

# **HIRING FOR MISSION Guidebook**

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## **Introduction**

“You get what you hire, you keep what you tenure.” Dean at University of Dayton

“The people you hire will determine what you become as an institution.” Administrator at Villanova University

This guidebook is written for a workshop and/or a “campus conversation” about hiring faculty at an institution of higher education. The title-- hiring for mission--- deliberately stresses the importance of the context for hiring faculty and staff. From our study (Braskamp, Trautvetter, and Ward, 2006) hiring is best viewed within the context of the mission of the college and its vision for the future. We learned that colleges simultaneously are looking backward and forward—building its future on its legacy and strength and years of experience and accumulated wisdom.

This guidebook is organized around the following topics.

### **Recognize changing expectations of faculty**

### **Recognize contributions of faculty**

### **Use a career perspective on faculty development**

- Recruitment and selection
- Orientation and mentoring
- Life long professional and personal development of faculty

### **Use a planned strategy in recruitment and hiring**

- Preparation of the responsibilities and expectations of the faculty member
- Searching for prospective candidates
- Campus visit(s)
- Contractual arrangements

### **Questions for discussion**

### **Resources for finding faculty positions**

### **Suggested readings**

## **Recognize changing expectations of faculty**

Throughout the history of American higher education, faculty have contributed to the academy in many ways and they have been expected to contribute through their teaching, research, engagements in the community, service to the campus community, and for their mentoring and modeling as persons. Today faculty at church colleges in particular are being asked to contribute as persons—to integrate their personal and professional selves. Over the past years, faculty have been expected to perform many functions, but the primary role can be viewed as:

- Professor as teacher
- Professor as researcher
- Professor as scholar
- Professor as person

This last role has been stressed by several prominent educators including:

“I am more than what I do. What I do is an extension of what I am, but it is not the same thing...you must not be defined exclusively by what you do. What you do—your work, your job—is merely a means to a larger end. ...And what is that larger end? It rests upon the useful distinction between a job and a calling. I would like to rehabilitate the notion of a calling, or, to use a more pretentious word, a vocation.” (Rev. Peter Gomes, minister of The Memorial Church at Harvard, 2005)

“A faculty member is a ‘spiritual guide’”....A professor...is, in the primary definition, a person who professes something, especially one who openly declares his or her sentiments, religious belief, subject, and so on. Therefore, an educator-professor is one who leads out toward truth by professing in his or her intuitions, apprehensions, and convictions of truth, in a manner that encourages dialogue with the emerging inner authority of the student” (Sharon Parks, 2000, p. 167).

“Some faculty report a disjunction between who they are and what they do. The vision of the new American scholar that is emerging from a variety of quarters promises to provide a broader and more connected conception” (Gene Rice, 1996, p. 11).

“We teach who we are.” Parker Palmer (1998, p. 1).

In our visits to the ten college and university campuses, this perspective can be nicely summarized by this quote by a campus pastor at Hope, “We start with being then doing. Being supercedes doing.” Being is related to identity. Identity is the foundation of engagement—being generates doing. Being rooted in something beyond oneself—a religion tradition, an ideal self, a set of universal principles-- gives meaning, courage, and desire to become engaged. We are more than what we do, so doing is a part of being and

being is doing, but a sense of self is more than one's patterns of behavior. In terms of the language of vocation, a person is called to involved—to be invested. This perspective is not “I am what I do,” defined in terms of success in the marketplace. Rather it is based on one's sense of self but in relationship to others beyond oneself. A sense of self involves addressing two questions—“Who am I?” and “How do I serve society?”

Almost all faculty desire to be good role models. Being a role model is what most of the faculty expect and want to be in our sample of colleges and universities. They like being respected as an important adult figures in the life of students. At Hamline University, when faculty were asked if they consciously view themselves as role models, even if it conveys a sense of arrogance of their status, they answered that they do. One stated, “Yes, students want to spend time with me, asking me often of my opinion. This is different from my generation of the 1960s when no one trusted anyone over 30. I am regarded as a surrogate mother (confirmed by one of the students.) What do I do with this recognition? I need to reflect on a very practical level. I need to make changes in my own personal life—to become more congruent with my beliefs and my behavior. What I am and what I do? The all means that I need to do the little stuff that is ethical, like returning a phone call. “

This idea of multiple mentors was stated beautifully by a professor at Whitworth College, who commented in his perspective of the community at his college, “The genius of Whitworth as a place to work and study is that there are as many models as molds.”

Both faculty and academic leaders recognize that faculty are powerful models by how they behave. Every one strongly supports the rule of “Walking the talk.” Many faculty considered this to be sufficient for being a role model. They prefer to demonstrate their convictions and values by what they do and how they do it. This is particularly relevant at the colleges that are not explicitly religious or evangelical. As the Provost of Hope said to us, “Our walk is one of the greatest testimonies. The administration is not looking for a cookie-cutter.” At Wooster one senior faculty member noted, “The faculty are not trained or told to put forth their religious lives, nor is it welcomed in the classroom. You don't need to talk – just model it.”

In summary, hiring a faculty member is best viewed in hiring a “whole person,” not a set of skills or interests. At institutions that stress developing the whole student, colleges will do well in seeking out and rewarding faculty who view their work as a part of their total being.

## **Recognize contributions of faculty**

Historically, faculty have been expected to perform their professional duties in teaching, research and service. While this triad of faculty work has served the professorate well, we are proposing that this well known taxonomy be adapted by clustering the contributions of faculty into five areas:

- Teaching and mentoring

- Research and creative activities
- Engagement in communities beyond the college
- Citizenship in the college community
- Holistic—Professor as person

The foundation for this organization is built on the seminal work of Ernest Boyer (1990), who proposed four forms of scholarship to replace the teaching vs. research dualistic approach. Boyer’s basic argument is that faculty demonstrate their scholarship in many ways, not only in the traditional sense of being a productive researcher. A faculty member as a “new American scholar,” is a scholar, an integrated thinker and doer, deliberately blurring any distinction between being and doing (Rice, 2002). In the assessment of scholarship, the same criteria can be used to assess its many forms and manifestations (Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff, 1997). In this project we used the word, contributions, to denote the careers of faculty to stress that faculty contribute by who they are as well as what they do. Scholarship involves teaching and research, like two sides of the coin. Imagination, inquiry, discovery, creativity, and communication are all involved in scholarship. The unity of knowledge, long considered one of the fundamental tenets of a classical liberal arts, is honored. Thus being scholarly is being whole, fighting against specialization, compartmentalism, and fragmentation.

### **Use a career perspective on faculty development**

College leaders and faculty in our project stressed a life long perspective of faculty development, which can be viewed as three interlocking stages:

- Recruitment and selection
- Orientation and mentoring
- Life long professional and personal development of faculty

As we learned faculty development properly begins with recruitment and orientation and continues throughout the life of a faculty member. A strong and purposeful faculty development program helps faculty also grow and develop in both their professional and personal lives. The goal is to help faculty and staff think of their careers as a part—a very important part—of vocation (Haughey, 2004).

These colleges take into account two major dimensions of congruence. First, how do faculty see their careers as reflecting a sense of self, sense of purpose, and vocation? Does her work reflect who she is? Is he able to be personally invested, acting out of his convictions and identity. Ideally, faculty and staff can view their lives as purposeful, integrating personal and professional goals and aims.

Second, how do faculty consider their place of work as supportive of their goals and contributions? Does she feel at home at this college? We like the notion of “readiness” rather than the words “fit” or “match.” He may not fit or match the existing community as defined by its current set of values, norms, and expectations of behavior, but it

highlights the need for the community to be hospitable (Bennett, 2003) and allowing for new members of the community to make a difference.

