Faculty Hiring and Success

Guest Editor: Daniel Wakelee

Attracting highly qualified faculty is a matter of importance to metropolitan universities. Faculty hiring is a significant activity on any campus, but at many institutions facing declining resources, faculty hires now offer particularly precious opportunities to strengthen departments and reinforce areas of institutional priority. Although the results of faculty hiring processes have significant impacts on universities, many of the processes related to this activity have been the subject of relatively modest detailed examination. While this issue of *Metropolitan Universities* focuses on faculty hiring and success, it is not a comprehensive study of faculty hiring. The articles in this issue offer perspectives about how candidate and faculty expectations, along with institutional resources and processes, can impact the long-term success of those hired to teach on our campuses.

Building a faculty of successful teachers and scholars involves more than making good decisions in the hiring process. It may be useful to consider faculty hiring less as an institutional function that begins and ends in any given academic year, and more as a multiyear process that requires the integration of hires into their new institutions by providing adequate resources to help new faculty succeed after they have accepted offers of employment, as well as acknowledging the broader goals of both new faculty members and their institutions.

Both candidates and those involved in hiring decisions must determine whether the skills and interests of candidates fit with the mission of the institution. It is important that candidates have a clear understanding of institutional expectations before committing to join the faculty at an institution where they (if successful) could spend much, or all, of their professional career. In "Looking for the Scholar-Teacher," Elizabeth Say and Stella Theodoulou examine the critical importance of institutional mission in the hiring process.

While faculty hiring can seem to be a routine, almost mundane activity, it is important to consider that hiring today occurs in the context of an academic labor market that is changing in a variety of ways. Institutional expectations of new faculty in the key areas of service, teaching, and scholarship continue to evolve. Similarly, if they wish to attract and retain new faculty members, departments and institutions need to be alert to changing expectations of newly hired colleagues about their experiences as members of the faculty. Cathy Trower and Anne Gallagher draw on data from the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) database on job satisfaction and interviews with faculty at COACHE institutions to identify elements that are most important to the success of newly hired faculty in "Trekking toward Tenure." Trower and Susan Walzer use data and interview responses from several sources to examine the tensions new faculty members face navigating between the demands of their faculty

roles and their own values and expectations in "Crossing Generational Divides." They offer recommendations that institutions might pursue to reduce these tensions.

Other changes may influence the way searches are conducted. From the methods used to announce positions and recruit potential applicants to electronic systems used to receive applications, the physical (or electronic) technologies associated with hiring have undergone significant change in the past ten years. John Ikenberry, Andrew Hibel, and Robert Freedman describe these changes as they examine the question of "How Technology Has Changed (and Will Change) Higher Education Employee Recruitment." Once a search is underway, the process used to conduct the search can have a substantial impact on its success. Marilyn Levine and Martin Schimpf examine recruitment strategies and best practices in "Faculty Recruitment in an Era of Change."

For a variety of reasons, the on-campus processes used by institutions to select successful candidates appear to have changed less than other aspects of faculty hiring. "Faculty Hiring: One New Campus Approach" provides an opportunity to consider a process that differs from the traditional, departmentally based search processes that are the norm on most campuses.

Discussions of successful faculty hiring sometimes conclude at the point where a candidate has accepted an offer from the hiring institution. As several of the articles in this issue suggest, it is important to measure success using a longer-term lens. Hiring new faculty colleagues means more than just completing the hiring process; it represents a significant, multiyear investment on the part of each department, the department's faculty, and the institution. Beyond just attracting highly qualified candidates or even securing their hire, faculty success involves creating settings and resources that facilitate a successful transition from candidates to long-term productive teachers and scholars. Tom Otieno, Paula Lutz, and Andrew Schoolmaster examine the design and implementation of mentoring programs in "Enhancing Recruitment, Professional Development, and Socialization of Junior Faculty through Formal Mentoring Programs." Drawing on the experience of a faculty development program on their campus, Jace Hargis and Phil Gilbertson describe how a faculty center can assist with mentoring and orientation activities, as well as the faculty recruitment process itself. Ed Nuhfer, Michael Blodgett, Steve Fleisher, and John Griffin focus on ways to support the teaching of non-tenure track faculty. Although often overlooked, non-tenure track instructors conduct much of the teaching at many institutions. Recognizing non-tenure-track faculty and finding ways to contribute to their development and success is important, given their important role on most campuses.

As the information in the following articles demonstrates, the authors in this issue offer a range of ideas, information, and practical experiences that contribute to our understanding of faculty hiring experiences and how they can prove successful, for hiring institutions as well as for those who are selected to join the ranks of their faculty.

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