Notes from Department Chairs Meeting, April 24, 2007

The Associate Dean, Department Chairs, and the Director of Resource Management met from 10:00 AM - noon.

James Tarbox, Iris Mehler, and Brianna Koucos from Career Services came to the meeting. Iris is moving to the Bay Area at the end of the semester. Brianna will be taking Iris’s place as the contact person to the CBA.

Sandi Williams has created Blackboard homerooms designated by major codes for all CBA undergraduate students. This will allow for a more direct and efficient communication with CBA students. Sandy spoke to the Chairs about how this will work and protocol for messages to be sent to students.

Last week, Gail, Jim, Randy Carmical, Nancy Kavanaugh, Chris Graham, and Karen Courtney met to discuss the effectiveness of the CBA web site for the various graduate programs, both state-support and self-support. This was designed to follow up and to seek the chairs’ feedback. Nancy came in to discuss this. Randy was supposed to join her, but he is serving jury duty.

Nancy reported that on the CBA web site, there are 235,000 page loads and 61,000 visitors per quarter, of which about 80% are from outside the system. The chairs discussed the difference in needs for web content for the self-support program as opposed to the state-support program. One issue discussed was the introduction of dynamic content to give a newness to the web pages when people log in on multiple occasions. The chairs all feel that they have a good working relationship with Nancy, and thought a separate meeting to discuss the needs of the web site would be appropriate.

Deb Tomic discussed the salaries for the Fall 2007 faculty hires, assuming the proposed CFA contract is ratified.

Deb also mentioned that we received money from the Provost for tenured/tenure-track faculty development. The money will be distributed to the departments to be spent by June 30. The money cannot be used for faculty stipends but can be used for travel, student assistants, equipment, software, data collection, memberships, or subscriptions.

Jim and Gail recently met with VP Ethan Singer to discuss the current situation in the college regarding the reduction of GA funding, class sizes, and tenured/tenure-track to lecturer ratios. Jim distributed copies of the tables that were presented at the meeting which illustrate some of the numbers of the CBA. Jim and Gail will meet again with Ethan and the Provost to address some solutions which can also speak to accreditation issues.

Jim, Joe, and Bruce met twice since the last Executive Committee meeting to work on the Assigned Time Policy. The chairs will bring the new policy draft to the departments for feedback.
There was a brief discussion on college support to student organizations. We are not allowed to use state funds for this activity. A concern was raised in that when a student organization brings in distinguished speakers which support an academic program, this enhances the student experience. Deb will look into how situations like this can be handled.

Jim noted to the Chairs that when he sent out the announcement for the Faculty Development Plans, he neglected to include the FERP faculty members in the group required to fill out a plan. He asked the Chairs to contact their FERP faculty members to ask them to do so.

Chairs were asked to start thinking about their faculty position requests to recruit for 07/08. While we need to have our information to the Provost by the end of May, we are going to submit a college coordinated request, so we need the information earlier.

Chairs were asked to get Jim their summer vacation schedules once they know them. As we continue to meet approximately every two weeks during the summer, alternating Chairs and Executive Committee meetings, these will be coordinated around availability. Jim will try to schedule these around Gailís availability, so that she can attend (she was at an AACSB Deans meeting today). It was also suggested that an agenda item for each Executive Committee meeting should be reports from the Dean and Program/Center Directors with updates on key strategic issues.

Jim reported briefly on Aztec Shops book orders. They seem to be earlier this year and Aztec Shops has contacted Lecturers about book orders for Fall 2007. The chairs were not happy about this request to the Lecturers. As Lecturers who are not on three-year contracts are hired year-to-year, and decisions are normally not made until after teaching evaluations have been reviewed after the close of the semester. Jim has a meeting scheduled with Todd Summer (Aztec Shops) and Bonnie Zimmerman on Wednesday to discuss this issue.