Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to announce that the Strategic Academic Planning Committee (SAPC) is seeking proposals from the faculty for initiatives that will significantly advance Notre Dame’s research endeavors. The Call for Strategic Academic Proposals is attached for your review and consideration. The SAPC program will be successful only if the best ideas of the faculty come forward. On behalf of all the SAPC’s members, I urge you to consider working with your colleagues to craft a proposal.

The launch of this proposal process completes the first stage of the SAPC’s work, which included an assessment of the status of research and research support at Notre Dame; consultation with distinguished guests from the academy, federal funding agencies, and industry; face-to-face meetings with approximately 130 faculty members through a series of 14 focus groups; and the consideration of numerous letters and emails sent to one or more members of the SAPC by faculty. Thank you to all who participated in one or more of these activities. The outcome of these activities is a Call for Strategic Academic Proposals, which includes a statement of the criteria on which proposals will be judged and a process for winnowing down the initial set of proposals to a small group that will be funded. Both the Call and the process were improved from their initial draft as a result of faculty input, especially that given during the focus groups.

The members of the SAPC met almost weekly during the spring semester, with a final day-long retreat. They truly worked long hours and selflessly, with commitment, wisdom, judiciousness, openness, high standards, and a dedication to the overall best interests of the University. I am most grateful to this special group of individuals. I look forward to continuing to work with the SAPC during the proposal solicitation, evaluation, selection, and follow-up process.

Thank you in advance for your interest and participation in this new initiative. Best wishes for a productive and refreshing summer.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas G. Burish

Enclosure

cc: Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C.
Call for Strategic Academic Proposals

INTRODUCTION

Notre Dame aspires to be a preeminent research university with a distinctive Catholic character and an unsurpassed commitment to undergraduate education. Recognizing this goal, the Strategic Academic Planning Committee (SAPC) requests proposals for scholarly and research endeavors that will lead to transformative enhancement of the University. The investments funded through this effort will be distinct from, and additive to, those outlined by individual colleges and departments as part of the University’s current strategic plan, *Fulfilling the Promise.*

BACKGROUND

With the support of the Board of Trustees and Notre Dame’s senior academic and administrative leaders, the University has decided to invest significant new funding into the research endeavors of its faculty. Part of the funding for enhancing the research enterprise will come from the “Spirit of Notre Dame” capital campaign, which was just publicly announced. Most of the campaign goals are for endowed chairs, student stipends, research infrastructure, and program development within individual departments and colleges—the typical and traditional ways of growing excellence. The SAPC initiative provides significant additional dollars over and above those campaign goals. These new funds are intended to be invested in strategies for advancing the excellence and visibility of Notre Dame’s research enterprise. The committee is especially interested in programs that substantially advance a particular intellectual area or bring together faculty in fruitful new ways.

The initial areas of investment related to this new initiative will be chosen through a formal proposal process. Proposals from all areas of the university are encouraged. The committee anticipates selecting approximately three to five proposals for funding in order to target investments for highest impact. Proposals may seek funding for up to three years. During the last year of a funded project, faculty may apply for up to three additional years of funding. Although there is no maximum budget for individual proposals, a total of $40 million is allocated for investment across projects during the initial three years. Significant additional funding is anticipated over the next few years. Recurring costs beyond the life of the grant, such as faculty salaries, will be absorbed in the University budget. While not required, funds awarded from this effort may be supplemented with current budget resources, planned investments from the capital campaign, or external funding.

The 2007-2008 proposal process will include two phases. Phase 1 will solicit short (3-page maximum) Concept Papers. After review, a subset of the initial applicants will be

1<http://www.nd.edu/~strategic/final/index.shtml>
invited to submit a more detailed proposal in Phase 2. The SAPC will review all proposals in both stages, with assistance from external reviewers in Phase 2. The committee will make a recommendation for investment to Notre Dame’s Executive Team (President Jenkins, Provost Burish, and Executive Vice President Affleck-Graves).

Please direct any questions to Erin Hoffmann Harding, Assistant Vice President for Strategic Planning and Special Projects (eharding@nd.edu). Erin or a member of the SAPC will reply promptly. Frequently asked questions and responses will be posted on the Office of the Provost’s website.²

CONCEPT PAPER REQUIREMENTS

I. Purpose of the Initiative. Describe the proposed concept and the objective it is designed to achieve. Briefly explain why the effort will significantly advance the excellence and visibility of Notre Dame’s research enterprise. Use the “Criteria for Proposals” as a guideline.

II. Approach. Outline the specific activities that are envisioned as part of the effort and the methodology that will be used. Indicate how the initiative will be organized and coordinated.

III. Anticipated Budgetary Needs. While a detailed budget is not required at this point, indicate a preliminary estimate of funds required over the initial three year period and a rough breakdown of the components for investment (e.g., salary, equipment, space).

IV. Contact Person and Anticipated Participants. Name the faculty who will be involved and their anticipated role or contribution. In cases where different individuals will be involved at different times, indicate how those faculty will be identified and selected.

V. Attachments. Attach a brief curriculum vitae (maximum of 2 pages) or a link to an electronic biography for all of the participants involved in the effort.

VI. Other. Concept Papers may not exceed 3 pages in length (1” margins, 12-point font, single spaced). Interested faculty and groups should submit Concept Papers electronically to Erin Hoffmann Harding (eharding@nd.edu) no later than October 15, 2007. Please copy the relevant Dean, Department Chair, and/or Institute Director in the electronic submission.

²http://provost.nd.edu/academic-resources-and-information/
CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS

Successful proposals should meet each of these criteria. They should also be consistent with or even strengthen the University’s Catholic character.

A. Creates or expands a program of research, scholarship, or creative expression in order to establish preeminence in an important area that will have an impact on the academy, nation, or world.

B. Creates productive internal or external collaborations. This could be done by bringing together existing institutional strengths in a new and distinctive way, by proposing a creative new program, or by forming external partnerships. External partners could include other academic institutions, the Church, nonprofits, industry, and so forth.

C. Enhances the learning environment or research opportunities for undergraduate, graduate and professional education.

D. Shows promise for sustaining itself after the initial period of support through new University endowment, college or departmental resources, or sponsored research funds. The effort must demonstrate the ability to adapt as the nature of our collective understanding of intellectual problems evolves.


PROCESS OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Announce and open Phase 1 proposal process</td>
<td>May 22, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 1 Concept Papers due</strong></td>
<td><strong>October 15, 2007</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete internal review of Phase 1 proposals.</td>
<td>October 16 – November 15, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respond to Phase 1 participants; Invite Phase 2 proposals.</td>
<td>November 15, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 2 Proposals due</strong></td>
<td><strong>January 31, 2008</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete internal and external review of Phase 2 proposals. Submit recommendations for funding to President, Provost, and Executive Vice-President.</td>
<td>February 1 – April 15, 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decide on areas of investment, communicate results to faculty, and commence funding.</td>
<td>April 15, 2008</td>
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**Evaluation and Review.** The SAPC will evaluate proposals using the “Criteria for Proposals.” The committee will conduct an internal review in both Phase 1 and Phase 2. In Phase 2, the SAPC will seek advice from external reviewers with expertise related to the proposal. Applicants will have an opportunity to nominate appropriate individuals for external review.

**Phase 2 Call for Proposals.** The requirements for Phase 2 proposals will be announced at a later time. The SAPC anticipates that these proposals will be approximately fifteen pages in length, including a more detailed budget and metrics of assessment.