

**American University of Beirut  
Minutes of the University Senate  
Regular Meeting of Friday 25 January 2008**

Present: A. Abdelnoor, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, H. Abu Khuzam, G. Araj, N. Cortas, N. Darwiche, M. Darwish, R. Dean, L. Farhood, I. Hajj, P. Heath, K. Hindi, N. Hwalla, S. Kenney, M. Khawaja, M. Kisirwani, L. Musfy, G. Najjar, N. Nassif, M. Nimah, O. Obeid, I. Osman, J. Radulski, S. Sadek (substituting A. Al-Alaoui), H. Sader (on behalf of K. Bitar), S. Seikaly, F. Sleiman, J. Waterbury (chairing), H. Zurayk.

Absent: A. Al-Kutoubi, K. Bitar\*, J. Dargham, H. Diab, M. El-Sabban\*, R. Haddad, H. Huijjer\*, S. Jeffrey, M. Jurdi\*, R. Khauli, A. Lyzzaik, S. Maamari\*, M. Obeid, M. Salameh\*, B. Shayya, , R. Smith\*.  
(\* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 4 January 2008 were approved. The chairperson of the SCFA, I. Osman, requested that the administration briefs the senate regularly on actions taken on issues arising from previous senate meetings.

2. *Discussion of Tenure Proposal.* The President indicated that his primary concern is enhancing the quality of the faculty and that he will be in support of what is in the best interest of the university. He explained that members of the Taskforce on Tenure (appointed in October 2006) thought long and hard about almost every issue and that the senate should take this into consideration during deliberation.

A long discussion followed, during which a number of senators raised some major concerns. On procedural matters, a senator asked if the report was discussed at the various faculties as was the case in Engineering. Deans and Associate Dean of FAS stated that faculty members held town meetings to discuss the issue, but there was no formal faculty meetings held for this purpose at any faculty. The President answered a question concerning the role of the BOD in the tenure issue that the Deans discussed this issue during two sessions of the BOD deliberations. Provost Heath added that Deans can express their opinions, but there is no rationale for a formal vote at the BOD on this matter. A senator said that there are two major procedural irregularities: (i) He questioned the formation of the tenure taskforce by appointment and without the involvement of the Senate faculty affairs committee or the Senate steering committee; and (ii) He questioned its make-up of 12 assistant and associate professors but with only 6 full professors, especially that the assistant and associate professors are not involved in promotion committees at the faculty level. He added, the faculty at large should have had a say in this report during its making. The chair of the taskforce, K. Hindi, said that on issues concerning full professors, it was mainly the full professors who gave their opinion. Provost Heath pointed out that the President has the right to appoint the tenure taskforce, and that there are no rules concerning appointment of such a tenure committee.

A number of senators suggested the election of a committee from the senate to study the report of the taskforce and present their recommendation for discussion at the senate within a two week period. A senator proposed the following motion which was seconded; **The Senate elects a committee from its members, chaired by the senate steering committee chair and including one member representing each faculty, along with the chair of the taskforce, K. Hindi, to study the report of the taskforce on tenure and report back to the senate in two weeks.** A brief discussion followed during which a couple of senators said that since most issues were thoroughly considered by the taskforce, being discussed here at some length, and most points are accepted in principle, there is no need to elect another committee, but the senate should continue their discussion now on this matter. The question was called.

**Vote 2008-09: The motion was defeated (For 5, Against 11, voting members present 28).**

A number of senators found the issue of tenure review for full professors who are in post (the issue of transition; page 5, section IV.1.c) to be completely unacceptable and reflects lack of confidence in the existing AUB system, asking why insisting in further reviewing full professors after they have already gone through two vigorous cycles of promotions at AUB. They added that the idea of further review of current professors is not at all acceptable, explaining that by being promoted twice to reach the rank of full professor they consider themselves having been denied tenure twice, that they should be looked at as core members of AUB and should be given automatic tenure. They suggested that section IV.1.c in page 5 of the report be deleted or rewritten based on the ideas presented here. A senator proposed the following motion which was seconded: **The Senate rejects the recommendation of the taskforce concerning full professors who are in post and asks that section IV.1.c be deleted.** The President explained that the taskforce report is presented to the President, so the senate can discuss it but not delete sections from it. He also noted that he was not bringing the TF report for formal action by the Senate but rather for discussion only. After further discussion the **motion was withdrawn.**

