graduate Assistantships and how it competes with other universities and with doctoral programs. A. Harutyunyan responded that the estimate of three Graduate Assistantships is based on need, but that as the program grows it could be adjusted; she noted that there is a need to attract students to the humanities. M. Salameh pointed out that the Ministry of Higher Education now stipulates the need for a feasibility study no matter the size of the program, and A/Dean Chahine raised several concerns about financial sustainability of the program. Dean McGreevy remarked on the strong potential of such a program, and that external reviewers expressed a high level of excitement about the art scene in Beirut; some students may be willing to pay full tuition and the program could attract donors. **Vote 2016-09: The motion was approved.**

6) Academic Development Committee Recommendations

Z. Dawy, on behalf of W. Sabra chair of the ADC, presented three recommendations of the ADC. He noted that the first proposal applies only to students who are returning to AUB after study abroad and is mainly due to the difficulty of establishing equivalence of the grade of 70 at AUB, and he noted that the transcript for such students does not include the grade. He made a motion that **approval of credit transfer is contingent upon achieving a minimum passing grade at the study abroad university.** **Vote 2016-10: The motion passed unanimously.**

Z Dawy made a second motion that **students seeking double major, dual degree, or second degree should be free to nominate and satisfy the GE requirements of one of the majors or degrees. Students will nominate with their advisor the major for which they intend to meet the GE requirement.** Several concerns were raised about the motion, and a request to include different scenarios with their implications was made. Z Dawy therefore **withdrew the motion** and it was agreed it would be considered at the next Senate meeting.

Z. Dawy made a third motion that a **course failed at AUB must be repeated at AUB**. Several senators argued that this is unduly harsh, and contradicts approaches at most universities. **The motion was withdrawn** with the recommendation that it be further considered at the ADC.

[Item 7 on the faculty development policy was deferred to the next Senate meeting due to lack of time].

7) Delays in part-time contracts

S. Diab, Interim Director of HR, reported that AUB employs 300 part-timers every semester. She pointed to several reasons for delays in contracts being issued, namely: a) HR receives the requests late; b) they need budget approval; c) pre-employment medical exams must be completed, and d) sometimes the contract is ready but the part-timers do not go to HR to sign them. HR met with both the comptroller and the infirmary to speed up the process and has assigned someone at HR to follow up on the part-time contracts. A senator remarked that it is a collective problem, but that it is not acceptable that part-timers could be teaching two months into semesters and still not have a contract. AUB could be liable if there is an accident on the job. S. Diab agreed but noted that part-timers cannot sign a contract without the requisite documentation. Another senator noted that a new faculty member refused to come because of the lack of a contract. Dean Suidan remarked that the difficulty is concerning new part-timers, and asked what that proportion typically is. Dean McGreevy pointed out that in some departments it is not clear how many course sections are needed until the start of teaching, that this is difficult to predict in advance and that the flexibility is important. President Khuri stated that as part of the effort to becoming research-intensive university, there needs to be a decrease in the reliance on part-timers, and to develop full-time meaningful careers for teaching faculty.

8) Other business

Action point: senators to send any comments on the draft Faculty Development policy to Dean Hwalla

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

(Minutes recorded by J. DeJong, Secretary of the Senate)