

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to our first Senate session of the Spring semester. The amount of the work we accomplished during the Fall semester is impressive. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to you for this fruitful, collaborative endeavor. I would also like to acknowledge the SEC members for their very long sessions, which typically run a three hours, and for the full day retreat we recently held.

Having sent to all faculty the “Faculty Senate Update” to present, my report today will be brief. Yet there remains important business to be done. The Grievance Code is first among our next items to complete. As you well remember, the previous Senate session under President Al Homoud devoted countless hours to develop an alternative Grievance Code. It is necessary now to bring this important achievement of the previous Senate session to fruition. The two documents (the existing Grievance Code and the proposed alternative) were sent to all Senators in November. The SEC has taken the task of analyzing the proposal, suggesting changes for its betterment, and reporting to the full Senate, so that we may move this task forward to the Senate floor. The SEC document, which resulted from the SEC retreat, will be sent to you electronically and presented at an extraordinary meeting of the Senate.

At the most recent meetings, the SEC discussed an updated proposal on eligibility for promotion, process of selection of AUS faculty awards, and status of schools faculty handbooks, which have been placed on the agenda to be discussed today.

In our meeting today, Committee Chairs will update their colleagues of the Senate on the status of their progress in fulfilling their mandates. A number of the Committee chairs informed the Senate President that they were still collecting and analyzing data to reach their objectives. It was agreed during the SEC retreat that each SEC member would serve as a liaison to monitor some particular committees’ work and update the SEC on a regular basis.

The Senate President has been invited by Chancellor Thompson to serve on the Search Committee for the Dean of Architecture. The Committee is chaired by SOE Dean Leland Blank, and search efforts are currently underway.

At its meeting yesterday, the Senate Executive Committee accepted with regret the resignation of former President Al Homoud. The SEC would like to express its appreciation for President Al Homoud’s lasting contributions to governance at AUS.

Finally, with regard to a request from past president El Kadi to have the Senate today discuss further the friendly amendments on FPCs membership, I note the following:

As former president El Kadi notes in his communication, “the issue was discussed at length in the Senate.” The SEC having this consideration in mind has unanimously recommended the virtual session, which will allow more time for discussion rather than taking a few minutes at the beginning of a meeting, which has a set and distributed agenda.

Rather than putting the issue to a hasty vote we will abide by the unanimous decision of the SEC. The virtual session will allow ample time for discussion during the two days allocated to debate.

With regard to former president El Kadi's final point, that we should better spend a few minutes at the start of today's meeting to finish up that item rather than have that virtual vote where "some people might not be aware of the consequences of their vote" I emphasize that the Senate President and the Senate Executive Committee have full confidence in the capabilities of our fellow Senators to understand what the friendly amendments state and what the consequences of their vote might be.

I now open the floor for questions.