

OFFERING ACADEMIC POSITIONS

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
COMMUNICATION NO. 2

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Overview

Recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty and staff is central to our excellence as an institution. This Communication provides guidance and institutional requirements for making offers to candidates for faculty, academic staff, and academic professional positions.

It includes specific requirements for:

- The approval process for offering an academic appointment;
- The content of official letters of offer;
- The procedure for making offers after May 1 to individuals on the faculty of another CIC or AAU institution or from another University of Illinois campus;
- Letters of reference for former university employees being considered for new appointments.

I. Developing an Offer of Appointment to the Academic Staff

THE SEQUENCE FOR OFFERING AN ACADEMIC POSITION

- 1) Complete the Hiring Request Form found in Hire Touch at <https://employ.uillinois.edu/>.
- 2) If position to be filled is an academic professional, access Hire Touch at <https://employ.uillinois.edu/> to complete a new Principal Administrative Position Exemption (PAPE) if new position or update existing PAPE if current PAPE is more than three (3) years old. If PAPE is less than three years old, unit may upload existing PAPE as part of the Hire Touch process at <https://employ.uillinois.edu/>.
- 3) Follow the steps in the OEOA guidelines at http://oeoa.illinois.edu/NewSearchManual/search_guidelines_and_procedures.pdf.
- 4) To conduct the search, see Chapter 4 of the OEOA guidelines at http://oeoa.illinois.edu/NewSearchManual/search_guidelines_and_procedures.pdf. The search process should produce finalists for the position. References are required for all new academic staff and for former academic employees if there has been a break in service for more than three years.
- 5) Open discussions/ negotiations with chosen candidate.

- 6) Seek prior approval for the appointment as described below in this policy.
- 7) Send letter of offer – *must be conditional upon Board of Trustees approval* -- consistent with the requirements in this policy. (See Section II below for specific requirements for “Letters of Offer.”)
- 8) Secure acceptance of appointment, as described in this policy.

REQUIRED PRIOR APPROVALS FOR FACULTY APPOINTMENTS

The *Statutes* (Article IX, Section 3.d.) require that recommendations to the academic staff shall ordinarily originate with the department, or, “in groups not organized as departments, with the officers in charge of the work concerned.” They are then presented to the dean of the college for transmission with the dean’s recommendation to the provost, who acts as the chancellor’s designee.

When a recommendation for appointment has been approved through the appropriate channels (see Communication No. 3), a letter of invitation may be written by the dean/director. (See below for information on the parallel letter from the unit executive officer that usually accompanies it.)

OFFERS MADE AFTER MAY 1

To reduce disruption to programs, the CIC and AAU universities have agreed that, unless special permission is received, offers to join the faculty that are pending or are made on or after May 1 of each academic year normally will not be effective for the coming academic year, but are only effective after the intervention of one academic year.

Thus, while inquiries about an individual’s interest in and conversations concerning a new full-time, academic position are in order at any time of the year, ***an appointment still pending or made after May 1 may not be made for the next academic year without permission from the dean of the candidate’s home institution.*** The dean of the college seeks this permission, normally at the time the appointment is being considered at the college level.

This policy applies to all appointments made to the faculty at the rank of assistant professor or above, whether tenured or untenured, but not to new terminal degree holders (or ABDs) who are not presently holding a faculty position.

On rare occasions, our provost will seek the permission from his or her counterpart at the candidate’s home institution. The dean should forward such requests to the provost.

INTERCAMPUS RECRUITMENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

The provost at the campus proposing to make the offer will discuss the matter with the equivalent officer at the other campus before the head of the department approaches the faculty member (under consideration) at the other campus. If they cannot reach agreement on the conditions of the proposed offer—such as rank, salary, and timing of the transfer—the matter will be brought to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The provosts involved will inform the respective deans of the outcome of their discussion, indicating the conditions under which negotiations with the candidate may proceed. The deans, in turn, will inform their respective department heads of the proposed offer, indicating the conditions under which negotiations may be opened and conducted. Department heads should not approach faculty members at other campuses until such clearance has been received.

If an individual is to be offered an essentially similar position at the campus making the proposal, normally it would be at the same rank and at a salary equivalent to that which the individual would have had during the following year in the present position. The determination of “equivalent” salary will be made jointly by the two campuses. In accordance with the policy prevailing among CIC institutions, no offer should be proposed to an individual after May 1 for service beginning in August of the same year. For any offers made on or after May 1, transfer to another campus could not occur before the end of the following contract year—except with the concurrence of administrative officers at the individual’s present campus.

