

Dear Colleagues:

I would like to thank you for your diligent efforts in bringing ongoing Senate matters to completion. In taking the time to hold two Senate meetings today, the entire Senate should be commended for your sense of duty. The Senate President also welcomes back our fellow Senators Abdalla, Assaleh, and Secretary Mokhtar who returned from Hajj.

Earlier this year, the Senate President presented personalized invitations to faculty to contribute to the Senate Student Fund. I am happy to report that thanks to the contributions of faculty colleagues, the Faculty Senate has amassed a student fund totaling Dhs. 6,525. The first award from the Student Fund will hopefully be made during the Commencement in May. The SEC will discuss at its meeting this Wednesday the details of appropriate ways for disbursing the available funds.

The Senate President will devote next week to meetings with all committee chairs. SEC members from each School will schedule with their respective Deans and Faculty Senate forums in each Unit. The forums will be attended by the SEC and the Chancellor, in addition to the School Senators.

The SEC will also meet with the Senators-elect in anticipation of the organizational meeting. Senators-elect would have received from the Senate President the FOP and the Robert's Rules of Order.

The Committee on Fringe Benefits has completed its deliberations. The (very thorough) report was sent to all senators on January 20. In sending it once again on February 15, Senate Secretary Mokhtar also invited feedback from fellow Senators. The floor will be open in due time for any comments or queries pertaining to the report entitled "Recommendations of the Senate *Ad Hoc* Committee on Fringe Benefits." We would like to express our genuine appreciation to all members of the committee for the considerable effort, commitment and dedication that went into this document.

The Senate Committee on Elections is currently developing the procedures for elections of Senate Officers and SEC members. While it is not a foregone conclusion that the committee will complete its deliberations by the forthcoming organizational meeting of the Senate, it was also recommended by the SEC, that any guidelines that are developed would not apply to the current process. Rather, they would only pertain to the next Senate session, for the current Senate would not both make the rules and implement them upon itself.

When the topic of AUS contractual liaisons with AU and Texas A&M were discussed in the SEC meeting, it was pointed out that the general terms of such contracts are open to all faculty (such as for faculty or student exchanges, and assistance of any kind that is to be offered). The details of particular contracts of administrators, however, remain confidential as are faculty contracts.

In response to an agenda item submitted to the SEC by a faculty colleague for requiring Deans and Associate Deans to also teach and conduct research, Chancellor Thompson indicated that he viewed that Senior administrators should teach and research as part of their expected duties. However, since the Deans must fly out (for recruitment) and occasionally engage in other off campus duties, it may not be feasible for them to teach at this time. Associate Deans are expected to carry a load of teaching. However, this is a matter that the Chancellor will pursue with the Deans of the Schools and College. He will also discuss the issue of the possibility for Associate Deans to take on overloads.

In response to a query from a faculty member for a transparent recruitment process of senior university administrators such as Deans, it was pointed out that such a process is already in place and is being implemented for the search of a Dean of SA&D. In this regard, the faculty in SA&D selected their department chairs to represent them in the search efforts. The Dean of Students, the Senate President, a representative from the students' council and an HR representative were also invited by the Chancellor to join the search committee. The Committee is chaired by SOE Dean Leland Blank. Also, as you all know, a Senate committee is currently working on procedures of faculty recruitment.

On the issue of Faculty Awards, the SEC emphasized the need to encode more candid criteria for selection. The SEC recommended that an University Committee named by the Chancellor in consultation by the SEC develop such criteria. But the awards should not be given until the criteria are fully developed and adopted by the Faculty Senate and approved by the administration.

On lingering concerns about AUS Health Insurance, the issue will be debated with the VCFA Office, and will be placed on the agenda of the next regular Senate meeting.

Three grievances are being heard at various stages.

Finally, as announcements, an organizational meeting of the Senate will be held on Sunday, February 29, to elect new Senate officers and SEC members for the term 2004-2005. The SEC has accepted with regret the resignation of Senator McClane for the term 2004-2005. The Committee of Elections will announce this vacancy along the terms on elections recently adopted by the Faculty Senate. The vacancy should be filled before the organizational meeting. The Senate President emphasizes that the adopted guidelines apply to all elections, across the Schools and Colleges. Therefore I emphasize the consensual understanding of the Senate that the document as adopted by the Senate applies to any elections that might arise in the future within the Schools and College.

As previously indicated, the Faculty Assembly is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24. An official announcement will be sent to faculty from the Chancellor's office.

On the social side, the Chancellor hosted the Senate Executive Committee for lunch with the Board of Trustees on Saturday, February 14, as well as for lunch with His Highness Shaikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi and the Board of Trustees, the next day. Chancellor Thompson also hosted all Senators and their spouses for a dinner at his home

with the Board members. We thank Chancellor Thompson for his kind hospitality and for the opportunity to interact with the University Board.

I shall not reiterate the times from the Board of Trustees that the Chancellor shared with the SEC, given that Chancellor Thompson would have already stated them himself in the Chancellor's report.

I now open the floor for discussions.