

PAC 2015-2016 Report to the Provost

2015-2016 PAC Committee Members

Committee Members: Brian Hook (University Programs - Program Director Representative), Doug Miller (Natural Science Program Area - Chair Representative), Lora Holland (Humanities Program Area - Chair Representative), Karin Peterson (Social Sciences Program Area - Chair Representative), Micheal Stratton (Senate Representative), Deans Gwen Ashburn, Ed Katz, Jeff Konz, and Keith Krumpe (Non-voting Members: Assistant Provost Pat McClellan and Provost Joe Urgo)

PAC Process

PAC met twice during the fall semester to review enrollment data and to develop the PAC request form and process. The call for proposals was emailed to department chairs and program directors in early January 2016. All requestors submitted an application on or before February 5 and were invited to give a brief presentation to the committee and to answer questions, beginning February 26 and continuing through April 11. Once all applications were presented, committee members ranked the proposals according to their relative strengths. PAC met three times, April 22 and 29, and May 5, to discuss the merits of each proposal and formulate a set of recommendations. When committee members' own proposals were reviewed, they abstained from both the conversation and the voting. The deliberations were lengthy in part because the committee knew that we would be able to meet only about six of the requests, and the significance of the needs and the scarcity of available positions extended the discussions.

2016 Requests

The Position Allocation Committee (PAC) received 19 requests for tenure track searches from 16 departments and programs in February 2016. The requests are alphabetically as follows:

- Art/Art History (1) (Painting)
- Biology (1) (Integrative Biology)
- Chemistry (1)
- Computer Science (1)
- Drama (1)
- Environmental Studies (1)
- Health and Wellness (2) (one request for Health Education, one for Community and Public Health)
- History (1) (Digital Humanities)
- Management and Accountancy (1) (Management Science)
- Mass Communication (1) (Video Production)
- Mathematics (1)
- Modern Languages and Literatures: French (1)

- Modern Languages and Literatures: German (1)
- Music (1) (Music History/Historical Musicology)
- New Media (1) (Design and Visual Communication)
- Sociology (2) (one request for Law and Justice Studies, one for Sexualities)
- Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (1)

Positions Recommended

PAC expects each of these departments to engage in conversation with the area Dean regarding feedback from the committee, as well as the final articulation of the position prior to conducting a search.

- Art/Art History (1)
- MGMT (1)
- FREN (1) The committee approved this position with the stipulation that the hire be able to teach courses in WGSS, especially in the subjects of women and gender.
- SOC (1 Sexualities) The committee recognizes the departmental need as well as the ability of this hire to teach courses in WGSS
- CSCI (1) The committee encourages the department to use this hire to consider new ways of contributing extra-departmentally and to university programs apart from 178 courses, and specifically identify a strategy for bringing department faculty into teaching outside the major in Humanities or other LAC areas.
- BIO (1) The committee recognizes the departmental need for this position; further work on the department vision and planning need to be demonstrated before future requests will be considered, given that student interest and faculty expertise do not appear to be fully aligned. For example, there appears to be a high demand for cell biology - how will the curriculum and staffing address this need? PAC expects the awarding of a new position to include a departmental reinvestment in teaching outside of the department in Humanities or other LAC areas.
- HWP (1 Community and Public Health) The committee recognizes the clear need of this request, but further requests will have to demonstrate action taken to address the number of majors, gateway course rigor, class size, and to bring the GPA more in line with university averages, as well as a strategy for bringing department faculty into teaching outside the major in Humanities or other LAC areas.

Positions Not Awarded

The committee was confronted with the difficult task of awarding only six or seven positions for nineteen requests. Those requests not awarded fell into two general categories:

1. The request was clearly meritorious, but there were competing needs in other department/programs; the committee encourages the department/program to reapply in the future.
2. The request had some merit, but there was evidence of other issues that should be addressed prior to a new PAC request. See list of general considerations below.

Specific feedback for these departments/programs will be provided by the area Dean. If a department/program did not receive a position, we recommend that the chair/program director pursue a conversation with the area Dean as early as possible. Please note: position requests that are repeat requests from previous years -OR- multiple requests from a single department are NOT automatically given preference over first-time or single requests.

Considerations:

In evaluating proposals, PAC members considered the following factors:

- **Will the decision increase, retain, or reduce the number of tenure lines in a department or program?**
 - PAC is concerned exclusively with tenure lines, not lecturers. We take into account whether departments are expanding the number of tenure lines or whether they are replacing a retired position. There is no guarantee that retired tenure lines will be retained in the department/program. Replacement positions are defined as those that retain the same number of tenure lines in a department *from the previous year* and not from years prior.
- **Is there evidence of need for the position?**
 - What does existing data indicate about size of major, ability to deliver the curriculum, service to the broader university curriculum (especially teaching outside of the department/program). Note that data is only one factor in PAC's decision making.
 - Programs with a high number of majors should demonstrate that they have strategies for managing that number, including the possibility of a rigorous gateway course, higher class enrollments, or other means; and strategies for addressing department/program GPAs if they are higher than university means, through grade norming, rubrics or other means.
 - If there are curricular issues (such as high demand for specific courses, number of credit hours in the major, roadblocks to completion of major on time), has the department/program moved forward and completed curriculum changes through the APC process?
- **Is there evidence of shared vision, planning, and leadership around curriculum issues in the department/program?**
 - Does the position request articulate how the department has planned for the position in light of a shared vision? Does the specialization of the position requested appear to meet a shared vision?

- Are there apparent issues in the department/program that should be addressed through other means than a new tenure track position?
- Does the vision and record of the department/program include support of LAC, Humanities, and/or other University Programs? Does the vision articulate how the department/program serves the broader liberal arts mission?
- Are there indications that the department/program would benefit from a program review prior to assigning new tenure track positions?
- **If the department/program received feedback from PAC in a previous year, does the new proposal address those concerns?**

Recommendations to Departments and Programs Considering Future Position Requests

- Review this year's PAC report for feedback that is specifically addressed to your department/program.
- Review this year's PAC report to learn about the kinds of concerns that you might address in your PAC request.
- At a minimum, in advance of submitting a PAC request, discuss your Dean's perception of your department's/program's needs and areas of concern. Consider asking your Dean for feedback on your request before submission.
- In the interview process, be ready to answer questions about how the new faculty member's teaching load will be distributed over a two-year period.