COBA Steering Committee Meeting
September 24, 2004

Minutes

Present:  Swaminathan Badrinath
     Jim Beatty
     Chee Chow
     Gail Naughton
     Fred Raafat
     Massoud Saghafi
     Howard Toole
     Bob Wilbur

Excused:

1. Jim Beatty, Chair, called the meeting of the Steering Committee to order at 1:03pm on September 24, 2004, in the Dean’s Conference Room.

2. The minutes of the 09/10/2004 meeting were discussed, moved, seconded, and approved (unanimous) with minor changes.

3. The meeting agenda for September 24, 2004, was reviewed and approved, with several modifications. The Committee decided to only address those items that needed immediate attention at this meeting and then spend the remainder of the time to 2:00pm discussing the retreat and next steps in the planning process. The Committee also agreed to meet with both Bob Capettini and with the Executive Committee for a time-certain from 2:00-2:30pm to discuss the results of the retreat and the next steps (as noted below).

4. The Steering Committee discussed the curriculum proposal from the Department of Marketing, which was forwarded from the Department to the Undergraduate Committee, and approved by the Undergraduate Committee. The Steering Committee moved, seconded, and approved (unanimous) the curriculum proposal to allow COMM 565 as an elective in the Marketing Major/IMC Specialization. Committee members raised the issue of adding a line to the “Supplemental Curriculum Information Form” that would include an indication of whether a proposal has been approved by the Department as well as by the Department Chair prior to being forwarded to the next committee.

5. Dean Gail Naughton reported that she and Associate Dean Bob Wilbur had met with the College’s Advisory Board several days after the retreat. The meeting was very well attended by board members, who expressed a real concern about faculty shortages, FTE concerns, recruiting and retention issues, and other related matters that were emphasized in the retreat. Members of the Advisory Board plan to request a meeting with President
Steve Weber and/or Provost Nancy Marlin in the near future to discuss these concerns.

6. The Committee then discussed approaches and timelines for the next step in building on the efforts of the faculty retreat. The conclusion of the Committee was that the retreat generated useful information for moving forward. Considerable debate followed regarding formats for the next step. One approach discussed was to create four task forces or committees to focus on the various issues, including a) self-support, b) undergraduate, c) graduate, and d) faculty concerns and organizational structure. Another approach discussed was to create several task forces or committees to discuss the broader areas of concern for the College, and then to bring these groups together to share ideas. Committee members raised concern that a task force might consist of only members favorable to the area (or unfavorable to the area) and thus might not truly represent the entire College. Throughout the discussions, the Committee emphasized the importance of integration and frequent reality checking of any task forces created, regardless of the process. The discussion eventually focused on the first option AND to have these same task forces also regularly meet as a body of the whole (all members of all task forces) to ensure the thoughts and recommendations of the task forces would be compatible in light of recommendations of the other task forces. The Steering Committee noted that considerable checks-and-balances must be in place in order for these task forces to be effective, that issues can be prioritized, and that all concerns can be heard.

7. It was moved, seconded, and approved (five “yes,” one “no,” and one “abstention”) for the following working assumption: Four groups will be formed, based on the four focus areas at the retreat: a) self-support, b) undergraduate, c) graduate, and d) faculty concerns and organizational structure. These groups will then meet as a body of the whole to compare recommendations and to resolve conflicts. Faculty members will again be polled as to what task force(s) they are willing to serve.

8. The Committee then discussed the purpose and composition of the task forces. It was concluded that the strategic plan is intended to go beyond being a document generated for AACSB purposes; instead, it should be created to provide guidance for the College’s future. Further, the composition of the task forces/committees should consist of tenure/tenure-track faculty members.

9. Target dates for the completion of these task forces, the work of the task forces of the whole, and the final recommendations of a strategic plan for the College were discussed. The Dean suggested a target date sometime in early May 2005.

10. The tenure/tenure-track faculty will receive a request to volunteer in this process and to rank their first and second choices for task forces, based on this model.
11. Dean Naughton reaffirmed her support for the development and for the implementation of a strategic plan for the College.

12. The Committee then invited both Bob Capettini and the Executive Committee to join the meeting of the Steering Committee.

13. Bob Capettini had offered to take the lead in arranging a discussion with President Weber and/or Provost Marlin regarding budgetary, staffing, FTE, and accreditation concerns, as discussed at the retreat. He suggested that such a discussion would be designed to be a one-time event, with a rather narrow focus on the issue(s). The President/Provost should be provided with information and objectives in advance in order to make the session effective. He, the Steering Committee, and the Executive Committee discussed whether this should be the entire faculty or whether a special task force should be selected to meet. One suggestion was to have a smaller group of faculty, including those who were knowledgeable in the issues, the AACSB requirements, and the constraints the current situation have imposed, as well as the Dean. The intent is that this discussion should be a joint and united effort by both the faculty and the administration of the College. The Committee thanked Bob for these efforts and noted it would ask him to meet with the Committee again to finalize a strategy for such a meeting.

14. The Executive Committee also met with the Steering Committee, with a time-certain from 2:00-2:30. The Executive Committee expressed its support for the faculty efforts and its commitment to the long-term success of strategic planning. Members of the Executive Committee agreed to help in whatever way they can to achieve a successful strategic plan for the College.

15. The Steering Committee and the Executive Committee then agreed to send out a joint communication to the faculty endorsing a spirit of cooperation in the achievement of this objective.

16. The Committee reconvened as a Steering Committee to build on these discussions. The Committee agreed in spirit to increase the length of the meeting times by an additional half-hour in the future.

17. Members of the Steering Committee again emphasized the importance of having minutes of the Executive Committee distributed to the faculty in a timely manner.

18. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be October 8, 2004, from 1:00-3:00pm, in the Dean’s Conference Room.

19. The meeting was adjourned at 3:25pm.