Date: 11/16/12

Members Present:
Kris Erway (Presidential Appointee), Ching-Lih Jan, Pat Jennings, Jim Mitchell, Carol Reese (Presidential Appointee) Aline Soules, Meiling Wu (Chair), Helen Zong

Members Absent: Erica Wildy, Gilberto Arriaza, Gary McBride
Guest(s): Monique Cornelius, Sophie Rollins

1. Approval of the agenda: Passed

2. Approval of Minutes: Passed

3. Report of the Chair, Meiling Wu

   a. Planning for Distinction (PFD) Website

   We reviewed the Web page and discussed the structure of committees and the linkage between committees. Meiling requested that we review the documents on the Web page since COBRA will play a role in this change.

   PFD Forums:
   Meiling has attended 3 meetings on PFD. She noted that the Strategic Resource Allocation document is now online. Meiling requested that COBRA committee members review this document. As a committee, we need to decide how much involvement COBRA should have in this process. Meiling shared some of the questions and responses on PFD that arose at the CLASS open forum. Meiling shared the Provost’s stated goal of PDF. We discussed the definition of and problems with defining distinction. Carol explained that the PFD committees are starting the process by developing a definition of a program. The Instructional Task Group will then proceed to defining/developing criteria for the review of programs. Pat asked if the criteria will be put through the Senate. It was stated that at this point there is no plan to move criteria through the Senate. One faculty member mentioned that the Senate went through a similar type of program evaluation in the past. (During the fiscal crisis of the 1990s, faculty generated a ranking of programs.) Meiling will request these past documents.

   b. Strategic Resource Allocation (Power Point) from Program Prioritization task force meeting

   Meiling made us aware of the Power Point link that provides an overview of PFD and asked that we review it on the PFD Website.

Committee plans to approach the Provost requesting that he visit COBRA to make a presentation on the budget.

Kris noted that with the passage of Prop 30 fees are going down. Some of the funding that was set aside for the potential budget cuts (prior to the passage of Prop 30) will go back to the division this year, 2012/13. Kris noted that the vote on three new fee increases (e.g., super seniors, overloads) proposed by the BOT was deferred.

Carol:
For 2012/13 Academic Affairs is in good shape. However, the 2013/14 may still be a difficult budget year. Carol reported on the A2E2 fee. She indicated that the fee could go to $120.00 next year. Kris has projected that we will get around 3.2 million from A2E2 fees. The 3.2 million will be allocated as follows: Freshmen clickers ($60k); Enhanced Course Learning (426.8K); Enhanced Instructional Related Activities (550K); and, university wide activities and programs (UAP) (1.13M). Colleges are getting higher dollar amounts than they did from older model of course fees. The 1.13M allocated to the UAP will be allocated to a host of sub-categories (e.g., College-based advising centers; peer mentoring program; student academic support; intensive mentoring and advising; service learning/internal internships and career advising; Student Research Academy; and, co-curricular transitional support). Carol’s handout includes a specific breakdown of each sub-category under UAP. Pat requested that the handout be placed on the COBRA Website. Historically, the bulk of IRA funding, which is now EIRA, has gone to CLASS; the A2E2 Committee is encouraging faculty in other colleges to apply for these funds.

Meiling asked if Carol could find out and report to COBRA the timing of the call for RFPs for EIRA requests. It would also be a good idea to post the dates for RFPs on the Web site.

5. Old Business: Postponed until our next meeting
   a. Invitation Schedule
      i. James Houpis, Provost & VP, Academic Affair
      ii. Brad Wells, CFO & VP, Administration & Finance

6. New Business:
   a. COBRA’s role in participation regarding Planning for Distinction

We discussed what our role in PFD might look like. COBRA can make a recommendation to the Instructional Task Group noting that as the Committee on Budget and Resource Allocation, we should be notified of the criteria by which the redistribution of the 6 Mil will be made, and we should be notified of the dollar amounts redistributed and of the departments that will lose and receive funds. We also have a role to play in ensuring that the ranking criteria be based on quality of program and not just numbers (SCUs, SFRs, Enrollment, etc.). Criteria should be an honest assessment of programs and, thus, should not automatically result in multiple tiers.
It was suggested that we approach PFD Steering Committee Chair, Linda Dalton, and Instructional Task Group co-chairs, Nancy Mangold and Jose Lopez to request that we be notified and included in budgetary (reallocation of 6 Ml) decisions. Meiling suggested that we access and study any financial documents generated by the PFD committees; these should be on the PFD Web page.

Motion: Send Mitch Watnik a letter that COBRA will address to the Chair of the Instructional Steering Committee. The point of the letter is to clarify COBRAs role in PFD and to request that rankings consider the quality of programs in the development of criteria, and that the rankings do not result in an arbitrary hierarchy of programs. For example, in theory, if criteria are used to truly assess the quality of a program and what the program offers to the mission of the university, then 90% of programs could, in theory, fall into the same tier. However, if placing programs into a ranked hierarchy is predetermined then the development of criteria may not be objective.

Motion: Pat/Jim Vote: Passed
Carol indicated that a system wide e-mail on CSO was sent from Ruth Clare Black today. Meiling requests COBRA members read the memo, and if there are issues relevant to COBRA we will discuss next meeting.

b. Compilation of questions regarding KMPG financial statements

Jim moved that we move this to our next meeting. This motion passed.

7. Adjournment

10:55 a.m.