

American University of Beirut
Final Minutes of the University Senate
Meeting of Friday, September 28, 2018

Present: H. Abou Araj, A. Abu-Alfa, E. Al-Chaer, I. Baalbaki, M. Bariche (by invitation), T. Bazi, J. Chaaban, A. Chalak, L. Daouk, R. Chedid (by invitation), Z. Dawi (by invitation), H. Diab, N. Dumit, S. El Fakhani, W. El-Hajj, H. El Rassy, N. El-Cheikh, M. Farah, C. Fugate, N. Ghanem, M. Harajli, A. Harutyunyan, S. Harvey, E. Hitti, H. Huijer, S. Isber, M. Jurdi , K. Kabalan, S. Kanj-Sharara, F. Khuri, N. Melhem, R. Mohtar, H. Muller, T. Nizameddin, J. Norton, I. Nuwayhid, B. Orfali (by invitation), G. Saad, S. Sadek, N. Saliba, N. Salti (by invitation), M. Sayegh, K. Shaaban (by invitation), E. Shammas, A. Shihadeh, F. Talih

Absent: M. Abiad, R. Sharara*

(* = regrets notified before meeting)

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

1) Obituaries for Dr. Selwa Makarem and Mr. Amin David Kourani

Dr. Huda Huijer read an obituary for Dr. Selwa Makarem (**see appendix I**) and Dean Nadia El Cheikh read an obituary for Mr. Amin David Kourani (**see appendix II**). Moments of silence were observed after each.

2) Welcoming new Senate members

The president welcomed eleven new Senators: Assistant Prof. Joshua Norton, Associate Prof. Courtney Fugate, Associate Prof. Houssam El Rassy, Assistant Professor May Farah, Professor Najat Saliba, Professor Samih Isber, Associate Prof. Noel Ghanem, Assistant Professor Farid Talih, Associate Professor Toni Bazi, Associate Prof. George Saad, and Professor Karim Kabalan.

3) Approval of the minutes of May 24 and June 6, 2018

The minutes of May 24 and June 6, 2018 were approved as circulated.

4) Annual reports of Senate committees and boards. 2017-18

Following a new procedure introduced to make the meeting more efficient, the written reports of the Senate committees and boards were distributed to all Senators for their review prior to the meeting and the chairs were invited to attend this meeting to answer any questions Senators might have. Those committees and boards are: Senate Admissions Committee, Board of Graduate Studies, University Disciplinary Committee, Library Committee, University Publications Committee, University Research Board, University Committee on Student Affairs, Academic Development Committee, Senate Steering Committee, and the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs. A Senator requested from the University Research Board (URB) Chair to revisit the URB rule that bans using URB funds from covering the open access publication fees of selected Journals. In turn, the URB Chair indicated that this item will be discussed in the first URB meeting this year. No other questions were raised from Senators. Two Committee Chairs requested that their recommendations be acted on: The Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies recommended clarifying the mandates of every administrative body governing graduate studies, specifically, the faculty graduate studies committee, the graduate council, and the Board of Graduate Studies. The Chair of the University Publications Committee recommended revising the committee's bylaws to reflect the changes of the University's organizational structure. Other Committee Chairs referred to the recommendations included in the Annual Report for possible implementation.

5) Voting of degrees for summer 2018 graduates

Acting Registrar H. Abou Araj presented the list of degree candidates and statistics on their distribution (circulated list of expected graduates of summer 2018). Dean El Cheikh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAS. Vote 2018-01. The motion was approved unanimously.** EVP Sayegh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Medicine (FM). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FM. Vote 2018-02. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Shihadeh recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (MSFEA). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in MSFEA. Vote 2018-03. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Mohtar recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FAFS. Vote 2018-04. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Nuwayhid recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in FHS. **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in FHS. Vote 2018-05. The motion was approved unanimously.** Dean Harvey recommended awarding degrees to the indicated students in the Olayan School of Business (OSB). **A motion was made to award degrees to the candidates in OSB. Vote 2018-06. The motion was approved unanimously.**

A motion was then made to project the list of expected graduates and corresponding statistics rather than printing them out. During the discussion, a senator emphasized that the senators should receive the lists electronically before the Senate meeting. **Vote 2018-07. The motion was approved unanimously.**

6) Elections to the Senate Steering Committee (SSC) and the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs (SCFA)

The SSC has six elected members, one from each of AUB's six faculties. These six members serve one-year terms, so elections need to be held annually. The other two voting members of the SSC are the Secretary of the Senate and an at-large member, traditionally appointed by the president. The provost serves on the SSC as an ex-officio member. There were no elections, as only one candidate stood for each position. The representatives chosen are: Professor Samih Isber will represent FAS, Professor Elie Al-Chaer will represent FM, Associate Professor Elie Shammass will represent MSFEA, Associate Professor Ali Chalak will represent FAFS, Associate Professor Nada Melhem will represent FHS, and Assistant Professor Lina Daouk-Oyry will represent OSB. The president appointed Associate Professor Nuhad Dumit of HSON as the at-large member of the SSC. The Senate Secretary is Associate Professor Wassim El-Hajj from FAS.

