Department Chairs’ Meeting – February 17, 2014
This meeting featured a discussion of the plan, as announced at the January Faculty/Staff Assembly, to decentralize budgets and move to a department-based budgeting system. Questions from department chairs formed the basis of the discussion.

Chairs’ questions regarding department-based budgets

Will departments that generate more FTES and have greater needs have budgets that reflect this? (Shulamit)
   After implementing this system, future years will move closer and closer to having department budgets based on FTES. There will also be decisions about the amount that will fund college-wide functions (dean’s office), and a surplus amount that must be set aside. (Joe)

What happens if a department goes bankrupt? (Shulamit)
   The dean needs to have strategies to prevent that. The college also needs department chairs who are willing to manage their own resources. (Joe)

Will departments get the full amount for faculty hires? (Patti)
   We are waiting for information from Academic Affairs on this question. (Joe and Jose Luis)

Will department chairs receive training on managing budgets? (Cristina)
   Yes – departments will need to know the rules. Also, the Associate Dean’s role will change to one more involved in technical assistance and advice. (Joe)
   There’s a need for making sure departments understand the impact of things such as assigned time (including RAT) and grant buyouts. (Jose Luis)
   There was a period of time under Dean Skip Meno when we had department-based budgets. It was interesting – and it led to good conversations around the table. (Nancy)

Will department chairs receive more budget information about the college as a whole? (Laura)
   Yes – and with this there will be lots of new opportunities for collaboration across the college. (Joe)

What about staff support (such as Frank’s position) for managing budgets? (Shulamit)
   We need to have even more sophisticated systems to help departments monitor budgets – for instance, when expenditures are in excess of budget. (Joe)

Is there an update on negotiations with CES? (Laura)
   We learned that some information we had understood earlier, regarding CES buyouts, is not correct. (Jose Luis)
   We are still trying to ask the right questions of the right individuals at the right time. We want to be able to support faculty to develop CES programs that generate more revenue. (Joe)