

Feb. 2013 Re: Faculty hiring

Michelle:

I think we need to set up a meeting as soon as possible to talk about how we want to proceed and how the process could improve so that this does not happen in the future.

Erin:

I echo earlier responses that this result is disappointing but not surprising. Despite our recommendations to avoid this very scenario, we've been forced to repeat the pattern that we've encountered before - the job description is narrow and unattainable. Until those with hiring authority recognize the unique needs of our program and of Native Programs in general, the efforts we place on this important work seem to be a waste of time and resources. Ultimately, it is our students who will lose.

Linda:

I agree that this repeats a pattern of a series of failed recruitment efforts as Erin has noted.. When the field in the vacancy announcement is so specific and narrow in its requirements for a degree in an area that other colleges and universities are actively competing for, we do not attain our objective. Even when we interview the "one" we would like to interview, it doesn't produce results. The pool is too small and they sooner or later are interviewed elsewhere and offered a better package. I do not think people are responding just to money: but supporting a family is a reality and getting some support for their writing and goals has come up in some discussions.

I agree we should talk about what would help. Certainly recruiting from a broader range of degrees would help. In my recent research for the MPA review document on the question of how we compare to other MPA-giving institutions, I found that most schools/departments of public policy recruit faculty from a range of inter-related disciplines to achieve a diverse faculty complement that is effective in preparing students for work in the public sector. Degrees in public finance, international relations, political science, public economics, health policy and other areas are highly relevant. There are new names for degrees in areas that were previously just Public Administration and Public Policy even in the most conservative departments. Universities are responding to the need for greater disciplinary that practice in public institutions requires. I do still hold that, given the current staffing of MPA, we really need a PhD or DPA or other doctoral level degree but it could have a variety of names.

I do NOT include a juris doctorate, because that degree holds no social science research component for teaching the cores and it is designed for very different and important objectives. The advanced research component is necessary to do MPA Tribal faculty job to provide the kind of support for our second year core that is all research focused and to ramp them up for it in the first year. Students need the benefit of faculty who have had the experience and academic training at a level to accomplish this. We are in the service of the Tribes and the State to improve tribal government capacity, as we stated when we got the line item budget increase from the legislature to do this program. We need someone who can work at this level in order to graduate students who have the level of credible research skills to contribute to the research tribal governments are saying that they need.

We used to have greater flexibility because the mpa tribal faculty was teaching in a team with a fully qualified DPA or PHD iwith a public fsocial science focus who was a continuing faculty. General MPA is now down in faculty, so it hasn't been possible. We have people with JDs teaching the tribal courses and it hasn't worked. My current position is that we need a PhD, DPA or equivalent level degree along with strong academic/practice work in the study of tribal governance to meet these needs. In short, the program needs an anchor, but there are several shapes that would work. This anchor will likely be teaching with visitors and adjuncts who have less degrees or JDs, so that is why I think it is so important now.

Michelle:

I think what you say is very important and needs discussion and consideration. I would love to see some data on the potential pool of Native PhD's there are in the related fields you are talking about. Could you share your findings with us?

I do also want to point out that as important as the research portion is, my MPA program allowed us to choose a thesis track (original research) or placement in a work study track with a work related paper, generally an analytical piece. Both were rigorous and required committee approval. The tracks were geared for those going on to a PhD program or into public positions that included research and for those who wanted practical/applied experience to reach their goals.

Amy:

1) It is not my understanding we are advertising a hiring preference for "Native" faculty. Perhaps this can be discussed at our meeting?

2) While many MPA programs have thesis tracks with an original research component, there is a difference between having experience in conducting research as a student vs. as a professional/practitioner. While I completely understand Michelle's point (and it was the path we chose in the last advertisement), I also understand Linda's point. We've both taught our 2nd year core and we've both conducted our own research projects throughout our careers in academia and as PA practitioners. This experience is crucial to effectively teach 2nd year core and Capstone as an anchor faculty in the program. Perhaps we can talk about re-posting the ad to emphasize minimum qualifications of research experience in the field and in teaching research methods?

