

Council for Equity and Community

Proposal for Target of Opportunity Faculty Hiring

Excellence and diversity are not only complementary but will be tightly linked in the multicultural society characterizing our nation and the world in the future. – James Duderstadt, President, University of Michigan, 1988-96

Faculty Diversity in Higher Education:

According to the 2009 AAUP report on “Diversity and Privilege,” University of Michigan leaders implemented programs that made the link between diversity and excellence explicit, thereby “inaugurating a new campus culture. They established the Target of Opportunity Program to increase the number of minority, and later white women, faculty in all ranks. They also recruited senior faculty members from elsewhere to provide leadership in shaping recruitment and retention practices. Their efforts paid off. They established a critical mass of women and minority male faculty members in many departments and programs. They adopted more flexible university-wide policies to balance work and family responsibilities. They restructured tenure and promotion policies. And they ensured attention in all these efforts to women of color in particular.”

Faculty Diversity at Lehigh:

In 1990, the Lehigh University Commission on Minorities and Commission on Women recommended that the university “phase in, over a period of four years, a fund of \$200,000 to allow departments to hire minority faculty even if no slots are open.”

In 2007, the faculty diversity task force proposed that Lehigh adopt a formal, written policy and implementation plan for Target of Opportunity hiring. The task force noted that opportunities for hiring might arise “before a formal policy is agreed upon.”

Clearly, diversity task forces at Lehigh have been advocating some form of Target of Opportunity hiring for at least 20 years. Lehigh has thus far failed to adopt either of the aforementioned plans. Table I illustrates how little progress has been made since 1996, the first date for which data can be found:

TABLE I: FULL-TIME FACULTY: Percent Minority

	<u>1996-7ⁱ</u>	<u>2001-2*</u>	<u>2009-10*</u>
African-American	3.3% (13)	2.4% (9)	2.6% (11)
Latino/Hispanic	1.8% (7)	2.1% (8)	2.1% (9)
Multi-Racial	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.9% (4)</u>
TOTAL	5.1%	4.5%	5.6%

As suggested by the Michigan illustration above, *many* of our peer institutions, including the nation's most distinguished universities, have Target of Opportunity policies in place. The Council for Equity and Community believes it is *imperative* that the university move forward with a policy for Target of Opportunity hires, as outlined below. Like our predecessors, we believe that Target of Opportunity hiring not only can be transformational for the university but is also the most feasible way to increase significantly the number of well-qualified minority faculty at Lehigh. In our view, the latter change is crucial to the overall climate of equity and community at Lehigh.

Proposal:

We propose the creation of an annual budget line sufficient to enable Lehigh to hire highly qualified minority faculty [and women faculty in selected disciplines] by one of two paths:

- 1) the traditional Target of Opportunity hire which involves seeking out and hiring a faculty member who brings a particular distinctiveness to the university in the absence of an organized search, or
- 2) within an authorized departmental search, providing funds to hire a highly qualified minority applicant whose subject expertise differs from the specific fields targeted by the department.

We recommend a budget allocation sufficient to hire one senior faculty member (path 1) or two faculty members at the Assistant Professor rank (path 2) each year for three full years. Though details have obviously not been worked out yet, we expect that the Vice Provost for Academic Diversity (VPAcad) will be directly involved in administering the program and coordinating it with efforts to support and retain minority faculty. The Provost will monitor the Target of Opportunity program annually, sharing his assessment of its effectiveness with the Council for Equity and Community and the faculty Steering Committee. At the end of three years, the Council for Equity and Community will evaluate the Target of Opportunity program prior to its continuation.

Funding for Target of Opportunity hiring can be drawn from three potential sources, two short term, and one long term. In the short term, a ToO hire will either be, in effect, a substitute for a regular new faculty hire in the university, or it will be funded by the Provost as a bridge hire until the department in question experiences a retirement. Long term viability of the Target of Opportunity program depends on making this a priority in the next capital campaign, sufficient to generate an adequate budget for continued Target of Opportunity hires until a critical mass of minority faculty across the university has helped to transform the climate of diversity on campus.

Procedures:

1. Outside the normal organized search: A department will forward a written proposal to its College Dean and the Provost, with a documented recommendation for the recruitment of a faculty member who would bring distinction to the College and University while advancing the cause of faculty and university diversity. The Provost would constitute a recruitment committee consisting of the department chair and two additional department members, as well as a faculty member from another department (and from an interdisciplinary program if relevant to the candidate's teaching). The committee shall solicit information on the candidate's qualifications

as a scholar and teacher and shall invite the candidate for an on-campus visit, following the normal Lehigh practices.

2. Within an authorized departmental search: If during either its review of applications or its on-campus interview process, a department discovers a minority candidate who is an appealing candidate for the department and college yet not a best-fit in terms of the substantive fields sought by the department, the department will petition the Dean of the College for permission to invite that candidate for an interview or make the candidate an offer as a Target of Opportunity Hire. If the Dean concurs, the department and Dean recommendations will be forwarded to the Provost for support for the new position.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that Lehigh has had a handful of Target of Opportunity hires in the past (without being so designated), and these have worked out highly successfully.

ⁱ 1996-97 data are drawn from the less reliable "Fact Book." [Henry Odi also believed the number of African-American faculty was too high for 1996-7, as he had responsibilities in that area.]

*2001ff. data are drawn from Banner.