

**American University of Beirut**  
**Final Minutes of the University Senate**  
**Meeting of Tuesday, June 7, 2022**

**Present:** A. Abu-Alfa, H. Abu-Khuzam, F. Afiouni, A. Alhakim, A. Al-Hroub, S. Guler Altug, T. Amin, I. Baalbaki, R-M. Boustany, S. Boujaoude, P. BouKhalil, G. Burris, R. Chedid, L. Choueiri, A. Daou, S. Diab, Z. Dawy, J. Doummar, N. Dumit, S. Elbassouni, L. Farhoud, T. Ghaddar, N. Hwalla, H. Jaafar, M. Jaber, S. Karaki, S. Kharroubi, M. Khraiche, F. Khuri, N. Melhem, L. Musfi, M. Nasrallah, S. Nouredine, A. Olabi, Y. Shaib, A. Sibai, A. Shihadeh, Y. Sidani, R. Sultan, B. Tucker, R. Sawaya

**Regrets:** A. Ghauch, S. Mallat

**Absent:** S. Abdulrahim, H. Puzantian,

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am. The meeting was held virtually using Zoom.

**1. Approval of Senate minutes of May 13 and May 27, 2022**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the Senate meeting of May 13, 2022 with minor edits. The motion was seconded. **Vote 2021-52: 35 (in favor) – 0 (against) – 0 (abstentions)**

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the Senate meeting of May 27, 2022 with minor edits. The motion was seconded. **Vote 2021-53: 35 (in favor) – 0 (against) – 0 (abstentions)**

**2. Voting of Degrees for Graduates of June 2022**

Interim Dean BouJaoude recommended awarding degrees to the the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) students indicated in the Registrar’s list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-54**). Dean Sawaya recommended awarding degrees to the Faculty of Medicine (FM) students indicated in the Registrar’s list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-55**). Dean Sawaya made another motion to recommend awarding the students indicated in the Registrar’s list with joint degrees from the FM and the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS). The motion was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-56**). Interim Dean Farhoud recommended awarding degrees to the Hariri School of Nursing students indicated in the Registrar’s list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-57**). Dean Shihadeh recommended awarding degrees to the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (MSFEA) students indicated in the Registrar’s list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-58**). Dean Shihadeh made another motion to recommend awarding the students indicated in the Registrar’s list with joint degrees from the MSFEA and FM. The motion was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-59**). Interim Dean Olabi recommended awarding degrees to the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) students indicated in the Registrar’s list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-60**). Interim Dean

Olabi made another motion to recommend awarding the students indicated in the Registrar's list with joint degrees from FAFS and FHS. The motion was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-61**). Dean Sibai recommended awarding degrees to the FHS students indicated in the Registrar's list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-62**). Dean Sibai made another motion to award students indicated in the Registrar's list with joint degrees from FHS and FM. Dean Sidani recommended awarding degrees to the Olayan School of Business (OSB) students indicated in the Registrar's list. A motion made to award the degrees was approved unanimously (**Vote 2021-63**).

The Registrar concluded this item by giving a summary of this cohort's statistics noting that, overall, this was a strong graduating class.

### **3) Approval of proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Actuarial Studies**

A. Abbas Alhakim presented a proposal for a BS in Actuarial Studies. He provided an overview of the proposal including reference to the following: the history of approvals of the proposal; the motivation for the proposal; the curriculum design and benchmarking of the proposed program; the program management; and projected budget. The proposal was circulated to Senate members before the meeting.

After the presentation, senators were invited to raise questions and make comments. One senator asked what the Arabic translation of "actuarial studies" was. Another senator expressed some concern that while the proposal suggests that there is a great need for the program and that there are various types of jobs that graduates could seek, there wasn't evidence in the form of a market survey or survey of potential students to document the feasibility of the program. This senator also wanted to make sure that students will meet the General Education requirements and commented that there was a need for revision of the format of program learning outcomes. Another senator asked if there was any possible overlap with other programs. A senator then commented that there are many BS in Mathematics programs in the US that offer a concentration in Actuarial Studies and added that it would have been helpful to know what current students and recent graduates thought of the proposed program. Another senator asked how the proposed program was different from the corresponding USEK program and asked whether students are likely to join this proposed program instead of the existing BS in Mathematics or would be additional students joining AUB. A senator asked if this program would qualify graduates to take the tough exams that those who work in this field are required to take. Dean Sibai recommended that it might be better to consider a graduate program in this topic instead, suggesting that it might be difficult to recruit at the undergraduate level. A senator was of the opinion that AUB would be eager to employ individuals with this degree to work on things like insurance and pension plans. Dean Sidani commented that this was a much-needed degree and asked how it would be marketed and asked what role OSB might play in this program given the connection between the fields. Dean Shihadeh pointed out that Math 272 could be considered equivalent to INDE 301. Provost Dawy raised a concern that the Department of Mathematics would now have a fourth degree and asked why not consider this program as a track within the BS in Applied Mathematics.

