

**American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
Special Meeting of Friday 5 June 2009**

Present: S. Arnaout, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, G. Araj, K. Bitar, N. Cortas, N. Dajani, N. Darwiche, H. Diab, P. Dorman (chairing), L. Farhood, J. Ghafari, I. Hajj, K. Hindi, N. Hwalla, M. Jurdi, A. Jurjus, A. Kayssi, R. Khauli, G. Najjar, N. Nassif, I Nuwayhid, I. Osman, J. Radulski, M. Salameh, B. Shayya, F. Sleiman, R. Smith.

Absent: J. DeJong*, R. Haddad, H. Huijjer*, S. Kenney, M. Kisirwani, S. Maamari*, W. Masri, L. Musfy, W. Nasr*, M. Nimah, M. Obeid, S. Sadek, S. Seikaly, D. Wrisley, R. Zurayk.

(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 29 May 2009 were approved as corrected.

2. *Proposal to change the name of the Medical Lab Technology program in FHS.* Dean Nuwayhid introduced the proposal saying that use of the word technology in the title of the degree meant that the degree was sometimes understood as a technical degree of lower standing than a full B.Sc., with deleterious consequences for those holding the degree. A change in title to “Medical Laboratory Sciences” would be consonant with usage in the USA and Canada and involved neither curricular changes nor changes in resources. He proposed a motion which was seconded that **the title of the undergraduate program in FHS be changed from “Medical Laboratory Technology” to “Medical Laboratory Sciences”, effective 1st October 2009.** He said that the change would have to be approved by the Ministry of Higher Education in Lebanon and the Department of Education in the State of New York. Dean Hajj added that the change would also have to be approved by the BOT.

The motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-23).

3. *Remarks on proposed revision of promotion procedures.* President Dorman said that he did not want to initiate a long discussion on the issue but would like briefly to bring the senate up to date. Revision of promotion procedures would require a good deal of further discussion. In the meantime he had been having a series of meetings with the faculty at large, in which he had expressed the following aims: (a) making departments more responsible for the preparation of promotion dossiers; (b) requiring a promotion dossier to express more fully a department’s judgment of a candidate’s work in the three fields of research, teaching and service; (c) better mentorship of junior faculty within departments; (d) the creation of a manual for chairpersons with the aim of promoting departmental culture; and (e) longer contracts especially at the level of Associate Professor. He said that he was interested in receiving as much feedback as possible and that he would bring the issue again to the attention of the faculty during the autumn when there would be more time for debate. He added that the criteria for promotion would not change, but that he would like to change the way a department prepared a promotion dossier. On a question from N. Darwiche he said that he thought an initial contract of four years would give a new faculty member longer time to develop research at AUB, especially in the sciences; and that he was in favour of granting seven year contracts automatically to those promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. In answer to a statement from N. Dajani that rolling contracts were preferable to seven year contracts, President Dorman said that part of his concern to introduce longer contracts was to decrease the administrative burden of reviewing one-third of faculty contracts every year; contract renewal should be treated with the same seriousness as promotion. He added that he did not think seven years was too long for an Associate Professor’s contract but that this was also related to the question of tenure.

On a question from I. Osman on the reinstatement of tenure, particularly in relation to the misgivings of full professors recorded in the senate minutes of 25 January 2008, President Dorman said that in general he favoured reinstating tenure. He added that present promotion dossiers did not give sufficient information on the quality of candidates, whose qualitative evaluation tended to come rather from outside than from within the community. K. Hindi said that he could not see how improving promotion procedures would solve the problem of attracting good applications for posts at AUB from outside, nor of retaining them; more important was the question of tenure, for only with tenure would a faculty member be free to do innovative and long-term research. On a final question from F. Sleiman regarding the lack of a mandatory age of retirement, President Dorman said that he was familiar with a number of attractive early retirement programs. With this comment he closed the discussion.