The SCFA also has one elected member from each of AUB's six faculties, and one Senate at-large member, but members of SCFA serve three-year terms. Four positions became vacant due to resignations and end-of-term: Associate Professor Wassim El-Hajj from FAS who resigned to serve as senate secretary, Professor Elie Al-Chaer from FM and Associate Professor Elie Shammass from MSFEA who resigned, and Associate Professor Ali Chalak from FAFS whose term has ended. The results of the elections are these: Associate Professor Anzhela Harutyunyan will represent FAS, Associate Professor Toni Bazi will represent FM, Professor Karim Kabalan will represent MSFEA, and Associate Professor Mohamad Abiad will represent FAFS. Again, no elections were contested. Continuing members are: Professor Mey Jurdi from FHS, Associate Professor Jad Chaaban from FAFS acting as at-large member, and Prof. Said El Fakhani from OSB.

7) Report on the BOT meetings of June and September 2018

During the Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings in June 2018, which constitute a meeting of the full BOT, the board voted to approve the new B.Sc. in Food Sciences and Technology, the new B.E. in Computer Science and Engineering, the proposed policies for evaluation of tenure and promotion for tenure-

eligible faculty members, the new undergraduate program in Health Communications, the graduate fellowship and assistantship policy, and approved granting the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing (HSON) an independent status making it the seventh faculty in AUB. The BOT also voted to award tenure to the first cohort of seventy-three faculty members, and approve the budget of this year.

During the BOT meetings on September 3-4 2018, which gathers some of the BOT's committees, trustees met with AUB constituents including faculty, students, and staff in several informal settings. They inaugurated the new Munib and Angela Masri Building during a symposium that was held for that purpose, they launched the Investment Management Program at OSB, and discussed the vision for health sciences.

8) Report on Round 1 of the Tenure Process and pending tenure-related policies

The provost presented the status of the tenure related policies. The completed and approved policies are: (1) Tenure Procedure for 2017-18, (2) Academic Appointment, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Policy, (3) Policy and Procedures for Tenure and Promotion Evaluation of Tenure-Eligible where the Teaching Portfolio Guidelines will be presented for approval later this semester, (4) Policy and Procedures for Termination of Tenure Appointment. Some senators asked about the status of the recommended changes requested by the Senate on the Procedures for Termination of Tenure Appointment. The provost indicated that some of the recommended changes were approved by the Lawyers, while others were not. The provost will provide an update on this issue later this semester. The policies that are in progress or being initiated include: (1) Tenure Letter of Appointment, (2) Tenure and Promotion Grievance Policy, (3) Faculty Workload Policy, (4) Pre-Tenure and Post-Tenure Review Policy, and (5) Faculty Retirement Incentive Plan.

The provost also presented a summary of the tenure recommendations of 2018, which includes the success rate in each faculty. Success rates are as follows: 69% in FAS, 77% in FM, 47% in MSFEA, 63% in FAFS, 100% in FHS, 100% in OSB, and 50% in HSON. In total 106 full professors applied for tenure and 73 were awarded. A senator asked if there is an explanation for the low success rate in MSFEA; the provost indicated that the actual success rate in MSFEA is in reality higher but he cannot comment more to preserve the confidentiality of the process. Another senator congratulated the faculty members who were awarded tenure and requested to make the UPTC members public. The president indicated that the UPTC members of 2018 explicitly requested that their names remain confidential. He added, that in principle, keeping the names confidential spares the members any external influence and preserves the objectivity of the decision making process. As for UPTC members of 2019, some of them will be known given the composition of the UPTC this time around, but all UPTC members will be committed to confidentiality as part of the process. A Senator also alerted the administration from appointing to the UPTC members with previously confirmed scientific misconduct, or members who were previously investigated for scientific misconduct and as a result had to retract papers. A distinction was made between misconduct and retraction.

9) Suggested Tenure Policy Change as presented in the document on “Promotion and Tenure Guidelines during Transition Phase for In-Post Tenure-Eligible Faculty Members who Joined AUB before AY 2017-18”

The provost started by presenting the suggested change in the policy, which mainly states *“In-post full professors who apply for tenure for the first time before September 2022 and whose application is unsuccessful are eligible to reapply only once by September 2022 (inclusive). In-post full professors who apply for tenure for the first time in or after September 2022 will not be eligible to reapply if their tenure application is unsuccessful.”*, **as opposed to** *“Non-tenured full professors may reapply for tenure as many times as they wish, so long as at least three years have passed since the previous decision.”*

The president presented the rationale behind this change. Out of 20 surveyed universities, none grant tenure on the third attempt. The norm is one attempt and in special cases two attempts. The success rate of having tenure granted to a faculty member decreases after every application. In effect, there is no third application for tenure. The president added that the idea of a faculty member applying infinite number of times for tenure does not exist in any institution. Dean Shihadeh supported the argument by adding that the dean will not put someone forward for tenure for a third time given the negative consequences on the faculty member if not granted tenure, so in reality there is no more than two times; hence, let faculty members use them whenever they want. The president indicated that some of the faculty members who were denied tenure feel very strongly about re-applying to tenure right away, especially that this time around the Deans are heavily involved in the process and know their own faculty members more than anyone else. The president closed by mentioning that no vote will be imposed on this change and it is to be discussed.

