

To: Deans, Associate Deans and AAU Heads
From: Douglas Kneale, Provost and Vice-President, Academic
Re: Employment Equity Practices
Date: October 21, 2015

As you may be aware, this summer the University and the Faculty Association settled an outstanding grievance related to employment equity obligations outlined in Article 30 (Employment Equity) of the Collective Agreement. The settlement results in some changes to how we hire faculty at the University. What has not changed is the Collective Agreement statement that “the best qualified candidate shall be appointed” while upholding “the principle of employment equity for designated groups.” In many cases, the changes outlined below are the result of identifying an agreed-upon approach to enacting the existing language in Article 30.

Given the timelines contained in the settlement and the recruitment activities that are currently underway in many departments, it is important that Deans, AAU Heads, and Appointments Committees be aware of the new practices. Here are some key points.

A. “Serious under-representation” of designated groups

1. Every five years, the University undertakes a campus-wide employment equity survey of full-time faculty. According to the settlement, the University will now share the data and preliminary analysis with the Faculty Association, which will review and provide feedback to be incorporated into the analysis.
2. Based on the survey data, the Review Committee on Employment Equity (RCEE) will recommend hiring goals and timelines for departments and faculties with serious under-representation of designated groups (women, Aboriginal peoples, members of visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and members of sexual minorities) no more than 12 months after the data are gathered.
3. In the case of 2015-16 hires, the settlement states that RCEE will identify serious under-representation of designated groups and recommend hiring goals and timelines within 60 working days of the announcement of these positions (i.e., Monday, December 7). A report, including goals and timelines, will be presented at Senate before the December deadline, but information will be provided directly to identified units before that date.
4. According to the settlement, “serious under-representation” occurs when members of a designated group are fewer than 60% of the proportion in the agreed-upon pool data for the AAUs or the Library. The pool data currently being used are drawn from: Statistic Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, the 2012 Canadian Survey on Disability, and Statistic Canada's 2011 Classification of Instructional Programs Canada.
5. In all other cases, RCEE will provide hiring goals and timelines within 60 working days when an AAU receives approval to fill a tenure-track position.
6. Failure to identify a qualified applicant from a designated group will not prevent the position from being filled by another qualified applicant.
7. RCEE will undertake an annual review of the impact of new hires and retirements and make adjustment to goals and timelines (2016-2020).

B. “Approximately equal” in hiring grids

1. The term “approximately equal” has now been quantitatively defined as scores on the hiring grid that differ by 8% or less of the total number of points available. When two candidates are “approximately equal,” the candidate who contributes to the employment equity hiring goals must be recommended.

2. The categories of qualification identified in hiring grids should match the job ad and must always include teaching and research in reasonable proportion to one another.

C. Other information

1. The application interface now encourages applicants to report minor career interruptions caused by family responsibilities. This information shall be taken into account in assessing the relative strengths of applicants' CVs.
2. When an Appointments Committee is struck, the AAU will be asked to name an individual who will be trained to serve as an EE/PA for another unit. This service will be considered equal to the work of serving on an Appointments Committee for performance and promotion and tenure review.
3. A mandatory training session for EE/PAs and Appointments Committees in those AAUs that are hiring must be delivered within 60 days of the announcement of the positions (i.e., by December 7).

We will be discussing these changes at Deans' Council. We are also preparing to provide support to hiring committees, equity assessors, and academic administrators to ensure that recruitment processes will be efficient and consistent with the guidelines governing hiring as we implement these changes. Information about the training sessions will be provided soon.

Thank you for your support of the equitable hiring of best-qualified candidates.

