University-wide Centers and Institutes  
-- A Call for Proposals --

In light of the strong support from the Board of Trustees for the faculty’s desire to expand our spheres and intensity of research, funds have been set aside to create one or two campus-wide research centers. It addition, the Board has encouraged building centers at the school/college level. To advance the development of university-wide research centers designed to promote exemplary larger-scale collaborative scholarship and research, two full-professor lines have been established and seed funding has been allocated in the budget approved by the Board. We envision the new centers having the convening role around the major issues of our time. These centers (scholarly, research, professional, or creative) at all levels of the university can become: incubators for new ideas; magnets for partners and scholars to carry out original research; places to bring researchers, thinkers, and students in the field together; repositories for essential data bases and influential reports; and a connecting point for important ideas that lead to real world consequences.

I am therefore issuing a call for the faculty to suggest areas of collaborative and collective research around which these new university-wide centers will be built. Ideas for new campus-wide centers or institutes should be submitted in writing to your college/school dean to be considered by a review body made up of all deans and the provost. To be considered a proposal should identify:

1) a center that would reach across more than two colleges/schools;
2) an area of research that is either one where we already have capability, or where there is the potential of new faculty hires and interest in the units to support the effort (provide evidence);
3) a topic which is one for which there is a specific niche for AU to successfully compete for external support and ample external funding is available;
4) evidence that there is a place for AU to distinguish itself in this research niche among the existing leading research centers in the U.S.

In your proposal for a new center or institute to your dean, please identify a sampling of the existing leading research centers in the U.S. in the area of interest and explain how this center would be similar or different, include a realistic assessment of our ability to complete for national distinction at the highest levels, provide examples of the possible sources of funding to cultivate, and identify any recommendations of individuals who you think might provide the entrepreneurial, intellectual, administrative, and motivational leadership to make such a center successful.

Proposals for a new campus-wide center should not exceed 3 double spaced pages and are due to your dean by April 6, 2009.