A. Alhakim responded to these questions and comments. He pointed out that the profession is referred in Arabic as *khabeer ictuway*. He clarified that there are many job adds that require specialists in this area. He reassured the Senate that GE requirements will be met and have been carefully incorporated into the program and that learning outcomes have been included in the proposal. He pointed out that there are courses that do overlap with other programs but there are also specialty courses. He responded that the department considered the idea of a concentration, but preferred a separate program because the scope of the degree is not just mathematics and that it would cost the same anyway. He acknowledged that opinions of students or recent graduates had not been sought but reported that there were a number of cases of mathematics students taking jobs in this area. He pointed out that USEK's program is in French so caters for a different potential student pool. He suggested that the program would attract new students because those who come with an interest in pure mathematics don't even consider applied mathematics. He reassured the senate that the program would fully equip graduates with the knowledge needed to sit for three exams in the field and partially for others. The preference for a program at the BS level was because the department is following the American model in preparing graduates for entry level jobs. He explained that the team preparing the proposal did meet with the previous Dean of OSB given the potential overlap between fields but given the course profile he suggested that it made more sense for this program to be in the Department of Mathematics. He added, however, that the department would be open to working with OSB.

President Khuri commented that there are a significant number of questions that suggest a reconsideration of this proposal in the fall, giving time for these issues to be addressed; he added that while there is clearly a lot of enthusiasm for the program, there are some concerns with overlap with other programs and potential links with other departments and faculties that could be explored. Provost Dawy agreed with the suggestion to postpone the vote till the Fall when a revised proposal would be considered.

#### **4) Approval of Research Assistants and Academic Assistants policies**

S. Diab pointed out that a working group has been working on the Research Assistants and Academic Assistants policies. She pointed out that various issues are often raised but are not mentioned in the current policies. She reviewed the main changes in the new policy highlighting that the new policy points out that RAs are only funded by external grants; in the new policy, a part-time RA can work as long as a year; and that a new title is being proposed of "Academic Assistant" for those who would have academic administrative duties. The proposed changes to the policies were distributed to senators before the meeting for their consideration.

A senator asked whether reference to RAs on grants in this policy includes those on internal grants and asked about the fresh dollar component of RA and AA salaries. S. Diab clarified that indeed the policy does apply to RAs on internal grants as well. The fresh dollar salary breakdown is not something that is included in the policy, as this changes with time.

Another senator asked what the rationale was to refer to “less than 50%” for part-time RAs and asked what happens after the two years of service for AAs; would they have to quit. S. Diab clarified that reference to “less than 50 %” is made because of a detailed related to the wording of the benefits clause. She confirmed the AAs cannot have an appointment beyond two years otherwise they should be hired as regular staff.

A senator expressed some concerns regarding the details in the policy: some grants are for more than two years so why is there a limit of two years; and why is there a distinction made between academic and non-academic assistants. S. Diab clarified that the two-year restriction is not for RAs on grants but is a restriction for Academic Assistants who are not doing research and will have administrative duties.

Another senator asked for clarification of the probation period and termination policy. S. Diab clarified the details of probation and the conditions of terminations.

A senator expressed concern that part-time RAs don’t get benefits asking why it was not possible to give benefits proportional to the time worked. Provost Dawy responded that if an external grant has a benefits line allowed by the funder, then this is allowable.

A motion was made to approve the revised RA policy and was seconded. **Vote 2021-64: 33 (in favor) - 1 (against) - 1 (abstention)**

A second motion was made to approve the AA policy and was seconded: **Vote 2021-65: 34 (in favor) - 1 (against) - 0 (abstention)**

##### **5) Approval of increasing thesis credits for MA in Media studies**

G. Burris summarized the proposal to increase the thesis credits from 6 to 9 credits with reduction of 3 elective credits.

A motion was made to approve the proposal and was seconded. **Vote 2021-66: 34 (in favor) - 0 (against) - 1 (abstention)**

##### **6) Other business**

President Khuri shared with the senate his view that there were inaccuracies in the Senate Statement to the BoT and that these were damaging. Specifically, he insisted that the suggestion that the Senate first heard about the AUB-Mediterraneo project in the media was simply not true. He said that this aspect of the statement was received by the BoT as the Senate not assuming its proper responsibility. M. Khraiche responded that what he expressed in the statement was shared with him by some senators who expressed surprise at first hearing about this project in the media. Another senator pointed out that the project was announced to all faculty in town halls in April 2021.

Another senator brought up another issue, suggesting that the policy on leave without pay be revised, especially as this applies to colleagues who are becoming MPs. President Khuri responded that this was not the time to revisit this policy but agreed that it could be revisited in a few months.

President Khuri thanked the Senate members for the excellent work done this year and for meeting the many challenges that this year presented. As this was the last meeting of the academic year, he wished everyone a good summer.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Minutes recorded by T. Amin, Secretary of the Senate