

Interoffice Communication

Date: July 22, 2020

To: Provost's Council
Carol Faber, President, Faculty Senate
Sara Parris, President, Professional and Scientific Council
Caroline Hayes, Chair, Department Chairs Cabinet

From: Jonathan Wickert
Senior Vice President and Provost



Subject: Hiring and Recruitment in Academic Affairs (SVPP COVID-19 Communication #16)

I am writing with guidance on recruitment within the Division of Academic Affairs, now that the Board of Regents has relaxed restrictions on domestic travel for university business. As of this date, the university's policy regarding visitors to campus reads:

University sponsored visitors to campus who are traveling from within the United States are permitted if the visit is preapproved by the supervisor of the unit or department that is sponsoring the University visit. University sponsored international visitors are not permitted.

On June 25, University Human Resources updated its recruitment guidance which requires an exceptional review and approval process through at least December 31, 2020, for departments/units that seek to proceed with new postings, fill current vacancies, conduct interviews, and make offers and hires. I delegate that approval to each of my direct reports in their respective units for Faculty, P&S, Merit, Contract, Postdoc, Resident/Intern, and Temporary/Emergency positions, and such review should follow my earlier guidance for all academic affairs units to:

1. Review and reduce faculty and staff hiring to align with enrollment levels.
2. Review and reduce term faculty renewals and/or appointment lengths in accordance with contractual obligations and in alignment with enrollment levels.
3. Review academic programs and prioritize, restructure, reduce, or eliminate.
4. Review support programs and prioritize, restructure, reduce, or eliminate.

The decision to conduct all or a portion of an interview in-person should take into consideration the needs and circumstances of the unit. The top priority should be health and safety, taking into account both the candidate's and hiring unit's comfort levels and preferences for interviewing virtually or face to face. To ensure consistency, the same process should be followed for each

candidate in the search pool, while recognizing that procedures may need to change based on the status of the pandemic. All in-person interviews must adhere to the COVID-19 safety protocols established by the university, including but not limited to: not shaking hands, avoiding large group gatherings, physically distancing by at least six feet, providing hand sanitizer, and the wearing of face coverings when in the presence of others and where physical distancing is not possible.

The following guidelines regarding faculty and postdoc recruitment processes are effective immediately:

- Suspended searches may be re-initiated following review and approval by my respective direct report.
- While the in-person interview is an important factor in selecting faculty on the tenure track, in light of the on-going pandemic, tenure-track faculty searches may be conducted using a hybrid method, combining virtual interviewing throughout the process with an in-person interview for the finalist(s).
- Term faculty searches with contracts up to three years in length to meet critical teaching needs may be conducted through virtual interviews.
- Searches for academic administrative positions may proceed with virtual interviewing with an in-person interview for the finalist(s).
- Virtual interviewing is allowed for postdoc searches.

To support academic affairs recruitment in this environment, my office has engaged the services of executive search firm Spelman Johnson to conduct training in the virtual search and interview process for hiring managers, department chairs, associate deans, and Equity Advisors. Spelman Johnson will provide guidance and best practices to design virtual schedules, material preparation, and pre-recorded presentations, and help prepare search committee members for virtual interviews. This training is cost-free to units and will be provided in August in advance of the upcoming academic year searches. To ensure that the virtual searches we do conduct will meet the highest professional standards, any department or unit planning to conduct virtual searches is required to participate.

In addition, all faculty and staff who serve on search committees in the Division of Academic Affairs are required to participate in [implicit bias training](#) per my December 11, 2019 directive. The ISU ADVANCE team has built a comprehensive Canvas Course that supports this need. It [standardizes materials and resources](#) for committee members and enhances the synchronous in-person/virtual training with the College Equity Advisor and/or Human Resources Partner.

Feel free to contact Associate Provost Dawn Bratsch-Prince or Director of Academic Policy and Personnel Brenda Behling should you have any questions.

JAW/jj

C: Wendy Wintersteen, President
Kristi Darr, Interim Vice President for University Human Resources