TO: The Academic Senate

FROM: Committee on Budget and Resource Allocation (COBRA)

SUBJECT: 10-11 Year-end Report to the Academic Senate and Recommendations to the President

PURPOSE: For Information to the Academic Senate

ACTION REQUESTED: Acceptance of the 10-11 Year-end Report and COBRA Recommendations

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
The primary activities of COBRA this year consisted of ongoing budget discussions. The committee investigated the new budget model created by the current Provost. The model provides a framework for funding the Colleges. It is still unclear to this committee how College departments will receive their respective budgets for next year. The committee collected information from current department Chairs about the state of each department; 12 Chairs responded to the request. The focus of UPABC has changed from budget to planning and assessment, and will now include the reporting of computer issues, as UIT has been disbanded.

Budget Discussions and Plans

This year has been the calm before the storm. The funding situation this year turned out not to be as bad as originally expected. The planned cuts that were put in place at the end of Spring Quarter 2010 set the University on a path that was not easily correctable in August and September, when the funding situation changed.

The new budget model presented to the University in the Fall and Winter Quarters was the focus of most of the discussion of COBRA this year. The Provost visited COBRA to present his new model for funding the Colleges. The model is presented in an EXCEL spreadsheet. Two more presentations of the model were made by Carol Reese, Senior Director of Academic Resources, to the committee. The color coded version of the spreadsheet used to present the model was easier to follow.

The new model represents the first time COBRA has received such a detailed explanation of the budgeting process. The new model gives formulas for the allocation of funds to each College. It can also be used to understand the funding of Academic Affairs, which is important to University faculty.

The COBRA Chair attended all UPABC meetings this year. The bylaws of this committee have been re-written. One major change in this committee (which in the past has been one of the main opportunities for COBRA to receive information directly from the Administration) was that the focus of the committee was going to expand from budget to planning and assessment. With the new budget model and these changes, COBRA will receive more insight into University planning.
COBRA expects that yearly presentations of the budget model, in Fall Quarter, from the Provost will provide a clearer picture of the state of the budget and funding within the University.

Another major change in UPABC for the future is that the computer advisory process on campus will be going through this committee. The former UIT has been disbanded, leaving the College-level Computer Advisory Boards without any clear membership on UPABC. This is a major change in the University.

All year we have been waiting to know the final funding that will be available for the CSU from the State of California. We know that there will be approximately a $500 million dollar cut to the system and a corresponding cut to our University. We are still unclear about the possibility of an additional $500 million dollar cut that will likely result if the Governor’s effort to extend some taxes is not approved. The most recent developments in Sacramento, as of May 15, 2011, seems to be that more tax dollars were collected this year than expected, thus the State budget situation is not as bad as originally thought. However, the budget for next year is still not complete.

COBRA sent the following survey, related to departmental increases and decreases that most directly impact faculty, to Department Chairs in order to collect information across the University.

From: Jackie Alnor <jackie.alnor@csueastbay.edu>
Sent: Fri, April 1, 2011 9:20:11 AM
Subject: Request to Chairs from COBRA

Dear Department Chair,

As Chair of COBRA, the Committee on Budget and Resource Allocation, I am writing to all Chairs on campus to request that you send COBRA a list of cuts that your department has received during the last two years and to ask if your department has received any additional resources during that same time period.

COBRA would like to provide this information as part of its year end report, Spring Quarter 2011. The hope is that with a single list in one document faculty governance will have a better accounting of the cuts made at the department level.

Please see the list of questions to guide your responses. We are looking for an overview only and anticipate that you will take no longer than 5 minutes to complete this. Please send your responses by clicking the Reply to button to send your responses directly.

Thank you,

REPLY TO:

Eric A. Suess, Chair of COBRA
eric.suess@csueastbay.edu

Questions:

1. What resources has your department lost during the last two years of the budget crisis?
2. Specifically has your department lost/gained any full-time tenure track faculty members? If yes, explain.

3. Specifically has your department lost/gained any long-term lecturers on a contract? If yes, explain.

4. Specifically has your department lost/gained any assigned time? If yes, explain.

5. Specifically has your department lost/gained any staff support? If yes, explain.

6. Specifically has your department lost/gained any budget funding? If yes, explain.

7. Specifically has your department discontinued/started any programs? If yes, explain.

8. Are there any other resources your department has lost/grained? If yes, explain.

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Summary:

Below is a list of the key items from the Departments across campus. This is an overall summary and not specific to any particular Department or College.

Question 1: loss of instructional funding, major courses not offered, FERPs not replaced, less lecturers, over capacity teaching, loss of graduate advising units, loss of budget S&S, using more grant money for operational purposes.

Question 2: gained on faculty member, losses to retirement with no full-time replacements

Question 3: cuts in course allocation

Question 4: loss of chair release time, loss of graduate advising, loss of program director

Question 5: loss of part-time staff, shared staff, bumped staff

Question 6: cuts to S&S, no travel

Question 7: started 2 programs, lost 2 programs

Question 8: course cuts, more independent studies, loss of student satisfaction, loss of reputation, gained one-time assessment funding

Other areas of concern:

The loss of the faculty voice in the use of computers and technology is an important change that needs to be reviewed by faculty governance. While this is not a key role of COBRA, this issue is important to all faculty.
The discontinuance and loss of programs needs to be monitored closely by the University to account for the direct impacts of the budget cuts that have been made.

**Unfinished Business**

- The current state of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Foundation, and Academic Affairs is still not clear. It is also unclear what the budget impacts will be as a result of these changes.
- The current state of Athletics is unknown. It is not clear what the future budget impacts will be, because of the move to a higher division.
- The current discussion of the requirement for students to purchase tablet computers is unclear. [recent report is that this issue will be decided by a faculty-student committee for Fall 2013]
- The possibility of additional increases in student fees is on the horizon.
- The fact that the University will be getting a new President and a new Chief Finance Officer are both important changes that will impact the future budget discussions.

**2010-11 COBRA RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT**

COBRA continues to recommend openness with and inclusiveness of the faculty in the University budget planning processes and with the budget cuts.

COBRA continues to encourage the enhancement of internal University communication of budget plans, priorities, and changes. A yearly presentation of the new budget model by the Provost is recommended. It is also recommended that important budgetary information communicated by the Provost to the Deans be consistently communicated to faculty governance, through COBRA, Senate, and ExComm, and directly to Department Chairs.

COBRA again advocates this year, in accordance with the President’s message to the campus community that identified the core functions of the University as “starting with direct instruction, student access, and academic quality” (CSUEB Communiqué, January 9, 2009), that instruction be the first and foremost consideration when the University budgets are being developed, modified, and implemented.

COBRA would like to thank the President for providing excellent appointees to the committee.