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UNH Cooperative Extension Criteria and Procedures for Filling Staff Positions

Organizational Criteria for Staffing

The Leadership Team approves filling status positions in the context of the total organization.

Program Leaders and Unit Leaders are fully responsible for directing and coordinating the hiring of all staff. Program Leaders and Unit Leaders are expected to lead search committees and fulfill the steps in the recruitment and hiring process outlined in this document. When a position becomes vacant the Program Leader or Unit Leader discusses with the Leadership Team the following organizational criteria for staffing decisions:

- Program and operational priorities including organization-wide and program area plans of work, state initiatives, technology strategic plan, communications plan, critical and emerging issues and program reviews
- Availability of funding
- Program and operational obligations including contracts, grants, earmarked funding and MOU's
- Analysis of past and potential economic, social, political and environmental impacts of the position under consideration
- Organizational commitment to staffing determined with county partners which achieve the mission, goals and objectives of the broad program areas of "Natural Resources" and "Families, Youth and Communities"
- Commitment to campus, state, regional and national initiatives
- Analysis of staffing options and alternatives in accordance with USNH policy (i.e. permanent full or part time status employee, temporary full or part time employee, service provider agreement, job sharing, team coverage, partnerships, multi county/state positions, leave vacant or position elimination)
- Input from staff and stakeholders through advisory councils, funders and decision makers
- Type of search process (e.g., internal, regional, national)
- Level of change needed in the position description and related implications

Program Justification and Approval Process

The Program Leader or Unit Leader submits the following information to the Leadership Team for discussion:

- a draft job description
- cost for the position and indication of funding sources
- a one page rationale demonstrating the need for and impacts of the position to be used with decision makers. The rationale must be compelling, persuasive,

describe the essential need for the position and answer, “**Why should ____ position be funded?**” Consideration should be given to the following questions:

- Public issues covered by this position and how they will be addressed?
- Demographic, economic and other data supporting the need for the position?
- The impact of this position?
 - People served in the last year
 - Groups served solely by UNHCE
 - Major programs and related outcomes
- What happens if this position is not filled as described?
 - Gaps in programming
 - Outcomes not reached
 - Mandates not met
 - Relationships fractured
- What is the specific public value of this position?
 - Economic
 - Environmental
 - Social
- How does this position provide a unique educational function that justifies support through public tax dollars?
- How does this position best utilize public money?
 - Direct savings
 - Leverage of new program funds
 - Indirect savings

In addition, the following steps will be carried out by Program Leader if the decision is made to secure new funding for county/multi county positions:

- Review the job description and position rationale with specialists, county staff, program participants and the county advisory council. Consider alternative staffing patterns. Determine the minimum staff requirement for a programmatic presence in each county. Be prepared to explain the staffing plan rationale.
- Identify supporters including program participants who speak articulately about the public need for the position. Coach supporters about the staffing plan, request letters of support and make personal contacts with appropriate elected officials. Consider holding a planning session with the county advisory council and key people – those who personally know decision makers, are passionate about Extension’s impacts and/or very articulate about Extension programs.) Conduct private conversations with key people before public discussion of positions, to help gauge and enhance the degree of support for the staffing plan.
- Work with the Assistant Director for County Operations (ADCO), the COA and Advisory Council members to prepare for a meeting with County government decision makers and/or County Commissioners to discuss the need to fill the position and the associated budget request. Seek advice and input from them. Proceed with the hiring process if approval is given by County decision makers and the Administrative and Leadership Teams

Recruitment Procedures for Program Leaders and Unit Leaders Hiring Status* Staff (* Status = Benefits eligible)

1. Involve advisory councils, specialists, staff, faculty and stakeholders in identifying needs within the discipline/program area or unit. Fully involve the ADCO, when filling county positions. For Extension Faculty positions, involve the appropriate department chair and faculty.
2. Form and lead a broadly representative search and screen committee. For county positions, the search and screen committee includes the ADCO, and the COA or his/her designee. For Extension Faculty positions, fully involve the appropriate department chair and faculty member(s) assigned to the search committee.
3. If the position has split responsibilities involving a funding partner (such as an academic department in the case of Extension Faculty), secure written verification for the position description and a commitment to provide required funding and the date on which the funding will be available.
4. Forward the proposal to fill the position with a draft position description and written verification of partner support and funding to the Leadership Team for review and discussion. Following Leadership Team review, submit the final position announcement to the Associate Director for approval.
5. Once approved, create a position announcement via the UNH web-based employment system stating job requirements and other information. Most of the web-based vacancy form can be quickly completed; however, serious consideration must be given to the position announcement. This process, including all advertising requests and details, will be submitted to Assistant Director for Finance & Human Resources. Advertising must include specific efforts to recruit racial minorities. For positions predominately held by males, advertising must include specific efforts to recruit females.
6. As application materials are received, follow-up with minority applicants and offer encouragement and assistance to ensure they have every opportunity to be given full consideration for the position.
7. The UNH Online Job Posting and Employment Site facilitates and automates many of the aspects of recruitment and employment application.. Through the Assistant Director, Finance and Human Resources, an account and password will be created for each search. Committee members can screen applicants any time during the process. Information that cannot be sent electronically must be provided in hard copy to each member of the search committee.
8. Convene a search and screen committee meeting to discuss each candidate, select applicants for interviews and document decisions about the status of each applicant.

