

DUAL CAREER ACADEMIC COUPLES PROGRAM

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
COMMUNICATION No. 8

I. OVERVIEW	2
II. DUAL CAREER ACADEMIC COUPLES PROGRAM	2
III. GUIDELINES	3
IV. PROCESS.....	4
V. REVIEW PROCESS.....	5
VI. FUNDING LIMITS AND APPROPRIATION GUIDELINES	5
VII. ATTACHMENTS.....	6

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I. OVERVIEW

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is committed to building and maintaining an excellent and diverse faculty. The university requires all appointees to faculty and academic staff positions to meet the highest standards in teaching, research, and service. Faculty and academic staff members meeting these criteria are best identified through the regular recruitment and search processes, funded through departmental and college procedures. However, under special circumstances, the Office of the Provost may provide funding for a position and/or allow a search waiver when a special recruitment will contribute to the university's strategic objectives and institutional priorities.

The Office of the Provost supports three programs in which partial or total central financial support for academic positions may be provided: the Faculty Excellence Program (see Communication No. 4); the Targets of Opportunity Program (see Communication No. 7); and the Dual Career Academic Couples Program, described herein. The overriding criterion for granting financial support and/or a search waiver is whether the request contributes to academic excellence in the unit, as measured by usual standards for hiring and as outlined in the strategic goals of the unit, college, and campus.

Further criteria for different categories of dual career support requests are described below. Decisions on requests for financial support and/or search waivers under this policy are made by the Provost in the best interest of the University. Decisions of the Provost are final.

II. DUAL CAREER ACADEMIC COUPLES PROGRAM

The University of Illinois is committed to our faculty members and their partners. The Dual Career Academic Couples Program is designed to help partners of tenure-stream faculty to identify and pursue employment opportunities in our community. Please note that this program provides no guarantee of employment. Furthermore, the university is unable to help fund positions with area employers. (Program Overview is available in the attachments.)

The Dual Career Liaison is a position staffed in Human Resources to work with faculty and units on dual career cases. The Dual Career Liaison has established a broad network of community contacts and is able to share information related to area employers, job openings, and networking opportunities. S/he can work with Unit Executive Officers (EOs) to identify and explore appropriate opportunities for a faculty partner both on campus and in the community and is available to meet with faculty partners to discuss university and community employment resources. S/he is also available to assist partners with resume/cover letter review, interviewing techniques, and networking strategies.

III. GUIDELINES

Under certain circumstances, the Dual Career Academic Couples Program can facilitate the placement of tenure-system faculty partners in positions on campus and, in some cases, provide financial support for the position. While the program is focused on the recruitment and retention of tenure-system faculty, the campus may provide dual career support for senior-level administrative positions.

The program does not extend support to the recruitment or retention of non-tenure-track employees. For the partners of these individuals, the Dual Career Liaison may, under limited circumstances, provide guidance such as resume review, interviewing skills, and general advice.

Units must recognize that providing an opportunity to the partner is a resource commitment. Therefore, employment opportunities for the partner must be mission-critical to the campus. Partners are hired to perform a specific role that benefits a campus unit. Partner hires must meet the high standards of excellence expected of all university employees.

It is anticipated that most partner hires will involve appointment to a tenure-stream faculty position. To be eligible for a tenure-stream faculty position, partners must demonstrate the level of excellence, or potential for excellence, that is expected of candidates identified through a regular search process.

Although this program is geared primarily to appointments of tenure-stream faculty positions, compelling requests for partner appointments for academic professional and non-tenure stream faculty positions will be entertained. Under limited and exceptional circumstances the dual career program may support Academic Professional (AP) hires. To be eligible, the AP position must be open and advertised or deemed “mission-critical,” but even then, funding is not guaranteed.

Under certain limited circumstances, the Provost’s Office may extend support for a soft money position, but only for the duration of the soft money. Once the original commitment of funds from the Provost’s Office expires, it is expected that the partner’s employer will assume the full cost of the commitment (e.g., by writing the cost of employing the partner into the next grant application) or that the position will end. It should be made clear to the partner that the position will rely fully on soft funds in order to be renewed.

Visiting appointments for partners are not eligible for support from the Provost, except in special circumstances.

The program does not cover partners in Civil Service positions on campus due to the State Universities Civil Service System’s rules and procedures. However, the Dual Career Liaison can discuss the Civil Service application/hiring process with partners and can connect them with staff members in Staff Human Resources who can assist with any Civil Service questions.

The program does not cover placement into graduate programs. Partners must apply to a graduate program and if the partner is admitted on her/his merits, the lead department/unit may provide funding toward the partner's education.

IV. PROCESS

During recruitment, it is inappropriate to ask candidates during the interview process if they have a partner or any question related to their partner's situation. If the candidate mentions that s/he has a partner who would be seeking employment, the candidate can be informed that the university has a Dual Career Academic Couples Program or simply supplied with the Dual Career Program Overview.

Once an offer has been extended, it is acceptable to ask the candidate if there are other considerations regarding her/his potential move. When communicating about the dual career program, it is important to set reasonable expectations and not overpromise or guarantee employment for the partner.

The EO may refer the partner to the Dual Career Liaison to assist with locating opportunities in campus units and in the community.

If the partner is interested in a position on campus, the EO of the first unit (*i.e.*, the unit that is either recruiting a faculty member through a regular search process or trying to retain a current faculty member) is responsible for contacting the appropriate unit for possible employment of the partner and for negotiating an appropriate position. The EO may utilize the Dual Career Liaison to assist with this process.

Once a campus position has been identified, the next step is for the partner to be evaluated by the second unit (*i.e.*, the prospective employer of the partner) through a process appropriate to the position. This will usually involve an interview, including a campus visit and reference letters.

After the interview process, if both units agree to move forward, they must take the following actions before sending the proposal to the Office of the Provost for review:

- The executive officer of the first unit must provide a letter of justification to appoint the partner in order to recruit or retain the faculty member, identify how that faculty member will enhance the unit's mission, and indicate that the unit is willing to furnish at least 1/3 of the salary of the partner for the duration of the Provost's commitment. This letter should be addressed to the Provost.
- The executive officer of the second unit must provide a letter to justify the appointment of the partner on the basis of legitimate unit needs and the candidate's qualifications. The unit must also be willing to support 1/3 of the partner's proposed salary for the duration of the Provost's commitment and indicate a plan to fund the position for the long-term. This letter should be addressed to the Provost.

- It is possible to request a search waiver to hire a partner without requesting funding from the Provost's Office. In this situation, both units must agree to fund the entire position. The unit who wishes to hire the partner must still follow the procedure described above and attach all pertinent documentation to obtain a search waiver. The requested waiver must support the excellence of both the unit in which the faculty member is being recruited, or potentially retained, and the unit to which the partner would be appointed.
- If mutually agreed upon by both units, funding time limits can be set by either the lead or partner unit. In these situations, it is imperative that both units and the employee have a clear understanding of what will happen at the end of the funding commitment.
- The units should forward the proposal through the appropriate channels, including the deans of both the first and second units.
- Upon agreement between the executive officers of the two units, the executive officer of the employing unit of the partner should transmit a request to the Office of the Provost to appoint the individual. The checklist in Attachment 1 specifies the documentation required for such appointments. Please note that a separate search waiver request is not necessary.

V. REVIEW PROCESS

Unless tenure is involved in the proposed appointment, the Provost acts without consultation. This process normally takes 2 to 4 workdays after the papers are received in the Office of the Provost.

If tenure is involved, the decision at the campus level is made by the Provost using the off-cycle promotion review process. This process normally takes 5 to 10 workdays after the papers are received in the Office of the Provost.

VI. FUNDING LIMITS AND APPROPRIATION GUIDELINES

Subject to the availability of funds, central campus resources will be used to provide up to 1/3 of the required funding for the salary of an approved candidate. For partners in tenure-system positions, the funding is recurring. For appointments to all other positions, the funding commitment may last up to three years. Note that the funding commitment represents the portion of the partner's *initial* salary to the partner's unit. Salary adjustments come out of the annual salary pool distributed to units.

At the conclusion of the funding commitment from campus administration, the unit employing the partner will assume the full salary commitment of the employee, unless otherwise specified in the original agreement between the two units.

Upon the resignation, termination, or retirement of an individual hired under this program, the funds allocated by the campus to the unit and by the requesting unit to the hiring unit will revert to the initial funding units.

Note that funding does not automatically follow the individual. Dual career funding is allocated not to help a person obtain employment, but rather for that person to perform a specific role that benefits a campus unit. If the employee changes positions, the new hiring unit must initiate a new request.

Research funds may also be requested from the Vice Chancellor for Research. Questions about these funds should be directed to that office (333-0034).

VII. ATTACHMENT

Dual Career Academic Couples Program Overview
Transmittal for Dual Career Academic Couples Program