REQUIRED PRIOR APPROVALS FOR ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

When appointing an academic professional, prior review and approval is required at the next level. The Provost provides this review for:

1. The immediate staffs of executive officers reporting directly to the Provost (including deans and directors)
2. Any academic professional position that has attached to it a faculty appointment on a 0% basis as an assistant, associate, or full professor (with no modifier).
3. Any academic professional position with a salary exceeding \$90,000, including appointments in the Chancellor’s portfolio (see Communication No. 3).

Otherwise, the unit may make the appointment following standard procedures and affirmative action requirements for establishing and filling academic professional positions on this campus (see Attachment 1 and the [Campus Administrative Manual](http://www.admin.illinois.edu/cam/CAM/ix/ix-c/ix-c-16.html) <http://www.admin.illinois.edu/cam/CAM/ix/ix-c/ix-c-16.html>).

REQUIRED PRIOR APPROVALS FOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

The Board of Trustees must approve permanent executive officer appointments before they start. If the appointment is to begin before the Board is able to approve it, the individual must be appointed in an acting or interim role. Please consult with the Office

of the Provost and the Office of Academic Human Resources for guidance on these matters.

Special Requirement Regarding Salary and Administrative Increment: Please note that the Board of Trustees has adopted an administrative salary policy for unit executive officer appointments:

“...When such an individual accepts increased administrative responsibilities, increased salary may be provided to reflect, in part, the added responsibility. When such increments are provided, a written record should be made thereof in the initial letter of appointment. Upon leaving an administrative position and returning to the faculty or staff, an individual’s salary should ordinarily be reduced to reflect, among other considerations, the change in responsibility and, in some instances, a shift to a nine-month academic year appointment...”

In order to comply with this policy, administrative increments must be reflected separately in the unit executive officer’s appointment. See Attachment 2G for examples of how to state the salary structure for executive officers in letters of offer.

II. Letters of Offer

Copies of all letters of offer should be placed in the unit personnel files. In addition, units must send copies of accepted letters of offer to the Office of Academic Human Resources as part of the transaction processing.

For an appointment requiring prior Board of Trustees approval, a vita must also be forwarded to the Office of Academic Human Resources (AHR) so that office can develop the required Board of Trustees agenda item and biographical sketch, and provide a copy to the Board of Trustees. The appointment cannot be processed until AHR receives these documents.

LETTERS OF INVITATION FROM THE DEAN OR DIRECTOR--OVERVIEW

Written letters of offer (technically, letters of invitation to accept an appointment) are required for all faculty and academic professional appointments. Several attachments should be included with each letter inviting an individual to accept an academic appointment, including one outlining general terms of employment (Attachment 3) and forms required to process the appointment.

The University’s *Statutes* (Article IX, Section 3.a.) provide that only the Board of Trustees has the authority to make formal appointments to the academic staff. Although units initiate recommendations for appointments, ***all interactions with the individual to be appointed must indicate that the final appointment requires Board approval.*** (Because the only authority to offer a position resides with the Board of Trustees, please note that these letters are technically “letters of invitation to accept an appointment,” but are informally referred to as letters of offer.)

All internal approvals to offer the position, including appropriate administrative and equal employment opportunity (EEO) committee approvals, must be received *before* the candidate can be issued a letter of offer. Letters to candidates must always make clear that their agreement with the tentative terms outlined in the communication will result only in recommendations of approval to the Board of Trustees. Letters of offer do not supersede the Board's formal *Notification of Appointment* to the academic staff members. The Notification of Appointment is the official academic employment contract.

For appointments to the faculty, unit executive officers normally conduct initial discussions, but the University Statutes, (Article IX, Section 3.d.) require that the appropriate dean or director must sign the letter. The letter of offer may be accompanied by a communication from the department head, or a letter from the department head may be sent separately and simultaneously with the dean's letter. Deans and directors are **not** required to sign letters of offer for academic professional and visiting academic professional positions.

Note: Some appointments require prior approval by the Provost. These include appointments to faculty positions in undivided units (those for which the provost provides second-level review), appointments with indefinite tenure, initial term ("Q") appointments, and appointments of unit executive officers. Some appointments also require prior approval by the Board of Trustees. See Communication No. 3 for more detailed information on appointments requiring the provost's and the Board's approval, and for approval procedures.

