CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, EAST BAY  
COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND RESOURCES ALLOCATION  
Draft Minutes of the COBRA Meeting of Friday, May 15, 2009

Members Present: Dennis Chester, Kris Erway, Judith Faust, Armando Gonzales, Gary Li, Janet Logan, Nancy Mangold, Sue Opp (Chair), Eric Suess, Ke Zou

Members absent: Jeanette Bicais, Steve Ugbah

Guests: Cal Caplan

1. Approval of the agenda - MSA

2. Approval of the minutes of 4/24/09 with minor changes. - MSA

3. Report of the Chair
   
   The chair asked members to introduce themselves and say whether or not they would be on next year's committee, since this is the organizational meeting for next year's COBRA group. Gary Li of Geography & Environmental Sciences was the only new member present. Nancy Mangold announced that she would be unable to serve on COBRA next year, because she has been chosen to be the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Academic Fellow next year - one of only 4 faculty members in the U.S. chosen. COBRA members congratulated Dr. Mangold on this honor. She will be working in the Office of the Chief Accountant on issues related to U.S. accounting standards (GAAP, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles), and international accounting standards (IFRS, International Financial Reporting Standards). Dr. Mangold said she would ask her colleagues in CBE to volunteer for COBRA membership - one to replace Steve Ugbah who is going off next year, and someone to replace her for one year.

   Chair Opp explained that COBRA terms are for 4 years and chair terms are supposed to be for 2 years, though those term lengths could shorten if in faculty elections more than 50% of the faculty will vote and approve an amendment to Senate Bylaws. She briefly discussed the role of COBRA in inviting guests from divisions, colleges, the library to present on budgetary measurements in their areas, and the year-end report which goes to the Senate. She also said that she meets several times a year with the President and Provost.

   COBRA elected new officers for 2009-2010: for Chair, Eric Suess of Statistics, and for Secretary, Janet Logan of Educational Psychology.

   Chair Opp reminded us of the Budget Update Forum, Thursday, June 4, 2-3 pm in the New University Union, Multipurpose Room.

   Next UPABC is May 29 at 10 am in the PCR. Potential meeting times for COBRA, if needed, are May 22 or June 5.

4. Report of the Presidential Appointees - None

5. Old Business
   
a. Year-end Report and Recommendations to the President - draft

   Chair Opp reminded COBRA that we are trying to finish our Year-end report to the Senate so that it actually gets to the Senate before the end of the Spring Quarter. She explained changes that were made at the last meeting, including the insertion of the paragraph on the first
page, to give a better picture of why certain people came to COBRA this year. Unfinished business includes a need to meet with the Athletics Director, Debby De Angelis, to discuss budgeting in Athletics as we move to Division II; an update on the CSU-wide matrix survey of building use in the CSU mentioned at the Facilities Planning & Operations presentation; quantified, clearly described budgets and action plans from University units as well as the University as a whole; and a need for better access and instruction on budgetary and financial databases so that faculty may fully participate in budgetary discussions.

A new section of the document under COBRA Recommendations for the President recommended that if UPABC meetings occur in Summer 2009, the previous year’s members of UPABC be included, since new faculty representatives for UPABC for 09-10 won’t be determined until the first meeting of COBRA in the fall. Also recommended was that the President or his designee confer with the Chairs of the Senate and COBRA if any significant budget cuts become necessary during the summer.

A motion was made by Nancy Mangold, seconded by Judith Faust, that COBRA accept the Year-end Report. There was unanimous approval.

6. New Business
   a. Summer budget changes and shared governance

   Chair Opp mentioned again that at a meeting of the Statewide Academic Senate she attended that we at CSUEB are in better shape than many other CSUs regarding budget transparency and shared governance. She asked Cal Caplan if he thought it was true that the reason COBRA exists is because of a prior lack of communication.

   Caplan said that as a result of CSUEB statewide senators’ discussions with other campuses, he has observed that most of the other campus faculties lack opportunities to understand budget processes. Over the 9 years that he has been on statewide senate, he has heard horror stories about the lack of communication on other campuses. While EB faculty are not always involved in budget decisions, at least we are given the opportunity to ask questions, even if we didn’t always know what to ask. And our faculty embraced the idea of COBRA as a new standing committee. He said our new administration is very different in every respect; the amount of cooperation and leadership is the envy of many campuses. Six years ago, our statewide senators were asking many questions of many other CSUs – now there is a long line of campuses that have started asking us questions. There has not been a lot of progress on other campuses – only two other campuses are ahead of us this way.

   Chair Opp said she has been pretty impressed with UPABC – she encourages faculty members to speak up there. She said there are strengths faculty can bring to UPABC and faculty members will also have a better idea of what the deans are saying.

   The final Senate meeting is June 2.

7. Adjournment – MSA

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Faust
COBRA Secretary