Notes from Department Chairs Meeting, March 4, 2008

The Associate Dean, Department Chairs, and the Director of Resource Management met from 10:00 AM to 12:20 PM in the Dean's Conference Room.

David Ely joined us at the beginning to discuss issues related to the new MBA program which will begin in Fall 2008. There is already considerable interest among current MSBA students in switching over to the program, and this will create additional demand for the new MBA theme classes. The new MBA program may eliminate the need for many of the MSBA concentrations. David will be tracking the demand for future discussions about this. Even in the long run we will keep some of the MSBA concentrations on the books because not all concentrations fit into the MBA structure or because they facilitate offering programs outside the US.

David has been working on advising sheets for each concentration. He distributed one that he made for Finance and it was well-received by the group.

With the waiveable core in the new MBA program, there was a discussion about the standards to be applied when evaluating requests for course waivers. Per the CBA Graduate Committee, for a core course to be waived, an equivalent course must have been taken at an AACSB school within the past 5 years and a grade of B or higher must have been earned in the course. Challenge exams will also be available to students to demonstrate competence in an area. David will be working with each department to establish appropriate protocol to administer the challenge exams. Demand for MBA core courses will also need to be carefully tracked as we implement the new program.

There was also a discussion about each department’s desire to use 790 as an alternative or in addition to BA 795 for MBA students. The Management Department feels strongly about having MGT 790 as the capstone experience, rather than BA 795. With the anticipated additional numbers of students shifting from the MSBA program to the MBA program, each department will need to determine what they would like to do with regard to the capstone class, as this could create additional demand for BA 795.

Gangaram Singh has decided to step down as Chair of the Management Department, effective the end of the semester. While we are still awaiting official paperwork, we are all appreciative of the many good things that Gangaram accomplished during his four years as chair. Gail and Jim will meet with the Management department faculty on Friday to discuss the process of selecting a new chair.

As we have moved to electronic student evaluations of faculty and courses, we have used an instrument that has had additional items (Q8-Q13) which allow faculty to ask their classes additional items beyond the standard 7 items on the instrument. After polling the Chairs, it appears that only a minimal number of faculty are requesting these additional items from their classes. Given that information, Joyce asked Enrollment Services to make a second instrument, which does not have any additional items, and to make this the default instrument for the college.
We are hoping this will be done for this semester's evaluations. Faculty who would still like to use the instrument which contains Q8-Q13 just need to notify Joyce for which classes they would like to use this, and she will ask Enrollment Services to include that instrument for those specific classes.

Jim summarized the discussion on the graduate fee from the meeting two weeks ago in Sacramento with the other CSU Business School Deans and Associate Deans. Keith Boyum from the Chancellor's office attended the meeting.

Jim reminded the chairs that lecturer evaluations and periodic evaluations (post-tenure review) are due on March 20.

Gail, Deb, and Jim recently received a revised estimate of the funding and FTE reductions anticipated for next year from Academic Affairs. We have been funded for the FTE targets for next year, and then asked to reduce the college general fund by $650,000 (the initial estimate a few weeks ago was $579,000) from that total funding. Deb put together a spreadsheet for the group, showing what the fixed costs were for next year with the tenured, tenure-track and FERP faculty, and commitments to 3-year full-time lecturers. The remaining dollars are used to hire part-time lecturers, GTAs, and GAs.

As we are in the midst of scheduling for Fall 08, Kelly brought the most current schedule based on the changes each chair has been making since our last round of budget discussion. This has not been an easy process, but at this stage, each chair has made adjustments in the schedule which help us achieve our FTE and budget targets for Fall 08. We are not there yet, but Jim will work with Kelly and the chairs to further refine the schedule per the FTE and budget considerations.

The next round of budget information from Academic Affairs is expected after the May revise. We will be meeting at some point on a Friday morning prior to that to further discuss the budget strategies and Spring 09 scheduling, and how to handle reductions for next year should the May revise result in additional cuts.

We discussed how we might be able to separate the academic budgets for each departments, so that departments could capture the cost savings from making changes to their programs that benefit the college.