



April 2, 2020

Update on Faculty Hiring

Dear Dean or Chair:

This memorandum seeks to set forth a new policy, provide guidance, and answer questions arising from the inevitable financial fallout from the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic as it pertains to the hiring of ladder-rank Senate faculty (*i.e.*, those in the Professor series, APM 220) and those in the Lecturer with Security of Employment series (*i.e.*, LSOEs or LPSOEs, APM 285). Updates will be posted on the Academic Personnel Office (APO) website: apo.berkeley.edu.

This memorandum covers the following topics:

1. Appointments for which offers have been extended
2. Ongoing searches for which offers have not been extended
3. Off-cycle FTE requests
4. The current on-cycle FTE allocation process

Appointments with July 1, 2020 or January 1, 2021 start dates for which offers have been extended

This applies to two categories:

1. An official offer (*i.e.*, one signed by me or by the Chancellor) has been extended.
2. A candidate has been identified, voted an offer by the unit, has been informed of the vote, and possibly extended a so-called soft offer.

For the first category, the offer will be honored and the appointment will proceed as usual. For the second category, assuming a favorable campus review (*i.e.*, by the Budget Committee and relevant administrators), an official offer will be extended and the appointment will proceed as usual.

For cases falling into the second category, units are encouraged to submit them to the campus as soon as possible (if they have not already been submitted). In particular, units should *not* wait for the candidates to accept their soft offers before submitting them for campus review. Although unlikely, there remains a slim possibility that, were the budget picture to become significantly worse, we might have no choice but to cease making formal offers. This, I wish to emphasize, is a highly unlikely scenario, but as waiting for the soft offer to be accepted is never a good rationale for delaying the submission of cases to the campus, there is no reason not to get cases in as expeditiously as possible.

For cases falling into the second category, if the case has not yet been submitted to the campus, please send me documentation that a faculty vote has occurred and been communicated to the candidate. Please do so no later than **April 7, 2020**.

Authorized searches for appointments with July 1, 2020 or January 1, 2021 start dates for which offers have *not* been extended

If an authorized search has not yet started, it can no longer start this academic year. Units with such searches should contact me no later than **August 1, 2020** as to whether they wish to conduct them in the 2020–21 academic year (AY 2020–21). Such requests will be reviewed, with prompt responses. If no such request is received by August 1, 2020, the search authorization will be extinguished.

If an authorized search is under way, but not concluded the unit must suspend the search *temporarily* (although *already* scheduled interviews or virtual visits may continue). This applies to searches for which interviews or virtual visits remain to be conducted, for which the search committee or faculty have not chosen a candidate, for which no faculty vote has occurred, or those in which a candidate has been selected and voted on by the faculty, but the candidate has not yet been notified of their selection.

For searches that are temporarily suspended in this way, units should submit to my office, as soon as possible, a request for continuance of the search. The case for continuance should include the following information:

- A brief assessment of immediate need, with an emphasis on curricular and advising needs
- A brief assessment of the strength of the pool or the strength of the candidate who has been identified. If it is unlikely that a new search in AY 2020–21 would generate as strong a pool or candidate, the reasons for such a conclusion should be provided.
- How far along the search is at this point in time.
- The probability that top candidates would accept an offer with a July 1, 2020 or January 1, 2021 start date.
- An account of the communications with applicants, finalists, etc. and an assessment of the likely reputational risk to the unit if the search were ended and resumed at some later date.
- Any other information that a unit deems relevant for assessing whether continuation is warranted.

Both for the sake of reviewers, as well as for you, I strongly encourage you to be brief in such communications. It is my expectation that we will choose to continue most ongoing searches, but given the precariousness of the budget as currently understood and reflecting the evolving nature of budget situation, I unfortunately cannot offer any guarantees. Every effort will be made to give you a response as quickly as possible, as we understand there is a cost to suspending a search even temporarily.

While a search is suspended, I kindly ask that you (i) don't schedule virtual visits or interviews; (ii) don't conduct faculty votes; and (iii) do not extend offers or communicate with candidates. If a candidate inquires as to the state of the search, I encourage you to say simply that the campus is assessing ongoing searches at this time. You can relay to candidates that the Vice Provost has indicated that he is optimistic that ongoing searches will be permitted to continue, but cannot make any promises to that effect.

Off-Cycle FTE requests

Off-cycle FTE requests previously granted will be handled in the same way as other ongoing searches, as described above. That is, for off-cycle positions for which official or soft offers have been extended, the offers will be honored. For off-cycle positions in which an offer has not yet been communicated to the candidate, the process must be suspended and a request for continuance submitted to my office. (See above for the information that should be included in your brief request.)

Off-cycle FTE requests that have not yet been authorized are less likely to be granted in the current budgetary climate. Please note:

- Off-cycle FTE requests for spousal appointments will have priority and will be treated largely as they always have been.
- Off-cycle FTE requests for “two-fers” (multiple offers on a single search) are much more likely to be turned down than before. A very compelling argument will be needed for such an off-cycle request to be granted.
- Off-cycle FTE requests for targets of opportunities (*i.e.*, individuals who suddenly have come on the market for a limited time) are very likely to be turned down. The case will need to be overwhelmingly compelling for such an off-cycle request to be granted.

The current on-cycle FTE allocation process

The Budget Committee and the administration continue to work on FTE allocations for Target Year 2021–22 (*i.e.*, searches with July 1, 2021 or later starts). Obviously, given the fluid budget situation, what the ultimate number of positions allocated and related issues for searches to be conducted in AY 2020–21 are matters subject to change.

Sincerely,



Benjamin E. Hermalin
Vice Provost for the Faculty

cc: A. Paul Alivisatos, Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost
Heather Archer, Assistant Vice Provost & Executive Director of the Academic Personnel Office
The Committee on Budget and Interdepartmental Relations