Approved Minutes of the Meeting of October 5, 2007

Members Present: Kris Erway, Judith Faust, Karina Garbesi, Janet Logan, Jose Lopez, Nancy Mangold, Susan Opp, Eric Suess,

Members Absent: Replacement for Mayling Chu, Replacement for Steve Ugbah, Armando Gonzales

Visitors: Shawn Bibb, Bill Dinehart, Mark Karplus, Hank Reichman

1. Approval of the Agenda

Amendments: Omit #3 Budget Report, Add new #4 Goals for the Next Year (approved as amended)

2. Chair’s Report

Changes in COBRA membership are required because Mayling Chu is unable to serve year one of her four year term due to membership on FAC for 07-08, and Steve Ugbah has a teaching conflict. Nancy Mangold will need a one quarter replacement for Spring 08 while she is on sabbatical. CLASS will need to elect a replacement for Chu; CBE will be consulted about a replacement for Ugbah; EXCOM will appoint a replacement for Mangold.

Garbesi led a discussion on the function of COBRA both for the edification of new members and to remind continuing members. COBRA makes recommendations and observations to the Senate and has annually made reports to the President. In addition, five members of COBRA serve on UPABC (University Planning, Assessment and Budget Committee), the Chair plus four additional members, as determined by COBRA. The three main areas (“the 3 P’s”) of COBRA function involve development of principles, policies and procedures of budget allocation with particular reference to the role of faculty.

3. Election of UPABC members

Last year, the decision was made to have the more senior members of COBRA serve on UPABC, but the membership on COBRA for 07-08 will necessitate having one or more new members of COBRA serve on UPABC as well. A discussion ensued regarding determination of UPABC membership.

M/S/P Mangold/Suess – Faculty representation on UPABC from members of COBRA should include one member from each college and the library for 07-08.
Therefore, the more senior members on COBRA (Garbesi from CLASS, Lopez from CEAS, Mangold from CBE, and Opp from SCI) plus the representative from the Library (Faust) were elected to membership on UPABC. All COBRA members are encouraged to attend UPABC meetings which are generally held on Fridays at the same time as (and occasionally supersede) COBRA meetings. Garbesi will ask to have all COBRA members included on the distribution list for UPABC meeting emails. All UPABC information presented at meetings is sent to the Provost’s office in soft copy and in the future may be put on Sharepoint to be available to all.

The day/time of the next UPABC meeting is in a state of flux due to WASC activities. Garbesi will update COBRA members when this is straightened out.

UPABC meeting schedule for 07-08: October 28, October 19 (tentative), November 9, December 14, January 11, February 22, March 14, April 25, May 23.

4. Goals for COBRA for next year

COBRA members were reminded of the need to begin to work with Colleges to develop means for faculty participation in budgetary decision-making at the College level. The need also exists to develop principles for faculty participation in decision-making regarding how to spend end-of-year funds, especially since these decisions would typically occur in summer when COBRA does not meet. This past year, surplus funds were allocated using the 7 Mandates as the guiding principles. Two different types of surplus funds exist, those that revert to the university as a whole and those that stay within units; these two types of funds would have different working principles of allocation.

05-06 COBRA 2 established goals for budget documents and requests for information because at that time the budget documents were very difficult to interpret by faculty and others. The desire is for documents that include more analysis, including trends over time, benchmarks using comparison data, and performance indicators. The general idea was to determine what money is needed for and why to understand what an appropriate level of funding is for various functions. Administrative units are still working on developing benchmarks and performance indicators at this time; some units are on the second draft, some on the first draft. The goal by the administration is to have dashboards available in the future to give real-time information about how well units are doing within general bounds. Right now, the goals and objectives of the units are being gauged based on the 7 Mandates. The priority divisions for faculty regarding budget allocations and dashboard indicators are Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and PEM.

Discussion ensued about whether or not CSUEB is moving away from paper budgets to electronic budgets that would only allow queries but would not provide overall reports. We now have financial reporting software that can be queried by any employee for any unit, which can report data in many different ways, depending on what you want to see. Information is desired that can be used for planning, rather than just instantaneous budget
and expenditures information. UPABC provides direction for planning and allocations, more than COBRA does.

Currently and for the next 2-3 years, the overall budget process of the University is fairly straightforward; the structural deficit makes the budget pretty formulaic, given the identified mandates, in order to close the deficit in 2-3 years. It was suggested the focus of COBRA should involve two main areas: 1) development of policies and principles of budget allocation for Academic Affairs, the primary unit that affects faculty, and 2) development of policies and principles for allocation of one-time (surplus or roll-over) funds. Performance measures are also needed for units other than Academic Affairs in order to have appropriate budgetary checks and balances, but it will take a few years to get this completed.

5. Next meeting will be October 18 or 19, depending on WASC and UPABC meetings. Garbesi will update everyone.

6. Adjourn M/S/P