

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Wednesday, May 31, 2017

Present: M. Abiad, H. Abu Khuzam, B. Bashour, J. Chaaban, A. Chalak, H. Diab, I. Elhadj, S. El Fakhani, N. El Cheikh, Z. Ghazzal, M. Harajli, C. Harb, S. Harvey, E. Hitti, H. Huijer, N. Hwalla, D. Jamali, M. Jurdi, S. Kanj-Shararah, R. Karami, A. Kayssi, F. Khuri (chairing), F. Maalouf, T. Mehmood Ali, S. Mejcher-Atassi, H. Muller, W. Nasr, I. Nuwayhid, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, S. Saleh, I. Saoud, M. Sayegh, R. Sedehi, E. Shammass, A. Shihadeh, C. Tarraf (for T. Nizameddin)

Absent: M. Al-Ghoul, G. Araj, I. Baalbaki, M. Clinton*, G. Kanazi*, A. Taher, S. Zeineldine

(* = regrets notified before meeting)

The meeting came to order at 2:07 p.m.

1) Approval of the minutes of April 21 and April 28, 2017

The minutes for both of these meetings were approved as circulated.

2) Voting on degrees for spring 2017 graduates

M. Salameh presented the list of degree candidates and statistics on their distribution (circulated list of expected graduates of June 2017). Dean El Cheikh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAS. Vote 2017-35. The motion was approved unanimously.** EVP Sayegh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Medicine (FM). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FM. Vote 2017-36. The motion was approved unanimously.** Director Huijer recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Hariri School of Nursing (HSON). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in HSON. Vote 2017-37. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Nuwayhid recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FHS. Vote 2017-38. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dr. Nuwayhid also notified the Senate that this year saw the first group of students complete BS degrees in Medical Audiology and Medical Imaging Sciences. Because those two programs were registered with the Ministry of Higher Education under FHS, this year the diplomas only indicate that faculty and have the signature of the Dean of FHS. But with the help of the Registrar, next year the programs will be registered under both FHS and FM and henceforth the diplomas will be signed by the Deans of both of those faculties. Interim Dean Shihadeh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (SFEA). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in SFEA. Vote 2017-39. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Hwalla recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAFS. Vote 2017-40. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Harvey recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Olayan School of Business (OSB). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in OSB. Vote 2017-41. The motion was approved unanimously.**

3) Update on the 2016-2017 Senate vote log

The chair of the Senate Steering Committee (SSC), Imad Elhadj, updated the Senate on previous progress on, and current status of, issues discussed and acted upon by the Senate during the 2016-

2017 academic year. During discussion it was made clear that the decision about positing of the most recent course syllabi pertains to the publicly accessible sections of department webpages. A Senator asked if the summary document that was distributed to the Senate would be posted on the Senate webpage and it was agreed that it would be, which is in accord with a standing precedent. Dr. Elhajj acknowledged the work Paula Chalhoub had done towards generating this summary document and in providing administrative support for both the SSC and the Senate throughout the year. The President thanked the members of the Senate for all their hard work this year.

4) Update on AUB compliance program

The President and the COO updated the Senate on the ongoing effort to strengthen AUB compliance with Lebanese law, US law, as well as the pertinent statutes of the home nations of any grant-issuing institutions with whom we are engaged. During discussion a Senator asked if this new effort will result in an additional administrative structure being placed on top of the Office of Grants and Contracts (OGC) or whether we could proceed with the current personnel. The COO replied that although the plan is to mostly work with current OGC staff, it will probably be necessary to hire a chief compliance officer.

5) Discussion of hiring a consultant to study payment options for Plan B retirement

J. Chabaan and E. Shammass from the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA) noted that AUB faculty members who pay into Plan B during their employment currently receive a one-time lump-sum payment at the time of their retirement. On behalf of SCFA, they proposed that AUB hire an actuary in the role of consultant to look into what other options for payment might be possible, such as an annuity spread out over a number of years. **A motion was made to recommend that the administration identify and hire an independent expert consultant to study the feasibility of introducing different retirement payment options within the current retirement system. Vote 2017-42. The motion was passed unanimously.**

6) University-wide IT policies

Dr. Yousif Asfour gave a presentation to the Senate on three important university-wide IT policies. First, with respect to data: for every datum both the owner and the custodian must be identified and it must be put into one of three classifications pertaining to confidentiality. Second, each faculty member can have his or her primary work computer replaced after four years, but this is not an entitlement. If IT judges that the machine is in good working order after four years, then a request for replacement may be denied. And in exceptional circumstances a request for replacement that is initiated before the four-year mark may be granted. Third, Dr. Asfour characterized the policy on acceptable use of computer resources as “don’t do bad things with your computer or our network” and gave the examples of online harassment and the sending of mass commercial emails as things that must be avoided. The COO urged the Senate to accept these policies as soon as possible, because it will be helpful to have them in place in case there is an audit between now and the beginning of the fall semester. During a discussion, Senators had many questions about such issues as email security and offered multiple suggestions for clarifications in the wording of the current draft policies. The President eventually invoked his privilege as chair of the meeting and instructed Dr. Asfour to incorporate the suggested amendments into the policy document and bring it back to the Senate in September for discussion and a vote.

7) Other business

A Senator from SFEA raised the case of students whose current GPAs qualify them to graduate with either distinction or high distinction but have not yet completed a required zero-credit internship. After noting that these zero-credit internships cannot affect these students’ GPAs in any way, this Senator asked if they could be allowed to have “distinction” or “high distinction”, as applicable, read

aloud as they walked to receive their diplomas this Saturday. The President and the Provost said this might be possible if it could be determined that a standing precedent for such a practice existed.

8) Senate representative statement to the BoT

As this was a session for faculty members only, upper level administrators and members of the Board of Deans left the Senate chamber. Dr. Kanj-Shararah then answered questions and accepted feedback on the draft statement that was distributed to the Senate in advance of this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.

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