By paying attention to these two congruencies, colleges can assist faculty and staff to feel fulfilled and motivated when both sets of congruencies exist. Being personally invested means one is acting on his sense of purpose and finds meaning in his investment of his talents and time and ideally contributing in ways that are aligned with the college's mission and vision (Maehr & Braskamp, 1986; Braskamp & Hager, 2005; Lindholm, 2003). This perspective is viewed by campus leaders as critical to helping students in their holistic development. They get to witness first hand how others integrate their personal and professional lives, but at times with difficulty.

### **Begin with recruitment and selection**

Given our argument for an interlocking stage perspective on faculty development, we recommend that much work is needed before any faculty members joins the community and arrives on campus. Faculty development is viewed as a life long journey. Selecting for fit is one of the most important decisions to be made, but hiring for mission requires two major considerations. Hiring for fit is the first and not the final step in faculty development. In fact if initial fit is emphasized too much, a campus can make the mistake that a faculty member will naturally grow and develop without considerable nurturing and support from the community. Colleges which take the entire life span into account are developing policies and programs to make development a career long venture. It is much more than just hiring good people who will fit in. Faculty need nurturing within the college community. In short, leaders have begun to view faculty development without recruitment and recruitment without development both as incomplete. When faculty are not fully integrated into the college community, they will not be able to enrich the college mission. Faculty development properly begins with recruitment and continues throughout the life of a faculty member.

Peter Steinfels (2005) argues that colleges (he is referring mostly to Catholic universities given the focus of his book) can hire for the "religious dimension of mission" and still honor and uphold the ideal of freedom and diversity. He recommends a four-step strategy in hiring to achieve a more salient mission-based hiring process. First, colleges should be clear about their mission but not be orthodox in its position and enactment of it; second, they need to stress how a faculty member's research and teaching can reinforce the mission rather than dwelling on her personal faith or practice; third, they incorporate these considerations into all phases of the hiring process; and fourth, they need to be flexible rather than establish arbitrary quotas.

How the college leaders and faculty define and interpret "fit" is also critical. We like to notion of defining fit in terms of readiness, given to us by a dean at Creighton University. He remarked, "I inform the chairs that I prefer to talk about readiness rather than fit. It is more a question of openness and readiness. If you only look at the people who already know the right answers, I think you are going to end up with some real restrictions." Thus a person may have a disposition and yearning to come without knowing the specific

traditions and history of the place. One who is open to the mission of the college and finds them interesting and stimulating is a good candidate to those hiring.

Colleges use different criteria in determining what “fit” means to them, which reflects the intentionality of the campus’ commitment to a religious worldview and an explicit set of social expectations. For example, at Union University, the notion of “fitting in” at Union University was mentioned numerous times during the site visit. They intentionally hire faculty who are committed to a Christian faith tradition, have good academic credentials, and love to teach and invest in the lives of the students. Prospective faculty candidates are required to write about their personal faith and philosophy of teaching. They also need to adhere to the social expectations from the Southern Baptist Convention (e.g., abstinence from alcohol).

A Dean at a Lutheran college talks about the faith and religious backgrounds when he interviews potential faculty. He talks to potential faculty about the role of religion in general on the campus, but stresses to them that “you do not need to be a member of the (Lutheran) church.” He explicitly asks a potential faculty member “What is your religion?” just to start the conversation, not to pass judgment on the specific choice of religion. In his interviews he also stresses that faculty are to be a model – what do they plan to bring to the community of our college? To him in this modeling, a faculty member’s role includes “who you are.” He stresses “who you are” because he considers a faculty member’s life beyond the 9 to 5 presence on campus to be very important to her joining the college community.

When a new professor at Wooster was asked about whether his personal values were considered in his hiring, he stated “they were more interested in my teaching and research. They value a good collegial atmosphere. Being a role model is implicit in Independent Study as a researcher and scholar who needs to be current in research.” A strong value orientation exists at College of Wooster but it is not linked to any religious legacy or tradition. Instead the focus is on the values of the profession and academic integrity. The traditional arts education is quite apparent in the way he discusses the college’s goals.

