TARGET OF OPPORTUNITY HIRING FOR ACADEMIC PERSONNEL

This target of opportunity policy overlays and makes target of opportunity considerations and actions available in any competitive faculty or post-doctoral fellow search, waiver, or other hiring process at the University. It is an essential tool for obtaining faculty and fellows who can especially advance priority mission-driven goals, affording the institution flexibility to expeditiously hire mission-critical faculty who would otherwise be beyond reach or unavailable.

The University requires a broadly diverse body of faculty and research scientists to fulfill its mission and achieve the educational and research outcomes it seeks. In accordance with state and federal law and University regulations, the University is committed to providing equal opportunity in employment through inclusive, non-discriminatory recruitment and hiring practices. Target of opportunity hiring furthers the critical goals of broad diversity and inclusiveness.

How To Use The Target of Opportunity Consideration In The Hiring Process
Considering as a whole all of the candidate’s many qualifications and anticipated contributions to the University community as is always done, it is determined that the individual not only satisfies usual high academic and intellectual standards for membership in the University’s faculty in a discipline of need or interest to the institution, but also is expected to uniquely or especially advance the University’s priority mission-driven goals based on particular accomplishments.

1. Examples Of Target Of Opportunity Criteria

Extraordinary Professional Distinction. The candidate demonstrates truly exemplary promise or truly extraordinary accomplishments in and contributions to a field based on highly selective, peer-determined, top academic prizes (e.g., Nobel or Pulitzer) or memberships in top scholarly academies (e.g., National Academy or American Academy), or other evidence. Or the candidate is the only, or one of the few, experts in the field.

Outstanding Record of Conduct of Inclusion in the Workplace. Regardless of the candidate’s own race or gender—and in addition to many other qualifications (of course including

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1 ©American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The original version of this document was developed for the AAAS Diversity and the Law Project funded by the National Science Foundation (Navigating the Legal and Higher Education Landscapes to Foster and Sustain Greater Faculty and Student Diversity, NSF (HRD-1038753)). This document was originally authored by Jamie Lewis Keith, Vice President and General Counsel of University of Florida; Arthur L. Coleman, EducationCounsel LLC and Dr. Daryl Chubin, AAAS, were editors of the first version. The original version was published as Appendix C.II of AAAS’ Summary and Highlights of the Handbook on Diversity and the Law, ©American Association for the Advancement of Science 2011, 2012, which Summary was authored by Arthur L. Coleman, Jamie Lewis Keith, and Daryl Chubin. Ms. Keith has updated this document, most recently in October 2016. Use of this document for internal purposes by tax-exempt private and public institutions of higher education is permitted by AAAS.
academic, intellectual, and professional strengths)—the candidate has a record of breaking down barriers for colleagues and/or students, creating a welcome and inclusive environment (in teaching, learning, research or mentoring, etc.) for a broad diversity of individuals and providing meaningful opportunities for students and/or colleagues to gain experience working in multi-cultural, multi-perspective teams, enhancing their learning and research outcomes. This criterion considers the candidate’s conduct, not other characteristics. If used other than to fill a single position in a full search process, this criterion is generally used in an expedited or internal search process. (See related sample interview questions in 3 below.)

2. **Consideration of Target Of Opportunity Criteria**

a. Under this policy, target of opportunity considerations may be among the many qualifications considered in any full search process **without involving the Office of Provost**.

b. Target of opportunity considerations may justify filling an additional position to hire a candidate identified in any full search process without a further search process. (This is a kind of expedited search.) Confirmation that a candidate meets the criterion must be obtained from the Office of Provost in consultation with the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity and, as needed, the Office of the Vice President and General Counsel.

c. Target of opportunity considerations may partly justify the grant of a waiver or approval to conduct an expedited or internal search by the Office of Provost in consultation with the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity and, as needed, the Office of the Vice President and General Counsel.

d. Once approved to conduct an expedited or internal search, target of opportunity considerations may be among the many qualifications considered when evaluating each candidate to make a hiring decision, **without further involvement of the Office of Provost**.

e. Use of target of opportunity considerations is not a change in the basic hiring process being employed. This policy overlays and applies to all searches and hiring from the start, allowing target of opportunity considerations to be factored in hiring decisions and decisions on whether to grant a waiver or approve an expedited or internal search process.

f. If requesting a waiver or internal or expedited search using the target of opportunity criterion, follow the **waiver approval process** at [insert URL].

3. **Sample Essay And Interview Questions Applying Conduct of Inclusion Criterion**

Regardless of an applicant’s/candidate’s own race or gender, what would the applicant/candidate do at the university:

(a) to help others (students, fellows, faculty, staff) to overcome barriers to academic and academic professional achievement;
(b) to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all individuals (students, fellows, faculty, staff), including those who are racial minorities, women or from a low socio-economic background (or otherwise reflect broad diversity), allowing all to fully participate in the university’s academic, co-curricular and/or research endeavors and social interactions;

(c) to foster collaborative work, curricular, co-curricular and social activities among students, fellows, faculty or others who represent a broad diversity of individuals, providing experiences for all in multi-cultural and otherwise diverse team-work and living; and

(d) what specific experience, record and ideas do you have that support your commitment to, and ability to succeed in, doing these things?