4. *Voting of degrees, Faculty of Medicine.* The senate voted unanimously to approve granting the degree of Doctor of Medicine to the 70 candidates listed in the memo presented by Dean Cortas dated 5 June 2009 (vote 2009-24). The senate also voted unanimously to approve granting the degree of Doctor of Medicine with distinction to the eight candidates on the same list against whose name appears the letter D (vote 2009-25).

In a case in which the cumulative average of a graduating student of the Olayan School of Business in February 2009 had been calculated incorrectly as 84.77 instead of 85.67, Dean Najjar proposed a motion, which was seconded, to **grant Maria Abboud (ID: 200601170) the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration with distinction. The motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-26).**

5. *Revised 2009-10 academic calendar.* The registrar, M. Salameh, introduced modifications to the 2009-10 academic calendar whereby an extra day's holiday would be given for each of 'Id al-Fitr and 'Id al-Adha, and there would be a full week's break between the two semesters with final exams ending now on Saturday 6 February 2010 instead of on Monday 8 February. On a question of clarification, the registrar said it had been the practice to give three days for each of the two holidays, although non-academic employees and students were entitled to take only two days' holiday from the three. A. Abdel-Rahman proposed a motion, which was seconded, to **approve the revised 2009-10 academic calendar. The motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-27)**

6. *Recommendations from the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs on sick leave policy for academics and on HIP maternity policy.* Representing the SCFA, F. Sleiman thanked the university administration and VP Radulski for introducing a policy of sick leave for academic faculty, in line with the recommendation of the senate on 4 January 2008. He said that the proposed policy was, however, a short-term disability policy, and he urged the university administration to initiate a process leading to the development of an integrated sick leave plan involving both short- and long-term disability policies. He proposed a motion in three parts, which was seconded, that **with regard to the draft policy under consideration the senate approve the following changes;**

- a. **Under Sick Leave Schedule to substitute "... if employed less than three years" with "... if employed less than or equal to one year." In the same item to substitute "... if employed for three years or more", with "... if employed for more than one year".**
- b. **Under Duration of Employment to substitute < 3 years with "less than or equal to 1 year" and > 3 years with "greater than 1 year".**
- c. **Under Physician's Statement to substitute "... more than three (3) working days" with "... more than five (5) working days." Under the same item to delete the phrase "or some written statement of the facts concerning the illness."**

F. Sleiman said that the intention of the motion was to reduce the period of eligibility of a faculty member from three years to one year, adding that it would apply to full-time faculty not part-time, and concerned period of service, not of contract. Dean Hajj asked whether it would apply to visiting faculty. VP Radulski welcomed the proposal but asked what benchmarks had been used to justify reducing the period of eligibility to one year, saying that he would be happy to make available to the

SCFA the information compiled by Human Resources about universities in the USA. I. Osman read out the senate's motion of 4 January 2008 "that AUB changes its benefits package to include a short-term disability program, a long-term disability program and a life insurance program for benefits-eligible faculty and staff"; he added that he saw a problem with classifying long-term disabilities differently from short-term. VP Radulski replied that the administration could only do things one at a time, that long-term disability coverage would have to be in part contributory, that the proposal was in his opinion better than that offered by any university in the USA, and that he hoped to have an integrated scheme in place by the end of the year. Dean Bitar asked for how long a person might be hospitalized under the proposed scheme, saying that a period of sixty days in hospital might fall between two semesters, with administrative and financial consequences. After further discussion, **the motion was carried (vote 2009-28: 19 for, voting members present 24).**

F. Sleiman then introduced a further recommendation concerning HIP maternity policy. He proposed a motion, which was seconded, in two parts, that **the senate approve the following changes to Section Eight of the General Provisions of the Regulations of the Health Insurance Plan Applicable to Academic Personnel, as revised in 1998:**

a. In item 7 substitute " ... such coverage is applicable only if the husband and wife are members" with "... only if the woman is a member".

b. Deletion of item 8 which stipulates that "Once maternity insurance is discontinued by a subscriber for any reason, maternity coverage cannot be reinstated".

