

## **Guidelines and Process for Tenure-Track and Multi-Year Faculty Position Requests (Including Conversion Requests)**

**Office of Academic Affairs  
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University  
Spring 2020**

Hiring new tenure track colleagues, as well as non-tenure track colleagues on multi-year contracts, helps to meet the curricular and staffing needs of departments and programs. The consideration to submit a request for a tenure-track position is also an opportunity to reflect on the vision of the department or program. Every time a department considers a long-term hire, it is a chance to review the goals of the department in relation to the missions and strategic directions of the colleges. Therefore, successful hiring requests clearly demonstrate how the position meets the needs of students and supports the curriculum.

These guidelines and criteria are designed to assist department chairs and program directors in formulating requests for tenure-track and multi-year faculty lines. Requests should be completed for new tenure-track positions, continuation of tenure-track positions that have been vacated, and multiple-year non-tenure track positions. Requests for sabbatical replacements, short-term leaves, and administrative replacements, whether through part-time adjuncts or short term, full-time term hires (generally one year or less) is a separate process and those requests should be made in writing to the Academic Dean before the staffing meetings in the fall semester (or as soon as possible in the event of unexpected circumstances such as the departure of a faculty member late in the academic year).

Departments and programs that wish to convert a faculty member's fixed term contract to a tenure-track contract should still submit a tenure-track position request as outlined here. The request should make an argument for the *line or position* and *not* reference a particular faculty member. If the request for the line is approved, Academic Affairs will contact the department chair to inquire whether the department recommends a new search or a conversion of an existing faculty member's contract. Academic Affairs will consider the departmental recommendation and then make a separate decision regarding possible conversion based on whether: the current appointment resulted from an external, national search; there was a diverse applicant pool in the original search; the faculty member's expertise aligns with the academic and strategic needs of the department and the institutions; the faculty member has demonstrated excellence in teaching at CSB/SJU; and departmental composition supports a tenure-track position (Academic Affairs is unlikely to approve a conversion if it means that all colleagues in a department are tenured or tenure-track). Departments should not submit supplementary materials, such as letters of recommendation, teaching materials, annual evaluations, student course surveys, CVs, etc., to support conversion requests unless requested to do so by Academic Affairs.

Retirements do not lead automatically to new hires in affected departments and programs. A retirement in a department is not, by itself, a warrant for continuation of that line in the same department. All position vacancies are an occasion for re-examining overall faculty composition among departments and programs. If a retirement occurs in a department or program, then the department will need to submit a request for continuing this line. Normally, position openings resulting from negative reviews stay within the department.

### **Vision**

These guidelines and criteria are designed to assist department chairs and program directors in completing position requests. In rendering decisions to allocate faculty lines, Academic Affairs is guided by a vision that:

- Builds a community of teachers, scholars, and university citizens in the Benedictine, liberal arts tradition;
- Enhances the diversity of the faculty;
- Builds exemplary academic departments and programs to meet student learning outcomes;
- Integrates departments with the general education curriculum;
- Fosters flexibility within and across departments;
- Builds faculty composition to align with projected enrollment patterns, and with current and projected fiscal resources; and
- Advances the missions and strategic directions of the colleges.

The following sections of this document describe in detail the ways that chairs and program directors should address these goals in position requests.

### **Procedure**

Chairs or program directors may request authorization for tenure-track and multi-year faculty lines. Position requests should be submitted to the Dean of the Faculty via Forms Manager no later than March 15.

Academic Affairs will work with the Academic Planning and Budget Committee (APBC) to provide it the necessary data it needs to render its recommendations. APBC will review the proposals and provide written recommendations to the Dean of the Faculty and the Provost by the end of the spring semester. Academic Affairs will review the requests and the recommendations from APBC, and it will forward its own recommendations to the presidents for final approval. The Dean of the Faculty will provide a written justification to APBC if there is variance from the committee's recommendations. The Dean of the Faculty will also notify departments and programs of the outcome of their requests, and will communicate the results of the process to the entire faculty.

## Criteria

The Academic Planning and Budget Committee and Academic Affairs shall evaluate position requests based on the following criteria. (The criteria are not rank-ordered, but rather the factors taken into account when evaluating requests.)

- The ability of the position to reduce enrollment pressures in the department or program and to satisfy ongoing or projected student need for courses in the department or program.\*
- The importance of the position to the missions and strategic directions of the colleges.
- The ability of the position to contribute to the general education curriculum, or to give departments the flexibility to staff the general education program, as well as service contributions to other departments and programs.
- The potential for the position to enhance the diversity of the faculty and/or the academic curriculum, and the ability of the department to recruit a diverse applicant pool.
- The ability of the position to foster interdisciplinary collaboration and/or promote flexibility within the department or program. Academic Affairs encourages departments to collaborate on proposals for joint academic appointments.
- The ability of the department or program to successfully meet student learning outcomes.
- The capacity of the department or program to mentor colleagues.

