Target of Opportunity Program

Purpose of the Program
To allow the University to move expeditiously in recruiting and hiring exceptional senior faculty who will further the goals expressed in the Academic Plan, enhance the profile of the institution among AAU peers, and have significant influence on the quality and impact of teaching and scholarship both within their fields and across the University.

Principles
- Target of Opportunity hires will focus primarily on experienced tenured faculty with established records of excellence in their areas of intellectual and creative inquiry. It is expected that these individuals will be in a position to provide scholarly leadership from the outset of their appointment. Where strong candidates exist outside of academe (i.e., in industry or independent research organizations), these individuals may be considered for Target of Opportunity hires.
- While this program will be viewed primarily as a vehicle for tenure-related appointments, it may be appropriate in some instances to consider appointment to senior NTTF positions, such as Research Professor, Senior Research Scholar, or Professor of Practice.
- The program is not to be used in instances in which strong faculty may be hired through a standard competitive search process. It is understood that Target of Opportunity hires are uncommon and characterized by qualities and circumstances meriting an exemption from traditional search requirements.
- Candidates for Target of Opportunity hires will be subject to appropriate peer review, abbreviated but nonetheless thoughtful and thorough.
- Consideration of Target of Opportunity hires will include an assessment of the potential for substantive enrichment of the academic unit and promotion of strategic institutional goals. Such hires will focus on units that show potential for transformational change, that is to say, those with clear plans for advancement and a well-articulated rationale for how a specific hire will promote such plans, including areas where the University can establish or build on comparative advantage.

Interconnected Goals
The University of Oregon has multiple goals for faculty hiring:
- Excellence;
- Diversity, both racial/ethnic and gender;
- Strategic academic and research strengths; and
- Support for dual academic careers.

All of these could invoke the same general waiver of search provisions. Moreover, more than one institutional objective may be represented in any individual opportunity hire. As a result, it may be worthwhile to view Target of Opportunity (or excellence) hires as one dimension of a multi-pronged approach to exceptional, strategic hires intended to strengthen the overall faculty profile of the University. If this approach is adopted, there is
value in a coordinated administrative approach that acknowledges the potential for overlap and avoids the introduction of artificial procedural divergences. This in no way precludes independent funding, criteria, communication, or locus of decision-making for the separate initiatives.

**Process**

1. Deans propose Target of Opportunity candidates to the provost (or designee) through a defined protocol requiring at a minimum (1) a cover memo summarizing the merits of the case, the strategic nature of the hire, and potential contributions of the candidate to the unit and the institution; (2) the endorsement of both the unit head and the dean; (3) the candidate’s curriculum vitae; and (4) a funding proposal.

2. A designated committee of senior scholars within the school or college conducts an expedited review of the candidate’s record and potential contribution, and advises the dean and the provost.

3. The provost, following appropriate consultation with senior leadership, communicates a preliminary decision on the requested hire and associated funding.

4. If the Target of Opportunity hire is approved, the dean (or designee) contacts the candidate. It is understood that, during the course of negotiations, further discussions regarding funding or other support may be necessary. Any changes to the funding proposal must be agreed to by the provost.

5. The hiring unit is responsible for preparing and submitting the Request to Offer (RTO) and Request for Waiver of Unclassified Search Process form in accordance with the University of Oregon Recruitment Guidelines for Unclassified Personnel (http://aaeo.uoregon.edu/files/Search_waiver_language_final.pdf).

6. When the unit is prepared to finalize an offer, if tenure is involved, the full promotion and tenure file is submitted to the Faculty Personnel Committee (FPC) for an expedited review.