In summary, colleges vary are how they define the qualifications of prospective faculty especially in their faith and personal values and patterns of behavior, and how explicit they are in asking prospective faculty about them. We now turn to a set of procedures that colleges can use in hiring for mission.

### **Use a planned strategy in recruitment and hiring**

We recommend a variety of activities and practices in the process of recruiting and hiring faculty. They include:

- Preparation of the responsibilities and expectations of the faculty member
- Searching for prospective candidates

- Campus visit(s)
- Contractual arrangements

### **Preparation of the responsibilities and expectations of the faculty member**

The college community will do well to discuss and have an understanding if the colleges desire to look for someone who has specific skills (e.g., research specialty, area of scholarship, teaching skills and experience) and personal values and faith and religious commitments. In short to what extent does the college hiring a faculty member for her personal qualifications include a faith commitment and specific scholarly and technical competencies? At what point does the college recognize that the most qualified person is viewed by some as a compromise between the characteristics of the persons under consideration? This decision reflects the intentionality of hiring faculty for the college's mission. We learned that colleges in our study are becoming more explicit and upfront about whom they hire. As one Provost stated, "we don't apologize for our mission and identity."

They achieve this in a number of ways, but one theme is requesting faculty to write a statement of how they can contribute to the college. Creighton has this request—"On a separate sheet, please write on the following: What you understand as the mission of a liberal-arts, church-related institution like Creighton University and how your discipline and your background would enhance it. Include a statement on your philosophy of teaching and the nature and extent of your commitment to teaching."

Two major types of activities have been promoted at these colleges that are worth any college considering in our view. First, the Provost or CAO invites departmental leaders to a workshop about hiring in which the Provost informs the relevant search committees about her perspective on hiring for mission. The University of Dayton holds an annual meeting, with the Provost approving only positions for which the Chair of the search committee has attended a day long meeting on the University's plans and goals.

Second, faculty in a department, faculty can interview each other about the types of questions they find appropriate and relevant in asking the potential candidates. This gives an opportunity for current faculty to discuss among themselves their faith perspectives and their views on the importance of them in hiring. It provides practice in discussing sensitive topics before a candidate arrives on campus and does not leave selected faculty ( as one noted, those who are comfortable asking rather personal questions of faith) or to leave issues of religious commitment to the Provost or President or a member of Campus Ministry.

Third, colleges use letters of introduction to prospective candidates to explain their mission and expectations of faculty. The University of Dubuque sends a letter to each candidate who has met the initial screening. I am including portions of this letter in Appendix A to illustrate the level of specificity that this college uses to introduce itself to

candidates and to provide a context for the candidates to answer five questions about their views of the University of Dubuque and their views of their vocation and calling to teach. (The five questions are listed near the end of the letter in the appendix.)

### **Searching for prospective candidates**

The colleges know the importance of adopting policies that foster diversity of faculty views, even and especially if a college starts with relatively broad restrictions, e.g. one must be a professing Christian. This is needed to a college becoming too homogeneous, creating a “clannish atmosphere,” a concern of almost any college. Colleges with an explicit set of requirements do struggle about whether they will get the strongest scholars to apply. As Mannoia (2000) notes, diversity is critical to preventing indoctrination and relativism.

Colleges have opportunities to use a number of national services to advertise faculty positions (e.g. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Black Issues in Higher Education*) as well as associations (e.g. Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities).

