

**American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, October 2, 2015**

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

Absent: R. Brow, J. Chaaban, H. Diab, G. Kanazi*, T. Nizameddin

(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting came to order at 2pm.

1) Approval of the minutes of May 27, 2015

The minutes were approved with minor amendments.

2) Welcoming President, Interim Provost, and new Senate members

D. Jamali as chair of the SSC welcomed the new President and Interim Provost, and the President asked new Senate members to introduce themselves.

[sequence of agenda items was changed with item 3 actually being discussed after item 5]

3) Elections to Senate Steering Committee (SSC) and Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA)

Elections were held with the use of clickers. The following senators were elected to the SSC: M. Al Ghoul (FAS); E. Hitti (FM); J. DeJong (FHS); A. Kayssi (FEA); M. Abiad (FAFS) and D. Jamali (OSB). The following senators were elected as new members of the SCFA: F. Maalouf (FM) C. Smith (FAS), A. Chalak (FAFS).

Action point: The President will appoint an additional member to the SSC before the next Senate meeting.

4) Report on the May 2015 and September 2015 meetings of the BoT

The President briefed the Senate about issues recently in Board of Trustee meetings. These included 1) planned launch of the 150th anniversary in early 2016 and the decision to combine the presidential inauguration with it during a 2-day event in January; 2) recognition of the service of the former President (7 years) and Provost (6 years) during which financial aid had been doubled, the endowment had been expanded, and the number of students and academic programs increased and progress towards tenure had been made; 3) tenure had been discussed previously in May, and at the September 2015 meeting interim Provost Harajli presented the arguments for/against tenure including relevant data (e.g. on research productivity). A decision was made by the BoT to hear a case for the restoration of tenure at AUB during the November 2015 meeting with a vote taken by the Board; 4) in discussion about institutional integrity and compliance including confidentiality of data, the BoT opted for an educational approach to increase adherence and compliance in a non-threatening manner; 5) AUBMC

progress toward the 2020 vision including an acknowledgement of several major recent grants; 6) the 'silent phase' of the capital campaign – to start 2016 but having made good progress so far; 7) review of the finances of the university; 8) open searches – the search for the OSB dean was successfully concluded (with the new dean to start January 2016), and that the search for the COO was launched. M. Harajli and M.Haddadin were appointed as interim provost and special advisor to the President, respectively. A senator asked why a COO was needed, and the President responded that he cannot serve as COO and President and that a full-time COO would increase efficiency. Senators raised questions about tenure, shared governance and the budget process and whether the budget would be presented to the Senate. The President stated that the plan is to develop the initial budget by late December, 2015 and hold discussions with representation across the university, including from the Senate and that this will be the first time the Senate will be involved in the budget process. A senator stressed the importance of a 5-year plan, and the President responded that he is aiming to hear from Deans their plans, and eventually there should be a 1/3/5 year budget. A senator pointed to the need to understand why budget problems occurred while revenue was increasing with higher student numbers. Another asked whether shared governance was discussed in view of the Middle States request that this be resolved; the President responded that Middle States did not give this issue a timeline (as for example the issue of university finances being linked to university mission), but its importance was stressed. A senator asked about the findings of the faculty compensation committee report. The President said that he was ready to share the report and it could be discussed at the meeting after next. The two most prominent outliers were FAS associate professors and nursing faculty; correcting the lower salaries of the former, but not the latter, would have budgetary impact.

