

Minutes
Faculty Senate General Assembly
9 June 2006
12:30PM – 1:45PM

Present:

Harout Armenian (President), Lucig Danielian (Vice President), Vahan Bournazian (Chair of Faculty Senate), Purusottam Sen, Don Fuller, Naira Khachatryan, Theresa Khorozyan, Lusine Galajyan, Melissa Brown, Karine Muradyan, Lilianne Edilyan, Marianne Celce-Murcia, Rajendra Akerkar, Victor Ohanyan, Varoozhan Harikian, Artak Hambarian, Tom Samuelian, Hakob Martirosyan, Elisa Kekejian, Hasmik Mehranian, Alexan Simonyan, Kenell Touryan, Gayane Yenokyan, Yelena Amirkhanyan, Varduhi Petrosyan, Ed Bunker, Suren Khachatryan.

Special Guest:

Dr. Jonathan Samet, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore

Before the formal start of the meeting, President Armenian made a special presentation. Dr. Petrosyan was given her PhD diploma, which had been hand-carried from Baltimore.

Introductions:

Vahan Bournazian invited all those assembled to introduce themselves.

Remarks by President Armenian:

President Armenian thanked Dr. Danielian for all her efforts related to preparing the WASC report, a report that highlights the impact that AUA and its students have had on the country.

President Armenian reported that the College of Health Sciences and the Department of English Programs have both undergone an internal review and that this process will set in place a system of evaluation for the future.

President Armenian reported a search continues for a Provost/Vice-President. A new Registrar will arrive shortly, and she will lead regional recruitment efforts.

Vahan Bournazian was thanked for his efforts and sacrifices as he served as Acting Registrar. These duties were on top of his responsibilities as Chair of the Senate and Assistant Dean of the Law School.

President Armenian reported that the Mr. Turpanjian has provided funding to allow the establishment of 2 AUA education centers in areas of Armenia that were impacted by the earthquake. He commented that AUA wants to support efforts that have a multiplier effect.

President Armenian also gave an update on the new AUA building. Internal construction work (electrical, etc.) has commenced. Another ~5 million dollars will be necessary to complete the project, which should be completed in 1 year. HyBusiness Center is also being renovated and this should help to generate more revenue. HyBusiness will host visiting faculty, foreign students, as well as business people and tourists visiting Yerevan.

It was also reported that AUA is seeking support from the U.S. government. Previous capital support has been in the amount of between 300K and 1M per year.

The President thanked the faculty for the many sacrifices they have made over the past several years.

The President then opened the floor for questions.

A concern was raised about the weakening dollar. President Armenian explained that because AUA has both revenue in U.S. dollars and Armenian Dram that the impact should not be dramatic. He also explained that AUA was working to harmonize a 2-year budget plan, a 2-year fiscal plan, and its strategic plan.

Vahan thanked the President Armenian for his comments.

Remarks by the Vice President

Vice President Danielian reported that the final WASC report on Educational Effectiveness is being finalized. She explained that the site visit in September will be the last phase of a long process of accreditation. A final accreditation determination will be made in early 2007.

Vice President Danielian encouraged each faculty member to become familiar with the contents of the various WASC documents and reports and be prepared for the September visit.

President Armenian commented that there are many positive things that have followed (or will follow) from accreditation and the process of accreditation:

- 1) There has been a formalization of a process for critical self-assessment
- 2) AUA will be evaluated according to U.S. standards, thus strengthening our identity as a U.S. institution
- 3) Accreditation will bring with it credibility, which will help AUA to raise funds and assist our efforts with international recruitment

Dean Samuelian asked what impact WASC accreditation might have on deferment for military service. President Armenian commented that this was a larger political issue. Vice President Danielian added that U.S. accreditation is separate from Armenian accreditation.

Remarks by Vice President Touryan

Vice President Touryan reported that there are currently 7 research centers at AUA with numerous contracts and grants. He mentioned that it is important that AUA is developing (and seeking approval for) a policy on patents. This policy is modeled after policies in place at Berkeley and Stanford. Center Directors were encouraged to review and comment on the policy.

Report of Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Vahan Bournazian reviewed the purpose of the General Assembly: to report to the faculty activities of the Faculty Senate. He also reviewed the charge of the Faculty Senate and the two standing committees: Curriculum Committee (to promote academic excellence) and Ethics and Grievance (to regulate standards under which faculty and students operate).

Vahan then presented the policies that have been reviewed and/or approved. Faculty members were advised to contact their Faculty Senate representatives to learn more about these policies and procedures.

Ed Bunker commented that one of the policies the Faculty Senate approved was for a “1-Step” admissions process. Ed stated that in relation to this policy the College of Health Sciences was developing a proposal to change MPH enrollment from late February to September. He invited faculty to offer comments and suggestion on this proposal.

Open Forum

The DEP Dean (Marianne Celce-Murcia) said that she would like to make a comment in follow-up to the proposal by the College of Health Sciences to change the start of enrollment: she stated the DEP was – by necessity – going to start their next cohort of MA-TEFL student in the fall of 2006. This was because a faculty member left abruptly.

Closing

Vahan thanked faculty members for attending this forum during lunch.