A number of other points concerning section IV.1.c were brought up by various senate members. A senator said that section IV.1.c of the report is very serious and dangerous to full professors; he compared the status of similar colleagues who opted not to return to Lebanon and are now serving in international universities abroad, and inquired, would it be fair that non-tenured full professors be asked to review and make recommendations on tenure cases for junior assistant or associate professors. Another compared a promotion of an assistant professor to tenure after 7 or 8 years, to the case of the current full professors who have gone through two cycles of promotions over a longer period of time at AUB and who would still need to yet again apply for promotion to tenure. A senator indicated that this issue could represent a form of discrimination against full professors and could open the door for legal action. A senator said that if the frozen tenure is to be revived, AUB should apply equitable treatment to various members of the faculty.

One senate member stated that while AUB successfully marketed its Ph.D program because it has good full professors on board, now the credentials of those same professors will be called into question, suggesting that automatic tenure be granted to all full professors who are in post. Another senator stated that if professors were good enough to pass two promotion cycles, then there should be no major problems in passing a tenure promotion review. He added, there are perhaps about 5% to 10% of existing full professors who might not be able to meet tenure requirements. A senator noted that the option of leaving full professors free to apply for tenure or not is quite reasonable as they may elect to continue under the current system as it does not take away from their current privileges. Some senators hinted that it is unlikely that the BOT would approve automatic tenure to all full professors, and that some sort of a review for tenure would be very reasonable. A senator brought up the issue of post-tenure review. Another senator argued that the point of revocation of tenure after being granted defeats the purpose. The President said that such post-tenure review would take away the major protective elements of tenure. At this point and after an hour of discussion, the President suggested that the senate continues the discussion on the taskforce report on tenure in the next senate meeting to be held next Friday February 1<sup>st</sup> for this purpose, and to move on to the next item on the agenda.

3. *OSB Bylaws Amendment.* The Dean of OSB, G. Najjar, explained at some length the need for amending OSB Bylaws concerning the right to attend, participate in, and vote in selected committees within the OSB. He proposed the following motion which was seconded: **The Senate approves the OSB proposal to grant non-professorial full-time faculty members, visiting professorial and non-professorial faculty members, and a select number of part-timers chosen according to announced criteria the right to attend, participate in, and vote in selected committees. These committees do not include any committee that makes personnel decisions, the admission committee, or the administrative committee. It is understood that all faculty members covered have to be either academically qualified (AQ) or professionally qualified (PQ), as defined by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), and may not represent the OSB in any university committee or board. The voting rights of non-professorial, visiting and**

**part-time faculty members are limited exclusively to designated committees and do not extend to track or general faculty meetings. The total number of non-professorial, visiting, or part-time faculty on any one committee would not exceed one-third of total membership. The Senate further approves amending OSB bylaws to reflect this proposal.**

A few senators raised some concerns; would this new category of participants, as Participating Faculty Members versus Supporting Faculty Members, be applicable to other faculties?, Would it be logical to have different categories for certain members (particularly part timers) in different faculties? Could the OSB proposed amendments look as if it was meant only to meet certain numbers of categories of faculty members, as those named participating faculty members, which is essentially re-naming or re-labelling of some existing faculty members?, and would this satisfy the AACSB?. The OSB Dean, G. Najjar, provided answers to these and other questions. After further discussion the question was called.

**Vote 2008-10: The motion was carried (For 19, Against 2, voting members present 27).**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

A. Abdel-Rahman, secretary