

American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
General Meeting of Thursday 26 June 2008

Present: A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, H. Abu Khuzam, A. Al-Alaoui, G. Araj, K. Bitar, N. Cortas, J. Dargham, N. Darwiche, R. Dean, , R. Dimechkie (by invitation), M. El-Sabban, I. Hajj, P. Heath, K. Hindi, H. Huijjer, N. Hwalla, S. Jeffrey, M. Jurdi, S. Kenney, R. Khauli, S. Maamari, L. Musfy, G. Najjar, N. Nassif, M. Nimah, O. Obeid, I. Osman, J. Radulski, M. Salameh, S. Seikaly, B. Shayya, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, J. Waterbury (chairing), H. Zurayk.

Absent: A. Abdelnoor*, A. Al-Kutoubi*, M. Darwish, H. Diab, L. Farhood*, R. Haddad, M. Khawaja, M. Kisirwani, A. Lyzzaik, M. Obeid, S. Sadek.

(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:06 p.m.

The president asked Dean Cortas to take the floor. Dean Cortas said that the untimely death of Dr. Nancy Malek on June 8, only recently appointed in the Faculty of Medicine as Instructor of Clinical Pediatrics, was a matter of great sorrow and shock. Senators stood for a minute of silence in her memory. (See attached memo.)

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 30 May 2008 were approved as corrected. The minutes of 6 June 2008 were approved as read.

2. *Voting on degrees.* The Senate voted unanimously to recommend the graduation of the June 2008 Graduates as circulated by the Registrar's Office and presented by the respective Deans (attached). In addition the senate voted unanimously to recommend the graduation of two additional students of FAS, as presented by Dean Bitar, Linda Rached to a BSc in biology and Adam Jewel, a transfer student from the USA, to a BA with high distinction.

3. *New undergraduate program in FAFS: BSc in Agribusiness.* Called on by the President to introduce the proposed program, Dean Hwalla said that it would be the first such program in the Middle East, that it was fully interdisciplinary with the OSB, and that it had been drafted after expert consultation. She proposed a motion which was seconded, **to approve the introduction of a new undergraduate BSc program in Agribusiness within FAFS.** The Chair of the ADC added that the ADC had looked in depth at the proposal as a result of which it was now being presented to the senate. There was some further discussion.

Vote 2008-37: The motion was carried (20 for, voting members present 29)

4. *Proposed addition to Appendix I of the Senate Bylaws: Senate Committee on General Education.* Following the senate's approval to establish a senate committee on General Education on 30 May 2008 (vote 2008-30) the Provost introduced a statement on the function, composition and rules of procedure governing that committee to be added to Appendix I of the Senate Bylaws. In reply to a senator's question, he said that the committee's evaluation would be of a different nature from that of OIRA. Another senator recommended that the committee also oversee the additional categorization of courses as writing intensive (W), with oral presentation (P), and so on. Dean Bitar said that some categorization of courses, for example courses involving laboratory work and seminars, was already explicit in the matrix of each program given in the annual catalogue. The provost proposed a motion which was seconded, **to approve the proposed rules of procedure of the Senate Committee on General Education.**

Vote 2008-38: The motion was carried (21 for, voting members present 27)

5. *Recommendation of the Board of Graduate Studies that the Executive MBA (EMBA) and the Corporate Executive MBA (CEMBA) be put outside the purview of the Board.* Following the senate's recommendation in its meeting on 30 May 2008 (item 8) the Chair of the BGS presented a written statement outlining the curriculum and admission requirements of the proposed EMBA program, and justifying its need to be outside the purview of the BGS in order to maintain flexibility in dealing with prospective executive-participants. He said that if the EMBA was within its purview the BGS would constantly have to make special exceptions to the rules governing the main body of Masters programs. He proposed a motion which was seconded as follows: **Noting the special features of the EMBA program, the need to run this program flexibly in an environment of heightened competition regionally, and the fact that there are sufficient internal and external quality assurance measures, the Senate approves the recommendation of the Board of Graduate Studies that the EMBA be self governed, i.e. placed outside the purview of the Board of Graduate Studies.** Some senators questioned why the BGS should not have overview of the EMBA as with other Masters programs. On the senate's invitation Riad Dimechkie said that participants in the EMBA were often high executives of successful businesses for whom existing graduate regulations were inappropriate, hence the need for EMBA management to be flexible. Dean Najjar added that there was absolutely no relaxation of standards and that he would be happy to submit an annual report to the BGS. In answer to a question what was meant in the motion by "self-governed", Dean Najjar said that the EMBA would be fully under the jurisdiction of the OSB. After further discussion the question was called.

Vote 2008-39: The motion was carried (for 18, 0 against, voting members present 25)

6. *BOT resolutions.* The President said that he regretted that no final draft of the recent BOT resolutions had yet been made for presentation to the senate. He said that on account primarily of an increased energy bill the BOT had regretfully approved an increase of 6.1% in tuition fees. In answer to a question from the Chair of the Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs, he said that no adjustment for inflation to faculty salaries had been made, adding that increases on merit would average four per cent. He said that on account of the recent rise in the minimum wage there would probably be further costs to the university through increased benefits and an increase in transport allowance. He then gave the floor to the Senate Representative, A. Abdel-Rahman, who presented a brief account of his meetings with the BOT on 20 June. The Senate Representative said that he had been asked many questions on the issue of tenure, which seemed to be the main point of interest in his discussions with the BOT.

9. *Other business.* The Chair of the Senate Steering Committee said that as this was the last senate meeting of the year, she would like on behalf of the senate to express its appreciation of the provost's and president's excellence of service to AUB.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Richard Smith, secretary