

**American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, May 4, 2016**

Present: M. Abiad, F. Abu Salem, F. Afiouni, M. Al-Ghoul, T. Amin, G. Araj, V. Araman, I. Baalbaki, A. Chalak, M. Clinton, Z. Dawy, J. DeJong, H. Diab, N. Ghaddar (on invitation), I. El Hajj, M. Harajli, C. Harb, S. Harvey, E. Hitti, S. Hmaidan, N. Hwalla, S. Kanaan (on invitation), G. Kanazi, S Kanj, A. Kayssi, F. Khuri (Chair), P. McGreevy, H. Muller, W. Nasr, L. Nasreddine (on invitation), T. Nizameddin, I Nuwayhid, R. Sedehi, M. Salameh, I. Saoud, M. Sayegh, E. Shammass, C. Smith, M. Suidan, S. Zeineldine.

Absent: B. Bashour*, J. Chaaban, H. El-Rassy*, H. Huijer*, D. Jamali*, R. Karami*, S. Khalaf*, F. Maalouf, T. Mehmood*, S. Saleh, A. Taher*

(*= regrets notified before meeting or on leave.

The meeting came to order at 2pm.

1) Approval of minutes of April 20 2016

The minutes were approved with no amendments.

2) Proposal for a Dual Master's in Engineering Management and Energy Studies

N. Ghaddar presented the proposal (that had been approved by FEA and the Board of Graduate Studies) following guidelines on Dual Master's approved by the Senate and **a motion was made to approve the proposal**. The proposal is a response to the rapidly growing interest in the intersection between Engineering Management and Energy Studies as they relate to the issues of sustainability, energy, economics and technology adoption. Students would take 42 credits of coursework and 6 credits for the thesis for a total of 48 (as opposed to 30 credits for each degree). N. Ghaddar noted that there are no changes in individual degree requirements. Students must be accepted in both programs, and their thesis must be approved by both departments as well as the GSC, and thesis committees must include one faculty member from each program. Students would be admitted only if they are accepted to both programs and they would be assessed in a comprehensive exam on both programs. The Dual Master's is primarily intended for students with a Bachelor's degree in engineering, and would allow them to become leaders within their disciplines. The dual degree would draw on existing faculty and graduate assistance would be drawn from both departments. President Khuri commented that alumni had said the dual degree would be attractive. In discussion, Senators asked if students would receive one or two degrees and N. Ghaddar replied they would be granted two degrees and obtain one transcript. Dean Nuwayhid asked why this could not be an internal FEA issue, and N Ghaddar responded that the Senate decision was that it needs to come to the Senate but not to the Board of Trustees. Some concern was expressed that the students would need to take fewer credits (48) than the total credits of the two programs (60), although it was pointed out that this already happens at the undergraduate level. President Khuri asked that it be checked whether this raises any issues in terms of accreditation and a senator also advised checking about Ministry of Education requirements. **Vote 2016-25: The motion was approved unanimously pending checking on accreditation requirements.**

3) Proposal for Master's of Science Public Health Nutrition Program

L. Nasreddine presented this proposal for a new joint program between FAFS and FHS of 40 credits. The strength of the collaboration lies in the fact that existing nutrition programs at AUB focus mostly at the individual level and public health programs at AUB lack an emphasis on nutrition. Graduates would therefore acquire the skills of both fields. Public health nutritionists are able to promote health and prevent disease through nutrition interventions at the population and community levels. AUB would be one of the first institutions to offer such a program, which was benchmarked. In addition, qualitative interviews were conducted with employers, focus groups with graduate students and alumni, and an online quantitative survey was administered. Coursework would focus on nutrition, public health and research/statistics. The program would include a practicum in a relevant institution and a capstone course (culminating experience). President Khuri expressed concern about the lack of a thesis, and L. Nasreddine responded that a thesis track can be offered, with a thesis of 6 credits in lieu of the practicum and capstone course. The program would be hosted at FAFS with joint governance by a committee of five faculty members. **A motion was made to approve the proposal including the thesis-track.** In discussion, questions were asked about the duration of the program and how many new students were expected. L. Nasreddine responded that the program can be finished in 1.5 years but more likely 2 years, and that the worst case scenario for enrolment would be 6 new students and the best case 14 new students. **Vote 2016-26: The motion was approved unanimously.**

