Minutes of the Meeting of May 6, 2004

Members Present: Kevin Callahan, Judy Clarence, Susan Gubernat, Jiansheng Guo, Chris Lubwama, Michael Strait (Chair), Gale Young, Helen Zong

Members Absent: Vish Hegde, Janet Patterson, Gloria M. Rodriguez

Guests: Carl Bellone, Saeid Motavalli, Julia Norton

Chair Strait called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda
   The Agenda was accepted.

   The Minutes were approved as submitted.

   Chair Strait thanked the committee for carrying on April 15 in his absence. He met with Julie Norton and Susan Correia to set priorities and clarify responsibilities for the remainder of the year. It was originally thought that CAPR would not need to approve the discontinuance of the option for MBA Operations Research, but a document in the 1980-81 Curricular Procedures Manual states that all discontinuances of majors or options must be approved by CAPR. The Anthropology review has been completed, and the paperwork sent on to ExCom and Senate. Art had originally requested a review this year even though they’re externally accredited. A note was sent to the chair, who replied that the external reviewer visited in April and is currently at work on a draft report. If it’s not available soon, they’ll request postponement. Environmental Studies, Music, Telecommunications and Liberal Studies (informally) have requested postponement. Reviews of the Communications Dept. and of the Special Majors program are in process. Six reviews are on schedule for this year; all programs except one are externally reviewed. Others are requesting adjustment in the cycle to coincide with their external reviews.

4. Report of the Presidential Appointee
   Young met with Provost Clark and with the Deans to examine the processes and outcomes of CAPR departmental and program reviews. She described the Deans’ sense that external reviewers frequently lack a CSUH perspective; CAPR must look at external reviews in light of our local situation, since the reviewer may not be knowledgeable about CSUH and its culture. Strait added that we also need to be attentive to complicity, to external reviewers who simply rubber-stamp everything we’re doing.) Further, the Deans say that the five-year reports must be evidence- and scholarship-based; and not begin with the “graveyard approach” in which the department over-emphasizes the loss of tenure-track faculty due to retirement, death, etc. Reports should highlight ways in which the department meets student learning needs, collects assessment data, examines outcomes, gives evidence of curricular response to market and discipline shifts, and looks closely at the knowledge base needed by the discipline. Additionally, the reports should provide evidence of analysis of the curriculum, comparing it system-wide to
similar programs. Evidence of cost-efficiency should be provided. The Deans are concerned that not all members of CAPR necessarily understand the issues and problems they (the Deans) face. Guo said he would welcome a lot more education, and others agreed that none of us thoroughly understands how the system works. Young believes that the Deans and CAPR should meet to discuss the five-year reviews. She further feels that after a five-year report has been submitted and CAPR has issued its response, the Dean and the department chair should meet with CAPR. That meeting should result in a memo indicating that the review has been considered, and outlining a plan for the future.

The Deans would like to see CAPR keep a strong focus on program quality and integrity; This doesn’t mean that costly programs should be dumped, but it would be helpful to develop criteria to decide if quality is worth the cost. The Deans welcome conversation with the chair and the external reviewer together at the beginning of the review process; perhaps also with COBRA.

Young and Norton met with the Provost to clarify the relationship of CAPR to COBRA. COBRA focuses fully on resources; CAPR’s responsibility is to evaluate the quality of a program, as well as student learning. Young asked if CAPR reports go to COBRA; Norton responded that COBRA members are so swamped that they wouldn’t have time to look at them. Strait stated that we’ll have a draft of more formal recommendations from the Academic Review COT at our next meeting.

Gubernat expressed concern that we’re asking for more transparency from the Deans about the part played by CAPR’s response to the 5-year reviews in the process by which they make faculty allocations. She feels as if “the monkey has gotten back on our backs” in terms of how our reviews fit into the tenure-track allocation process. Noting that her department was favorably reviewed by CAPR and had not had a new hire in 25 years, Norton reported that Statistics was able to hire a new faculty member. She feels CAPR is very important in the tenure-track allocation process.

Lubwama noted as a positive change the willingness of the Deans to create a template for external reviewers to follow. Young observed a new openness to CAPR’s part in the process, adding that in the past administrators have not paid much attention to the 5-year reviews, though faculty have found them valuable. Too frequently the reports end up gathering dust on a shelf, suggested Lubwama.

Guo wondered to what extent CAPR is responsible for recommendations for tenure-track hiring, and whether we should consider budget issues at all. Norton responded that we should not—those are the responsibilities of the Deans or the chairs, based on the CAPR report. As a department chair, she’d like to be able use a favorable CAPR review as ammunition for a new tenure track hire. She doesn’t feel CAPR should compare departments with one another. She appreciates a CAPR report that shows that she’s using her resources well.

According to Strait, these questions haven’t been adequately addressed. CAPR does its best to evaluate a program and help it improve, and that’s all we can do. Some kind of annual review update needs to be applied to annual budget decisions about hiring.

5. **Reconsideration of the request for discontinuance of the MBA Option in Operations Research.**
   This option is marked by very low enrollment. MSP unanimously to discontinue.
6. Engineering five-year review, outside-accredited program.

Because this program is externally reviewed, CAPR only needs to make recommendations, not a full report. Chair Motavalli stated that he expects a report from the external reviewer this summer. The reviewers gave an exit interview (not yet official) in which two suggestions were made: they would like to see assessment of external outcomes, such as how many graduates go on to graduate school and where they go, how many get jobs, and where, etc. The reviewers are also concerned that the size of the faculty seems insufficient to cover the program. (Another tenure track faculty member has recently been hired, so the report due this summer should look better.) Everything else was positive—an excellent program for one of its age. Motavalli expects a three-year report and six-year accreditation.

Lubwama asked whether it would be better to review a department undergoing external review before or after the external review is submitted. Strait and others agreed that it’s best to wait until we have the external reviewers’ final report. Callahan wondered whether we need to review a department after its 3-year report and again after the 6-year accreditation. Strait responded that the basic cycle is six years. In the case of Engineering, we’ll submit our review in the Fall, after we’ve received the external review—the next review will take place in six years.

MSP to delay CAPR’s review of Engineering program until Fall, after the formal report from the external reviewers is available.

7. Continued discussion of the Special Majors Five-Year Review.

Guo submitted his draft report, noting that the first part is a summary of Bellone’s report. Lubwama commented that he feels it’s more cost-effective to align procedures rather than evaluate every individual program.

Guo noted that we agreed to a suggestion (made by Gubernat at a previous meeting) to conduct a site visit. Strait would like the external reviewers to follow procedures for outcomes assessment. There were questions about whether special majors must be interdisciplinary—Bellone said yes. Should the program reviewers consist of subject specialists in the two disciplines? Or should they be procedural experts? Lubwama stated that we should appraise and review the procedures and how they are being followed.

It was decided by the group that external review should be sought from a person with experience in interdisciplinary studies and/or assessment of student learning outcomes.

MSP to continue the Special Majors program without modification.

Other agenda items were referred to the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Clarence
Secretary