

APPENDIX B: Strategic plan on Faculty Diversity Hiring

Strategic Plan on Faculty Diversity Hiring

The Background

Racial disparities exist amongst the faculty of most US higher education institutions, and Syracuse University is not an exception. While compared to its peers, Syracuse University is slightly above average in the percentage of both full time faculty and students who are from underrepresented minority groups, there remains a significant gap between the percentages of students and faculty from underrepresented minority groups.¹ To address this disparity, our analysis suggests that the University would need to hire an additional 70 faculty from underrepresented minority groups, assuming the percentage of students from underrepresented minority groups will hold stable at the current rate. University leadership recognizes this disparity exists and must be addressed.

During their campus visit in February 2020, the Board Special Committee on University Climate, Diversity and Inclusion met with 17 groups of students, faculty and staff. One of the persistent and recurring themes from all of those engagements was an observed lack of diversity in faculty ranks. Students uniformly expressed a desire that the racial and ethnic demographics of the faculty to more closely resemble that of the student body. Faculty—particularly but not exclusively from underrepresented minority groups—seek more diversity in their ranks in all disciplines and across all schools and colleges. Accordingly, one of the principal recommendations of the Special Committee is to develop a program, funding plan and mechanism that will result in significant increases in faculty from underrepresented minority groups.

The Challenge

Any program with the main objective of increasing faculty diversity must also address several challenges and sub-objectives. First, it must comply with local, state, and federal employment anti-discrimination laws, which prohibit employment discrimination based on a number of protected characteristics, including, but not limited to, race, national origin, disability, age, sex, and sexual orientation. Second, it must have a clear funding stream, and any unmet budget needs must have a clear funding plan. This is particularly true given the extraordinary fiscal challenges presented by the pandemic. Third, it must address not only hiring new faculty from underrepresented minority groups, but also the cultural challenges and campus climate of nurturing and retaining diverse faculty once they are hired. And fourth, if possible, the program must also support the University's other goals and objectives, such as increasing research, retaining Carnegie R1 status, and supporting existing areas of strength where in some cases, the pool of candidates for employment may not be available. Finally, the program must be cognizant of the significant market challenge in hiring faculty from underrepresented minorities. While the higher education sector in general has been focused on faculty diversity for some time, the social and racial justice movement of the last

¹ Currently the Syracuse University student body is 15.5% from underrepresented minority groups. The average for our peers is 14.5%. The percentage of full-time faculty at the University is 8.6%, while the average of our peer universities is 7.9%

few months has brought a sharp focus onto faculty diversity, and currently most American universities and colleges are actively recruiting from the same limited pool of talent. Accordingly, any program should be designed both to make competitive offers to those candidates on the market, and to develop a pipeline of candidates from within the University, especially for the disciplines for which candidate pools are particularly limited, such as STEM disciplines.

The following reflect our strategic considerations at the University :

The Plan:

Faculty Diversity Hiring Initiative

To meet the principal objective and all attendant sub-objectives, the University will invest \$50M over the next 10 years. This will allow the University to bring on up to 70 permanent faculty and 100 postdoctoral scholars from underrepresented minority backgrounds. The program will also allow the University to spend \$5M on programs designed to recruit and retain our faculty from underrepresented minority groups, and to help transform the culture of the schools, colleges and departments to make Syracuse University an attractive and welcoming environment for highly sought-after faculty of color to come to teach, research, lead and, most importantly, stay for a career.

Of this \$50M, the University will self-fund \$40M, and the University will fundraise an additional \$10M, to allow for an annual structural budget spend of \$5M through 2031. Over the course of the program, there are various options to ensure the continuation of the program past FY 2031. The \$4M/year of structural funding will continue in perpetuity. The additional \$1M/year will need to come from an endowed fund generated by Advancement, a structural commitment on the part of the University, or a slow accumulation and encumbrance of subvention over time.

The \$40M of University funds will come from a combination of already-encumbered subvention funds, and unencumbered funds in the Invest Syracuse faculty hiring program. From unallocated subvention, the Provost has already committed \$2M/year (by 2023) to the diversity hiring program. To date, the research faculty hiring programs have encumbered \$13M of the \$15M budgeted. The remaining \$2M will be directed to the SU Faculty CORE program, increasing the total annual spend to just over \$4M, which almost entirely covers the faculty hiring component of the program.

Budget and Program Assumptions

Faculty hiring program assumptions:

- To remain compliant with local, state, and federal law, the Faculty Diversity Hiring will have to be structured as an incentive program rather than a direct recruitment of minorities. Search committees, department chairs and deans are incentivized to recruit a diverse candidate pool, thereby increasing their chances of potentially hiring candidates from an underrepresented minority group.
- To maximize the utility, scope and sustainability of the program, it is structured as a cost share with the schools and colleges, and as a rotating fund, to ensure the funds

