Using Faculty “Cluster Hiring” to Increase Diversity, Enhance Collaboration and Improve Climate

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What is cluster hiring?

• Hiring multiple faculty into different departments around interdisciplinary research topics (clusters)

• Other aims:
  – Diversity and inclusion
  – Research excellence
  – Increased collaboration
Who is involved?

- Senior leadership (usually Provost)
- Chief Diversity Officer
- Deans and department chairs
- Cluster hiring manager/coordinator
- Lead faculty members
About the Study

- Qualitative methods: key informant interviews
- 10 institutions
- Advisory committee for oversight
Our Definition of Diversity

Inclusiveness, mutual respect, multiple perspectives, and serves as a catalyst for change resulting in equity.

Includes all aspects of human differences such as socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, geography, disability, and age.

Source: Association of American Medical Colleges
Our Definition of Climate

Perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors reflecting the beliefs and values (the culture) of an institution

*Source: Association of American Medical Colleges*

Four dimensions evaluated in this study:

1) Academic success of faculty from all backgrounds
2) Inclusive learning environment
3) Collaboration among diverse individuals, and across disciplines
4) Community engagement
KEY FINDINGS

• Can be very impactful....depending on implementation!
• Cluster hires more diverse as a group
• Increased interdisciplinary collaboration and partnership
• Cluster faculty just as – or more – successful than non-cluster peers (provided that policies were adjusted)
Characteristics of successful programs

• Intentional focus on diversity (with supporting policies in place)
• Vertical buy-in
• Clear expectations
• Infrastructure to support collaboration
Common Challenges

• Sustainability through leadership changes
• Communication and marketing issues
• Lack of corresponding policy changes (esp. tenure and promotion)
Promising Practices

1. Structural policy changes
2. Use cluster hiring with other supporting diversity strategies
3. Develop infrastructure for collaboration
Faculty Cluster Hiring for Diversity and Interdisciplinarity

Saul J. Weiner
Vice Provost for Planning and Programs
September 24, 2015
Learning Objectives

1. Describe the elements of a cluster hire program designed to increase diversity and interdisciplinarity.

2. Recognize the organizational and financial challenges of a cluster hiring program.

3. Identify strategies for managing challenges of a cluster hire program.
Goal: Increase diversity and interdisciplinary studies

• Diversity in hiring faculty and in curriculum, research

• Interdisciplinary studies attract innovative, nontraditional scholars, break silos, enhance collaboration

• 35 faculty to be hired, across five colleges, varied ranks. 5 per cluster

• Financial commitment from the campus and the colleges
Formulated to motivate hiring of traditionally under represented faculty

- Provost (i.e. campus) will cover $2.5M in recurring salaries, $4.25M in one-time costs.
- Deans (i.e. colleges) cover remainder (Responsibility Centered Management – RCM budgeting model)
- For URM hires (African American, Latino, Native American): campus covers 70% for as long as faculty is at UIC
- For other faculty: campus covers 40%
- Currently, $436k paid by campus; $676k paid by colleges. Colleges also pay some start up costs.
Criteria for Evaluating Proposals

- All proposals, diversity and interdisciplinary, evaluated according to 10 criteria for a well-crafted proposal
- Diversity proposals assessed for 10 additional criteria
- Interdisciplinary proposals assessed for 10 additional criteria
Criteria for Diversity Proposals

1. To what extent does this proposal build upon existing strengths, areas of excellence, and/or themes and research priorities outlined in the RFP in a way that is likely to achieve sustainable diversity (including retention)?

2. To what extent does the cluster proposal address multiple aspects of diversity?

3. To what extent will this proposal, if implemented, help to cultivate “diverse leadership in our academic programs and units”?

4. Given UIC’s current statistics on diversity and diversity-related scholarship, what is the extent of the overall impact that this cluster proposal will make, if funded? Will it be simply additive or potentially transformative?

5. Does the theme or focus of the proposal address some aspect of diversity in the research itself? To what extent will the cluster hires yield new knowledge on diversity related themes as well as a diverse pool of scholars?

6. To what extent will the cluster “create a community of scholars” with common research interests that further our mission and vision?

7. Is the proposal creative, cutting edge, innovative and plowing new ground?

8. Is there sufficient ‘conceptual glue’ that promises to hold the cluster together?

9. Does the PI and his/ her collaborators have the credentials, track record, capacity and leadership to implement their cluster hiring plan as proposed?

