

**American University of Beirut**  
**Minutes of the University Senate**  
**General Meeting of Friday 26 March 2010**

Present: A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, G. Araj, S. Arnaout, A. Dallal, N. Dajani, J. DeJong, P. Dorman (chair), L. Farhood, J. Ghafari, I. Hajj, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, M. Jurdi, A. Jurjus, A. Kayssi, S. Kenney, R. Khauli, P. McGreevy, L. Musfy, G. Najjar, A. Nasri, N. Nassif, S. Neaime, I. Nuwayhid, J. Radulski, M. Salameh, S. Seikaly, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, M. Tabbal, R. Zurayk.

Absent: L. Choueiri\*, H. Diab, M. El-Sabban\*, K. Hindi, H.Huijer\*, S. Jeffrey\*, Z. Kassaify\*, M. Kisirwani, S. Maamari\*, I. Osman, S. Sadek, M. Sayegh.

(\* = 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 5 March 2010 were approved unanimously as corrected.

2. *Observing a minute's silence to honour former colleagues Professor Emeritus Muhammad Yusuf Najm and Professor Emeritus Fuad Hanna Tarazi.* On behalf of the Department of Arabic and Near Eastern Languages, Dean McGreevy read out memorials to honour Professors Emeriti Muhammad Yusuf Najm and Fuad Hanna Tarazi. The house stood for a minute's silence. Testimonies drafted in their honour are attached to these minutes as Appendix I and will be forwarded to their families.

3. *Reappointment/renewal procedure for full professors (continued from 5 March 2010).* S. Isber withdrew his motion of 5 March. A. Kayssi moved **to propose recommendation by the senate of the document "Renewal Process for Full Professors" circulated to senators on 24 March 2010.** The motion was seconded by F. Sleiman with a proposed editorial amendment to the penultimate line of the first section, eliminating the phrase "or a shorter three-year contract". Introducing the document A. Kayssi read the following statement.

The proposal is an attempt at bridging the gap between the initial proposition to require a promotion-type review before reappointment of full professors, and the long-standing faculty demand for awarding tenure to all full professors. The procedure described in the document that was distributed by email to all Senate members provides what is hoped to be a reasonable compromise, and as such it does not fully satisfy the wishes of all parties, but builds on the common goals and the good intentions, while avoiding what seemed at times to be a collapse into a lose-lose situation. The procedure is in line with the Statement of Policy with Regard to Academic Appointment and Tenure (March 2010 revision), and is also in line with what the President and the Provost stated as their objectives on several occasions, in this Senate and elsewhere, that "we strongly believe that seven-year contracts should be the norm for full professors already in rank".

The proposed procedure defines two paths. The first path is a streamlined process for the usual case, and covers *all but the most exceptional cases* of contract renewal. The process along this path is not much different from what we have today, with the following differences: 1- the duration of the contract is seven years, instead of three; and 2- the Provost makes the recommendation to the President (instead of the Dean recommending directly to the President). The second path is for unusual cases. These are rare, exceptional cases where the renewal may be for three years only. In such cases: 1- the departments and/or advisory committees may vote to recommend a three-year contract; 2- the Provost, if not convinced of a seven-year renewal recommendation, consults with the Board of Deans; and 3- external letters may be solicited.

Various points were raised in discussion: Would a dean no longer have the power to call for external review? Was the proposed procedure transparent? Who would decide what a weak case was, and on what basis? Should a CV be accompanied by statements of research, service or teaching philosophy? Provost Dallal said that if a professor applying for contract

renewal/reappointment chose not to provide names of referees along with his or her CV, it weakened the case for not providing statements. President Dorman said that he and the provost had been at extreme pains to make a distinction between procedure at promotion of assistant or associate professors and procedure at reappointment of full professors. He added that in matters of university policy the senate acted in an advisory capacity, but that he and the provost would take the senate's concerns into consideration. To clarify transitional procedures proposed for the reappointment of full professors, he read out the following statement.

It is my conviction that the assessment and improvement of educational excellence at this university is best accomplished with the engaged commitment of its faculty. For that reason, the revised promotion policies and procedures, which have been approved by the Board of Trustees, entail the more active deliberation of departments in questions of promotion, as well as a more transparent process of evaluation at separate levels of the university administration. For that same reason, the transitional procedures proposed for the reappointment of full professors to longer-term contracts invite their more active participation in articulating their own intellectual priorities and directions, giving direct voice to those of you in our community who define the breadth and depth of both our current research and future directions. Self-reflection is always more powerful than the sort provided by external referees. Without such reflection – and critically at times of reappointment – our capacity to discern the way ahead is materially impeded.