can be redeployed after a discrete period of time

- 15 faculty lines are available to select search committees, particularly in departments which have deficits in the diversity of their faculty. These are to be three-year, 50-50 cost sharing with the schools and colleges for each line that takes advantage of the opportunity by hiring the candidate from the underrepresented minority group.
- After three years, the funds are redeployed for another diversity hire. Technically, this means 15 new faculty could be hired every three years, for a total of about 50 over 10 years.
- Because this is a temporary commitment of funds, it is a reasonable expectation that deans and department chairs will use this primarily for replacement faculty—hiring to fill holes in departments left by departures and retirements. This has two positive effects.
 - First, it will create positive budget relief for schools and colleges, which can then more fully participate in the Invest Syracuse faculty hiring programs designed to bring in new research faculty and thus increase the total faculty size.
 - Second it will more rapidly increase diversity of the faculty by filling existing positions with diverse faculty.
- In addition, for the second round of Cluster Hires, a premium of 20% has been offered if a department hires a candidate who is from an underrepresented minority group. Instead of a 50-50 cost share, the Provost will allocate 70% of the salary for this incentive. We expect that 25% of the 69 lines allocated under the cluster 2 program will be underrepresented minority hires, and thus a permanent allocation of an additional \$260K/year.
- This will apply to up to 17 additional underrepresented minority faculty hires.
- For both the rotating diversity hiring program and the diversity incentive for Cluster 2, the budget reflects the needs to offer highly competitive compensation. Accordingly, the expected salaries are 15% higher than the budgets for the Cluster and Signature Hiring programs.
- Given the highly competitive hiring market for faculty of color, it is reasonable to expect that this program will not be fully deployed. When messaging about this program, it will be important to set expectations and explain the meaning of the commitment
 - The University is fully committed to spend \$50M on diversity hiring over 10 years and has structural funds of \$4M to commit to this project past the first decade

- That said, the University cannot guarantee that it will achieve specific hiring numbers in any given year, nor in the decade-total.
 - Faculty diversity hiring is held to the same standard as regular hiring: *a failed search is not when someone is not hired, but rather when the university hires the wrong person.*
 - Accordingly, as with all searches, some may not be successful, and thus leave diversity incentive funding undeployed and available for hiring in subsequent years.
- The University can and should be prepared to make adjustments within the faculty diversity hiring program to better meet the needs of the University's commitments on diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility during the first ten years and beyond. For example, if the premium needs to be adjusted upward, or if some lines redeployed to fund start up packages, the total number of faculty hired may not match to total possible, given the allocations of funding.

Postdoctoral scholarship program assumptions:

- This program is more demanded by STEM areas
- Each cohort will have 5 postdocs for two-year appointments. By year two, there will be 10 postdoctoral scholars on campus at all times.
- The University will build community within the cohorts and will provide opportunities for the postdocs to become tenure track faculty, providing a pipeline for the faculty hiring program.
- The postdoctoral scholars will be expected to teach one course a year in area of their expertise. In addition to providing teaching experience to these scholars, this will also help in addressing desire of the students that the racial and ethnic demographics of the instructors to resemble more closely to that of the student body.
- The program can be launched in advance of fundraising through the use of University one-time funds (technically carryover from previous years, or unspent current-year funding).
- Some disciplines may choose to structure their program as three-year programs. In these cases, they will skip a year for recruiting.
- With \$70K stipends and \$5K of professional development funds per year², when fully operational, the program will cost \$1.8M per year to operate.

² This is a reasonable assumption based on the postdoctoral scholar market and provides a premium for underrepresented minorities. The additional \$15K represents fringe costs

Recruitment and Retention assumptions:

- The recruitment and retention program is funded at \$500k/year, for use for one-time needs. It is not to be used for structural needs or permanent subvention.
- Departments will need incentive funding to adequately recruit, support, provide professional development and to encourage underrepresented minorities to apply for open positions.
- New faculty hired under the diversity hiring program will need professional development funds such as funds for travel to conferences, GA lines, summer salary and other one-time research needs, consistent with such funds and services offered to all incoming and existing faculty.
- The faculty diversity program does not include start up packages, so recruitment funds can be used to partially support start up packages

Fundraising or fund redistribution goal

To realize this program, the University must commit to raising or redirecting about \$10M in the next 10 years. While this is a significant commitment, especially as the nation faces a sharp economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that it is achievable, particularly given the long runway of a full decade. On an annual basis, \$1M in new cash is not insignificant, but neither is it unachievable, given the University's track record in advancement.

To avoid the vicious cycle of an inability to launch a program in advance of fundraising (and thus an inability to fundraise due to the lack of program progress), there are funds within the Invest Syracuse system—unused funds from the current year and previous years--to start the programs in advance of fundraising. That said, these one-time funds are not structural, and the \$1M per year either must be a hard target for the University's Advancement team or must be found elsewhere in the University's structural budget.

Conclusion: Meeting the Four-Fold Challenge

As previously noted, any meaningful diversity hiring program must meet the fourfold challenge. The faculty diversity hiring initiative does so in the following ways:

- 1. Likely complies with state and federal anti-discrimination law**
The incentive nature of the program appears to keep the University entirely within the boundaries of state and federal law and reasonable propriety
- 2. Maintains a clear funding stream, mindful of current financial and economic realities**
As noted, most of this program is hard-funded on existing budget lines. The rest relies on slow redirection of subvention and a reasonable yet aspirational expectation from the Office of Advancement and External Affairs.

- 3. Addresses the cultural challenges of nurturing and retaining diverse faculty once they are hired.**

The recruitment and retention program, coupled with existing faculty training mandates and other campus commitments on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility helps to address this point. In addition, the postdoc program will bring new talent into the institution, allowing Syracuse University to build dynamic and exciting new cohorts of researchers from across disciplines and to build a pipeline for hiring.

- 4. Supports the University's other goals and objectives, such as excellence in teaching, increasing research, retaining Carnegie R1 status and supporting existing areas of strength**

The University reasonably expects all departments to participate in the diversity hiring program, bringing exciting new talent into the university, and freeing up school/college funds to fully participate in the Invest Syracuse research hiring programs. Additionally, the number of postdocs is an important metric for Carnegie rankings. So, any program that will increase the numbers will help the University's research ranking objectives. In addition, postdocs will help in supporting teaching mission of the university, especially in addressing desire of the students that the racial and ethnic demographics of the instructors to resemble more closely to that of the student body.