

Date: May 31, 2016

To: Mary Grant, Chancellor

From: Joseph Urgo, Provost

Re: Response to PAC Recommendations

The Position Allocation Committee (PAC) received 19 requests for tenure track searches from 16 academic units in Spring 2016:

- Art/Art History (1) (Painting)
- Biology (1) (Integrative Biology)
- Chemistry (1)
- Computer Science (1)
- Drama (1)
- Environmental Studies (1)
- Health and Wellness (2) (Health Education; 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 and Musicology)
- New Media (1) (Design and Visual Communication)
- Sociology (2) (Law and Justice Studies; Sexualities)
- Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (1)

After extensive deliberation, including presentations by requesting departments and programs, PAC recommends 7 faculty appointments, effective August 2016, in these areas:

- Art/Art History (1)
- Management (1)
- French (1) The committee approved this position with the stipulation that the hire be able to teach courses in WGSS, especially in the fields of women and gender.
- Sociology (1) (Sexualities) The committee recognizes the departmental need as well as the ability of this hire to teach courses in WGSS.
- Computer Science (1) The committee encourages the department to use this hire to consider ways of contributing to university programs apart from LA178 courses, and specifically identify a strategy for encouraging faculty to teach outside the major in Humanities or other LAC areas.
- Biology (1) The committee recognizes the departmental need for this position; further work on disciplinary vision and planning should be demonstrated before future requests will be considered. 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 reinvestment in teaching outside of the department in Humanities or other LAC areas.

- Health and Wellness Promotion (1) (Community and Public Health) The committee recognizes the clear need of this request, but further requests must demonstrate action taken to address the number of majors, gateway course rigor, class size, and to align the GPA with University averages, as well as a strategy for allowing faculty to teach in Humanities or other LAC areas.

PAC expects each of these academic units to engage in conversation with the appropriate Dean regarding feedback from the committee, as well as the final articulation of the position before initiating a search.

Positions Not Awarded

The committee was confronted with the difficult task of awarding only 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 departments and programs; the committee encourages the unit to reapply in the future.
2. The request had some merit, but there is 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 and programs will be provided by the area Dean. In cases where a position request was unsuccessful, we recommend that the chair or program director pursue a conversation with the area Dean as early as possible.

Please note: 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:

- **The effect of the allocation decision on the number of tenure lines in the unit.**
 - 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. 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.
- **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? (PAC looks closely at teaching outside of the department or 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 rigorous gateway courses and higher class enrollments, and strategies for addressing GPAs if they are higher than university means, through grade norming, rubrics, or other means.
 - If there are curricular challenges (high demand for specific courses, high number of credit hours in the major, roadblocks to the timely completion of the major), has the department or program moved forward and completed curriculum changes through the APC process?

- **Evidence of shared vision, planning, and leadership around curriculum issues.**
 - Does the request articulate how the department has planned for the position in light of a shared vision? Does the specialization of the position appear to meet a shared vision?
 - Are there challenges in the department or program that should be addressed through means other than a new tenure track position?
 - Does the vision and planning undertaken include support of LAC, Humanities, and other University Programs? Does the vision articulate how the academic unit serves the broader liberal arts mission?
 - Are there indications that the department or program would benefit from a program review prior to assigning new tenure track positions?
- **If the department or program received feedback from PAC in a previous year, does the new proposal address those concerns?**

In addition to the foregoing considerations, PAC offers four recommendations to departments and programs considering future position requests:

- Review this year's PAC report for feedback that is specifically addressed to your unit.
- 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 unit's needs and areas of concern. Consider asking your Dean for feedback on your request before submission.
- In the presentation process, be ready to answer questions about how the new faculty member's teaching load will be distributed over a two-year period.

I want to both thank and commend the members of the Position Allocation Committee for their thorough, diligent, and collegial work over the course of the 2015-2016 academic year. With nineteen requests and seven available positions, decisions were challenging and our discussions were complex and extensive. I commend committee members for maintaining a long view of the institution, realizing that decisions made this year will affect the University for decades.

2015-2016 PAC Committee Members

Brian Hook, University Programs - Program Director Representative
 Doug Miller, Natural Sciences 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
 Assistant Provost Pat McClellan and Provost Joe Urgo, non-voting members