There was further discussion concerning proposed procedure in exceptional cases not immediately recommended for a seven-year contract (item 7 of the proposed document). An editorial amendment to the document was proposed by S. Seikaly and adopted, substituting the word “understanding” for “vision” in item 2 of the section on procedure. On a question from A. Abdel-Rahman, the President said that in exceptional cases where external references would be sought the applicant would not be asked to submit examples of their writings or publications. When the question was called, President Dorman used his prerogative to ask for a secret ballot.

**Vote 2010-11: the motion was carried (For 20, Against 7).** See Appendix II for the approved document as amended.

4. *Voting of degrees, February 2010 graduates.* The Senate voted unanimously to grant degrees to the October 2010 graduates as listed by the Registrar's Office and presented serially by the respective Deans (**vote 2010-12**).

5. *IRB fees.* Provost Dallal said that he had no particular statement to make regarding IRB fees but would be happy to listen to suggestions. Dean Hwalla said that many complaints had been received regarding the proposed charges and this had the effect of discouraging research proposals. Dean Najjar feared that MBA projects might be delayed pending IRB approval. Dean Nuwayhid said that the process of seeking IRB approval was cumbersome leading to delay in implementing research. He added that the university somehow had to absorb the cost of IRB fees without burdening faculty members. R. Khauli questioned the IRB definition of human research by pointing out that retrospective analysis of data already tabulated concerning human subjects fell under the IRB's rubric of human research. To the latter point Provost Dallal said that such retrospective analysis might well be exempted from fees but still needed to be discussed. The chair of the URB senate committee, M. Tabbal, asked that the IRB clarify what fees would be required in the current academic year because IRB fees cannot be allowed on URB grants. R. Zurayk said that he understood that the IRB had agreed to waive fees for research by students this year. N. Dajani said that fees were only required for research funded by industry or large corporations. M. Jurdi said that even exemptions had to pay a \$100 fee, and she added that faculty time was being taken in applying for IRB approval. F. Sleiman, as chair of the Senate Steering Committee, proposed that the chair of the IRB be invited to discuss the issue of IRB fees in the senate at its next meeting.

6. *Update on Plan A/Plan B.* VP Radulski said that, following the senate meeting of 29 January, a small committee had been formed which included a financial expert from OSB; it had met twice and it would issue a report before the next senate meeting on 30 April. As of 1st April there would be a facility for participants in Plan B to take out loans from their employee account

in special cases. He added that in the first quarter of 2010 the memorandum account had yielded between 3 and 4 percent growth, implying an annual yield of ten or eleven per cent.

*7. Other business. (a) Report on the March Retreat of the Board of Trustees.* At the request of F. Sleiman, chair of the Senate Steering Committee, President Dorman gave a brief account of his recent meetings with the BoT. He said that the board had met not in committees but for 1½ days in retreat as an exercise in self-examination. Issues of strategy and conceptualization were discussed concerning the university's vision and how to promulgate its essential values. He reported that the board would like greater personal interaction between trustees visiting the AUB campus and the faculty and student body. Questions of good governance had again been raised. The upcoming campaign would have a major role in pushing strategic goals. Two major presentations had been given. The first by VP Kenney on the structure of student tuition envisaged a new system of student aid and of helping students to obtain loans at a low rate of interest. The second by Dean Sayegh concerned the expansion of the medical centre and curricular changes in the faculty of medicine. On a question from A. Abdel-Rahman, VP Kenney said that a summary of the new budget would be circulated in the near future and would be for nine months since the academic year would be changing in 2011.

*(b) Promotion policy.* On a question from F. Sleiman concerning the university's statement of policy on promotion, President Dorman said policy had always to be reviewed and that points for clarification should be raised individually with the provost, following which there could be a general meeting to discuss the various issues raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

R. Smith, secretary

Attachments:

Appendix I, Memorial notices for Professors Emeriti Muhammad Yusuf Najm and Fuad Hanna Tarazi (Professor Emeriti Najm and Tarazi.docx)  
Appendix II, "Renewal Process for Full Professors" (renewal.doc)