

A&P Hiring Task Force Midyear Report

Membership

Chair(s): Michael O’Fallon & Erica Lewis

Members: Mike Busing, Jennifer Campfield (ex-officio), Taimi Castle, Mark L’Esperance, Chuck Flick (ex-officio), Howard Lubert, & Meg Sander (ex-officio)

Charge:

The AA A&P Faculty Hiring Guidelines Task Force has the following responsibilities:

1. Review and understand the variety of positions classified as A&P within Academic Affairs (213 distinct positions as of 2022-23) and evaluate their unique attributes
2. Review and understand the current Academic Affairs A&P faculty recruitment and hiring guidelines, incorporating all relevant laws, statutes and policies
3. Assess and provide recommendations pertaining to Academic Affairs A&P faculty hiring, from the creation of the position to the point of offer and closing the search, considering the variety of position types and their unique attributes
4. Consider the three recommendations included in the Faculty Senate Resolution (first reading at Faculty Senate, January 26, 2023) regarding transparency and accountability of A&P appointments within Academic Affairs.

The Provost’s Office will review the task force recommendations and consult with the Academic Council and Faculty Senate Steering Committee as needed upon receipt of the recommendations. The Provost’s Office will make a final determination on formalizing guidelines after review and consultation with Human Resources and University Counsel to ensure consistency with policy and legal guidelines and considerations.

Summary of Current Semester Activity:

Summary of Charge 1 Activities:

- The 23 – 24 Task Force (TF) reviewed the data gathered last Academic Year related to charge 1.
- The TF has proposed the following working *draft* definitions to clarify the variety of A&P positions and allow for more informed and nuanced discussions.

Level 1A – Provost report and not designated as 1B, example Dean/Vice Provost

Level 1B – Provost report, Associate and Assistant Vice

Presidents/Communication Director

Level 2 – Level 1 Report, example Directors and Associate Vice Provosts

Level 3 – Level 2 Report, example Lab Coordinator

Future work related to Charge 1:

- The work of charge 1 is nearly complete. All committee members will continue to refine and gather feedback about the draft definitions. The committee members agreed that it may be in the best interest of the TF to focus on Level 1 A&P positions.

Summary of Charge 2 Activities:

- A&P Faculty recruitment and hiring documents were gathered, and the review is ongoing. The committee met twice, asked clarifying questions about these documents, and delegated responsibility for gathering additional data to guide future work. The committee has been asked to review the following documents:
 - Administrative and Professional Faculty Recruitment Procedures and Recommended Strategies for Expanding and Retaining a Diverse Faculty (2019)
 - Academic Affairs Guidelines for Recruiting and Hiring Instructional Faculty (2023-24)
 - Policy 1335: Administrative and Professional Faculty – Terms and Conditions of Employment (Revised June 2023)
 - Policy 1106: Conflict of Interests
 - Section III.C. Search and Appointment Procedures in the faculty Handbook

Future work related to Charge 2:

- The work of charge 2 is ongoing. Bi-monthly meetings are planned beginning in January 2024 to review the documents. Efforts will be made to have some of these meetings in person to facilitate the work of charge 2. The committee chairs are organizing this review work, and all committee members are reviewing the documents. Specific members were assigned profession-specific tasks to bring additional information to future meetings. The committee members have been asked to review all these documents and to identify gaps that may be recommendations to the final document.

Summary of Charge 3 Activities:

- The work of charge three has begun with a draft list of a few recommendations. The current recommendations further development before sharing outside of the TF.

Future work related to Charge 3:

- The work of charge three has begun and will be the primary task of the spring TF work. The goal is to have recommendations for guidelines provided by the end of the 23-24 AY.

Summary of Charge 4 Activities:

- The TF added the three recommendations included in the Faculty Senate Resolution to its internal documents about the charge (see below)) such that consideration of the recommendations could be front-of-mind throughout TF work. Documents related to conflict of interest and hiring were included to be reviewed as part of the ongoing work

of charge 2. Thus far, the committee has discussed the conflict-of-interest policy, and conversations about how to best address the Resolution are ongoing. All members' input, including faculty input, has been considered vital to the TF decision-making process.

Future work related to Charge 4:

- All TF members will continue considering the Faculty Senate Resolution as part of Charge 3. The TF may ask for input from stakeholders once the recommendations are drafted to gather feedback about whether the recommendations meet the needs illustrated in the Resolution.

The Three recommendations from the Faculty Senate Resolution:

Be it resolved that the language of JMU Policy 1106 on Conflict of Interest be revised, or a new policy or guidelines be written (for example, similar to the National Science Foundation's policies), to include a clear process to be followed when concerns about conflicts of interest are raised regarding searches or other academic matters, and to include a mechanism by which faculty—or a neutral third-party on their behalf (such as the faculty ombudsperson)—can verify and document that the conflict of interest claims have been properly handled and resolved;

Be it further resolved that the language of the non-disclosure confidentiality agreement required of search committees be rewritten to clarify that confidentiality about the personnel involved in the search does *not* preclude Committee members (or faculty) from raising actionable objections in response to perceived violations of the *search process*;

Be it further resolved that by April 2023, senior leadership publicly adopt policy and guidelines which establish a transparent and accountable search process for divisional and senior leadership within the Division of Academic Affairs, in proactive and meaningful consultation with members of instructional faculty and staff. This policy must allow committee summary reports of searches and should include a mechanism by which faculty—or a neutral third-party on their behalf (such as the faculty ombudsperson)—can verify claims that normal search processes must be suspended. In general, search processes must follow the recommendations of the American Association of University Professors' Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.