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**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS POLICY STATEMENT**

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**TOPIC:** Faculty Recruitment

**DATE:** September 20, 2016 (Updated from July 2014)

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Each school – and often each discipline within a school – structures faculty recruitment in ways idiosyncratic to the relevant academic field. In some cases, an accrediting body or a professional association explicitly mandates a specific course of action; more often, the approach has evolved over time without being codified. Either way, the outcome is a degree of variability in the way in which searches are conducted that is entirely appropriate.

From the University’s perspective, however, there is some merit in consistency and an even greater interest in ensuring that the hiring process meet basic legal requirements. The procedures outlined below were designed to foster these two goals. However, requests to deviate from the following instructions may be considered in certain cases; these should be directed to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Online Search Process**

**The University uses ByCommittee, a software package developed half a dozen years ago by Interfolio, for all full-time faculty searches.** The project manager for ByCommittee in the Office of the Provost is Melissa Loughner, with technical support from Dr. Jeff Miller. Together, Melissa and Jeff train those responsible for staffing searches across the campus.

**Position Announcements**

Disciplinary practice in how and where to post a faculty vacancy varies widely. One advantage of using ByCommittee is that, once a position announcement has been posted in multiple locations, it is possible for the software to query applicants about the way in which they first encountered it. At the end of search processes, therefore, department chairs have data readily available to help them make better, more strategic decisions about where to post future openings.

All faculty positions are automatically posted by the Office of Human Resources to the Ohio/Western Pennsylvania/West Virginia HERC. Departments do not need to take any action to trigger this additional posting.

The ubiquity of Web technology allows departments to “eat their cake and have it too” when it comes to position announcements. The text that appears in a journal or on a professional jobs site can be comparatively brief, but also include a link to a far fuller description hosted on a department Web page (as well as links to other relevant information about the department, the University, and the region).

While it makes sense to exploit this opportunity, it is important that even the initial posting include a number of key items. **All position announcements for full-time faculty positions, therefore, must include the following information**, structured in whatever way disciplinary practice dictates:

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- ✓ A specification of the contractual parameters of the position
  - Academic rank
  - Tenured/tenure-track/non-tenure-track
  - Contract length (9-month, 12-month, other)
- ✓ A description of the academic field(s) sought
  - Broadly speaking, this must correspond to the characterization of the position as it was originally approved by the Office of Provost
- ✓ A description of the qualifications and skills candidates should possess
  - “Required” qualifications/skills should be clearly distinguished from “preferred” qualifications/skills
- ✓ A list of the materials candidates must submit for review and directions on how to submit them via ByCommittee.
- ✓ The following statements, which should be inserted into the text of the announcement *verbatim* (though not necessarily in this order)
  - Catholic in its mission and ecumenical in spirit, Duquesne University values equality of opportunity as an educational institution and as an employer. We aspire to attract and sustain a diverse faculty that reflects contemporary society, serves our academic goals and enriches our campus community. We particularly encourage applications from members of underrepresented groups and support dual-career couples through our charter membership in this region’s HERC (<http://www.hercjobs.org/oh-western-pa-wv/>).
  - We invite applicants for this position to learn more about our university and its Spiritan heritage by visiting <http://www.duq.edu/about/mission-and-identity/mission-statement>. Those invited to campus for an interview may be asked about ways in which they see their talents contributing to the continued growth of our community and furthering its mission.
- ✓ Information about who to contact for additional information.

It is critical for department chairs and the members of search committees to appreciate that the way in which a position is described when it is first posted also dictates how the department, the dean and the Provost can act at later stages of the search process. If the initial posting refers to an “entry-level assistant professorship,” the University cannot later make the appointment at the rank of associate professor. And it is similarly unacceptable to extend an offer to a candidate who is A.B.D. if the announcement stipulated “Ph.D. in hand” as a job requirement. In either case, other individuals whose qualifications did not meet the standards articulated in the posting may have elected not to apply. The moral is simply that time devoted to the careful framing of the position before it is published will pay off as the later stages of the search unfold.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

The University must redouble its efforts to recruit faculty members who can enrich the learning environment on campus as a result of their varying identities, viewpoints and talents. This applies not only to the statutorily protected considerations such as gender and ethnicity but also to considerations such as socioeconomic background. Our Western Pennsylvania location

presents us with a challenge in some of these areas. But comments by accreditors (such as those recently voiced off the record by the members of a team from the American Bar Association) make it clear that the University cannot rely on what some view as “excuses” as a way to avoid the hard work involved in cultural change.

We will continue to refine institutional statements on this topic, emphasizing the positive academic value represented by greater diversity among our faculty as well as our students and staff. We will also continue to seek ways to deploy strategically the funds set aside in the Academic Affairs budget for “target-of-opportunity” hires. And, by applying another feature of the ByCommittee software, we will ensure that departments understand the general composition of the applicant pools for the jobs they post before making decisions about whom to place on their short lists or bring in for interviews.

But success will still elude us if inclusiveness, broadly defined, is not adopted as a long-term priority. This is therefore a topic that the Office of the Provost will continue to stress.

**Questions/Concerns**

Any questions or concerns about the topics addressed in this document should be directed to Dr. Austin.