President Dorman asked whether the second part of the motion implied that maternity insurance could be dropped and readopted at any time. Dean Bitar said that he thought this might not be in the best interest of HIP since it might lead to an increase in premiums. VP Radulski said that the number of pregnancies varied from 200 to 400 a year and that he thought that HIP would be able to provide full-time coverage whether or not a member expressly subscribed to maternity insurance. He therefore recommended withdrawing the second part of the motion. R. Khauli said that the recommendation was made from a humanitarian point of view and could not be concerned with particular financial issues. In response to a question from President Dorman, VP Radulski said that a meeting of financial advisors, including the Ad-Hoc HIP Committee formed as a result of the senate decision of 24 April 2009, would meet on 12 June and that he was due to address the senate on the issue of HIP in its meeting on 24 June. After further discussion M. Jurdi proposed a substitute motion, which was seconded, to **approve the first part of the above motion. The substitute motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-29).**

The second part of the original motion was then withdrawn by F. Sleiman and the motion's seconder.

7. Proposal for increasing FEA membership on the Board of Graduate Studies from one to two. Dean Hajj introduced the proposal pointing out that the FEA had a growing number of graduate students, was running four Ph.D. programs and had now over ninety full-time employees (FTEs). He proposed a motion, which was seconded, **that FEA membership on the Board of Graduate Studies be increased from one to two.** In response to a question from F. Sleiman, Dean Cortas said that the number of FTEs in the Faculty of Medicine was 261, yet had a single representative on the BGS, while Dean Bitar said that similarly the Faculty of Arts and Sciences had around 265 FTEs, and he added that the number of FAS members on the Board of Graduate Studies was because of the division between Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences rather than the number of FTEs. N. Dajani asked how increasing the number of FEA members on the Board of Graduate Studies would increase efficiency. K. Hindi, chair of the BGS, said that BGS decisions were taken by consensus rather than by numbers. Dean Hajj said that redundancy was useful, moreover FEA comprised the Department of Architecture and Design in addition to the three more specifically engineering departments. **The motion was carried (vote 2009-30: for 13, voting members present 23).**

8. Any other business. Dean Nuwaiyid said that he wanted to bring to the attention of the senate a certain discrepancy in the process that had led to the exclusion of faculty hired after 2004 from post-retirement HIP benefits. The issue, he said, was important because it was understood that the senate

had voted to exclude faculty hired after 2004 from post-retirement HIP provision, and that a change of policy would require the senate to rescind its previous vote. It was also a source of considerable unease for faculty hired after 2004. Dean Nuwaiyid went on to say that, according to his investigations, the first notice to the faculty of a change in policy had been in an email from Provost Heath to the faculty dated 15 September 2004, to the effect that new faculty would not receive post-retirement benefits. The senate had then discussed the issue at length in its meeting of 5 November 2004. A motion had been carried at that meeting recommending the SCFA to look into the issue and report back to the senate in January 2005. In the January meeting of the senate, however, there had been no further discussion, and this meant that indirectly the senate had allowed the question to lapse, with a consequent understanding of senate approval despite the absence of a vote. President Dorman said that in a recent email ex-President Waterbury had written that he understood the suspension of the privilege of post-retirement benefits to faculty hired from 2004-05 to have been temporary. Dean Cortas said that there had been confusion regarding post-retirement insurance coverage when the question of outsourcing HIP management was discussed, since it had been thought that post-retirement insurance coverage might have to be a matter of individual choice; and he looked forward to the statement by VP Radulski on 24 June. A. Abdel-Rahman expressed the hope that the financial committee meeting on 12 June would consider firstly whether or not post-retirement insurance should be optional and secondly whether to recommend in-house management in preference to outsourcing HIP management. I. Osman said that he hoped the administration would circulate its report well in advance of the June 24 senate meeting in order for senators to have time to prepare written responses, as he himself had done in his response entitled "HIP cause-effect analysis and recommendations" to VP Radulski's memorandum on HIP presented to the senate on 24 April 2009. VP Radulski asked senators to recall that any premium in a private insurance scheme had several components, including whether the premium was taxable. President Dorman said that he would appreciate the presence of the Ad-Hoc HIP Committee at the meeting of the senate on June 24.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Richard Smith, secretary