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November 16, 2007

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Strategic Academic Planning Committee (SAPC), I write to inform you of the outcome of Phase 1 of our call for proposals. The response from the faculty was terrific. We received 72 proposals, which far exceeded our expectations. The proposals involved faculty from each of the colleges and schools of the University. We are exceptionally grateful for the efforts and interest of all who collaborated on these proposals. Most proposals were responsive to all of the criteria listed in the call, including having the potential to significantly advance research, scholarship, and/or creative expression at Notre Dame, as well as advance our educational programs. Many of the proposals brought together new teams of faculty to work on significant issues in creative ways.

The SAPC considered each proposal thoughtfully, and ultimately recommended inviting the faculty associated with 11 of the proposals to submit Phase 2 applications. The faculty from two of these proposals were invited to combine their efforts. The titles of the 11 proposals can be found at <http://provost.nd.edu/academic-resources-and-information/sapc/SAPCFAQs.shtml>. Robert Bernhard, a SAPC member and the Vice President for Research, has collated the comments of the SAPC members from Phase 1 and will provide feedback to the lead investigators of all 72 proposals. We hope that, even though not every proposal can be funded through the current SAPC process, the discussions that resulted in the generation of the 72 proposals will be useful in developing new collaborations and initiatives. In fact, we have been pleased to learn that this is already the case with some of the proposals. We will do all we can to help facilitate these new collaborations.

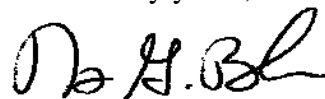
I thank all of the members of the SAPC for their diligence, commitment, and integrity. The committee members spent long hours, after consultation with many individuals from within and outside the university, formulating the process for this unprecedented opportunity. All of the Phase 1 concept papers were read and reviewed by all 15 members of the SAPC except for those situations where potential conflicts existed. The committee members then worked diligently and collegially on the difficult task of selecting the Phase 2 proposals. It has been a pleasure to work with this group of uncommon individuals. They were invited to join the committee based on

faculty recommendations from across the university. I am grateful to you for those superb recommendations, and to the SAPC members for their wisdom and commitment.

A few SAPC members were involved with proposals that have advanced to Phase 2; others were involved with proposals that did not advance; and still others were not involved in any of the proposals. Those members of the SAPC who are involved with proposals invited to Phase 2 will not participate any more with the SAPC this year. As a result, I will invite a few additional members to join the SAPC in our spring deliberations. The members of the SAPC for the Phase 2 evaluation will be available on the Provost's website at <http://provost.nd.edu/academic-resources-and-information/sapc/SAPCFAQs.shtml>.

Through this first year of the SAPC process, we have learned much about the faculty's energy, creativity, and enthusiasm for strengthening current research programs and creating transformative new initiatives. As we complete this first year and plan for future years of investment through the SAPC, we welcome suggestions for how we might improve the process so that, in combination with the many other vehicles for research investment already in place and planned for the future, it can truly enable Notre Dame to reach new heights in its research and educational programs. All of us on the SAPC look forward to working with you in this effort.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. G. Burish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Thomas G. Burish