

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans

FROM: Sheldon Ekland-Olson
Executive Vice President and Provost

DATE: February 24, 2004

RE: Guidelines for Implementing the Faculty Initiative

As discussed at a recent Dean's Council meeting, I have asked our new Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Neal Armstrong, to organize and shepherd the Faculty Initiative and to take primary responsibility for setting hiring priorities and working with schools/colleges who bring cluster hiring proposals to the table. This, of course, is the initiative to hire 30 new faculty each year and 300 over time.

As in the past, we intend to keep this program as free flowing and unencumbered by paperwork as possible. We will continue to have informal discussions and include commitments and requests in the Compact process. With this flexibility in mind, many of you have asked for some basic guidelines. Here they are.

The types of hires we envision are: strategic (to reduce very high student-faculty ratios, to develop new and important fields, etc.); opportunistic (to recruit "star" faculty who become available and movable); cluster (to develop and/or enhance relationships across schools/colleges and departments); and special interest (to strengthen the student learning experience on campus to better prepare them for the world they will enter). The general criteria for hiring faculty as part of this initiative are: the hire is consistent with the missions of UT Austin and the department/school/college; it is justified by strategic plans of the department/school/college; and there is clear strength and value added within and among programs within and/or across departments/schools/colleges.

For this Faculty Initiative, two types of requests are anticipated: (a) for a specific candidate being brought forward; and (b) for a position or positions with hiring to take place in the future. In the former case, the Provost's Office will need: (1) a current curriculum vita and reference letters; (2) a statement of justification that includes information on how this hire would benefit the department/school/college and mesh with the mission(s) and faculty hiring plan(s) for the department/school/college; (3) the anticipated interaction of the candidate with programs/research centers; (4) the funding needed to attract the candidate and what cost sharing the department/school/college proposes to provide; and (5) a statement from the dean indicating full support for the request.

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When requesting the second type of hire, i.e., a position or positions with hiring to take place in the future, we will need: (1) a statement of justification that includes information on how the hire(s) would benefit the department/school/college and mesh with the missions and faculty hiring plans for the department/school/college; (2) the anticipated interaction of the position(s) with programs/research centers; (3) the anticipated salaries needed and what cost sharing the department/school/college proposes to provide; (4) the details of recruitment plans and a selection process that will ensure we secure faculty from the broadest talent pool possible; and (5) a statement from the dean indicating full support for the request.

The faculty expansion initiative is an opportunity to improve the quality of what we do in very important ways. All of us in the Provost Office look forward to working with you on these matters.

cc: Stephen A. Monti, Executive Vice Provost
Victoria Rodriguez, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate School
Neal E. Armstrong, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
Lucia Gilbert, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies
Dorothea K. Adams, Associate Vice President