Special Opportunity Positions

A special opportunity position is a tenure track faculty position at any level that can be filled without a national search by a person who fulfills certain criteria. The criteria establish that the hire will move the college towards its goal of greater diversity, enhance the curriculum, and that the candidate will be of commensurate quality to candidates hired in national searches. This process allows speed and flexibility in securing extraordinary candidates. It also creates a mechanism for soliciting individual scholars who might not apply for a position as well as effectively competing with other institutions for outstanding candidates.

Procedures for Appointment to a Special Opportunity Position

1. Nomination. Candidates will be nominated to the Dean for Academic Affairs. A candidate might come to the attention of college members in a variety of ways, for example through faculty searches, through pre- or post-doc fellowships, through visiting faculty positions, or through outside contacts by faculty or staff.

2. Evaluation by Department and/or Programs. The Dean will consult with programs and/or departments that might be potential homes for the appointment to determine, (a) the quality of the candidate per criteria 3 below, (b) procedures for campus visits or equivalent as appropriate, and (c) how the candidate will fit within the department and/or program or enhance departmental and/or program offerings.

3. Evaluation by CAPT. The Dean will refer nominations of sufficient merit based on departmental or program evaluation to the Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure who will advise the Dean on whether the nominations meet the three criteria below, and which candidates, if any, should be considered for appointments.

4. In consultation with the President, the Dean offers appointments. These appointments are specific to the candidate, not to the department or program. That is, they do not increase the number of permanent tenure track lines for a department or program.

Criteria for Special Opportunity Positions

1. The candidate will help the college fulfill its mission by increasing the diversity of the faculty, particularly with regard to historically underrepresented groups.

2. The candidate will enhance the curriculum of the college.

3. The candidate will be of quality commensurate with that of top candidates from national searches. That is, the candidate should have a record or promise of excellence in teaching and distinction in research that makes it likely that he or she would have emerged as the top candidate in a conventional search had one occurred in his or her specific area of expertise.

Target of Opportunity Positions

In Spring 2008, the faculty passed a recommendation that the administration seek funding beyond the faculty positions allocated in the Capital Campaign to support “Target of Opportunity” hiring as a means of increasing faculty diversity. The present economic situation suggests that -- while a high
priority -- funding for such positions may not be realized for some time. In the interim, three possibilities should be considered for potential target-of-opportunity hires.

1. **Converting the line of a Consortium for Faculty Diversity (CFD) Fellow into a tenure-track position.** In exceptional circumstances, a Department or Program may propose converting the line of an existing Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow into a tenure-track appointment. The Department or Program would need to make the case of the extraordinary potential of the candidate as a teacher and scholar, the curricular needs the candidate would fill, and the ways in which the candidate contributed to the diversity of the College. Such a change of status would mean the loss of one CFD line going forward, so any appointment will need to be considered with great care. If for some reason the faculty member appointed in this way left the College, the line would revert to the pool of CFD fellows and the department or program would have no specific claims on the line.

2. **Filling one or more remaining campaign positions through targeted hiring as the positions are funded and authorized.** Four positions remain to be funded in the campaign. Areas of specialization have already been allocated for two (hard rock geology and oceanography) and CEP narrowed the areas of specialization under consideration for the remaining positions to four existing proposals (Psychology, Neuroscience, GWS/GLS, and Film). Funding these endowed positions remains a priority of the campaign. When funded, they could be filled by means of a targeted search within the already identified areas of specialization.

3. **“Mortgaging” a retirement for an early targeted-hire replacement.** With this approach, when a faculty member commits to a retirement at a specific future date, the Department or Program is allowed to proceed with a targeted search for the replacement rather than wait for the reauthorization. This allows the possibility of an extended period to identify an outstanding candidate for the replacement.