4) Amendment to the By-Laws of the Faculties on FEA

Dean Suidan explained that the number of departments at FEA had increased but some committees are not including representatives of smaller departments and the committees are overworked. He therefore **made a motion to amend the By-Laws of the Faculties on FEA according to the attached proposal to modify Departmental Representation on FEA Standing Committees.** A question was raised as to whether proportional representation was important, and Dean Suidan replied that it was not as Engineering is a broad field. **Vote 2016-27: The motion was approved unanimously.**

5) Financial aid

S. Kanaan presented an overview of financial assistance to students at AUB, which currently covers 46% (or 4002 students) of the entire AUB student body. This year the total amount of financial assistance was \$56 million. Assistance is currently entirely needs-based; two years ago a decision had been made to remove merit-based scholarships. In discussion Senators asked how the Financial Aid office is circumventing the problem of families misreporting income. S. Kanaan explained that all applicants are interviewed, that the Ministry of Finance now allows applicants to pay \$200 and obtain needed reports on owned assets. Dean Hwalla commented that Deans need to receive information about which students have received earmarked scholarships. Dean Suidan commented that faculties are often in a better position to know whether students are financially in need since they know them well.

6) Budget presentation

COO Sedehi presented the budget, noting that the Senate was seeing the budget details before the Board of Trustees. The budget was presented for the whole of the institution – campus and AUBMC -- for the first time. R. Sedehi presented the challenges and emphasized the uncertainty of the environment. Key assumptions for the one-year budget are that there will be a 3% increase in tuition, 2% increase for

faculty/staff and 4.5% increase in net patient revenue and the same assumptions underlie the 2017-20 budget. A 4-5% annual increase in HIP rates is anticipated to begin the year after next and to continue thereafter. There will be a need to use contingency funds of up to \$2.75 million to balance the budget. The administration has also requested that the draw rate on the endowment be increased from 4.2% to 5%. There will be no cutting of faculty lines, but rather 'disciplined position control' across the institution. The campaign to be opened by fall 2016 will provide funds for financial aid, endowed chairs, support for centers and restricted gifts. R. Sedehi stated that the way the budget is now presented allows for benchmarking. For example, 21% is being spent on 'shared services' which in the US typically incur 17% of the budget; however, he noted that there are taxes in Lebanon that are specific to context, the university is unusual in that it also has a New York office and there are Lebanon-specific expenses such as having to run a power generator. President Khuri commented that there is a need for supportive legislation for some measures to be put in place, such as a law that scholarships under a certain income could be tax-protected. A senator stated that a 2% faculty salary increase represents a decline in salaries in real terms given cost-of-living increases. In response to a question about contingency funds given the uncertain environment, it was stated that typically AAA rated universities have a contingency of 5-10% but AUB is aiming to get it to 3.5%. Senators asked for access to the figures to consider them in more detail and President Khuri committed to sharing the budget information after it is presented to students. EVP Sayegh noted that academic medical centers typically lose money, but without much help from endowment the budget is balanced. COO Sedehi stressed that the university is doing well on its budget considering most US universities are cutting theirs. President Khuri stated that the situation is quite positive given the time and place although we hope and expect the situation to improve.

Action point: The administration to share the budget information with senators after it has been presented to students.

7) Other business

President Khuri referred to the act of violence that had occurred on campus on April 25 after a cultural event and stated that the administration is taking the issue very seriously and has raised it with the highest level of government. President Khuri stated that all efforts will be made to reinforce the rule that no armed persons will be allowed to enter the campus.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

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