9. Throughout the review process, update the online status of applicants so candidates are informed of their status.
10. Conduct screening interviews, document all committee decisions and identify finalists. When it is necessary to bring candidates to New Hampshire, the Assistant Director, Finance & Human Resources, must be consulted to determine the most cost-effective method of interviewing, and must approve all travel and related expenditures in advance.
11. Contact all references to verify work experiences and qualifications and explore issues or concerns about the candidate raised by the search and screen committee. Fully document all reference checks.
12. When appropriate, schedule finalist interviews with the Administrative Team.
13. For county-based positions, schedule finalist interviews with the local staff and County Advisory Council, in coordination with the ADCO. Arrive at a candidate recommendation with the Advisory Council in executive session by ranking their top choice. List alternate(s) identified or document the decision to continue the search by re-advertising the position.
14. For campus-based positions, schedule interviews with appropriate staff, faculty and partners. Provide an opportunity for participants to offer input to the search and screen committee on the candidates. For Extension Faculty positions, ensure the interview date selected supports involvement of the appropriate department chair and the school/college dean.
15. Forward the recommended individual for hire to the Dean & Director, Associate Director and Assistant Director, Finances & Human Resources. Include the ADCO, when filling county positions. Provide the Assistant Director, Finance & Human Resources with the following information on the new employee (1) calculated years of comparable experience, (2) proposed salary, (3) proposed rank and (4) position funding plan.

For Extension Faculty positions, the recommendation to hire must include a letter signed by the department chair verifying (1) departmental approval of Extension Faculty status, (2) rank approved and (3) initial term of appointment granted. A written recommendation to hire the candidate from the appropriate school/college dean must also be provided.

16. Summary reports for Human Resources are automated and no longer require the Staff Selection Form. Any question regarding this phase of the hiring process should be directed to the Assistant Director, Finance and Human Resources. Hire approval must be given by the Dean & Director/Associate Director before proceeding to step number 17.

17. Contact the applicant to verbally make a job offer only after the proposed salary, rank and start date have been approved by UNH Human Resources and the Assistant Director, Finance and Human Resources. For Extension Faculty positions, the department chair, and dean if appropriate, must also formally approve the salary, rank and start date before the offer is made. Any decisions regarding reimbursement for transition expenses must be approved in advance by the Assistant Director, Finance & Human Resources.
18. Inform the Assistant Director, Finance & Human Resources, when a verbal acceptance has been made and request a written offer letter be forwarded to the candidate. For Extension Faculty positions, immediately inform the department chair of the candidate's response. Fully involve the department chair if further negotiations regarding salary, rank or start date are requested by the candidate.
19. For Extension Faculty positions, follow-up with the Dean and Director of Cooperative Extension to ensure the following materials are forwarded to the Provost recommending appointment as Extension Faculty: (1) letter signed by the department chair/program director confirming the candidate meets Extension Faculty criteria, their support for Extension Faculty appointment, and the proposed rank and initial term of employment; (2) written recommendation from the appropriate dean; and (3) written recommendation from the UNH Cooperative Extension Dean and Director.

Change in Minimum Requirements for County Based Extension Instructor (effective March 29, 2002)

The minimum hiring requirements for an Extension Instructor include:

1. Master's degree with no experience.
2. Bachelor's degree in appropriate subject-matter area with at least three (3) years of relevant experience. Continued employment is contingent on obtaining a Master's degree within seven (7) years. During this seven-year period the employee will have probationary status as an Extension Educator. The UNH Cooperative Extension Leadership Team will work closely with the employee to advise and mentor them through their Master's degree program.

This change is made under the following conditions:

1. Consideration of Bachelor degree applicants applies only to county-based Extension Educator positions. Individuals applying for appointment as Extension Specialist will continue to be expected to have expertise and qualifications that greatly exceed the standards of an Extension Instructor.
2. The intention is to hire applicants with Master's degrees for Extension Educator positions. Applicants with a Bachelor's degree will be considered only when there are no suitable Master's degree applicants, and the Bachelor's degree candidate recommended has appropriate academic training and the requisite skills and experience.

3. As outlined in the Strategic Plan, there is a commitment through staff orientation and development for new staff, including a formal mentoring program.

This change is made in an attempt to attract a larger pool of highly qualified and diverse candidates for all vacant positions, and to consider individuals with significant qualifications, enthusiasm and potential but who lack the required degree.

Procedures for Program and Unit Leaders Hiring Non-Status Staff

Hiring temporary staff addresses specific and immediate program and organizational needs while making efficient use of limited resources. Temporarily hired employees must receive a clear job description and are managed and supervised in the same manner as benefits-eligible employees. USNH policies must be adhered to in all cases.

Procedures

1. Develop a proposal fully describing:
 - Specific need to be addressed
 - Proposed responsibilities and functions of temporary employee(s)
 - Rationale for hiring temporary employee(s) versus reassigning a current staff member
 - Name of proposed temporary employee(s) if known
 - Name of proposed supervisor
 - Position start and completion date.
 - Work schedule and job expectations
 - Budget detailing proposed hourly wage and all related expenses (e.g. travel, support), total cost, and source of funding.
 - Sample MOU with the employee for services
2. Submit the proposal to the Associate Director who will approve/disapprove proposals following consultation with the Administrative Team.