



GUIDELINES AND PROCESSES FOR ACES FACULTY HIRING IN FY23

Overview

ACES is an early career faculty hiring program. The ACES program promotes the research, teaching, and scholarship of early career scholars who embrace the belief that diversity is an indispensable component of academic excellence. ACES Assistant Professors develop an understanding of the value of diversity and inclusion and the power that it holds for students, faculty, and staff to enrich their lives. ACES Assistant Professors are afforded access to invaluable academic and professional development experiences to advance their career as scholars. They will benefit from: prescriptive mentoring, access to instructional best practices, a vast array of world-class research and productivity resources, and a robust network of renowned Texas A&M scholars from across disciplines.

The College of Arts and Sciences is one of multiple colleges participating in the ACES program. This document outlines the college's timeline and procedures for recruiting faculty through the ACES program in FY23.

College of Arts & Sciences Process**Stage One – Recruiting Applicants**

- (1) Each department that plans to participate in the program is required to send a representative to the ACES Workshop in late August. Participation in this meeting signals interest in participating in the program.
- (2) Departments that are interested in participating in the program should form a search committee following departmental practices for tenure-track job searches. Ideally, the committee will be diverse in multiple regards (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, research area, rank) and committee members will share a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. All members of the search committee need to have completed the STRIDE workshop preferably prior to the first committee meeting, and no later than the meeting to evaluate applications.
- (3) In early September, each department will help develop a job ad that includes required language from the Office for Diversity and an added paragraph with department-specific language.
- (4) The Job ad will include:
 - a. Description of the department. Each department should add some information about their department, including department's vision for the future, and department initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - b. Deadline for applications and Nominations. The deadline is November 1st. This should allow enough time to review applications before the nomination deadline of November 21st.
 - c. Maximum Years since PhD. The program is intended for early career scholars, so typically applicants should have received their degree no more than four years from the time of application.



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- d. Type of PhD. All applicants must have a PhD. Departments, however, can specify whether the PhD needs to be in a specific discipline, or whether the PhD can be in a related field.
 - e. Reference letters. All applications must include contact information for three references. Departments may opt to request letters at any point during the departmental review process.
- (5) Each department will be able to access their job ad from the OFD via interfolio and add a department-specific paragraph. The job ad will then go through a College-level approval process.
 - (6) There are funds for advertising the position in discipline-specific venues. The College of Arts and Sciences will provide up to \$1,000 for each department to cover the costs of advertising this position. Additional funds might be available from the Office for Diversity. The job ad and budget will be reviewed and approved by Dr. Omar Rivera, Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion, before they are posted, and Dr. Annie McGowan, the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity.
 - (7) After the ad and budget have been approved, departments can proceed to place the ad in appropriate venues. Similar to all faculty searches, departments will receive applications through Interfolio.
 - (8) The search committee will be able to review the applications as soon as the job is posted in Interfolio (no later than September 15th).

Stage Two – Evaluating and Nominating Applicants

- (1) Each department search committee should review and evaluate ALL applications as they would normally do for a tenure-track faculty search. The departmental review may assign different weights to the items, but should consider each of the following items:
 - a. Scholarly productivity/potential;
 - b. Scholarly impact/potential;
 - c. Complement/fit with department scholarly priorities;
 - d. Complement/fit with department curricular priorities; and
 - e. Department's ability to match candidate with a mentor.
 - f. Evidence of teaching/mentoring undergraduate and/or graduate students from diverse demographic and social backgrounds, especially from those underrepresented in higher education;
 - g. Ability to pedagogically address/respond to, or ability to potentially adapt to, the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds (e.g. inclusive teaching strategies);
 - h. Service and/or leadership in efforts to advance equitable access to higher education;
 - i. Demonstrated efforts to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion, through engagement with historically underrepresented populations;
 - j. Candidate's overall ability/potential to successfully transition to a tenure-track position;



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- k. Research relevant to diversity, equity, and/or inclusion; and
 - l. Candidate's overall ability/potential to make positive contributions to department/campus diversity, equity, and inclusion goals through research, scholarship, teaching, mentoring, service, and/or engagement.
- (2) Departments may submit up to two unranked nominations to the College of Arts and Sciences. The nominations should be submitted by **November 21st**. Whether or not a department submits one or two nominations will not affect the outcome for that department, or any particular candidate. For each nomination, the department must indicate a commitment to classify the candidate to a tenure-track assistant professor position (within two years).

