Executive Memorandum No. 33

University of Nebraska Policy on Non-Faculty Recruitment and Retention

1. Policy Purpose

To promote the benefits of recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce at the University of Nebraska through the integration of diversity, access, inclusion, and equity strategies, activities, and procedures in the University’s core operations. All supporting policy strategies, activities, and procedures are:

- In accordance with federal and state law and policies adopted by the Board of Regents;
- To guide the institution in the successful adoption of a shared policy to drive organizational success and outcomes;
- Intended to support the University’s basic values of diversity, inclusion, access, and equity; and
- Intended to provide a baseline and are not intended to replace comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) recruitment and retention plans on the University’s campuses.

2. Definitions

All definitions for diversity, inclusion, access and equity, and equity-mindedness are modeled after the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) inclusive excellence core principles and definitions.

Diversity/Diverse – individual differences (e.g. personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersectionality, country of origin, and ability, as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations).

Inclusion – the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diverse staff, administrators, and candidates in recruitment, hiring, professional development, and all additional ways that the organization would engage with these individuals—in ways that
increase awareness, visibility, content knowledge, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

Access and Equity – the creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participation in employment, professional development, advancement, and succession opportunities that are capable of closing any attainment gap in professional success.

Equity-Mindedness – a demonstrated awareness of and willingness to address equity issues among institutional leaders, administrators, and staff.

3. Policy Goals

The goals of this policy are to:
- Foster innovation and creativity through a greater variety of problem-solving approaches, perspectives, and ideas brought about by a diverse workforce;
- Competitively position the University of Nebraska as an employer of choice;
- Broaden access to sources of diverse talent to gain a competitive recruitment advantage and improve national and global relevance;
- Foster an environment of inclusiveness;
- Create a workforce reflective of the community and student population served; and
- Improve the retention of diverse staff and administrators.

4. Policy Scope

The following individuals share primary responsibility for implementing this policy:
- All campus and system executive leadership;
- All Human Resources staff and leadership; and
- All managers and above (i.e. Directors, Associate Directors, Assistant Directors, or anyone with supervisory responsibilities).

5. Policy Implementation

The President, Executive Vice President and Provost, and Chancellors—in collaboration with the Assistant Vice President for Diversity, Access, and Inclusion, and in consultation with the campus Diversity and Inclusion Officers—will determine the phased implementation efforts and University-wide rollout and identify human and financial resources devoted to the policy’s implementation.
The University will reaffirm its commitment to a diverse and inclusive campus environment by including the following statement in accompaniment with the University of Nebraska Nondiscrimination Statement in recruitment materials:

“We are a richly diverse community representing countless ethnicities, faiths, backgrounds, and academic disciplines—all brought together by a common desire to use the power of education to change the world.”

—University of Nebraska Executive Leadership

Recruitment

- **Recruitment Plans, Manuals, and Strategic Plans** – D&I recruitment and retention will be imbedded in each campus’s overarching strategic plan, diversity plan, and recruitment plans and manuals. Plans should also address the unique challenges of trailing spouses or partners.

- **Search Firms** – campus and system administration will inquire about a search firm’s success in assuring diverse candidate pools and require the search firm to provide information about the diversity of the firm’s staff and its success rate in placing diverse candidates prior to entering into a contract with such firm.

- **Candidate Sourcing and Posting** – diverse candidate sourcing should be expanded through traditional vehicles that reach diverse candidates, as well as nontraditional sources, including but not limited to printed and online publications, professional organizations, professional journals, electronic newsletters, web recruitment boards, annual conferences, and leveraging institutional member benefits with organizations that serve diverse communities.

- **Search Committees** – search committees should be as diverse as possible and include individuals who have broad perspectives, a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity, and when possible a member with some level of subject matter expertise in diversity, inclusion, and equity and/or a member(s) who have worked on projects related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. A learning component on the impact of unconscious bias in hiring decisions will be integrated into each search committee training as well as suggested best practices for hiring and retaining a diverse and inclusive campus environment. Search committees will work with the hiring official in the department conducting the search to identify professional organizations that serve diverse populations and ensure that the search committees provide these organizations with the position announcement.

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• Onboarding – D&I and cultural competency will be an aspect of the orientation program for new employees and a regular aspect of organizational development for all continuing employees.

• Affinity and Employee Resource Groups – campus leadership will employ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and affinity groups as a means of recruiting diverse talent. The establishment of University recognized ERGs must be approved by the campus chancellor or chancellor’s designee and the campus D&I Office. Membership will be open to all employees.

Retention

• Mentoring – any established mentoring plans and strategies will be tailored to the unique needs of diverse campus staff.

• Affinity and Employee Resource Groups – any established ERG and affinity groups will be leveraged as needed by each campus HR and D&I Office as a means of retaining diverse talent.

Professional Development

• D&I and cultural competency programs will be a central aspect of regular professional development programs for all non-faculty.

• To strengthen employee engagement and retention, all leaders (e.g. anyone with supervisory responsibilities) will conduct stay interviews to identify specific improvements that raise employees’ level of engagement.

Career Path and Succession Planning

Departments, Divisions, Offices, and Units will provide assistance to employees in developing career paths that could include but not be limited to career progression, including traditional and vertical career ladders; dual career ladders; horizontal career lattices; career progression outside of the organization; and encore careers.

Departments, Divisions, Offices, and Units will establish succession plans to develop replacements for any employee whose sudden departure would disrupt critical university business operations. Plans may include but are not limited to assessing employees’ competencies; identifying “high-potential employees”; metrics to identify access and equity gaps and growth needs; and the creation of individual-development action plans. All plans should address access and equity gaps.
All succession and career path planning must be based on:
  • Clearly established, consistently administered promotion policies and procedures; and
  • Established policies for posting—or not posting—available positions and the content and timing of the promotion announcements.

Annual Reviews and Accountability

  • All employees responsible for implementation of this policy will have D&I included as a component in their annual review (e.g. the extent to which the employee is implementing the policy).

Assessment

  • Climate Survey – campus and/or University-wide climate surveys will be conducted no less than every three years; and results will be used to assess and/or develop policies, practices, or procedures to address D&I areas of concern or matters that are systemic in nature.

  • Exit Interviews – to assist in analyzing employee retention and turnover, campus HR or a designated representative will conduct one-on-one interviews to explore (to the extent that the employee is willing to share) the reasons for departure. Information from the interview will also be used to identify and address any existing morale, climate, or cultural problems.

6. Policy Adherence

Adoption of this policy will prompt a review of University policies and practices throughout the University. To the extent that such other policies and practices conflict with this policy, this policy shall take precedence, and such other policies and practices shall be interpreted in a manner to resolve the conflict in favor of this policy.

The Chancellor or Chancellor’s designee—in collaboration with the campus D&I Officer and other responsible parties identified by the Chancellor—will submit a biennial report on implemented D&I recruitment and retention activities and assessed outcomes for presentation to the President.
Dated this 16th day of August, 2019.

Susan M. Fritz, Interim-President

Reference: August 16, 2019

AAC&U’s vision, practice, and guiding principles are designed to help colleges and universities integrate diversity, equity, and educational quality efforts into their missions and institutional operations.

The policy is composed following a review of works of AAC&U, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), institutional colleagues, University of Nebraska system peers, University of Nebraska campus peers, and related professional organizations, along with ideas and approaches wholly original to the University of Nebraska.