Mitchell called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Announcements
Nunez said Minutes from the March 8 meeting were not prepared. Institutional Research and Planning had several people gone between March 10 and 17, and the University was closed because of bad weather March 20 and 21.

Proposals for Programs of Excellence Funding
Mitchell said Couture would be late. Nunez proposed that APC start by discussing the procedure for developing recommendations. He said five APC members had responded by email to the Senior Vice Chancellor’s request for input on the proposals. Some of the responses were in the form of written comments and some ranked the proposals numerically. APC decided to discuss the proposals and give Couture a summary of the comments instead of ranking them. [Couture arrived.]
Couture said as much as $1.5 million in new funding and between $500,000 and $800,000 in one-time funding from expired projects might be available for POE awards.

Proposals are listed below in alphabetical order. The proposals and a summary sheet of the submissions are attached to the permanent record.

1. Academic Enhancement in Survey Methodology
2. Achieving Preeminence in the Info Age
3. Agricultural Water Management
4. Atomic, Molecular, Optical and Plasma Physics (AMOP)
5. Behavioral Health
6. Biofuel Systems Research
7. Biomedical Engineering Initiative
8. Cedar Point Biological Station
9. Digital Media Interdisciplinary Program
10. Ethics Initiative
11. Faculty Leadership for Writing Initiative
12. Math and Science Teachers for the 21st Century
13. Microbiology Unification
14. Nanomaterials Science and Technology
15. Nebraska Center for Virology
16. Nineteenth-Century Studies
17. Peer Review of Teaching Project
18. Redox Biology Center
20. Visual Literacy for Non-Majors

[Zeleny arrived.] Oliva said some funding should be put into buildings to make a bigger impact. Couture said an outside consultant was hired to look at the Life Sciences’ need for introductory teaching facilities. She said some POE funds would be put toward infrastructure to leverage other funding. [Sicking arrived.]

Motion
Oliva moved and Keown seconded to use POE funds to leverage other funds for classroom improvements. The motion was approved unanimously.

Couture said APC’s comments would be sent to the POE Committee. She said other sources of funding could be explored for proposals that were not clearly preferred by APC. [Allen arrived.]

Mitchell asked when the decision on POE funding would be made. Couture said the campus recommendations are to be submitted to Provost Jay Noren by March 31. After Central Administration looks at the proposals, they have to wait for the July 1 budget to know how much money will be available. Proposers might not know the results until September 1. Oliva asked how it would be possible to hire people if the decision is so long in coming. Couture said the process needed to start in the spring in order to have answers in the fall.

Proposal to create the Nebraska Transportation Center
Allen and Sicking appeared on behalf of the proposal. Keown and Kettler said after they met and had a conference call with the proposers they had agreed to endorse the proposal. Sicking said everyone named in the proposal was contacted and gave their support. Letters of support will be attached to the proposal.

Motion
The recommendation of the subcommittee served as a motion and second for approval. The vote for APC to endorse the Nebraska Transportation Center was unanimous. Mitchell offered her congratulations. [Sicking and Allen left.]
Proposal to create a Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research

Zeleny said the proposal for the Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research was a joint effort of the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) and UNL. He said there was a retreat in October to work on the project and some 60 faculty were involved. Seed funding would be $5 million over five years.

Hallbeck asked if there was a list of participating faculty. Zeleny gave her a list. He said some faculty are from UNO. Other universities in the region will be invited to collaborate. Hallbeck asked whether a center was needed in order to get the grant. Zeleny said NPPD didn’t make it a requirement but the Chancellor thought it was the best way to proceed. Hallbeck said the proposal needed to be fleshed out. She asked whether APC approval could wait. Zeleny said they hoped to get it on the April Regents’ agenda.

Keown asked if OPPD and LES could be included in the proposal. Zeleny said he would like LPS to join. OPPD and NPPD are the largest electric energy providers in the state. The Electrical Power Research Institute (EPRI) will also be an important constituency of the Center. Oliva wondered if UNL was in the driver’s seat. Zeleny said the Center’s Executive Council would be comprised of UNL faculty and administrators that are engaged in energy research. The External Advisory Committee would be comprised of three representatives of NPPD, Chancellor Perlman and Vice Chancellor Paul. The Director will be a UNL faculty member.

Harvey said he was interested in the statement about the three biggest power sources in Nebraska. He noted that the proposal included better technology for existing energy sources as well as the development of renewable energy sources.

Mitchell asked if UNO was trying to get a center of its own. Zeleny said a joint announcement about the Center was expected in April. He indicated a quick approval of the center would help. Mitchell asked if the APC wanted a subcommittee to review the proposal. Hallbeck said she wanted more details. She said the list of participants was not complete and wanted to be sure all possible participants were included. Zeleny said the Request for Proposals (RFP) process would invite participants. Couture asked whether that intention could be stated in the proposal. Zeleny agreed.

Kettler asked about funding. He gave an example of structural materials research that could be applicable to energy production. Zeleny said there would be seed grants to leverage funding. The RFP process would flesh out the Center. At the present the research areas are wide open.

Motion

Keown moved and Oliva seconded to accept the proposal, contingent on satisfactory answers to Hallbeck’s questions. The motion to endorse the Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research was approved unanimously. [Hallbeck notified Mitchell on March 29 that her questions had been answered and the contingency on the approval should be removed.]
Issues from the Vice Chancellors

Couture said there would be a Department Chairs workshop on March 29. It was a follow-up to an Academic Leadership Workshop in December, 2005. There has been continued visioning with the deans about the identity of the campus. The Strategic Planning process was continuing.

Paul said there would be a faculty retreat May 11 and 12 in Nebraska City regarding interdisciplinary research. Themes of the retreat would be cross-disciplinary research in transportation, and math and science education.

Paul said the Chancellor would be hosting the Board of Regents. During the visit UNL inventors were to be spotlighted. He also reminded the members about the Research Fair April 4 through 6.

Fritz said that the Vice Chancellor for IANR had no issues to present to APC.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lona Kramer
APC Coordinator