

**American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, 1 June 2012**

Present: M.A. Al-Alaoui, A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Al-Kutoubi, S. Arnaout, S. Chahine, N. Dajani, A. Dallal (Chair), I. El-Hajj, J. Ghafari, R. Habib, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, D. Jamali, Z. Kassaify, S. Kenney, G. Matar, P. McGreevy, J. Melki, A. Safieddine (for G. Najjar), W. Nasr, S. Neaime, T. Nizameddin, S. Nouredine, I. Nuwayhid, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, I. Saoud, K. Badr (for M. Sayegh), F. Sleiman, M. Suidan, J. Usta.

By invitation: C. Myntti (representing AUB Neighborhood Initiative).

Absent: B. Barhoumi*, R. Brow, P. Dorman*, M. El-Sabban*, G. Farag, R. Foster*, S. Harb, H. Huijer*, R. Khayat-Toubia, I. Lakkis, P. May, S. Saleh, A. Shihadeh, M. Tabbal, S. Talhouk*, A. Zenger*. (* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 pm.

1. Approval of minutes

On the Minutes of April 27, 2012, under other business (item #6), two amendments were made: (i) Adding a sentence stating that "The issue was further discussed" after the first sentence concerning promotion policy being circulated. (ii) Adding another sentence stating that "Some members noted that they have not seen the document".

Minutes of April 27, 2012 were unanimously approved as amended (32-0-0)

2. Voting of degrees, Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Kamal Badr (representing Dean Sayegh), presented two motions recommending the awarding of degrees to graduates in the Faculty of Medicine (List of those expected graduates in FM, for June 2012, is attached)

Motion: Recommend awarding degrees of Doctor of Medicine to the 78 FM graduates whose names appear in the list.

Vote 2012-35: Motion approved (unanimous; 32-0-0)

Motion: Recommend awarding degrees of Doctor of Medicine, with distinction, to the eight FM graduates with the letter D appearing before their names

Vote 2012-36: Motion approved (unanimous; 32-0-0)

3. Proposal from the Board of Graduate Studies for changing the name of the M.Sc. in Human Resource Management to M.A. in Human Resource Management.

Dr. Safieddine (chair, BGS) introduced this agenda item, indicating that, during the Senate meeting of May 27, 2011, the Senate approved establishing a "Master of Science" degree in Human Resource Management at OSB. This same approved proposal was then sent to the New York State Department of Education. The latter, in their letter of approval of this graduate proposal, noted their approval of the proposal as "Master of Arts" in Human Resource

Management (instead of M.Sc.). The document which is a letter from the New York State Department of Education indicating their approval is attached. The Senate is now being asked to change the name of this program (to M.A., instead of M.Sc.) in order to be aligned with its registration in New York.

A brief discussion followed. Questions such as: are similar programs in other universities normally considered as M.Sc. or as M.A., was the AUB program designed specifically as an M.Sc. program, and what exactly is the difference between M.A. and M.Sc. degree in Human Resource Management? Both Drs. Safieddine and Jamali responded to these questions, emphasizing that there are no major differences between considering the degree as M.A. or M.Sc., that the degree as M.Sc. perhaps requires a thesis, that OSB might consider revisiting the issue and propose improvements in a few year's time, and that approvals by the New York State Department of Education for such graduate degrees usually take time. A motion was made and seconded:

Motion: Approve changing the name of the M.Sc. in Human Resource Management to M.A. in Human Resource Management

Vote 2012-37: Motion approved (unanimous; 32-0-0)

4. Electing the Senate Representative to the BOT's June meeting.

Dr. S. Sadek said that the Senate as a whole would appreciate a general meeting with members of the Board of Trustees during their visit in June. Provost Dallah agreed, indicating he would follow-up on this, but said the program of the BOT visit had not yet been set. The floor was open for nominations. Three senate members: Drs. M.A. Al-Alaoui, A. Al-Kutoubi, and D. Jamali, were nominated. Before the second round of election by secret ballots (to be held between Drs. M.A. Al-Alaoui and D. Jamali), the latter stated that she is withdrawing in favour of the more senior Dr. Al-Alaoui. Dr. Al-Alaoui was asked to prepare a statement.