\*When evaluating a department or program's curricular needs, Academic Affairs will utilize metrics and data related to faculty composition and student enrollment trends, such as:

- Faculty Composition Metric Trends
  - Total Faculty FTE
  - FTE by Appointment Type
    - Tenure/Tenure-Track
    - Full-Time Term
    - Part-Time Term (adjunct)
    - Overload
  - Assignments not dedicated to departmental teaching (e.g. teaching in other departments, department chair, sabbatical, etc.)
- Student & Enrollment Trends
  - Course enrollments
  - Number of major & minors

- Credit hours delivered
- Average fill-rate of courses in the department or program
- Teaching in the Integrations Curriculum
- Enrollment in courses offered for other programs that are served by the department

Academic Affairs will compare the data and metrics for departments submitting requests to the overall metrics for the institutions and to similar departments. Chairs and program directors are not expected to compile and submit the data listed above, as it is generated by Academic Affairs.

### **Proposals**

Proposals for tenure-track and multi-year faculty lines should include the following information, submitted via Forms Manager. [Note: Aside from the rationale based on curricular needs, which may require a longer narrative, all statements should be brief—about 1 to 3 paragraphs each. Lengthy proposals do not improve the likelihood of approval.]

*A detailed description of the proposed position.*

Requests should include a preliminary version of the position description that emerges after departmental discussion.

*A statement of how the position helps the department or program fulfill its vision for the future.*

Requests should explain how the proposed position aligns with the suggestions of the department's last program review. Identify the action steps of the previous program review that are supported by the position. Requests should explain how the position contributes to the long-term planning of the department, and how the position anticipates developments in the field.

*A rationale for the position based on short and long-term departmental curricular needs.*

Requests should describe how the position will meet the department's continuing curricular needs. In particular, requests should identify the most pressing needs the position will fill, and how the position will help the department or program be of sufficient size and scope to operate effectively. If relevant, explain how the position will address chronically over-enrolled courses or areas of the curriculum.

Projected long-term staffing effects (such as retirements) as well as short-term sabbatical leaves and other obligations (relevant for multi-year term requests) should be discussed when possible. Indicate whether the requested position will alleviate the need for adjunct faculty or term hires. Proposals are enhanced when the department/program explains how it has made efforts to make the most efficient use of its current faculty in recent years.

If the data and metrics alone do not justify the position request, then the department should provide compelling reasons why the position should be considered (e.g., Is the position mission-

critical or central to the identity of the department? Does the position further values that are important to the institutions? Does the position help make the colleges distinctive? Will the position generate student interest in the major?) These claims should still be evidence-based.

*A statement on how the position may enhance the diversity of the faculty and/or the curriculum.*

All requests must identify how the position has been defined to attract candidates from underrepresented groups. Position requests should describe the specific recruitment efforts the search committee will use to recruit a diverse applicant pool. Requests can also explain how the curriculum may be supported by the position to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity, or how the position will enhance the department or program's ability to teach to a diverse student body.

*A statement on how the new colleague will be supported in the department.*

Requests should outline the specific steps for effective mentoring of colleagues to be hired, as well as strategies for retention.

*A statement on how assessment data supports the need for the position.*

All requests should describe briefly the department or program's assessment processes, and how the new position will enhance the ability of the department or program to fulfill student learning outcomes. Assessment activities are an important indicator of department productivity and the effectiveness of the department in preparing students for the future, and will contribute to the decision regarding faculty allocations.

*A statement on how the position will enhance the general education curriculum or meet the needs of general education staffing.*

Position requests should indicate how the new or replacement position will contribute to the college's general education program, or how it might specifically free up other colleagues in the department to contribute to general education. Academic Affairs realizes that not all positions will contribute to general education.

*A statement on how the position will enhance interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary teaching.*

Position requests should indicate how the new or replacement position could be relevant to other departments or programs. Proposals that expect significant involvement with an interdisciplinary program should include a statement of endorsement from that program's director. Academic Affairs realizes that not all positions will be interdisciplinary.

*A statement on how the position helps the department fulfill requirements established by external agencies, if applicable.*

If accreditation generates enrollment pressures, cite the requirement from the accreditation standards and how it impacts staffing in your department or program.

*A statement identifying other costs associated with the position, if any.*

Position requests should identify additional non-salary costs associated with the position (such as start-up expenses, equipment, etc.). If the position requires any additional staff support (e.g., for laboratory or studio), this should be noted.

Please note that the above information is required for a successful position request, but not a “checklist” that guarantees approval of a request. With all requests, Academic Affairs reserves the option to ask for revisions to proposals.

When authorizing positions, Academic Affairs budgets for entry-level positions at the assistant professor rank. Candidates who seek a position at an advanced rank will not be considered. Departments and programs should consult with the Dean of the Faculty if they believe extraordinary circumstances warrant consideration of a call for an open or advanced rank position.

Chairs and program directors should direct questions and comments about the position request process to the Dean of the Faculty.