Minutes of the Meeting of May 20, 2004

Members present: Kevin Callahan, Susan Gubernat, Jiansheng Guo, Vish Hegde, Michael Strait (Chair), Helen Zong

Members Absent: Judy Clarence, Chris Lubwama, Gloria M. Rodriguez, Gale Young (Presidential Appointee)

2004-05 CAPR members: Kim Geron, Michelle La Centra, Efren Padilla

Guests: Iliana Holbrook, Julie Norton

Chair Strait called the meeting to order at 2:10pm. The 2004-05 CAPR was unable to hold an organizational meeting due to lack of a quorum. They will vote for a Chair and Secretary via email.

1. Approval of the Agenda
   The agenda was accepted. “Environmental Science” was corrected to “Environmental Studies.”

2. Approval of the minutes of May 6, 2004
   Strait had several changes including changes submitted by Young concerning the report of the Presidential Appointee. The amended minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Report of the Chair
   CAPR member Rodriguez has resigned from CAPR effective immediately. She is taking a new position at UC Davis. Chair Strait introduced the new members of the 04-05 CAPR. Padilla is also replacing Patterson for the remainder of Spring 2004. CAPR agreed to meet again on June 3, 2004.

4. Report of the Presidential Appointee
   No report.

5. Continued Discussion of the Mass Comm/Speech Comm Five-Year Review
   Gubernat expressed concern that the Mass Comm/Speech Comm review process did not include an outside reviewer. Strait pointed out that CAPR had agreed to this last Fall, because this program was new this year. The lack of an outside reviewer and the rational behind it should be noted in Gubernat’s report.
   Gubernat said that it is important for CAPR and the faculty to recognize that the merger of these two programs was not done for pedagogical reasons but for pragmatic, administrative reasons. This was not faculty generated. It has yet to be seen whether this merger will be
academically successful or not. Guo reminded CAPR that Chair Pym previously reported that though the communications faculty was originally resistant to the merger, they have been working to ensure that the program is successful and now have a more optimistic outlook. Callahan wondered which body within the University decides on such mergers and to what degree the faculty participates in such decisions or is notified and invited to give input. Norton pointed out that the decision was made by the Administration and that ExComm and Senate were notified.

Gubernat said that she has real concerns that this merger and lack of tenure-track faculty is putting undue burden on the faculty. The faculty is stretching themselves thin by agreeing to put in extra hours in order to launch the new MA program, while at the same time having to offer a large number of independent study courses. There is also pressure to move to larger lecture format courses instead of a discussion format. This may negatively impact the quality of the academic program. Guo observed that a large number of courses are taught by lecturers and that the lecturer ration is too high.

Strait agreed that these findings and concerns should be included in CAPR’s report. Also, requests for new faculty positions will be strengthened by the inclusion of data and using that data to make the case that new faculty members will positively impact students’ ability to earn their degrees. The Legislature is interested in seeing data, such as time to degree. Guo expressed concern that institutional data is sometimes inaccurate or does not take into account important details, such as a faculty member who is in an administrative position instead of teaching or contributing to academic programs. Norton suggested that department Chairs keep their own data. Strait pointed out that institutional data is based on certain definitions and that the department Chairs have to rebut or explain this data in light of their department’s particular circumstances.

Discussion will be continued at the next meeting of CAPR.

6. Discussion of MLL Five-Year Review

Chair Strait pointed out that there is still a department vs. program confusion in the Five-Year review process. CAPR reviews programs and not departments. The review of the Spanish and French programs was postponed from 2002-03. The original materials, which were submitted in 2002-03, were missing a self-study and a plan for the future of the programs. Chair Holbrook submitted these documents in 2003-04. Holbrook was then invited to comment on the review process.

Chair Holbrook said that it was difficult taking over as Chair of the MLL department and picking up the CAPR review midstream. She said that her department is in an awkward situation. There are many lecturers in her department. There is also a large ratio of FERPers to regular faculty. The average age of the faculty is over 68 years old. She is concerned that there are several vicious cycles in which the lack of regular faculty will negatively impact her department’s ability to maintain and update robust programs and to move in new directions as needed. There are only two regular faculty members that serve over 50% of the majors. Any meaningful advising has become difficult. The faculty isn’t available to participate politically in the University which negatively impacts the department’s representation.

Strait said that he strongly recommends continuing the Spanish program and recommending a new faculty position, though perhaps the French program should be discontinued or changed to a minor. Holbrook pointed out that they have asked for a Spanish position, who also knows French. In the future, they plan on requesting a position for a linguist.
The MLL department can make an important contribution to the bilingual issues on campus and in the community. She would also like to request a position in sign language.

Strait pointed out that Liberal Studies dropped its language requirement which has had a large impact on the MLL department. As a university, perhaps we should require a second language of all of our undergraduate majors. Callahan asked why Liberal Studies dropped this requirement. Holbrook said that the CCTC does not require a second language and requires a cap on the total number of units found in a major. Therefore, Liberal Studies dropped it in order to lower the unit count. She feels that this is a bad idea for future teachers in the state of California. Guo conjectured that the English department is currently losing majors to the Liberal Studies program because English requires a second language. He supports that idea of a university wide undergraduate language requirement. Strait said that CAPR could make such a recommendation.

In support of new tenure track positions, Holbrook said that SDSU’s French program increased their student numbers by 20% in one year because of new tenure track hires. The faculty here is not young. The department needs new blood to energetically lead and increase student numbers. Holbrook went on to say that if French is discontinued, then the university will offer only one degree in a foreign language, Spanish. She feels that this would be a travesty. Guo agreed that if we only play the numbers game, French seems to be fighting a losing battle. The bigger issue is what the university should offer. What type of institution do we want to be and how can we get there? Where do we want to commit our resources? Strait recognized that though we are reviewing two specific programs, we can and should comment on all of the other languages being offered by the MLL department and how they fit into the university’s mission. It is not clear how CAPR should approach these other issues which don’t show up within the two majors being currently reviewed by CAPR. Strait will prepare an action request to send to Senate.

CAPR will continue discussion of the Spanish and French programs at our next meeting.

7. Discussion of Workgroup – Revision of Policies and Procedures

Strait said that many of the changes have already been discussed by CAPR. In addition, much of what Strait has written is procedural and should not be controversial. The document “Protocols for CAPR Reviews” details the customary procedure of Five-Year reviews. The “Evaluation Response Form” is a tool to be used by CAPR as they go through the review process. These documents will be further discussed by CAPR at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Callahan
Secretary, pro tem