

American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
General Meeting of Friday 29 January 2010

Present: A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdul-Malak, G. Araj, A. Dallal, N. Dajani, J. DeJong, H. Diab, P. Dorman (chair), M. El-Sabban, L. Farhood, J. Ghafari, I. Hajj, K. Hindi, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, A. Jaffa (for M. Sayegh), M. Jurdi, Z. Kassaify, A. Kayssi, S. Kenney, R. Khauli, M. Kisirwani, S. Maamari, P. McGreevy, L. Musfy, G. Najjar, A. Nasri, S. Neaime, I. Nuwayhid, J. Radulski, M. Salameh, S. Seikaly, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, D. Wrisley, R. Zurayk.

Absent: A. Abdel-Rahman, S. Arnaout, H.Huijjer*, S. Jeffrey*, A. Jurjus*, N. Nassif, I. Osman, S. Sadek, M. Tabbal.

(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 8 January 2010 were approved unanimously as read.

2. *Proposal for a Masters program in Clinical Psychology.* The chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, K. Hindi, said that the proposal fell in line with strategic objectives to increase the number of professional programs in the university, and that it had been extensively reviewed by the BGS. He proposed a motion which was seconded that **the senate approve the proposal for a Masters program in Clinical Psychology**. There was a long discussion on the extent of the faculty of medicine's involvement with the program. N. Dajani, as chair of the department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, said that the program although within SBHS would have help from the FM. A. Abdelnoor pointed out that at the BGS's review of the proposal in July 2009 it had been recommended that the program be inter-faculty, but that at its subsequent review in December 2010, membership of the board having meanwhile changed, the proposal was approved as a program within FAS. A. Jaffa said that Dean Sayegh supported the proposal but had some reservations particularly over the training of preceptors, since only one of the three clinical sites was accredited, namely AUH; and he regretted the failure to iron out difficulties before the proposal was brought to the senate. N. Dajani said that that the program was intended for psychology students in SBHS and that clinical psychology was not the same as psychiatry. Provost Dallal said that the opinion of the majority of members of the BGS was that the program was intellectually viable as proposed. In answer to a question put by Dean Nuwayhid, K. Hindi said that the BGS considered that inter-disciplinarity was desirable but not essential. In answer to a call by Dean Hwalla for a prior market study of the program's feasibility and a budgetary plan, Provost Dallal said that the proposal contained agreements from the three clinical sites and that it was not necessary to go into detailed economic feasibility. In answer to a question from S. Seikaly whether the program contained a specifically medical component, N. Dajani said that students would become familiar with psychopharmacology but would not themselves administer drugs. He added as a matter for record that SBHS was willing to meet and cooperate fully with the faculty of medicine in order to ensure proper implementation of the program. After further discussion the question was called.

Vote 2010-06: the motion was carried (For 22, voting members present 29).

3. *Report on the university contribution to Plans A and B.* VP Radulski cited a report on Retirement Plans A and B that had been commissioned by the university from Watson Wyatt in November 2005, which he said would be distributed to senators after the meeting. According to the report, for an average salary of \$80,000 at retirement after 30 years' service with an estimated further 20 years before death, Plan B was better than Plan A: under Plan B a person would get 68% of his salary per year, or \$54,400, while under Plan A he or she would get 72%, or \$57,600, but with taxes of 20% this would be reduced to \$46,080 per year. He added that there were no

Lebanese income taxes on Plan B payments but that there were U.S. income taxes on both the Plan A payment and the U.S. social security payment. There was general disbelief that a professor's pension fund could amount after forty years to over one million dollars at retirement from AUB, as implied by the report. K. Hindi said that such figures diverted attention from the central issue of how contributions were invested, for whereas previously both capital and consolidated gains were guaranteed, under the present scheme both were subject to market fluctuations. From AUB's point of view this might be advantageous, but from a recipient's point of view disadvantageous, for example if he or she retired in a year of general financial loss. VP Kenney said that he and VP Radulski were looking into the possibility of adding a conservative investment portfolio for the university's contribution or memorandum account. A. Abdul-Malak had two questions, firstly what the law said about a fund that was, in his opinion, only deemed to have been invested, no money transaction actually having occurred since the university's contribution was essentially an IOU; and secondly, how the move from Merrill-Lynch had been made. VP Kenney said that the matter was not simple and the administration was investigating alternative options. In answer to a question from G. Araj whether the move was reversible, VP Radulski said that under U.S. law, the university had a legal obligation to provide for its employees' retirement. F. Sleiman reminded the senate that the issue on the agenda concerned a comparison between Plans A and B, and that according to a vote in the senate at its meeting on 8 January 2010 [vote 2010-05] an ad-hoc committee would report to the senate within one month on these issues. In reply to a question from S. Isber, VP Radulski said that the university was investigating how to help faculty members buy an annuity plan on retirement.

4. *Faculty ID cards.* The chair of the Senate Steering Committee, F. Sleiman, circulated a model of a new ID card saying that the item had been brought up under Other Business in the previous meeting of the senate. He proposed a motion which was seconded, that **the senate approve the following changes in the ID card:**

1. Prefix "Dr." for both MDs and PhDs;
2. Add "MD" or "PhD" as a suffix following the name;
3. Remove "and Staff" from faculty IDs;
4. Remove "Faculty and " from staff IDs;
5. Keep "Faculty and Staff" on IDs for those having joint appointments.

There was discussion. Could an ID not include the professorial rank? How would the move be seen by members of staff? What were the cultural assumptions behind the proposal? Illustration was given of difficulties encountered in entering the USA and other countries without proof of being a university professor according to the ID. The question was called.

Vote 2010-07: the motion was defeated (For 13, voting members present 27)

5. *Promotion and length of contracts.* The time being now 3:53 p.m., President Dorman said that discussion would have to be limited to statements from Provost Dallal and himself, since they both had to leave at 4. Provost Dallal said that there were ongoing discussions of the issue in different venues throughout the university. He reiterated his view of the key components of the proposals:

1. Vigorous involvement of departments in the promotion process;
2. Better job security for faculty;
3. Importance of having an external component in review;
4. The names of two referees would be worked out in consultation with the candidate, department, dean and provost;
5. A candidate's full career would be considered.

The proposals were thus, he said, both a way of empowering faculty and a first stage in the reintroduction of tenure. The interim process of granting longer-term contracts to full professors would entail the assembly of information on the basis of which a case might be made for tenure. He added that much of what was being suggested was not new, since it was already within the power of a dean to request external review at reappointment. He ended by reaffirming his commitment to reintroducing tenure on the basis of the dossiers compiled at reappointment. In answer to a question from G. Araj that the mood across the campus was strongly against

measures applied to the whole faculty if what was needed was to target specific individuals, Provost Dallal said that the purpose of the proposals was not to clean out faculty but to provide a more substantial and transparent process. President Dorman said he stood by everything the Provost had said, and that he himself was committed to reintroducing tenure. He added that it was a big issue, he did not know of any university that was trying to reintroduce tenure after such a long period of lapse, but that it was important to move ahead because tenure was a way of assuring the quality of faculty.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

R. Smith, secretary