COBA Steering Committee Meeting  
April 8, 2005  

Minutes  

Present:  Jim Beatty  
Swaminathan Badrinath  
Bill Baker  
Chee Chow  
Massoud Saghafi  
Gail Naughton  
Jim Lackritz  

Excused:  Fred Raafat  

1. Jim Beatty, Chair, called the meeting of the Steering Committee to order at 1:05pm on April 8, 2005, in the Dean’s Conference Room.  

2. The minutes of the March 11, 2005, meeting were moved, seconded, and approved with minor changes.).  

3. The meeting agenda for April 8, 2005, was reviewed and approved.  

Old Business  

4. In regard to the status of a facility for retired faculty, Jim Lackritz reported that he is still waiting to hear from Tony Fulton’s office regarding estimated costs. Jim will update the Steering Committee and the Professional Development Committee whenever new information becomes available.  

5. Jim Lackritz and Bill Baker reviewed the activities of the team that is writing the strategic plan for the College. Jim and Bill reported that the committee assigned to finalize this effort is making progress and that Mickey Belch, Bill Baker, Heather Honea, Dave Ely, and Debra Bertram have been extremely helpful. Debra has pulled together staff information and a SWOT analysis that provide a broader basis for strategic planning.  

6. Badri reported on the progress of the “ad hoc Committee for Addressing the Central Administration.” Badri and Bob Capettini met with Allan Bailey to gain additional insights. Allan supported most of the data presented and suggested other useful documentation. He suggested that ways be identified to obtain additional funding in the hiring process, including external funds, if possible. When the question arises as to “whether we can hire,” the answer appears to be “yes,” since we have been able to hire new faculty recently. The Steering Committee, however, pointed out it is a more difficult matter to determine whether we are able to and will be able
to maintain the quality of new hires, not just obtaining new hires. It is also important to address retention of highly talented faculty, in addition to hiring new faculty. Jim Lackritz noted that our current FTE is approximately 27-to-1, while it was approximately 22-to-1 just prior to our most recent AACSB reaffirmation. The FTE needs to be below the 25-to-1 ratio. Several members of the Committee asked about the purpose of such a meeting with the Provost and/or President, what the ad hoc committee hoped to accomplish, and whether a date had been determined for such a meeting. Bob and Badri will meet again before going forward with their mission to President Weber and Provost Marlin. They intend to keep the issues of the MWF classes separate from the issues of the ad hoc committee. They also intend to share their information and documentation with the faculty by having their data posted on the College’s website in the near future.

New Business

7. There were no curricula proposals pending and no new proposals to be reviewed.

8. Jim Lackritz discussed the issue of unfilled committee positions on campus, including the Senate, the Graduate Council, and other important committees that impact the CBA. The Department Chairs have discussed the importance of this issue and hope a policy can be created to fill these slots when no faculty member volunteers to serve or to run for election. The CBA currently has two Senators, with two other Senate positions remaining unfilled. The Graduate Council also has openings for CBA faculty as well. The College must maintain representation on these committees and make sure we have a voice on campus. One possible solution is to make service a requirement; however, it was pointed out that service receives very little credit for faculty. There is no release time, often minimal motivation to serve, no means for professional recognition, and no means to force faculty to serve. The Committee encouraged Gail and Jim Lackritz to identify and contact people who would be desirable and helpful in these positions and to encourage them to serve. The Committee also encouraged giving consideration to a mechanism for rewarding individuals for meritorious service. The Committee also noted, as in the past, that it is also important to not only rely on senior faculty for service but to also encourage junior faculty to begin to take on such roles.

9. Fred Raafat, by way of email to the Steering Committee, had suggested changes in the membership of the Executive Committee. In Fred’s absence, Massoud summarized Fred’s points. Gail noted that the Executive Committee serves in an advisory capacity, not in a policy-making capacity. The Steering Committee tabled the discussion until a
time at which Fred can attend the meeting so that he might discuss these concerns.

10. The Committee then recapped the history of the Central Administration’s shift from the off-module undergraduate class schedules to a MWF schedule. In review, Provost Marlin and other administration officials have continued to view the MW schedule as counterproductive to the University’s class schedule. During the Spring Semester, ongoing discussions took place between the Provost’s Office and the Dean’s Office. Gail Naughton and Jim Lackritz shared these concerns with the Executive Committee. They were optimistic they would be able to persuade the Provost to not change the MW schedule, but just prior to the March 11 Steering Committee meeting, they learned this effort had not been successful. Shortly after the announcement of the central administration’s change was made, several members of the CBA faculty contacted the Provost to express their concerns. Provost Marlin then asked Ernie Griffin to speak with concerned CBA faculty on Friday, March 14, 2005. Subsequent to that meeting, the Steering Committee held an emergency meeting on March 17 to further discuss the matter. The Committee wrote a memo to Provost Marlin, which was forwarded to her on March 23, 2005. A copy of that memo was shared with the CBA faculty. Subsequent to this action, Provost Marlin requested a meeting with Jim Beatty, Chair of the Steering Committee, to occur immediately after Spring Break. Jim met with Provost Marlin and Ernie Griffin on Thursday, April 7, from 3:00-4:30pm. During that meeting, general issues and concerns were discussed, and Jim stressed to her the importance of a meeting between Provost Marlin and the faculty. Provost Marlin agreed to do so, and asked Jim to inform the Steering Committee of this agreement and to pursue a mutually convenient date for the meeting.

11. Jim debriefed the Steering Committee on this matter at today’s meeting. The Committee discussed various formats for the meeting with Provost Marlin. After considerable deliberation, the Committee concluded that the most effective way to ensure a constructive and productive meeting was to ask faculty to submit questions and/or issue points to the Steering Committee in advance. The Committee will then forward these points to the Provost to give her an opportunity to review the issues and any available data from the perspective of the faculty in preparation for the meeting. While the format for the meeting has yet to be finalized, the Steering Committee expects that it will begin with a presentation by the Provost to provide background information leading up to the decision to discontinue the off-module MW schedule, including responses to questions and points submitted to her in advance. Then the meeting will be opened to additional questions and discussion from the floor. The SC will emphasize the importance of developing well articulated questions and points that speak to the points of the letter to the Provost, be fact-
based, and be data-driven whenever possible in order to have a productive and meaningful interaction. Jim Beatty was asked to draft a letter to the faculty as soon as possible so that questions and issue points can be developed and forwarded to the Provost in a timely manner.

12. The next meeting of Steering Committee is April 22, 2005, at 1:00pm.

13. The meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm.