Members Present: Dana Edwards, Kris Erway, Armando Gonzales, Bonnie Ho, Terry Kelly, José López (Chair), Saeid Motavalli, Bruce Trumbo

Members Absent: Karina Garbesi, Nancy Mangold, Don Wort

Visitors: Pablo Arreola, Norma Rees

1. Approval of the Agenda

Agenda approved with the addition of discussion of the TT hiring timeline document.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the April 1, 2005 Meeting

Minutes approved as corrected.

3. Report of Ad Hoc Committees:

Recovery Plan - Motavalli postponed this report until the next meeting, since the Committee hasn’t yet interviewed the Provost. A copy of the formalized interview results of the Committee will be sent to the COBRA Chair, which will complement the rough drafts sent out earlier to COBRA members.

Faculty Questionnaire - Ho discussed the background of the formulation of the questionnaire, stating that it had arose out of COBRA concerns about the lack of full faculty input into the discussions on faculty participation in the budget decision making process. COBRA members then discussed the three questions prepared by Garbesi and Ho. Ho pointed out the statement on the questionnaire that informs faculty that they are welcome to attend COBRA meetings. Trumbo expressed concern that the questionnaire might perpetuate the idea among faculty that TT hiring issues are all that they need be focused on, but that this focus leaves out other parts of the budget, such as technology funding in a Department. Should not the questionnaire make an inclusion for other concerns? Edwards suggested that the Yes/No response option for each question be dropped, which might encourage simple responses with less written input. López suggested maintaining the Yes/No response while adding “Please Explain,” and replacing “input” with “involvement” in questions 1 and 2.

Rees expressed concern that as the questionnaire reads, it is concerned with budget decision making in the University as a whole, while the COBRA/COC meetings were focused at the College level. Shouldn’t these questions focus on the process at the Department and/or College levels? López and
Ho noted this oversight and agreed that the questionnaire should be clearer in this regard. Arreola suggested a focus on the Department level, as a focus on the College level would likely result in less feedback. Discussion of this issue continued, until Chair López called a vote as to whether the questionnaire should specifically refer to the Department, College, or both Department and College levels. It was decided that it would refer to both Department and College levels. A vote was then taken to approve distribution of the questionnaire to faculty. Distribution was approved. Rees stated concern over how the results of this questionnaire might be interpreted. For example, if a faculty member was involved in a request for a position for which approval wasn’t granted, will he or she respond that they do not have adequate involvement in the process? Perhaps a definition of what is meant by “involvement” on the questionnaire might be an improvement. López felt that the questionnaire will be useful in developing general principles, even though there may be questions of interpretation. Trumbo felt that it is important to make a distinction between two kinds of decision making: (1) budgetary decisions and (2) non-budgetary decisions made by vote. The questionnaire will be revised before distributing to faculty.

4. Report of the Chair

López discussed future meeting dates for COBRA. It was decided that COBRA will hold a special meeting on May 27 to develop budget recommendations for submission to the President. COBRA will also meet for the last time in 04/05 after the BAC meeting on June 3. COBRA will also schedule a presentation to the Academic Senate sometime in May.

5. Tenure Track Allocation Process – Provost Jim Kelly (Vice Provost to present)

López has met with Jim Kelly and is under the understanding that the TT allocation process that was developed last year, which included the changes put in place by Provost Clark, is basically being pursued d this year as well. Arreola stated that these changes were in part a result of the high number of separations and retirements last year. Rees described how Clark had worked with the Deans in order to fund the 30 position requests that he had recommended. Arreola commented that the spirit of the new procedures is to streamline the process and regain losses in TT faculty. This goes hand in hand with WASC goals and increasing faculty input in the TT hiring process, and allows the University to move in the direction of an ideal 75% faculty to 25% lecturer ratio in the future, as budget conditions allow. Rees added that this ratio is from the ACR 73 Report. Another goal is to complete recruitment earlier in order to better compete with other institutions.

For Fall 2005 there are currently 30 searches underway, 13 in ALSS, 4 in B&E, 5 in E&AS, 7 in SC, and 1 in University Library. Rees pointed out that searches are not always successful. Arreola added that there are additional position requests planned for Fall 2006. Kelly asked if approved positions automatically roll over to the following year when searches are not successful. Arreola responded that there is no automatic rollover, but that it would again go through the discussion and request process. In most cases, the positions remain. They do not count as new positions in the following year. Rees added that in many of these situations Departments have revised job descriptions for the next round of the process. Kelly asked that even if there is not an automatic rollover of a position, would there be an automatic rollover of the funds for a position within the Department? Arreola responded that since the funding resides at the College level, there is no such automatic rollover of funds. In these cases the money would stay in the College, and the Deans...
could use it for lecturers or salary savings. Rees pointed out that the success rate for searches at CSUEB is one of the highest in the CSU system. Arreola stated that about 80% of offers are accepted, and mentioned the faculty recruitment survey which proves feedback on the process. He said the PERS retirement benefits are a major factor in acceptance.

Rees spoke of the upcoming May Revise of the Governor’s Budget, and mentioned two factors worth keeping in mind: the state revenues have improved over projections, and the pressure to deal with the State’s budget deficit still may adversely affect the Compact. Regarding TT hiring, the Campus will know how many separations there will be by June 30th, after which the second round of new positions can be authorized. Arreola pointed out that the debate over FERP in current contract negotiations may have a major effect on separations, depending on the status of FERP in the next contract. The CSU is proposing the complete elimination of the FERP program.

Arreola pointed out that Round 1 hiring is an attempt to replace the separations since July 1, 2004. As part of this process, there are 19 positions allocated for Fall 2006: 8 in ALSS, 5 in B&E, 2 in E&AS, 3 in SCI, and 1 in the University Library. Round 2 will begin in July when we know the number of separations and can begin the process for approval of new positions. Round 2 will likely involve fewer positions than in Round 1, due to the large number of retirements resulting from the Golden Handshake offer the last year.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Dana Edwards, Secretary