A question was asked whether Ms. P. Chalhoub was replacing Ms. J. Muller, and about reference to recording the Senate discussions in the documents sent to senators prior to the meeting. It was clarified that Ms. Chalhoub is replacing Ms. Muller, and that A. Kayssi had suggested at the SSC that the Senate discussions be recorded, for reasons of transparency and as a practice followed at other universities. This was to be presented as AOB at this meeting. Discussion ensued on this topic, and a **motion was made to add this issue to the agenda for discussion. Vote 2016-01 was approved. A. Kayssi then made a motion to have audiorecordings of the Senate meetings available to Senate members on a secure website as supplementary material to the minutes of the meeting.** In discussion, senators mentioned that there are many details to be worked out, so the Senate at this point could only agree in principle; that recordings can also be taken out of context; the need for expertise on this issue; the right of Senators to ask for a stenographer if needed; and that the minutes of the Secretary are the official record of the meeting. Concerns were expressed about how the recordings would be shared, stored and used. J. DeJong noted that this proposal would necessarily require discussion of the role of the Senate minutes. Two contrasting views were expressed – namely that making a live recording available to Senators to question the minutes would invite many problems vs a proposal to reduce the minutes to votes on motions and a live broadcast, which would satisfy Robert's Rules. President Khuri stated that he was in support of transparency but asked if this would be supplemental to the minutes or made accessible more widely. He also stated that it needs to be the authority of the chair to be able to stop recording because there may be material that should not go into public domain. **Z. Dawy made a substitute motion to defer the vote on this item and have a committee look into the details and to bring it to the next meeting for a vote. The vote 2016-02 carried.** A committee was assigned comprised of 3 senators – Z. Dawy, A. Kayssi and W. Nasr.

Action item: The above committee to present a proposal for recording of the Senate discussions at the next Senate meeting

5) University Calendar

M. Salameh presented the university calendar for the next 5 years to 2020-21. Semesters will consist of 83-4 teaching days and there are 17 teaching days allocated for the winter session. Calculating 2 teaching hours a day, this would allow for 34 contact hours which is the same as 3-credit courses during regular semesters. There was a request to add the start and end for the winter session. One senator expressed concern about the discrepancy in contact hours between M-W-F courses and T-Th courses. Dean M. Suidan noted there was a preference by faculty for T-Th courses which results in faculty being absent on Fridays. **A motion was made to approve the calendar. Vote 2016-03: the motion was passed.**

Action point: M. Salameh to add start and end days to the winter sessions

6) Annual reports of the Senate committees and Boards, 2014-15

The President asked for any questions on the reports circulated in advance of the meeting. A senator asked about the total budget for the URB for next year, noting that although there had been a small increase in the nominal budget, inflation and the number of faculty numbers had increased. A question was posed (regarding the Admissions Committee report) about the change in the SAT score for early admissions, and it was clarified by Dean M. Suidan that there was a discrepancy in the score required for those admitted early vs. regular admissions; these have now been unified effective as of this year. I. Osman (chair of BoGS) stated that there is an overwhelming amount of work and no support and that the committee received 9 proposals of which 3 were approved, 3 are under review and 3 are pending, and that there are only 6 months of effective work since it can only meet during semesters; he suggested as in the report that faculties need to provide the names of their representatives in June so that BoGS could convene early September. President Khuri noted that the issue was tabled and that there was a need to look at the number of members and a need for support.

Action point: The budget for the URB for next year will be announced

7) Potential issues to discuss in the Senate during 2015-16

Senators suggested the following issues: a) an articulated academic vision of the university; b) data privacy; c) values of AUB as an institution and practical steps to be taken towards their articulation; d) policies and procedures generally, but including follow up of Senate decisions; d) criteria for measuring teaching effectiveness; e) the vision concerning interdisciplinary programs, including how housed and the status of existing interdisciplinary programs; f) plans to increase the endowment; g) full scope of community engagement by the university; h) reviewing policies and procedures regarding allocating financial aid with a view to its potential restructuring; i) shared governance; j) master's programs with or without graduate assistance and the financial sustainability of graduate programs; k) proportional composition of the Senate by faculty; l) the effectiveness of student advising.

8) Other business

President Khuri announced that as agreed by the previous administration, two members from the faculty-at-large need to be nominated to the PPRC and to be appointed by the Senate.

Action point: nominations to be sought from the faculty at large

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

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