Cluster Hiring Initiative

Overview and purpose

This initiative aims to facilitate interdisciplinary strategic hiring within the College to:

- Bridge gaps in existing faculty expertise where a critical new hire could lead to significant advances and increase reputation in that area.
- Catalyze, encourage and foster interdisciplinary research across departments, in innovative and exciting fields of study.
- Increase diversity and improve equity and inclusion.
- Address enrollment growth and strategic teaching needs.

This is the first year in a multi-year, faculty-driven process where available positions in the College will be reserved for cluster hires. We anticipate that the first round will result in the selection of 3-5 clusters for hiring and that could continue over 2-3 years.

Proposal guidelines

- Proposals must describe how the cluster will benefit the research and educational mission of the College of Engineering by bridging gaps in expertise and/or fostering research in innovative and exciting fields of study.

- Any group of faculty may propose a cluster but must include faculty from 2 or more departments, with a designated cluster leader. It is not necessary for proposals to include joint hires, especially at the assistant professor level. The proposal must identify potential home departments for each hire.

- Hiring requests can span several years, beginning in 2020-21 and continuing through 2022-23.

- Buy-in from department faculty not involved in the clusters is essential. Your proposal should identify ways in which potential home departments will be
engaged at all stages, including before, during, and after the search, hiring, and onboarding processes (i.e., presentations about the cluster at faculty meetings, faculty participation in candidate interviews, integration of faculty hire into departments, etc.)

- Proposals must outline plans to attract diverse faculty and comply with diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices in recruitment, hiring and retention. Effective practices include inclusive job ad language, candidate evaluation rubrics, reducing bias in evaluation skill building, real-time reporting of faculty candidate pool demographics, faculty on-boarding, mentoring plans, etc. Proposals must outline plans to provide new hire mentorship and cluster team building activities to ensure that the cluster continues to work as a cohesive unit post-hire.

- Proposals must identify any unusual startup costs and/or resources needed.

**Three-stage proposal evaluation process**

In the first stage, a faculty evaluation committee will review proposals based on an established rubric and make recommendations to the dean. The dean may then choose from existing proposals or invite more proposal submissions.

A subgroup of proposals will advance to the second stage where department chairs and the faculty at large will have the opportunity to review all proposals and presentations. Department chairs will provide feedback and describe to the dean how specific proposals fit in to their department strategic research and hiring initiatives, educational plans, and growth needs. Based on the feedback of the committee and the chairs, the dean will select final proposals to move forward to hiring.

**Cluster hire interaction with hiring committees**

The cluster participants are expected to serve on the hiring committees of their respective departments. The chair of the committee should be a department faculty member who is not a participant in the cluster, with a possible co-chair from the cluster. The committee should also include faculty members who are not
cluster participants to ensure departmental buy-in and engagement in the hiring process.

The hiring committee must follow established diversity best practices and assume responsibility for engaging department faculty and leadership during each step of the search. To keep the College apprised on the status of the search, the hiring committee must also share search progress information with the Dean’s office.

Failed searches can be re-launched in the next year.

**Brainstorming sessions**

Faculty are invited to participate in two brainstorming sessions in order to engage with potential proposal topics, learn about others’ research and identify potential collaborators.

The first session will be held on **February 12, 12-3 pm in HUB 334**

The second session will be held on **February 27, 10 am-1 pm in HUB 145**

**Key dates and deadlines**

**March 18, 2020** – Proposals due

**March 18 – April 3** – First-stage review by evaluators

**April 13 – May 1** – Second-stage review by Chairs, potential presentations

**May 15** – Proposals selected

**May 15 – June 30** – Cluster hiring prep meetings to work on ads, rubrics, recruitment/outreach plans. Search committees and ads finalized

**August** – Advertisements posted
Questions?

Contact Dean Nancy Allbritton (nlallbr@uw.edu) or Vice Dean Greg Miller (gmiller@uw.edu)

For questions related to diversity best practices, including talks at department faculty meetings or search committee meetings, contact Eve Riskin (riskin@uw.edu) or Joyce Yen (joyceyen@uw.edu)

Please submit proposals, using the attached template, to Lucia Ersfeld (luciap@uw.edu)