A senator asked whether feedback is being given to non-tenured faculty members whose tenure was denied. The president confirmed that verbal feedback is given. Another senator said that in one year the faculty profile will not change much and allowing a non-tenured faculty member to reapply after one year hints to some issues in the tenure process. Another senator added that if the president believes that some non-tenured faculty member should have been tenured and consequently can reapply immediately, a motion should be made to grant them the ability to apply for tenure without changing the policy. The president strongly objected to this suggestion, indicating that his role is to protect the policy and processes, and not break them. A senator said that any change in the policy before it becomes stable will only add to the anxiety that comes with the tenure process. A senator from FAFS said that if this change is implemented it will be unfair to full professors who applied already and those who will be applying later. He also indicated that 20 FAFS faculty members signed the following statement opposing the suggested changes:

The undersigned faculty members received with grave concern the proposed changes to the tenure policies and procedures as placed on the agenda of the Senate meeting of September 28, 2018. The proposed changes strip a large group of faculty members of their right to apply for tenure in accordance with the agreed-upon tenure policies and procedures, which were reached after a long and tedious process extending over three administrations.

Given the general direction of some senators, the president requested from all members of the senate to refrain from personal attacks and insinuations of ill-intent during senate discussions. The president confirmed that the changes were suggested with all the good intentions. The president and the provost then suggested to table this tenure update until further notice.

10) Update on e-Voting System at the faculty of medicine

Dr. Ghazi Zaatari gave a presentation on Electronic Voting Using Single Transferable Voting System (E-STV) which is the system being suggested to be used in the Faculty of Medicine for voting. He noted that the current AUB electoral system requires: A physical quorum of voters in one specified location, Majority vote (50% +1) to win, and in the case of no majority the elections will be repeated until a majority is achieved. However, this mechanism does not work in FM due to the large number of faculty members (370) which makes it impossible to achieve majority vote in most cases, especially when more than two candidates are running for the same position. The suggested E-STV system needs no physical presence, faculty may vote anytime during the set voting cycle, it ensures larger participation and minimal errors, faculty members vote only once on a ballot of one election round eliminating the need for repeated voting, and voter's identity remains anonymous at all times. Dr. Zaatari added that names of candidates are posted in random order and voters can decide on their preferences. Hence, E-voting system's security is protected through AUB IT system. Dr. Zaatari closed by discussing the principles of the voting which follows the well known Droop and showing a sample video on the Scottish council elections that uses the same suggested voting principles.

A senator asked whether there is a way where candidates can post some information about themselves, and the answer was yes. Another senator asked whether the system will be used only for committee elections or for any type of elections. Dr. Zaatari answered that it can be used for any type of elections and if discussions are needed, the discussions will happen before the elections are open. A senator asked whether the system differentiates between voting on policy changes which normally requires two-thirds of the votes as opposed to the simple majority or Droop quota. Dr. Zaatari replied that the threshold can be updated depending on the elections taking place. Other senators indicated that care should be taken when using the system as it contradicts with our traditional voting system that follows Robert's rule. **The proposal was not put to vote, since the proposal document was not sent ahead of time to the Senate and consequently cannot be voted on.**

11) Other Business

The provost presented the composition of UPTC for 2018-19 tenure process. The UPTC will be composed of 17 internal members:

- 11 members nominated by Deans in consultation with their FACs, approved by the provost and the president as follows: 3 FAS, 2 FEA, 2 FM, 1 FAFS, 1 FHS, 1 OSB, 1 HSON,
- 6 members: 2 elected by the Senate and 4 appointed by the president, 1 member from each of the faculties w/o HSON.

The final distribution is: 4 FAS, 3 FEA, 3 FM, 2 FAFS, 2 FHS, 2 OSB, 1 HSON. The provost and the president will appoint external members, beyond the 17 members; the exact number to be announced later. The provost asked the senators to collect nominations from their faculties. A senate meeting on October 12 will be tentatively scheduled to vote for two tenured faculty members to serve on the UPTC, such that they come from different faculties. The provost will send the list of tenured faculty members to the senators.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

(Minutes recorded by W. El-Hajj, Secretary of the Senate)

Appendix 1: Obituary for Dr. Selwa Makarem



Obituary Selwa
Makarem.docx

Appendix 2: Obituary for Mr. Amin David Kourani



Obituary Amin
Kourani.docx