

American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday 26 November 2010

Present: A. Abdel-Rahman, M.A. Al-Alaoui, G. Araj, S. Atweh (for M. Sayegh), S. Chahine (by invitation), A. Dallal, J. DeJong, H. Diab, P. Dorman (chairing), J. Ghafari, H. Huijjer, N. Hwalla, S. Isber, A. Jaffa (for M. Sayegh), D. Jamali, M. Jurdi, A. Kayssi, P. McGreevy, F. Moukalled, G. Najjar, W. Nasr, T. Nizameddin, I. Nuwayhid, I. Osman, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, M. Salameh, S. Seikaly, B. Shayya, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, M. Tabbal, S. Talhouk, D. Wickens, D. Wrisley.

Absent: A. Abdelnoor*, J. Andresen*, S. Arnaout, R. Brow, L. Choueiri*, M. El-Sabban*, L. Farhood*, S. Jeffrey, A. Jurjus, Z. Kassaify*, S. Kenney, R. Khauli*, R. Khayat-Toubia, I. Lakkis, S. Maamari*. (* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of the regular meeting of the senate on 29 October 2010 were approved unanimously as read.
2. *Observing a minute of silence to honour former colleague Dr. Usama Khalidi.* On behalf of the Faculty of Medicine Associate Dean S. Atweh read out a memorial to honour Dr. Usama Khalidi. The house stood for a minute's silence. A testimony drafted in his honour is attached to these minutes as Appendix I and will be forwarded to his family.
3. *Voting of degrees, October 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 or their representatives (**vote 2011-02**).
4. *Report of the November meeting of the Board of Trustees.* President Dorman said that for the first time the meeting was concentrated over two days with several overlapping committee meetings. Plans for the upcoming campaign and for the new medical centre were ongoing. The provost reported to the Board on various initiatives in faculty governance. Two new trustees, Fawzi Melhem and Najat Zarour, were elected to replace two outgoing women trustees, Martha Joukowski and Leila Sharaf. The new strategic plan and a formal mission statement were approved, both important for moving into the development plan. The appointment of the new Dean of Student Affairs, Talal Nizameddin, was approved whom the President also congratulated on the conduct of the recent student elections. On a question from F. Sleiman, the President said that a decision had not yet been taken concerning maintaining investment of the memo account beyond retirement.
5. *Proposed university calendar, 2011-12.* The registrar presented the proposed calendar for 2011-12, pointing out the numbers of working days and of holidays in a total of exactly 272 days between 26 September 2011, the first day of the Fall semester, and 23 June 2012, the day of commencement. D. Wrisley requested that the calendar mark the variable lunar holidays. On a question from M. Tabbal the President said that changing to an earlier start to the academic year was a complex process that would take time; during the present year the fiscal year was being shifted, itself a major change. A motion was proposed and seconded to **approve the proposed university calendar 2011-12**.

Vote 2011-03: the motion was approved unanimously.

6. *Forming a committee to look into promotion procedures.* The chairperson of the Senate Steering Committee, A. Abdel-Rahman, reminded senators that this was one of the issues proposed at the meeting on 29 October for discussion during the course of the year. He gave examples of matters that might require discussion by a committee: implications of the new

procedures on the criteria for promotion; the selection of referees; and the number of times a candidate might apply for promotion to the rank of full professor. President Dorman wondered if such matters might not be clarified through deans and the provost without the formation of a special committee. Provost Dallal said that the normal procedure allowed for clarification by deans, and a review of the whole process was made at the end by Due Process Monitors and the Board of Deans. F. Sleiman said that the senate would be neglecting its legislative function if it allowed the new promotion procedures to be implemented without due consideration by the senate. President Dorman reminded senators that the new promotion procedures had been discussed in several meetings in different faculties as well as in the senate. S. Sadek said that the problem of criteria for promotion was still uncertain, particularly in evaluation of teaching and service. Dean Nuwayhid cautioned over returning to a quantitative set of rigid criteria. Provost Dallal said that teaching portfolios were no longer required and there were many ways to assess teaching that were currently being debated in American universities. After further discussion a motion was proposed **to form a committee to look into promotion issues and procedures.**

Vote 2011-04: the motion was defeated (3-13).

7. Report of the Pension Plan Working Group. S. Chahine, the financial expert of OSB consulted by the PPWG, presented the group's report of 26 November by Power Point. The group had been formed as a result of a senate motion in January 2010. The objective of the report (p. 3) was to make recommendations regarding (a) recent changes relating to the Memorandum account of Plan B, (b) the gap between Plans A and B, and (c) governance issues concerning retirement investment management. Its recommendations were accordingly in three parts. Firstly (p. 8), AUB should return to the system implemented prior to January 2010. Secondly (p. 18), if AUB is unable to achieve equity between Plans A and B through an 'at retirement' revenue based scheme, the university might need to consider an alternative option using a cost based scheme, which in turn would suggest adding 3.7% to Plan B participants and finding ways to facilitate additional saving by Plan B participants. Thirdly, a set of four recommendations were made regarding governance (pp. 23-4): Employee Benefits Committee (EBC) should include full faculty representation and should have faculty finance experts; both the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA) and EBC should be consulted in all matters pertaining to financial faculty benefits; the university should have an advisory office to advise faculty members on retirement and investment options; and it would be advisable to have special training session for faculty members related to basics in portfolio management and financial markets.

After the Power Point presentation, R. Smith observed that a major difference between Plans A and B was the absence of medical insurance after retirement from AUB for members of Plan B living outside Lebanon, and he added that for those nearing retirement an essential need was how to manage retirement with the funds available. I. Osman proposed a motion that was seconded **to endorse the report with all its recommendations and to invite its serious consideration by the Compensation Committee of the Board of Trustees.** Questions of clarification were raised and answered. N. Hwalla asked if the rate of taxation and social security in the USA had been taken into account in the report. J. Ghafari requested clarification regarding the transfer of benefits to a beneficiary's dependants. On a question from D. Jamali, VP Radulski said that there was more choice for an employee's account (some ten options) than for the memorandum account (only two). W. Nasr asked how to measure the benefit of Plan A regarding medical coverage and social security if a beneficiary did not reside in the USA. On a question from the President, VP Radulski said that a major difficulty for returning to the system obtaining in December 2009 was that 46 members (out of a total of 540 participants in Plan B) now belonged to both Plans A and B, and deferred payment would create US tax issues for them. President Dorman said that it was not feasible for the university to advise faculty members on how to invest their retirement funds, but that the university has a responsibility to outline available investment options. On a question from F. Sleiman, the president agreed to look into extending the period for choosing the options offered for the Memorandum Account beyond the end of December 2010. J. DeJong said that faculty members needed to be more fully informed of the implications of the changes, which seemed to her not well understood. S. Seikaly said that, the PPWG having confirmed that the Memorandum Account had yielded an average of 6.2 per cent per annum over

the last ten years, the university should return to the system obtaining in December 2009. He proposed a **substitute motion**, which was seconded, that **the senate adopt the first recommendation of the Report (p. 8) that AUB return to the system implemented prior to January 2010**. VP Radulski said that the return on the Memorandum Account from January to the end of October 2010 was in fact 6.4%.

Vote 2011-05: the motion was approved (15-1).

The original motion was then called for question.

Vote 2011-06: the motion was approved unanimously.

8. *Other business.* There was none.

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

R. Smith, secretary