Because new academic employees do not receive and accept their first official *Notification of Appointment* (NOA) until after they are activated on the payroll, units are required to retain a copy of the written letter of offer with acceptance and provide a copy to Academic Human Resources as part of the transaction processing.

LETTERS OF INVITATION FROM THE DEAN OR DIRECTOR—REQUIRED ELEMENTS

The letter should include the following items describing the nature of the appointment. Copies of sample letters of invitation are attached for your use (Attachments 2A-G).

- 1) Rank (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, etc.) or Title (if appointment is to be academic professional or administrative);
- 2) Salary;
- 3) Percent time (full-time, part-time, or, if a joint appointment, the breakdown of percent of appointment to be held in each unit);
- 4) Service required (nine- or twelve-month appointment or other negotiated arrangements);
- 5) Effective starting date;

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- 6) For probationary assistant professors; an indication of the tenure year
 - 7) For faculty on Q appointment; note number of years of Q appointment and year in which review for tenure will occur.
 - 8) An indication of an expected response date (note: under normal circumstances, good practice is to allow a fairly short period – two to three weeks);
 - 9) A statement that the invitation is contingent upon approval by the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois;
 - 10) For assistant professors who have not yet completed a terminal degree, include a statement that appointment at the Assistant Professor rank is contingent upon completion of the degree by the start date;
 - 11) For tenured faculty positions, a reference to the privileges and responsibilities of tenure (refer to enclosed AAUP statements, Attachment 4);
 - 12) An indication that the paperwork must be completed and returned so that a formal contract may be issued by the Board of Trustees.
 - 13) For Visiting Academic Professional positions, a statement indicating the position is covered under a collective bargaining agreement must be included.
 - 14) Copy the Provost's Office on the letter of offer.

Note: For assistant professors, whose initial appointments begin later than August 16, please consult Communication No. 14 for appropriate wording and procedures.

The formal letter of invitation has required attachment(s):

- 1) For all appointments, include general terms of employment information sheet (Attachment 3);
- 2) For faculty appointments, include the AAUP statements in Attachment 4. For tenure-track faculty appointments also include Communication No. 9 (Promotion and Tenure), Frequently Asked Questions About Promotion and Tenure, and Communication No. 13 (Review of Faculty in Year Three of the Probationary Period).

The executive officer may provide a letter that serves as a companion letter to one from the dean. It usually contains more specific information about the appointment, especially for tenure-track faculty members where a probationary period is required or for appointments that are for an initial term (“Q” appointments). Issues often addressed include teaching responsibilities, space arrangements and other unit-specific information.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE OFFER

Units should request acknowledgement and acceptance of the invitation to join the academic staff. A copy of the accepted offer letter must be provided to the Office of Academic Human Resources as part of the transaction processing.

FINAL PROCESSING

Once the invitation has been accepted, the unit must submit the hiring transaction, along with a copy of the letter of offer and all other necessary documentation to the Office of Academic Human Resources. It is recommended that units keep copies for their internal files.

III. New letters of Reference for Former University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Employees

When a former employee of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is being rehired after a break in employment of more than three years, three new references must be collected and retained in the employing unit for (1) all appointments involving indefinite tenure (e.g., associate and full professor) and (2) all probationary and non-tenured academic appointments (e.g., assistant professor, lecturer, teaching and research associates, postdoctoral research associates, instructors, and academic professional positions). Reference letters or notes taken during a telephone reference check may be acceptable, depending upon the nature of the position. For tenured faculty appointments, guidance should be sought from the Office of the Provost. For non-tenured appointments, the Office of Academic Human Resources is available for guidance.

In the case of former visiting academic staff members who are being rehired in a visiting appointment, three new references are required only if the break in employment has been longer than four years. Exceptions may be made for brief and temporary (e.g., one or two months) appointments when the break has been longer than four years.

In the case of former graduate assistants who are being appointed to an academic (faculty, other academic, or academic professional) position, three letters of reference should be obtained and retained in the unit. An Employee Information Form and Educational Loan Default form are to be completed electronically via the NESSIE application.

IV. Assistance

For assistance regarding this policy or academic appointment processing issues, call the Office of Academic Human Resources (333-6747). For questions about policy interpretation, please contact the Office of the Provost (333-6677)

V. Attachments

Academic Professional Position and Title Approval – Attachment 1

Sample Letters of Offer (7) – Attachment 2a – 2g

General Terms of Employment for Academic Staff Members – Attachment 3

AAUP Statements on AFT and Professional Ethics – Attachment 4

Highlights of Employee Benefits – Attachment 5