

**American University of Beirut
Minutes of the University Senate
General Meeting of Friday 29 May 2009**

Present: S. Arnaout, A. Abdel-Rahman, A. Abdul-Malak, G. Araj, K. Bitar, N. Dajani, N. Darwiche, J. DeJong, H. Diab, P. Dorman (chairing), L. Farhood, J. Ghafari, I. Hajj, K. Hindi, H. Huijjer, N. Hwalla, M. Jurdi, A. Kayssi, R. Khaulil, S. Maamari, W. Masri, L. Musfy, G. Najjar, W. Nasr, W. Nasrallah (by invitation), N. Nassif, T. Nizameddin (for M. Kisirwani), I. Nuwayhid, I. Osman, R. Sabra (for N. Cortas), M. Salameh, B. Shayya, F. Sleiman, R. Smith, D. Wrisley, R. Zurayk.

Absent: R. Haddad, A. Jurjus, S. Kenney, M. Nimah, M. Obeid, J. Radulski, S. Sadek, S. Seikaly.
(* = regrets notified before meeting or on leave)

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.

1. *Approval of minutes.* The minutes of 24 April 2009 were approved as read.

2. *Proposal to establish 'Post-Doctoral Fellow' as an academic position* [item 3 of agenda]. In introducing the proposal Dean Hajj said that most universities had such a position and it was essential for AUB to introduce the post now that AUB had its own doctoral programs. He read the motion as circulated in his letter of 3 March, which was seconded. Discussion focused firstly on whether the position should be specifically for research and secondly on the source from which the position would be funded. R. Sabra said that the Faculty of Medicine had had an unofficial position termed 'post-doctoral fellow' for many years; but it was pointed out that 'post-doctoral' referred here mostly to post-MD rather than post-Ph.D. Dean Bitar said that the proposal was related to Ph.D. programs in AUB, was specifically for research, and was partly to encourage faculty to look for funds outside AUB. A. Abdel-Rahman wondered whether the period of renewal should be shortened to three years. Dean Hwalla suggested making a distinction between clinical fellow and post-doctoral fellow. After considerable discussion about the wording of the motion, Dean Hajj read out a modified version as follows: **A postdoctoral fellow is a temporary position held by a person who has completed his or her doctoral studies. Postdoctoral positions are normally given for a period of one semester or one year, renewable for up to five years, are dedicated to research and/or post-doctoral training, and paid for from research or soft funds.**

The motion was carried (vote 2009-20: 23 for, voting members present 30).

3. *Revised proposed amendment to the Student Code of Conduct from the Library Committee* [item 2 of the agenda]. The Chair of the University Library Committee, W. Nasrallah, introduced the revised proposal to create a new clause I.B.11 in the Student Code of Conduct governing inappropriate conduct in AUB libraries. He said there was a need to empower junior library staff since a library was not patrolled by regular security officers, unlike other spaces on the campus for which the Student Code of Conduct defined different categories of inappropriate behaviour. D. Wrisley questioned the need to specify within the Student Code of Conduct who was empowered. Dean Bitar suggested editorial changes, firstly in the proposed clause I.B.11 and secondly by introducing a subsection of clause II.B referring specifically to disciplinary action on non-academic misconduct in libraries. There was further discussion on wording. A. Abdul-Malak proposed a motion, which was seconded, to adopt Dean Bitar's suggestion of adding a subsection to clause II.B as well as revising clause I.B.11, which would now read:

"11. Inappropriate Conduct in the AUB libraries.

Any action that impedes the safe and efficient use by all patrons of the AUB libraries is prohibited (refer to the University Policy on Appropriate Conduct in Libraries)."

The motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-20).

4. *Proposal regarding the University Preparatory Program from the Enrollment Management Committee.* Acting Provost Nasr gave the floor to Dean Bitar who said that the proposal was intended to enhance the UPP by raising the level of admission while guaranteeing that UPP students would be admitted to the freshman program on satisfying demands set by the university; moreover it would increase diversity on campus. He said that the UPP had suffered from fluctuations in enrollment when tuition fees were high but there was no guarantee of admission into the freshman year. He proposed the following motion which was seconded:

- 1. Students with a minimum standardized school grade of 520 out of 800 qualify for admission to the UPP.**
- 2. The total number of UPP students in any academic year should not exceed 50 students.**
- 3. The success in the UPP year as measured by AUB administered exams would assure admission to the freshman program upon meeting the English language proficiency requirement.**

There were questions concerning the possible overlap with freshman courses, the rationale behind capping the number of students at 50, whether a guarantee of admission to the freshman year would not lower the freshman standard, and whether completion of UPP requirements might not rather secure entry to the sophomore year. Dean Hwalla expressed concern lest a back door entry to AUB be opened as a result of direct admission from UPP to the freshman year, bypassing the rigorous admission procedures required by SAT. She said that if school grades were better than SAT for admission into UPP, why not consider changing the criteria for admission into AUB to school grades? VP Diab said that the trend in Gulf countries, where school education was weak, was for universities to have full foundational programs. Dean Najjar said that the proposal would open a significant market segment. After further discussion the question was called.

The motion was carried by a clear majority (vote 2009-21).

President Dorman relegated item 5 of the agenda, “*Remarks on proposed revision of promotion procedures*” to the end of the agenda. Acting Provost Nasr took the chair.

5. *Proposal for changing the foundation period of the MBA to an intensive orientation program.*

Dean Najjar said that the MBA program was designed mainly for non-business graduates who were currently required to take up to 18 credits of foundational courses before embarking on the 42-credit graduate program. The OSB proposal was to reduce the foundational requirements to an intensive orientation program, as detailed in the memorandum circulated to senators with the meeting’s agenda. The chairman of the Board of Graduate Studies, K. Hindi, said that the BGS had satisfied itself that the proposal met academic standards, and he proposed the following motion which was seconded.

Upon the recommendation of the Board of Graduate Studies, the Senate approves changing the foundation period of the MBA to an intensive orientation period, as proposed by the OSB. On Dean Bitar’s comment that the proposal appeared to reduce some 200 hours of foundational courses to 75 hours of intensive orientation, Dean Najjar said that 18 foundational credits were required of only few students; moreover the proposed orientation was an integrative experience different from credit requirements. After further discussion the question was called

The motion was carried unanimously (vote 2009-22).

6. *Proposed Senate statement to the Board of Trustees* [item 8 of the agenda]. Several suggestions and corrections were made to the draft statement circulated by R. Zurayk.

Items 5 and 7 of the agenda were deferred for lack of a quorum.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Richard Smith, secretary