

**To** Faculty Search & Selection Process Review (FSSPR) Taskforce  
**From:** Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Kevin McDonald, Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion  
**Date:** September 20, 2013  
**Subject:** Charge for the *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force*

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### **Purpose**

Hiring and retaining an excellent and diverse faculty is a top priority for RIT. A diverse and highly skilled faculty is essential to achieving the university's mission of advancing scholarship and providing an exceptional educational experience for its students. Since 2002, the RIT Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention (OFRR) has been charged with supporting this mission through, among other things, the development and implementation of processes and protocols aimed at improving the quality and expanding the diversity of the candidate pools and lists of finalists for faculty positions at RIT.

In May 2013 an external evaluator (Gertrude Fraser, University of Virginia) met with groups of faculty and administrators to evaluate the current state of faculty recruitment and hiring practices at RIT in regards to satisfaction with the overall process. Dr. Fraser's review process involved discussion sessions with four distinct groups: deans, department chairs, search committee chairs, and college liaisons. Based on the results of these discussion groups, it is clear that current processes require a thorough assessment which will likely lead to a detailed refinement plan. Therefore, in consultation with OFRR and others, we have decided to convene the *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force* to focus on this important issue for the upcoming academic year. The purpose of this memo is to communicate the charge for this *Task Force*.

### **Charge for the *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force***

The primary charge of the *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force* is as follows:

The *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force* will provide administrative leaders and faculty with a plan to improve the success and effectiveness of the faculty search process. The work of the *Task Force* will include (1) an objective assessment of RIT's current faculty search and hiring processes and strategies, including establishing a measurement of success in both areas (i.e., hiring and retention) that accounts for both process outcomes and efficiencies; and (2) an effort to benchmark best practices at other universities in order to inform process improvements at RIT. Ultimately, the *Task Force* is expected to articulate approaches to improve our existing practices in order to help RIT achieve a high quality, diverse faculty body.

In carrying out this charge, the *Task Force* should pay particular attention to the key issues raised by the external evaluator regarding the faculty hiring process, including:

- A perceived lack of ownership in the faculty hiring process by key stakeholders
- A high level of faculty frustration and resistance to certain elements of the process
- Absence of data dissemination and unclear evaluation methodology for the overall process

## **The Approach of the *Task Force***

Our expectation is that the *Task Force* will conduct its work at the micro and macro levels within divisions, colleges, and departments to target systemic problems and potential areas for improvement. The work of the *Task Force* will include analyses of various elements and processes within the current faculty recruitment and hiring system, while learning from elements adopted within best practice faculty recruitment systems at other universities. The following items should help frame this investigation and, wherever possible, the answers to these questions should be data-driven and evidence based:

- Who are the key stakeholders associated with faculty hiring decisions and what are the needs for refinement in the current faculty recruitment and hiring system from their viewpoint?
- What is the current communication plan for the Faculty Search & Selection Process for each of the key stakeholders?
- What are the features that need to be designed into this system so that stakeholder concerns are adequately addressed and the system is effective and of high quality?
- Are there inconsistencies in the current process and, if so, how should they be resolved? Should all academic units be following the same process, and what are the benefits and costs associated with doing so?
- How is success measured within our current Faculty Search & Selection System? How are these results shared with key stakeholders currently?
- How could the current measures of success and associated communication be improved?
- What are best practices in regards to faculty searches at universities across the US?
- How should the Faculty Hiring Process refinement plan be disseminated?

## **Task Force Members**

The members of the Task Force are as follows:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Harvey Palmer, Co-Chair	KGCOE
Twyla Cummings, Co-Chair	CIAS/CL
Judy Bender	Human Resources
Margaret Bailey	ADVANCE/Female Faculty Associate
Maureen Valentine	ADVANCE/CAST/CL/Faculty Affairs Subcommittee
Marcos Esterman	AALANA Faculty Associate/AALANA Council
Kim Shearer	GCCIS/CL
Ann Howard	COLA/CL
Michael Vernarelli	COLA
Stephen Addersley	NTID/former CL
John Tu	COB
Mike Kotlarchyk	COS
Dan Ornt	IHST
Christine Monaco	Budget & Financial Planning Services
Jennifer Mastrangelo	Provost's Office
Kristin Waterstram	Faculty Affairs Subcommittee
Sylvia Perez-Hardy	Academic Senate/DI

Because the NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant is an ongoing complementary effort within our university focused on increasing the representation of women faculty including underrepresented women, key members of the grant's leadership team are included within the *Task Force*.

### **Timeframe**

We expect the *Task Force* to complete a preliminary evaluation by January 31, 2014 so that any budget implications associated with *Task Force* recommendations can be integrated into the FY15 budget process. In addition, the Board of Trustees (BOT) and I would like to review a report addressing all of the above questions during the April 2014 BOT meeting.

### **Conclusion**

It is our hope that the *Faculty Search & Selection Process Review Task Force* will work diligently to accomplish its charge over the months ahead. If there are any questions or comments regarding this *Task Force* or its charge, please contact me directly.