5. Briefing from the Animal Welfare Committee regarding cats on campus.

V.P. Radulski, Chair of the Animal Welfare Committee, introduced this item, summarizing that there are about 250 cats on campus, that there have been a number of complaints about problems related to cats, but some steps have been taken, such as having cat-feeding in specific designated locations, moving feeding stations away from the Physics Department, allowing kittens for adoption, etc. A number of senators raised concerns regarding vaccination, the health of the cats, the possible spread of diseases, that some individuals in the neighborhood bring their cats and leave them on campus, etc. Dean M. Suidan responded to some of the concerns raised, mentioning that cats keep rats and snakes away, and that it nice to have them in the campus. On a question regarding the cost of feeding the cats, V.P. Radulski mentioned that the cost is about \$1,100 to \$1,200 per month. Dr. I. El-Hajj said that this is more than the cost of four scholarships for undergraduate students. Dr. Abdel-Rahman explained that cats are occasionally trapped overnight or over the weekend, and they generate bad smells and defecate inside the premises to the extent that some classes have had to be moved. V.P. Radulski responded that there is a certain chemical that will keep cats away from buildings and that it will soon be used. Dr. Saoud pointed out that AUB campus was designated as a bird sanctuary and that this is affected by the presence of a large number of cats.

6. Update on Plan B Memo Account.

V.P. Radulski summarized that the size of the AUB pension fund is about \$55 million which is being invested by the university in a dozen investment alternatives, and that there are about 550 persons who are members of the university's pension Plan B, with 39 persons in both Plan A and B. He said that the university is trying to achieve parity between Plans A and B. He added, out of the 550 persons in Plan B, 79 invest in the conservative option, 372 in the moderate option, 43 in the aggressive option, and 56 self-directed, and that by end of April 2012 the interest was about 6.7%. A brief discussion followed.

7. Update on the Neighborhood Initiative.

Dr. Cynthia Myntti (Project Leader, the AUB Neighborhood Initiative) gave a power point presentation on this agenda item. The AUB Neighborhood Initiative was launched formally in 2007, and encourages AUB faculty, staff and students to apply their expertise and passion to solving the problems of concern to our neighbors in Ras Beirut. Activities are supported by foundation grants. A central premise of the Neighborhood Initiative is that of mutual benefit: engagement with the neighborhood strengthens AUB's core academic mission and, at the same time, promotes positive urban changes. Current activities fall under three themes: (i) Urban Environment (examples: the Neighborhood Congestion Studies; Greening the Neighborhood for green roofs and walls, rainwater catchment, and composting; and the design for Jeanne d'Arc Street as an accessible, pedestrian friendly model for Beirut); (ii) Community and Well-being (examples: the Ras Beirut Well-Being Survey; University for Seniors; Ras Beirut Leads which anticipates the smoking ban in restaurants next September); (iii) Protecting Ras Beirut Diversity (example: advocating for affordable housing in the neighborhood). On challenges, Dr. Myntti mentioned: (i) Making sure that all neighborhood voices are heard, (ii) Countering the public perception that AUB has bottomless financial resources, (iii) Encouraging forward motion despite the substantial conflicting time demands on faculty and students, and (iv) Making change happen in a complex political environment like Beirut. A lengthy discussion followed, during which Dr. Myntti responded to a number of questions and comments.

8. Update from the Housing Taskforce.

Provost Dallal introduced this item, acknowledging and thanking members of the housing taskforce on their efforts. He briefly described the main ideas and recommendations that were recently submitted by this taskforce. He mentioned that the rental subsidy this year was already increased from 40% to 60%. He added, the taskforce recommendations include: (a) Raising the ceiling of rental subsidy, and adjust subsidy percentages in relation to salary, (b) Restructure the current Housing Purchase Plan to extend it to 17 years instead of 13 years, and raise the related funds from \$50,000 up to a maximum of \$170,000USD, in addition to paying the full amount as a lump sum up-front, and (c) Build 50 new or additional rental units on or off campus. A number of questions and comments were made by various senators, including (i) could banks be approached to provide better rates for housing loans, and (ii) potential "donors of land" near campus among AUB alumni should be identified and approached. Some senators argued that these new recommendations are somewhat unfair to faculty members who joined AUB a few years ago and can thus not fairly benefit from the proposed plan. Provost Dallal emphasized that, as it stands, these are just recommendations that still need to be discussed at greater depth by a

larger taskforce and by various other bodies within the university, who may make significant revisions before submittal for consideration by the BOT.

9. *Other Business.*

No issues were raised under this agenda item.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45pm.

A. Abdel-Rahman, Secretary Pro Tem.