10. To what extent will the cluster attract top scholars and enhance the University's overall intellectual profile?
Criteria for Interdisciplinary Proposals

1. To what extent will the proposal foster cross department or cross-college collaboration involving different disciplines so that the work is “inter”disciplinary and not simple multiple disciplines working in tandem?

2. To what extent does this proposal build upon existing strengths, areas of excellence, and/or themes and research priorities outlined in the RFP in a way that is likely to achieve a sustained interdisciplinary project?

3. What is the extent of the overall impact that this cluster proposal will make in terms of academic programs and units as it relates to interdisciplinarity?

4. To what extent will this proposal, if implemented, help to cultivate greater leadership in our interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching, if funded? Will it be simply additive or potentially transformative?

5. To what extent is the cluster proposal broadly inclusive of multiple disciplines and fields of research while still retaining coherence in its proposed plan of collaboration?

6. To what extent will the cluster “create a community of scholars” with common research interests that further our mission and vision?

7. Is the proposal creative, cutting edge, innovative and plowing new ground?

8. Is there sufficient ‘conceptual glue’ that promises to hold the cluster together?

9. Does the PI and his/her collaborators have the credentials, track record, capacity and intellectual profile?

10. To what extent will the cluster attract top scholars and enhance the University's overall leadership to implement their cluster hiring plan as proposed?
# Cluster Hire Programs Selected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Racialized Body</td>
<td>Applied Health Sci (AHS), Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora Studies</td>
<td>LAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Urban Immigration</td>
<td>LAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Justice and Human Rights</td>
<td>LAS, Archit/Design/Arts (CADA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrative Neuroscience</td>
<td>LAS, Medicine (COM)</td>
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<td>Middle East and Muslim Societies</td>
<td>LAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion for Racially and Ethnically Diverse Older Adults</td>
<td>Public Health (SPH), AHS</td>
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Cluster Hire Implementation Advisory Committee (CIAC)

- 12 Faculty and Administrators, most of whom have played or currently play an active role in the Initiative’s development
- Charged by the Provost in Feb. 2013
- Main Purpose: “to provide responsive and consistent guidance in the faithful execution of the [Cluster Initiative’s] original goals.”
CIAC Responsibilities

- To facilitate the hiring of the Cluster Program faculty and to enhance the profile of the Clusters.
- Develop Guidelines for CIAC, PIs and Colleges
- To facilitate campus actions relative to the clusters (web presence, public relations, etc.).
- To serve as the repository of Cluster information and advance the synergistic profile of the CI.
Current Status

• 23 Cluster Searches have been conducted or are being conducted since July 2013.
• Of these, 12 resulted in hires.
• Demographics of hires: 6 men, 6 women; 1 AA, 6 Asians, 2 Latino, 3 Caucasian; 2 Prof, 4 Assoc Prof, 6 Asst Prof.
• 3 searches are currently in progress; 4 searches were initiated and then put on hold (delayed).
Challenge: Disrupting existing institutional culture and structure

- **Usual**: Department heads run searches for faculty hires into their department.

- **Cluster Initiative**: Cluster PI is delegated authority by Dean to run search. Hire may be to one or more of several departments. Who is on search committee? Who decides? Only Dept head can accept hire into their department.
Overcoming challenges: Role of CIAC

- Preserve the statutory roles of the academic department or college yet delineate guidelines for incorporating the role of Principal Investigators and the Senior Lead faculty who are hired to lead the cluster.

- Recommend best practices:
  Before starting a search, the PI(s) should call a meeting of cluster stakeholders, to include: department heads named in the original proposal; department heads of any potential home or shared appointment departments; and representatives of the dean's office involved in any stage of the hiring process.
Challenge:

To the budget of participating colleges

- While campus has set aside funds, colleges have not.
- At state schools that rely on state funds, long term planning is difficult.
- Colleges may be “awarded” more cluster hires then they anticipated.
- Hires may turn out to cost more than anticipated.
- Hires may not match student demand.
- If qualified URM not identified, college is burdened.
Overcoming challenges: Anticipate them!

- During Cluster selection consider student demand.
- Colleges should set a cap on number of clusters they will accept.
- Colleges should anticipate impact of hires on capacity to hire in other departments.
- Campus can provide additional support with cash from recurring funds set aside if available.
Questions?
Faculty Cluster Hiring at Fresno State

September 24, 2015

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