

**American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday 16 December 2011**

Present: M.A. Al-Alaoui, A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Al-Kutoubi, S. Arnaout, S. Chahine, N. Dajani, A. Dallal, P. Dorman (chairing), I. El-Hajj, M. El-Sabban, G. Farag, J. Ghafari, R. Habib, S. Harb, H. Huijer, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, S. Kenney, G. Matar, S. Nouredin, I. Nuwayhid, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, I. Saoud, A. Shihadeh, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, M. Suidan, S. Talhouk, J. Usta.

Absent: B. Barhoumi, R. Brow, D. Jamali*, Z. Kassaify, R. Khayat-Toubia, P. May, P. McGreevy, G. Najjar*, W. Nasr*, S. Neaime*, T. Nizameddin, S. Saleh, M. Tabbal, A. Zenger*
(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2 pm.

1. *Approval of minutes of November 25, 2011*

Minutes of November 25, 2011 meeting were approved as corrected (24-1-2)

2. *Observing a minute of silence to honor former colleagues, Dr. Amal Kurban and Dr. Farid Khouri.*

Dr. G. Kibbi, representing FM, read a memorial to Dr. Amal Kurban. Dr. A. Abdelnour representing FM, read a memorial to Dr. Farid Khouri on behalf of Dean Sayegh.

President Dorman asked the Senate to stand in a moment of silence in honor and memory of Drs. Kurban and Khouri.

The letters (attached) will be sent, on behalf of the FM and the Senate, to the families of the deceased.

3. *Proposed University Calendar, 2012-2013*

Dr. Salameh distributed a proposed University Calendar for 2012-2013 (Attached). He indicated that the number of teaching days will remain unchanged and dates for payment of fees will become unified for all students.

Questions raised by the Senate included reasons behind this interim calendar. Points were made regarding the fact that the fall semester ends two days after Christmas break, and the spring semester ends at a time when faculty are under pressure to correct final year projects and to meet registrar deadline for submission of grades for graduating students. Other points raised were related to environmental implications, such as the expected rise in the use of air conditioners, and work-life balance, for faculty members whose children will not have yet returned to school. Clarifications to questions and inquiries included the fact that a Task Force on the Academic Year, convened by the President, is currently

looking into advantages and disadvantages of a revised academic schedule that would set the beginning of the year to near the beginning of September. Exam weeks might be scaled back from two weeks to one, as elsewhere in American institutions, and the teaching free time could allow for rescheduling curricula and organizing conferences; students could pursue projects or thesis writing between terms. The revised calendar will be better aligned with US sister institutions; this will be equally beneficial to faculty going on development leaves and students seeking summer internships and jobs. The interim calendar is important because it will be easier later to change from the middle to the beginning of the month of September, it will allow time for applying schools to adjust their application schedules gradually, and it will give an insight into reactions of students' parents.

Motion: To approve University Calendar 2012-2013 as submitted
Vote 2012-16: Motion approved (21-1-2)

4. *Senate representative to the board of trustees meeting in Beirut*

A discussion regarding best representation and participation venues for the senate took place. Points were made regarding the importance of formalizing the presence of the senate representative in various BOT committees. A discussion took place on whether the Senate or the senate on faculty affairs committee should meet with BOT. The senate should prepare and propose agendas for its meetings with the Trustees.

Motion: Recommend to BOT that the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs meets with Trustees

Substitute motion: Recommend to BOT that Senate meets with Trustees

Vote 2012-17: Substitute motion approved (25-0-0)

Motion: Recommend to BOT that the Senate Representative be invited to attend certain BOT committee meetings in addition to the meeting allocated for the presentation of the Senate statement

Vote 2012-18: Motion approved (25-0-0)

5. *Update on pension plan*

V.P. Radulski informed the Senate that both Plan A and Plan B returns have been impacted due to stock market conditions during 2011. For Plan B, the memo account portfolio return as of end-October was still positive at 1.2% through end-October; he indicated that our belief was that market performance for November and December would maintain the positive return. HR had circulated a communication to all Plan B members early December advising them that they could during the month of December 2011 change the way they have memo account interest calculated for their memo accounts.

A discussion followed and included inquiries and suggestions related to portfolio management, dates allowed for changing portfolio, and relation between faculty pension plans and management of university endowment fund.

It was agreed that the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs will meet with VP Radulski to address all issues raised and will come up with specific recommendations to the Senate under a dedicated agenda item in upcoming senate meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm