American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday February 24, 2012

Present: M.A. Al-Alaoui, A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, S. Arnaout, R. Brow, S. Chahine, N. Dajani, A. Dallal, P. Dorman, R. Foster, I. El-Hajj, G. Farag, J. Ghafari, A. Hamadeh (representing J. Radulski), S. Harb, H. Huijer, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, A. Jaffa (representing M. Sayegh), D. Jamali, S. Kenney, I. Lakkis, G. Matar, P. McGreevy, J. Melki, G. Najjar, W. Nasr, S. Neaime, I. T. Nizameddin, S. Noureddin, I. Nuwayhid, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, S. Saleh, I. Saoud, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, M. Suidan, M. Tabbal, , S. Talhouk, J. Usta, A. Zenger.

Absent: A. Al-Kutoubi, S. Arnaout, B. Barhoumi, M. El-Sabban, R. Habib, R. Foster, Z. Kassaify, R. Khayat-Toubia, P. May

The meeting was called to order at 2 pm.

1. ***Approval of minutes of January 27, 2012***
   Minutes of January 27, 2012 meeting were approved as corrected (30-0-0)

2. ***Faculty of Medicine Revised Policy on Academic Tracks, Appointments, and Promotion (See Attachment)***
   Dr. Ziyadeh explained that following senate recommendations, the Academic Committee of the Faculty of Medicine met and unanimously approved the Revised Policy on Academic Tracks, Appointments, and Promotion document with minor modifications. The document was then approved by a two third majority vote in a meeting of the faculty of Medicine.

   Motion: To approve the Faculty of Medicine Revised Policy on Academic Tracks, Appointments, and Promotion
   Vote 2012-19: Motion approved (30-0-0)

3. ***Proposed M.S. in Construction Engineering (FEA) from the Board of Graduate Studies (See Attachment)***

   Dr. Sadek presented key points of the proposal document which was circulated to senators prior to the senate meeting. Dr. Sadek explained that this proposal is in line with the Faculty's attempt to diversify its program offerings. The proposed M.S. degree is required by the government for students holding a BSc in Construction Engineering. He indicated that there is demand for this field and that many of the senior students enrolled in the BSc in Construction Engineering have expressed interest in joining the M.S. program. The BSc consists of 110 credits and the proposed M.S. consists of 40 credits. The combination of the two degrees will enable students to meet government requirements in terms of number of credits which will enable students to join the Order of

Engineers. The proposed program builds on the strength of the Department and requires minimal input compared to the revenue which will be generated from tuition fees. The program has been discussed and approved by the department, Faculty, and Board of Graduate Studies and feedback at each step has been incorporated.

In answer to inquiries by senators, Dr. Sadek explained that the program offers thesis and non-thesis options and that there are currently no intentions to seek accreditation for it.

Motion: To approve the M.S. in Construction Engineering (FEA)
Vote 2012-20: Motion approved (30 -0-0)

4. ***Proposed M.S. and M.E. in Chemical Engineering (FEA)from the Board of Graduate Studies (See Attachment)***

Dr. M. Darwiche presented key points of the proposal document which was circulated to senators prior to the meeting. Dr. Darwiche explained that the M.S. program will cater for students holding B.S. degrees in related fields while the M.E. program will cater for students with B.S. in Chemical Engineering. The two programs are very similar and use common resources. The M.S. will encourage more students to opt for the B.S. Chemical Engineering track as it will enable them to join the syndicate of engineers.
In answer to inquiries by senators Dr. Darwiche explained that holders of B.E. degrees will need 30 credits to graduate with a M.S. while holders of B.S. will need 40 credits. Dean Suidan indicated that M.S. and M.E. degrees are perceived differently in the professional market. Although no detailed market study has been conducted, there is evidence that graduates of this field are in demand. The program is currently housed in the Mechanical Engineering Department and teaching is partially covered by faculty members of the department. Additional faculty is currently being recruited. The proposed programs will be unique in the region in terms of the quality of training that students will receive and research that they will be exposed to.

Motion: To approve the M.S. and M.E. in Chemical Engineering (FEA)
Vote 2012-21: Motion approved (30 -0-0)

5. ***Update on Campaign Priorities***

VP Brow indicated that the University current campaign priorities are the AUBMC 2020, the strengthening of the liberal arts programs and students' experience, and interdisciplinary research and graduate programs. Capital projects include, in addition to the Medical Center, a new building on the Durrafourd site (graduate and interdisciplinary studies), and the FAFS Wing B. There is also a need to renovate heritage buildings throughout campus. The campaign will focus on the University's 150th Anniversary in 2016. The estimated 500 M USD campaign will have a silent phase of three to four years, during which half to two thirds of the total funds required will be raised. During this period the advancement office will address essential campaign preparations, including widening the pool of prospective donors, improving infrastructure and recruiting staff.

The office is also putting in place better systems for reporting and care of donors. Once the target goal for the silent phase is achieved, the campaign will go into a public phase until its objective is secured. The upcoming Trustee meeting will focus on the campaign strategy. Currently fundraising brings in approximately 23-25 M USD/year and the University has extraordinary philanthropic support from its Trustees. Unlike past practice, projects will not be started before adequate funds are fully secured. In the case of the Medical Center, the architect has been requested to develop phased construction plans that could be stopped at different phases depending on availability of funds.

With respect to inquiries about fundraising for student financial aid the Provost indicated that the financial aid system reforms will lead to a significant increase from 13 million in 2009 to 30 M USD by the fall of 2014, of which 70% are unrestricted as compared to 30% in the past. The average student aid will be 50% while in the past it was less than 30%.

The Office of Advancement is sensitive to the possibility of "donor fatigue" and will ensure that appropriate strategies are followed to take extraordinary care of donors' interests, continuously broaden the donor base, and by following up on small but consistent donors who are seen as essential base from which to develop additional large donors.

6. ***Grading system at AUB***

The Provost indicated that grade inflation is occurring internationally and that our current grading scale is affecting our students' ability to get accepted to graduate schools. Many students are accepted to graduate schools because of AUB's reputation or faculty network and contacts. The Provost formed a committee to study the issue and to present its findings and recommendations in due time. Some senators had reservations against grade inflation, indicating that engineering for example showed no such problems, while others seem to agree that this is an issue for some departments and disciplines. Grade inflation was discussed ten years ago and the solution that was implemented by AUB was the inclusion of a conversion system explaining the grading scale at the back of transcripts. The Provost indicated that the data that was collected when the issue was being addressed in the past has been taken into consideration. One suggestion was to correct student GPA with related rank. This however does not seem to be considered by universities that handle hundreds of applications which are ranked according to matrices.

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm