

Provost's Council
Meeting of February 14, 2019
Bacon-Crary Meeting Room
Thursday 14 February 2019, 9:00 — 12:00 EET

Present:	Ehab Abdel-Rahman	Provost
	Alaa-Eldin Adris	AP-RIC
	Aziza Ellozy	AP-TLT
	Ahmed Tolba	AP-SEM
	John Swanson	AP-AE
	Lamia Eid	Interim Dean, LLT
	Heba El Deghaidy	Interim Dean, GSE
	Hassan El-Fawal	Dean, SSE
	Shahira ElSawy	Special Adviser to the Provost
	Ghada Elshimi	Dean, ALA
	Sherif Kamel	Dean, Business
	George Marquis	Dean of Students
	Adham Ramadan	Dean, Graduate Studies
	Alia Shoeib	Interim Dean, SCE
	Robert Switzer	Interim Dean, HUSS
	Kathleen O'Neill	Director, Academic Affairs Projects

Apologies: Yvette Isaac Assistant Provost, Faculty Affairs

1 Approval of Agenda

Vote to Approve Agenda

13 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain | Approved on 14 February 2019

2 Approval of Minutes

Vote to Approve Minutes

11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain | Approved on 14 February 2019

Approved with correction from Dean of Students. Kevin O'Connell is facilitating the leadership Institute, but it's being run by SCE.

3 Announcements

AP-AE: Extending AFR deadline. This is what has happened last year, at almost the exact same time. This has been requested from several faculty.

Comment: This meant that we also had to extend the deadline of first and third year reviews.

Provost: We need to look at the timeline in totality before we agree to this deadline.

Comment: As this is now the second year this request has come in, perhaps we need to readjust the timeline in general.

GAPP: GAPP is organizing a student conference from around the world. This is the second time AUC has organized this event.

GSE: Today there is an event at GSE. It's a public lecture from 5:00-7:00 in CVC Mary Cross.

LLT: We are working towards making the library 24/7. We are purchasing additional book security systems so we can add them to the veranda doors. We are working on turning the back veranda into a café/coffee area.

Comment: It is worth considering opening the RBSCL late more than once a night. Graduate students complain that if they have class on the late night, they cannot access the library.

Provost: We currently have three dean searches (LLT, HUSS, and SCE). HUSS has one external and one internal candidate that we are going to start interviewing. I will contact a headhunter today to assist with the HUSS recruitment. For SCE we have met the three candidates, and I am expecting a report on the ranking of the three candidates today. For LLT, our top candidate has already accepted an offer elsewhere. We are planning to work with a headhunter to solicit additional candidates. In the meantime, we have continued to receive additional applications that we are reviewing.

4 Board of Trustees Recap

The meeting was really only one day of meetings. One of the main points of focus was the response to the Vote of No Confidence. The other major issue is the budget. The BoT has not approved the budget, but it has approved the tuition. We will continue to provide data to the Board regarding the budget. Sherif Elsheemy has been contacting some of you for more information. We are asking for more supplies budget when we (the university) did not use the entirety of supplies budget this year. Please ask your finance people to provide Sherif with all needed information. There is nothing confidential about this information.

There were several meetings planned between the Board and the Senate Executive Committee before the Vote of No Confidence. There were four functions: dinner with the Senate Chair, lunch with the Senate Executive Committee and the Board Chair, a meeting between the Senate Executive Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board, and a trip to Saqqara.

In addition, there were faculty dinners with members of the Board of Trustees. They met with faculty from across the spectrum. These were good dinners with good conversations, and I want to thank Kathleen O'Neill for organizing these.

I want to thank Ahmed Tolba and Aziza Ellozy for their support in providing needed information to support the meetings.

Question: Has the financial assistance budget also been approved?

Response: We have only received approval for new students, not continuing students.

Question: Any feedback on the deliberations on the Vote of No Confidence?

Response: It was unanimous support for the president. I did not attend any meeting that discussed the future.

Question: Was there any feedback on the resolution submitted by Ali Hadi?

Response: They are leaving many of these to the administration, but the issue about adding faculty to the Board, that was rejected.

Comment: There was no real celebration of the faculty at the centennial launch. There was no real acknowledgement of them, except for Doris Shoukri, but she was not invited. She was there as the guest of someone else. I think we need to include a recognition of the faculty as we move forward.

The Board and Cabinet also met with President El Sisi, and this visit was very positive.

5 Senate Vote of No Confidence

We need to look strategically about what we can do to meet the needs of the faculty. This is both from the academic area but also from across the university. I am meeting with Hanan Abdel-Meguid next week to discuss the access policy.

The faculty services office was not cancelled. The intention is to enlarge this under the community engagement office.

Comment: I think the problem is that some decisions are taken that have impact with immediate effect (staff not being able to be TAs and second assignments.)

Comment: The issue of staff working as adjunct faculty should be after regular hours.

Comment: We shouldn't make generic rules when there are genuine exceptions. If the direct supervisor signs off on the adjunct contract.

Question: Do we agree that staff can take a TA award during regular working hours? What if there is specialized knowledge by that staff/TA person?

Response: Put it in the job description and make it part of their regular job and we will have those job descriptions re-evaluated, but we need to make sure that this only applies to staff who have a history of serving as TAs/instructors because of their specialized knowledge. These tasks should not be added to the job descriptions of staff who have never before served in this capacity.

Further discussion has been tabled until the next meeting.

6 Task Force: Declaration at the Gate (Ghada Elshimi)

We have been discussing the idea of whether students should be able to declare at the gate for all majors. The first year is supposed to expose students to different fields of study. We don't know how much this is actually happening because many students are set on declaring certain majors.

Michelle Henry will chair the task force. We hope to have all associate deans, as well as representation of students and Senate members.

Question: What is the mandate of task force? This seems to conflict with the liberal arts approach.

Response: It would be to explore allowing all students to declare at the gate for all majors.

Question: What is the motivation for this? We tried this in the past and we stopped, except for engineering. It is very important for HUSS to expose students to our disciplines because most students don't know what anthropology is before taking classes.

Comment: I'm a big proponent of declaration at the gate. I think we are conflating the issues. A student will also be able to change majors. If a student enters AUC with the intention of joining economics, the student is going to take general core requirements and the declaration courses for economics. This is not going to change if the student declares economics at the gate.

Comment: my expectation is that most students are going to want to declare the "professional" programs. They are currently competing for limited seats and don't take the core requirements seriously. At Brown University, you can tailor majors as you go along. That's not for everyone, but if we want to market AUC as special or unique, how does this change this?

Comment: The purpose of this task force is to get his feedback from the schools.

Comment: This discussion is very important as it will have implications on many schools. It's not about gate or not at the gate, but it's the capacity that effects the demand.

Comment: Declaring at the gate requires prerequisites (similar to the Egyptian national system). I think we should look at advising in general.

Comment: We have some majors that have excess demands, that have set up interviews and other admission criteria. How would declaration at the gate allow for these admission criteria. Then there are issues related to parents. How are we going to address parents if more students are able to declare at the gate but there is limited capacity? Or what if they ultimately don't meet the declaration requirements? Parents are going to scream that we are deceitfully taking their money.

Comment: Historically, students have not taken their core requirements until after they have already declared a major. We had an experiment with admission at the gate in the early ought's. During this period, there were only limited numbers of seats available for declaration at the gate. Around 2007/2008 departments were given the opportunity to determine if they want to allow admission at the gate. SSE is the only school that still permits this.

Provost: Based on this discussion, the committee's mandate should also look at the admission criteria. In addition, they should look at how we use the large financial aid budget to shape the study body as we want. For example, high demand majors, should we select the best students who can also afford to pay their way, and channel the financial aid to other areas to shape the study body to enhance the mission of the university.

Comment: The issue of diversity is really important.

Comment: If the committee could also look at grades versus talent.

Provost: We will recirculate the committee mandate before going to the committees.

7 Change of English Proficiency Requirements for Study Abroad Students from Non-English Universities (Ahmed Tolba & Ghada Elshimi)

This policy would allow them to come to AUC and participate in ELI, if they want to come. We should allow students to study abroad in ELI like they come to study Arabic. This will not change the requirement for English, it will just expand the study-abroad options.

There was a show of hands vote to determine if there were any objections to this change. No objections were noted.

This change will be sent to the Senate.

8 Governance

I'm mostly here to ask questions.

- 1) Do you think this is a proper basis for constructing an overarching governance document for the University?
- 2) In your opinion, are there elements that need to be altered?

Response: there are things that are not up-to-date.

Question: Do we want to formulate an overarching document that will clarify the roles or is the exercise to question fundamental elements of governance at the university?

Comment: There is a parallel discussion taking place with the Chair of the Senate and the Faculty Handbook Workgroup. The opinion appears to be to consolidate, update and clarify.

Comment: We should be filling the gaps. The major gap is what areas of responsibilities fall under which entities? Is it realistic or practical to have all policies go through the Senate?

Comment: The documents have governance rules, but not governance processes.

Comment: Lets put the structure in place in one document. This is one small step forward. Then we can fill the gaps and address the processes.

9 AOB

Annual Faculty Reports:

This looks at the calendar year, not the academic year. I'm supposed to be reviewing based on an academic year. I think we should review based on the academic year.

Comment: The form is confusing.

Provost: There are two issues we need to discuss 1) Duration of review (academic year or calendar year) and 2) the timeline for submission. We also need to determine why the faculty are requesting this extension.

Comment: If we do this on an academic year, we need to change the review cycle so that the chairs and deans are reviewing in the fall semester so it's applied in the following fiscal year.

Comment: In SCE we do academic year, and we finalize the process in May/June so any change is applied July 1.

Comment: The summer should also be included in the review process.

Comment: New faculty members are only evaluated on one semester.

AP-AE: The proposed revised deadline would have the faculty submitting March 1, deans receive them on April 1, and the Provost receives them on 1 May.

Comment: Shouldn't the timeline be proportional to the number of reviews that need to be conducted?

Question: What do we accomplish if we change the cycle?

Response: It's more practical.

Comment: If we don't remind faculty of the deadline, then the extension won't matter.

Comment: I'm going to share the P&T Task Force report. One of their recommendations is the need to strengthen the AFR. This should be the basis of all other reviews. I want to have a group of faculty review and strengthen the report. Do we want to form a task force to come up with recommendations and then send to the Senate for discussion and comment, or do we want to send to the Senate with a mandate and ask them to develop the recommendations? We need to look at the source of the data. We need to make this obligatory. I also think we should allow departments to add their own review questions. Not all departments are the same.

Comment: Part of this is the software. Does the software enable us to make the changes being discussed?

Response: If it's a limitation of the software, then we look for a new software.

Comment: If we can integrate this with other digital spaces, then it will make things easier.

AP-AE: Our software license has expired and we are extending for one year. We are looking at other options during this year, looking at flexibility of software for modifications to our needs.

Comment: We can only renew for three years.

Comment: We need to get faculty input on what it is that is problematic with the current system.

Provost: We should draft a mandate here, give it to a committee (who will have some

flexibility to adjust the mandate slightly), which is then sent to the Senate for review.

Comment: The Senate had a sub-committee looking at this issue, perhaps 3-4 years ago. We also need to make sure we can migrate any data from E-Repertoire to whatever system we select.

AP-AE: It's not just the annual faculty report, it's also the reviews conducted by the chairs. Often, they are very cursory.

Comment: Besides the software itself, I think one of the biggest issues is that people do not think it's useful because the result is often nil. Once we define the outcome of the AFR, then we need to have clear guidelines for the chairs, deans and provost.

Comment: If the AFR is not tied to salary increases, there is no incentive for faculty to complete the review.

AP-AE: We have made changes for the chairs that now include very specific questions related to teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service. They need to specify if the faculty are below expectations, at expectation, above expectation.

Comment: Do we have rubrics?

AP-AE: We do not have one, but perhaps that is something we can develop.

Comment: We cannot have generic rubrics. Each department should have their own.

Question: Do all administrators have to fill in the AFR?

Response: All faculty have to complete the report, yes.

Comment: The AFR includes self-reflection and student evaluations. We are missing peer evaluations. Can we create specific questions to guide the self-reflection of teaching?

Comment: The AFR includes a question about what level of merit pay the faculty believes they deserve. This makes the entire evaluation about salary and not personal and professional development and contribution. Perhaps this question should be removed from the AFR.

Comment: The previous comment is very important. If we are going to buy another system, we should be able to manipulate the data for the different needs rather than ask faculty to come

ACTION ITEM: Ghada, John & Provost will formulate the committee and then return to the Council.