Michelle:

And you are right that we did not put Native preference. I am only asking because I am curious about what the potential pool is for Native PhDs if you had a broadened range of degrees. A reverse question could be considered as well. How many people with the requisite broadened range of PhDs have the tribal experience and knowledge we are asking for? Given that, we are back to the original questions of how do we get the right fit and what about our process could be improved and where is it breaking down?

Erin:

It is my understanding that it is not legal to limit the faculty to Native only. However, our Affirmative Action Policy states:

"An important goal of the College is to create a learning and working environment that is inclusive, hospitable to, and reflective of our diverse society - an environment that nurtures respect for cultural diversity and encourages excellence. The Evergreen State College is implementing an Affirmative Action program to achieve this goal and to employ and retain members of underrepresented affected groups among its administration, faculty and staff."

<http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/policy/affirmativeaction>

We are empowered to hire a faculty who is reflective of our program, students and tribal communities we serve. I believe this should be at the core of our conversation.

Tina:

This morning I received word that my sister Terry had a heart attack and passed on. I'm currently making arrangements to go home to WI and am uncertain when i'll return, probably weds. please feel free to meet without me. without our top candidate, my opinion is that we have a failed search and will likely continue to do so unless we broaden the application criteria, which is what the majority of the committee has stated from the beginning. thanks!

Further e-mails:

On Feb 5, 2013, at 5:11 PM, "Gould, Amy" <goulda@evergreen.edu> wrote:

Hi All- I wasn't copied on the first e-mail, but Lee mentioned this to me during our faculty seminar today. Yes, this "lead" is for the continuing faculty position.

Nancy- Our hiring committee is meeting on Thursday afternoon. It is my understanding we cannot accept any more applications at this time because we did select our finalists for phone and campus interviews. Therefore, the two options the committee has for moving forward are: 1) change the position description and re-advertise, or 2) fail the search.

Is this correct? - Amy

From: Murray, Nancy

Sent: Tue 2/5/2013 6:02 PM

To: Gould, Amy

Cc: Stumpff, Linda; Lyttle, Lee; Genia, Erin; Aguilar-Wells, Michelle; Sharkey, Jan

Subject: Re: Email from the MPA Site

That's not entirely true. Just because the phone interviews etc had been scheduled, there is no reason you can't dip back into the pool. You haven't closed the position, right? If that's the case, the search is still considered active.

I will double check with Jan about the status and get back to you.

Nancy

On Feb 5, 2013, at 7:13 PM, "Gould, Amy" <goulda@evergreen.edu> wrote:

Nancy- Wow! That would be amazing if we could re-review our current pool of applicants and continue to accept new applications. I was confused because the job posting on our TESC website says: "We will continue to accept application materials until finalist are chosen." I thought we'd chosen our finalists.

Anyway, thanks for looking into this. - Amy

From: Murray, Nancy

Sent: Tue 2/5/2013 7:15 PM

To: Gould, Amy

Cc: Stumpff, Linda; Lyttle, Lee; Genia, Erin; Aguilar-Wells, Michelle; Sharkey, Jan

Subject: Re: Email from the MPA Site

Yes, that's right. Had you decided to close the position, we would have removed the job announcement from the website. In this case, we can certainly continue to review any new complete apps that come in.

From: Gould, Amy

Sent: Tue 2/5/2013 7:16 PM

To: Murray, Nancy

Cc: Stumpff, Linda; Lyttle, Lee; Genia, Erin; Aguilar-Wells, Michelle; Sharkey, Jan

Subject: RE: Email from the MPA Site

Wow..... this is really good news! This means we can also take another look at the completed apps we already reviewed and contact anyone with incomplete apps to get their missing stuff in. Right? Thanks, Nancy.

rom: Murray, Nancy

Sent: Tue 2/5/2013 7:22 PM

To: Gould, Amy

Cc: Stumpff, Linda; Lyttle, Lee; Genia, Erin; Aguilar-Wells, Michelle; Sharkey, Jan

Subject: Re: Email from the MPA Site

yes, though Jan and Janet have been in contact with candidates missing requisite application materials. Of course, it can't hurt to nudge some again!