

Call for Proposals for Cluster Hiring Authorizations
FY20 Planning Process – FY21 Search - FY22 Hire

The Office of the Provost announces a Strategic Cluster Hiring (SCH) initiative to support the growth of tenure-track faculty affiliated with and contributing to Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS) programs in order to diversify the curriculum and serve twenty-first century students better (Interdisciplinary Studies Programs can be found at the following link: <https://illinoisstate.edu/academics/interdisciplinary/>).

The SCH initiative directly supports the following actions in *Educate • Connect • Elevate*:

- *II.A.2: Facilitate the development and growth of interdisciplinary programs*
- *II.B.2: Enhance cross-disciplinary research and creative activities.*
- *III.A.2: Increase and promote practices that aid in the retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students that include individuals from all backgrounds*
- *III.C.3: Infuse diverse perspectives into the curriculum, co-curriculum, and programs and initiatives*
- *III.C.4: Increase the number of, and participation in, interdisciplinary studies and programs that explore diversity and global perspectives*

SCH positions will have a major appointment in a Department or School, where locus of tenure will reside, with a minor appointment in an IDS program. (Proposals may be submitted by more than two units or programs, in which case these guidelines can be adapted to reflect fairly all stakeholders' commitments and responsibilities based on the desired scholarly expertise.) Recruitment, appointment, annual evaluation, reappointment, and tenure and promotion reviews will be conducted in the Department/School of major appointment in partnership with the IDS program, as provided for in ASPT policies and following the procedural guidelines provided below.

The Office of the Provost encourages faculty affiliated with IDS programs to initiate conversations about the development of such proposals with the director of the program and with the relevant department chairs and school directors. Similarly, departments and schools may initiate the process by reaching out to IDS programs. Final proposals for SCH hires must be submitted by the major department/school through the existing budget planning process in the relevant College. The procedures delineated below are intended to document the framework of collaboration between the department/school that will serve as locus of tenure and the relevant IDS program(s).

The Associate Vice President for Academic Administration will meet with interested DFSCs and SFSCs to discuss implementation of ASPT policies with respect to the appointment and evaluation of individuals hired into joint appointments under this initiative.

Procedures

Requesting a Position

SCH proposals will present the rationale for the position in terms of curricular needs and must highlight how the proposed hire will expand or strengthen the curriculum. Particular attention should be paid to implications of the proposed hire for program enrollment growth. The appropriate version of PERS Form 936 will be attached.

In the Budget Planning process, Colleges will prioritize their SCH requests separately from their requests for other tenure-track positions. That is, two ranked lists must be forwarded: one list of SCH requests, and one list of non-SCH requests.

SCH proposals must also include a Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the chairs and directors of all participating Departments/Schools and programs, as well as the relevant Deans. The MOU will document:

1. The commitment to collaborative support of the proposed position by all units/areas involved. In particular, the Director of the IDS program and faculty affiliated with it will be expected to participate in recruitment, mentoring, and evaluation of the new faculty member.
2. The expected contributions in the department/school that will serve as locus of tenure and the relevant IDS program(s). This is intended to protect the new faculty member as well as each unit or area. While specific course assignments may not be feasible at this stage, a framework for understanding the expected contributions of the faculty member in each unit/area is essential for transparency.
3. The composition and functioning of the search committee.
4. Advertising and outreach.
5. Responsibilities for selection of a candidate, negotiations, and issuance of a "letter of intent" (offer letter).

MOUs for SCH requests will use the template provided. In addition to specifications documented in the MOU, note the following considerations.

1. **Search Committee Training.** The search committee will undergo Search Committee Training as all search committees are required to do. Training will be supplemented to include review of special considerations for the strategic cluster hiring position in light of the joint appointment and variations in the applicant pool, areas of expertise, and credentials (e.g., scholarly outlets) due to the explicit effort to recruit interdisciplinary scholars. Committees are encouraged to view and discuss webinars previously purchased by the University on hiring diverse faculty. Contact the Office of the Provost for further information.
2. **Service Expectations.** Service that arises outside of formal assignments, such as mentoring of students or advisement of student organizations, should be documented

by the faculty member and recognized as part of the total service contribution by evaluation committees. It is possible that such service may also contribute to teaching or to scholarly/creative activity; if so, such multi-faceted contributions should be recognized and rewarded through evaluation processes. Service that complements, is synergistic with, or flows from research (scholarly and creative productivity) and teaching is particularly valued. Examples might include pro bono consultation or action research projects that arise from service learning experiences developed by the faculty member, or teaching and mentoring activities in the context of research experiences. Faculty are encouraged to document how their service activities also advance the teaching and research missions of the department, college, and university. In no case should service contributions be considered to reduce the expectations for high quality professional performance in research and teaching.

3. **Evaluating Interdisciplinary Scholars.** Interdisciplinary work is often in emerging areas that can appear to be underdeveloped when contrasted with more traditional or established topics, and they are more likely to be disseminated to novel scholarly communities in unfamiliar or innovative outlets. Therefore, search committees are encouraged to focus on assessing the quality of applicants' contributions and demonstrated potential as a faculty member, because non-traditional pathways to the terminal degree, unfamiliar degree programs, unconventional topics, and use of emergent outlets and technologies are not in themselves indicators of poor potential.
 4. **Onboarding/Welcoming New Faculty Members.** Orientation and other welcoming activities should be conducted collaboratively, with the following considerations in mind:
 - a. The new faculty member's needs and interests.
 - b. Role of University- and College-wide activities (e.g., New Faculty Orientation).
 - c. Reasonable opportunities to integrate into the academic communities of the department/school and the IDS program.
2. **Ongoing support of faculty success.** Mentoring and professional development opportunities should align with University-wide offerings, including NCFDD membership, CTLT programs, and connection to mentoring networks.