TO: Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

FROM: Committee on Budget and Resource Allocations (The Faculty Members of the Budget Advisory Committee)

SUBJECT: COBRA Survey Results

PURPOSE: Information item to the Executive Committee

ACTION REQUESTED: No action requested

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: At its meeting on October 21, 2005, COBRA adopted the attached Survey Results document and agreed to sent it to the Executive Committee as an information item and that it be posted to the web.
Faculty Involvement with Budget: Three Questions
COBRA Survey Results

October 12, 2005

Summary:
This report summarizes the results of a survey of CSUEB faculty conducted in Spring 2005 by the Committee on Budget and Resource Allocation (COBRA). The purpose was to judge whether faculty feel they have meaningful input into budget decision-making at CSUEB. The survey was sent by e-mail to all faculty members of all ranks through the dean’s of the colleges at the request of Provost Kelly. The response rate to the survey was low, with only 26 faculty members responding. Among those who did respond, there was a preponderance of opinion that they do not have meaningful input to budget decision-making. Among total respondents, 63% indicated that they are not given adequate opportunity for input, and 69% indicated that their input is not given weight in budgetary decision-making. Though there were insufficient data to differentiate opinions among ranks, tenured faculty had a higher response rate than any other group and a higher fraction (83%) responding they did not have meaningful input to budgetary decision-making. A better response rate would be needed to draw clear conclusions from the survey.

Survey description:
The survey asked the following three questions:

1. Are you given adequate opportunity for participation in budget-related issues? (Yes/No: Please explain.)
2. Is it your perception that your input is given weight in the decision-making process? (Yes/No: Please explain.)
3. Please share any observations on what is working well or needs improvement.

Results:
Twenty six responses were received via a combination of e-mail and paper mail. It is possible that some faculty who wanted to respond were unable to, as the e-mail account to which surveys were being sent went over quota for a while during the time when responses were being sent.

The table below documents the responses to the first two (yes/no) questions. Following the table are comment themes based on the explanations that accompanied these questions. They are presented as a single group (for both questions together) as there was so much overlap in the answers. The numbers in parentheses after themes indicate if more than one person made the same comment. Following that is a summary of comments made in response to question 3. The comments are paraphrased for brevity and to preserve anonymity.
Questions 1 & 2
(1) Are you given the opportunity for input? (2) Is it given weight?

Table documents all yes / no responses to the questions broken down by the rank of respondent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Lecturers n = 5</th>
<th>Prob. TT n = 5</th>
<th>Tenured n = 12</th>
<th>Chair n = 4</th>
<th>Total n = 26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CODE</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 1: Are you given the opportunity for input?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 (1 @depart level only)*</td>
<td>10 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 (1not @College)</td>
<td>17 (63%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One respondent answered this question yes at the department level but no at the college level. This response was therefore counted as both a yes and a no, effectively producing an additional ‘vote’ on this question.

Comment Themes from Questions 1 and 2

**Lecturers**
- No lecturer input (3)
- Given opportunity for input by department chair (1)

**Probationary TT**
- Lack of knowledge of the process
- Not informed about the process (2)
- No opportunity for input (3)
- “Huge problem at level of college decision-making”
- Administration apparently not interested in faculty input: “System-wide problem that emanates from CSUEB administrator attitudes and from the Chancellors office”
- Policies not consistently followed. Departments with very high SFR not supported despite SFR goals
- More transparency needed in budget decision-making

**Tenured**
- Administrator/Dean makes arbitrary decisions (2)
- Administration does not share information on budget with faculty
- Deans make decisions that directly contradict Academic Senate votes with no recourse for affected departments
- Not consulted/no opportunity (5)
- Too busy to participate
- Faculty not included/informed of larger budgets (3)
Chairs
• Chairs participate in decision making (2)
• Dean hands down budget to department chairs with little input (1)
• Only have input at the department level (1)

Question 3
What works? What doesn’t work?

The following paraphrase responses given to question 3. The codes after the comments indicate the responder’s rank according to the scheme given in the table, above.

What is working?
• Good communication with chair helps assure input. (L)
• COBRA seems to be working well. (T)
• The recent establishment of the two-tiered allocation process for tenure track hires. (C)
• The Dean is open with budget scenarios and seeks input of chairs in college-level decision making. (C)

What is not working:
• Administration appears to ignore CAPR/Senate decisions are whether to support programs. (Faculty input ignored) (T)
• Deans should be required to account for discretionary spending. (T)
• Faculty are jaded about giving input on budget matters they have so little input to the major budget decision-making. The budgets over which they have control are trivially small. (T)
• Faculty are over-worked. Retired faculty need to be replaced more rapidly. (T)
• Faculty need to be more involved in budgetary decision-making at higher administrative levels. (C)
• Lecturers need to be included more in budgetary decision-making as they carry so much of the teaching burden. Not doing so breeds distrust. (L)
• Nothing in the consultative process works well, because the process is non-existent. (T)
• Should be transparency in budget-decision-making. Faculty do not know where money is going. (T)
• The existing system has problems maintaining faculty, admitting, registering, and evaluating students. (C)
• The governance structure at CSUEB does not empower faculty. (P)
• Want more real participation of faculty in budgetary decisions. (T)

Comments directed specifically to COBRA
• COBRA is not communicating with the faculty well enough. (C/T)
• COBRA should inform other faculty of discussion and decisions. (P)
• COBRA should e-mail minutes of meetings to faculty to keep them informed. (P)
• COBRA should e-mail short “action/issue/reports to faculty and staff once or twice a year to keep them informed. (T)

Conclusions:
Although the preponderance of opinion among the survey respondents is that faculty do not have meaningful input to budgetary decision-making at CSUEB, the Committee felt that we could not draw firm conclusions based on the results. Though the data are suggestive, with only 26 faculty members responding, the sample is small, particularly given possible bias among respondents. Specifically, the Committee felt that those with complaints may be more likely to respond. Clearly a higher response rate is necessary to draw clear conclusions. It is unclear at this time if and how it will be practical to pursue that goal.

A number of respondents identified the creation of COBRA as a positive indicator of increased faculty input to budgetary decision-making. At the same time four respondents expressed dissatisfaction over the lack of communication between COBRA and the faculty. That is, they could not tell if COBRA had made any real difference and still felt left out of the process. Specific suggestions were made for improvement in communications between COBRA and faculty that the Committee will consider implementing in 05/06.