

**Target of Opportunity (TOP) Faculty Hiring @ UNM
October 2018**

Guiding principles in pursuing Target of Opportunity (TOP) hiring:

As the flagship research university in New Mexico, UNM has particular goals, opportunities, and commitments that guide our mission. Prominent among these are:

- We best contribute to well-being in New Mexico by achieving and sustaining deep excellence in our research mission; that commitment lies at the center of our institutional identity
- Society at the state, national, and global levels must urgently diversify the pipelines to institutional leadership roles of both academic and other institutions. As a research university in a highly diverse state, UNM is uniquely positioned to contribute to forming that future leadership. Truly delivering on that promise is both the ethically right and the academically strategic thing to do
- If we deliver on both these priorities, we will be a leader on this terrain among institutions of higher education in the United States and globally

UNM usually pursues these priorities via competitive searches for excellent scholars from all backgrounds. This will continue to be the case. In some circumstances, however, and as recognized in UNM's longstanding sole source alternative hiring policy, the University's strategic needs justify faculty recruitment focused on individuals whose expertise and background make them uniquely qualified to advance the academic mission in a diverse state such as New Mexico. Such circumstances involve a combination of at least some of the following:

- An identified candidate who brings demonstrated academic excellence appropriate to a leading research university
- An academic unit (typically a department) whose strategic intellectual direction includes this candidate's core academic interests and expertise
- The candidate comes from a social background that will add diversity to the hiring academic unit (including but not limited to women in the STEM disciplines, under-represented racial and ethnic minorities, groups historically marginalized in American life, individuals with disabilities, and those from rural origins, first-generation college experience, and veteran status); the burden is on the hiring unit to demonstrate that a given background will diversity it in ways supportive of UNM's academic mission

- Dimensions of diversity that will receive priority for TOP hiring include those which, in the judgment of review and hiring authorities, are most relevant to the Department's and the University's academic mission of research, teaching, service, and community engagement in New Mexico, the United States, and the world
- A strongly demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and student success, as well as experience working with broadly diverse communities (e.g. demonstrated by previous experience, diversity statement, etc.)
- Evidence of likelihood that the candidate wishes to devote years to serving in New Mexico, in terms of stage of career, affinity for the state and its population, overlap with identified teaching and research needs, interest in engaging with New Mexico communities, and other relevant factors

All candidates must have already established their capacity to substantially enhance UNM's research and teaching mission and must have unusually strong academic profiles for their stage of career: True national or international prominence at the full professor level; outstanding established research and teaching record at the associate professor level; and outstanding early-career research and teaching potential at the assistant professor level. The vast majority of UNM tenure-track faculty hires will continue to be filled through competitive searches; thus TOP hires will prioritize candidates most uniquely capable of advancing UNM's mission in a diverse state.

Process:

1. Either departmental faculty or hiring officials (e.g. department Chairs, Deans, Directors) may identify desirable candidates based on the above criteria
2. The Chair/Director of the interested unit, in dialogue with unit tenure-track faculty, decides whether or not a given candidate meets the criteria for TOP hiring
3. Department Chairs explore the candidate's interest in moving to the University of New Mexico. Conversations with candidates must not promise any job offer, but rather be exploratory in nature. Chairs are encouraged not to pursue candidates simply on the basis of monetary rewards, but rather on the basis of the opportunity to be part of a university-wide priority on excellence-and-equity across all dimensions of the academic mission
4. Candidate must receive a positive vote from the departmental voting faculty; this vote and a summary of the discussion should become part of the file for other levels to review
5. Only candidacies of the strongest faculty members clearly interested in UNM should be elevated to the College level, though Chairs should keep their Deans apprised of developing proposals
6. Each College/School will establish 'best consideration' deadlines for formal proposals from Departments, but may also choose to keep this opportunity open at other times
7. The Dean will rank all extant TOP hiring proposals received, based on the above criteria and her/his strategic vision for the School/College

8. School/College priorities will be advanced to the University level where they will be considered by a diverse university-level committee convened by the Office of the Provost; the first best consideration deadline for such proposals in 2018 will be November 15, 2018; subsequent proposals will be considered periodically. Proposals must make the case for the hire under the criteria identified herein; summarize the faculty vote and views; clearly note whether or not the hire is dependent upon bridge funding from Academic Affairs; and the source of funds for the position going forward
9. The university-level committee will make the final recommendation to the Provost, who will authorize the final list of approved TOP hires (pending successful negotiation with the candidate and identification of adequate continuing resources)
10. The hiring proposal and the final hiring paperwork *must* include an argument and supporting evidence (related to the criteria identified herein) from the hiring official that the hire conforms to sole source hiring policy as stated in Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 3210

Bridge Funding:

Academic Affairs has set aside approximately \$600,000 in one-time bridge funding for TOP and other diversity hires meeting the excellence-and-equity standard. Half of that amount comes from the OVPR, drawing on funds from high F&A generating disciplines. Assuming excellent proposals are forthcoming, we anticipate awarding approximately half of the total to Departments making best argument on grounds of unique qualifications and ability to contribute vigorously to the academic mission; and half specifically to high F&A generating Departments (or units with convincing promise to become high F&A generating) who also make best such arguments. This money is available in AY2018-2019 and AY2019-2020 but may be spread out over multiple years either for strategic reasons or under provisions for gradual transition onto College/School funds (e.g. 67%/33% split between Academic Affairs & College/School first year, 33%/67% split second year). The same university-level committee will prioritize top proposals for bridge funding, with final decisions to be made jointly by the VP for Research and the Provost.