Steering committee minutes, November 13, 2009

Present: Doran, Shore, Singh, Plice, DeNoble
Ex-officio: Naughton, Lackritz
Invited: Belch, Reinig, Salehizadeh, Lightner, Ely

1. The committee noted the resignation of Bill Baker as a member and chair. The committee expressed its collective appreciation to Bill for his leadership and notable contributions toward furthering the strategic goals of the college. After discussion, it was decided that an interim chair would be appointed to complete the academic year. DeNoble was nominated and elected unanimously to chair the committee through May.

2. A motion was made to consider the IDS name change proposal that was tabled at the previous meeting. The issue was untabled by a vote of four in favor, none opposed, and one abstention. The following motion was made and seconded:

   The steering committee moves that the proposal of the IDS department to change its name to Management Information Systems, as voted on by a majority of the IDS department’s faculty following an appropriate internal process, be approved.

   The motion was approved by a vote of four in favor, none opposed, and one abstention.

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unanimously.

4. The committee discussed appointing one or more new members, following the provisions of the policy file for replacing members who resign during the academic year. It was also noted that the Marketing and Finance departments are currently without representation. It was decided to issue a general call for potential appointments, with an emphasis on recruiting new members to represent Marketing and/or Finance. A list of potential nominees will be compiled on or before December 2, so that the committee may act on this matter at its next meeting.

5. It was determined that there will be no quorum for the scheduled meeting on November 20 because of two furlough absences and Baker’s resignation.

6. The department chairs and the Director of Graduate Programs were invited to join in a discussion of the graduate fee and general budgetary matters. Lackritz informed the committee of discussions between the CBA, central administration, the CSU general counsel, and the CFA. Further action on a faculty grant program to be funded from the graduate fee must be done in consultation with CFA representatives. Dean Naughton clarified that CBA will suggest plan to Zimmerman, who will then take it to the CSU, and the CSU and the CFA (statewide) will negotiate from that point. An acceptable plan must involve forward-looking grant applications and (at a minimum) an appeals process that involves a faculty committee. It must also be tied into language from the chancellor’s MOU establishing the graduate fee. It was suggested that a grant process separate from the existing college grants program would be appropriate due to the potential number of applicants and the consequent workload on the Professional Development Committee. The need to get all faculty AQ or PQ in time for accreditation review was suggested as a high priority.
Some of the chairs expressed their interest in having a substantial role in deciding how the graduate fee money will ultimately be used. The potentially grave consequences that anticipated budget cuts will have on the college and its faculty next fiscal year were emphasized. The question was raised as to whether distributing the graduate fee to faculty through a grants program would be optimal if the money could instead be used to achieve outcomes such as: allowing graduate courses to be taught that would otherwise be cut; hiring more lecturers as an alternative to placing greater teaching loads on faculty; or recruiting to fill faculty positions that have been vacated by resignations or retirements. It was noted that using graduate fee money to replace state support is a potentially self-defeating strategy, but that few alternatives are available to avoid what might otherwise become a catastrophic loss of the college’s ability to serve its students and retain any reasonable level of assigned time for its faculty. Given the new budget realities, distributing the money across the board to faculty during the first year might not be the best approach from either the students’ or the faculty’s perspective, it was suggested.

After discussion, the committee agreed that the question of funding a faculty grant program can be separated from the question of how such a program would operate if and when funding comes forth. The steering committee agreed to focus its immediate attention toward settling the mechanics of a potential program, and to leave the question of the allocation of the graduate fee between the program and other uses as a matter to be addressed separately. The committee agreed to place the faculty grant program proposal on its agenda for discussion and a vote at the next meeting. As a point of departure, Lackritz redrafted and submitted to Baker a new draft of a plan that iterates on the SC’s work beginning in Summer 2009. Baker added an amended suggestion that for the first year of the plan, all grants be of the same size and sent this to the committee.

7. Singh suggested that the committee charge the dean and/or associate dean to meet with the director of graduate programs to get a better idea of the needs of the graduate program and the resulting resource requirements (beyond the things already accounted for in the budget).

8. The steering committee’s next meeting was set for December 4 at 12:30pm. Agenda items are expected to include: the discussion and vote on a potential faculty grant program; the need to recruit a new Associate Dean; international programs; and the makeup of the steering committee.