### **Campus visit(s)**

The campus visit is considered the most important element in the process of hiring according to those we interviewed. At all the institutions the President and/or the CAO take an active role in the hiring process. They do so for many reasons. They know the importance of hiring persons who can enhance the vision of the college. They desire to communicate the college’s vision to candidates personally. They often desire to learn about the more personal side of the faculty member. In doing so they use a variety of techniques. For example, in his interviewing candidates for faculty positions the President of College of Wooster likes to ask the candidate this question, “Who is your favorite teacher?” If the candidates mention an elementary teacher he can usually be confident that the person will be a good faculty member at the College. The person is identifying with someone who cares about others and helping students to grow and learn. If she mentions her faculty research advisory he gets concerned that she is more interested in her research and advancements in this area than in desiring to be a teacher first. Her heart may not be where the College’s is. He is interested in having one’s interest in teaching and research to be equal but if research is favored the fit may not be a good one for the person and for the college. As he stated “faculty here need to have a passion for working with 18-21 year olds.” At PLU, the President wants to know the faculty with an eye to “whether or not the applicant will be a good department chairperson in the future.”

It has become the common practice that President and Provost have the responsibility to take the position of keepers of the mission and the legacy of the college. Sometimes they become the gatekeeper. Recognize that compromises are often the result with faculty promoting the disciplinary skills of the person and the Provost and President defending the principle of faculty members fitting into and supporting the mission and identity.

## **Contractual arrangements**

Colleges have learned that all offers to faculty are best done from the Office of the Chief Academic Officer, e.g. Dean, Provost. This person has the perspective of the entire colleges, and has responsibility to commit resources to the faculty member, eg. Salary, moving expenses, research support, tenure track status. Contracts range from granting tenure immediately to a specified probationary period, to “creativity contract” for faculty and each is fundamentally different in expectations and responsibilities and obligations on the part of the individual and the institution. (Boyer, 1990).

## **Questions for discussion**

### **Hiring and Orientation**

- a. How does the college’s mission and identity influence the faculty selection and hiring process?
- b. If the college uses “mission based hiring,” how this policy influence the size and quality of your applicant pool?
- c. Are you ever challenged between hiring the best scholar in the discipline or the best person who fits your mission? How do you resolve these dilemmas?
- d. How does your college orient and communicate to new faculty the college’s mission and vision?

### **Qualities of a scholar**

- a. What “qualities of a scholar” does your college consider important to being a faculty member at your college?
- b. To what extent are the qualities associated with the person and his/her character included in the assessment of the faculty member’s contributions?
- c. How do you try to integrate “who faculty are” and “what they do” in fostering their development and evaluating their contributions to the college?
- d. How does your college assure faculty have the qualities of character necessary to be role models and mentors to students and peers?
- e. Is it important at your college that faculty integrate their personal commitments and beliefs with their scholarly practices? If so, why? If not, why not?
- f. When faced with the challenge of faculty who express worldviews dramatically different from your college’s traditions, how does the college demonstrate respect for their views within your tradition? Does the college’s mission, identity, and values statements guide you?

### **Honoring academic freedom**

- a. How does the college community show honor and respect for academic freedom as it relates to your college’s mission and identity?
- b. How do you communicate your college’s policy on academic freedom?

- c. When is it acceptable to limit a faculty member's expression of a political or religious ideology?
- d. What do the college's hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions communicate about academic freedom for individuals and the institution as a whole?
- e. How does your college resolve academic freedom with the college's founding religious traditions?
- f. Does your college's policy and practices on academic freedom hinder or promote open academic exchange among the faculty?

## Resources

*Chronicle of Higher Education*,  
*Black Issues in Higher Education*  
 Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
[www.facultyrecruitmentnetwork.org](http://www.facultyrecruitmentnetwork.org)

## Suggested Readings

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. San Francisco, CA.

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**Appendix A: Letter from the Academic Vice President of University of Dubuque to candidates**

Dear (candidate)

Thank you for your interest in the faculty position ....at the University of Dubuque. Following an initial screening of applications, the search committee has selected several candidates whose background and experience appear to fit our needs closely. You are among the candidates we would like to consider further.

The purpose of this letter and enclosed materials is to give you a better understanding of who we are. I also invite you to consult our web site, <http://www.dbq.edu>. If you wish to continue as an active candidate for the position, I ask that you reflect on the fit between your interests and who we are, and that you respond to the questions that appear toward the end of this letter...

The University of Dubuque was founded in 1852 as a school for prospective pastors to serve German immigrants. We are affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Throughout its history, UD has been known as a place of educational opportunity. Even today, many of our students are the first in their families to attend college. .... UD consists of the College, the Seminary, and the Graduate School. The College awards Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees, the Seminary awards

the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Religion, and Doctor of Ministry, and the Graduate School houses Master of Business Administration and Master of Arts in Communication programs.

The College emphasizes professional programs with a liberal arts core. ....

“Professional programs with a liberal arts core” means that all students in our professional programs take coursework in general education—written and spoken communication, computer literacy, etc.—and, as noted above, in spiritual growth, aesthetic appreciation, and global awareness. They also experience co-curricular learning opportunities in, for example, athletics and music. Similarly, all students in our liberal arts and sciences programs work with faculty who have experience as professionals in their discipline, complete an internship, and explore opportunities for professional application of their studies in, for example, philosophy, literature, art, and biology.

We are also continuing to live into our Christian heritage. Motivated by the slogan on the University seal, “Many gifts, one Spirit,” we welcome faculty and students from diverse faith traditions. Our commitment to multiculturalism means that we do not want to recruit or graduate people who fit any single model or mold. In addition, our Reformed, Christian commitment means that we want all members of our community to consider that all life can be understood to be in the service of God. Concretely, this means that we want faculty, students, administrators, and staff to consider how their work might be a vocation, a calling, not just a job. We provide students and faculty with formal and informal opportunities to reflect on their faith traditions, in the context of the history of Christianity. Voluntary College and Seminary Chapel services are held regularly. We also encourage everyone in our community to consider how he or she might be involved in service that helps transform the world into the place God wants it to be.

Currently the University, like many similar institutions, is striving to become increasingly engaged. As I noted, engagement is a part of our Reformed Christian heritage and commitment.... We recruit part-time professors and guest speakers from outside the academy, and most of our programs require internships. We are also enhancing the engagement of our faculty and students emphasizing the widely-adopted shift in focus from teaching to learning. In the place of the traditional teacher-centered classroom, we are encouraging all departments to integrate active and experiential learning, engagement with genuine questions and problems, small group processes, ongoing assessment and feedback, and internship and service learning opportunities into their curricula.....

The University’s Board of Trustees is a committed group of professionals who share the desire to help us become, in the words of our Mission statement, “one of the best small, private Christian colleges and universities.” They are dedicated to well-managed expansion that builds on current strengths, and they encourage entrepreneurial efforts of faculty.....

.....We recognize, however, that the University of Dubuque is a unique place. The ... position we have described will have real appeal for some, but not for all.

If you would like to continue as an active candidate for the position ..., please respond to me... If you have not done so in your previous materials, please also respond to the following questions:

1. What in particular attracts you to the University of Dubuque and to this position? Please describe any previous experience you may have had in an institution like ours.
2. Besides the \_\_\_\_\_ courses, what other upper-level courses would you like to teach? What major issues in these courses intrigue you?
3. What do you consider to be the three or four most important books or other documents published in the last 20 years dealing with \_\_\_\_\_? Briefly explain why you have chosen these materials.
4. If you have second-language proficiency and/or experience in international or cross-cultural learning, please tell us something about these abilities and experiences.
5. How do you respond to the distinction between a job and a calling? To what degree is this an important distinction for you as you consider employment opportunities?

.....Thank you very much for your interest in the University of Dubuque. As I'm sure you know, the most important element of any position is the fit between the candidate and the position and institution. The goal of this letter and of the final stages of our hiring process is to do all we can to confirm a close fit. I wish you well in finding the position that best suits you.