All nominations should follow guidelines provided by the Office for Diversity.

- a. Describe the Fellow's quality of scholarship and future potential in the field, and how the Fellow would meet the department's future research, teaching, and service needs.
- b. Describe the Fellow's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and their overall ability to make positive contributions to the department/campus diversity goals.
- c. Provide information on the proposed departmental mentor(s) and mentoring plan.
- d. Describe the department's search process and the department's overall enthusiasm for the candidate, and assessment on candidate's ability to successfully transition to tenure-track within the department.

Stage Three – Review of Nominations by the College of Arts & Sciences and the Office for Diversity

- (1) Simultaneous to the department review, the Office for Diversity will review and rate applications. The Office for Diversity's review process will focus on:
- e. Diversity/Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 - f. Scholarly Record/Contributions
 - g. Teaching Experience/Mentoring
 - h. Academic Promise/Impact

The Office for Diversity will rate each application based on relative alignment with the ACES program goals (strong, moderate, limited). These ratings will be used as one of multiple criteria in the college review of applications.

- (2) The College of Arts and Sciences 's Faculty Affairs, Equity & Inclusion team will conduct a review of all nominations. The college review will consider the following criteria:
- i. Department's mentoring plan for the candidate (10%);
 - j. Evidence that the department values the candidate's scholarship (15%);
 - k. Evidence of scholarly accomplishments and potential (15%);
 - l. Evidence of commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (15%);
 - m. Candidate's fit with department curricular priorities (15%);



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- n. Evaluation of candidate's fit with college goals and college needs; the college review may factor in departmental needs for faculty, but will NOT factor in whether the department has received an ACES hire in recent years) (10%);
 - o. Quality of description of the search process (including efforts to recruit candidates from underrepresented groups) (10%);
 - p. Rating of candidate from the Office for Diversity (10%).
- (3) After evaluating applications, the College of Arts and Sciences will share the approved list of candidates for interview with the Office of Diversity. The college will provide a justification in the event that an approved candidate did not receive a strong or moderate rating from the Office for Diversity.
- (4) By **December 15th**, the Office for Diversity will notify departments that they have been approved to proceed to interviews and campus visits. At this point, departments may start scheduling a campus visit to take place during the spring semester.

Stage Four – Interview

- (1) Departments will follow established practices for coordinating interviews and campus visits for tenure-track faculty hires. Campus visits can occur anytime between January 15th and March 15th.
- (2) In addition to scheduling a visit with members of the college leadership team (Drs. Mark Zoran and Omar Rivera), the department should coordinate with the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity (or another member of her office). The Office for Diversity should also be informed of the candidate's job talk time and location so at least one member from the Office for Diversity can attend the talk.
- (3) Departments are responsible for any costs associated with the candidate's campus visit (e.g., airfare, lodging, meals, etc.).
- (4) The department should follow normal faculty hiring deliberations and voting after the candidate's visit. If a department vote is favorable, the department head should inform the college (e.g., Drs. Zoran, Rivera and Bermudez) that they would like to make an offer.

Stage Five – Hiring Process

- (1) The college will work with the department head on the terms of the offer including the following:
 - a. Salary. The starting salary should be consistent with starting salaries for assistant professors in the department, factoring in relevant experience and research area. Salary considerations will include equity within the hiring department. The College of Arts and Sciences will supplement the salary provided by the Office for Diversity



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when appropriate. The Office for Diversity will provide \$60,000 per faculty member as long as the ACES Assistant Professor has not been reclassified.

- b. Startup Costs. The faculty hired through this program will be provided with startup costs equivalent to a tenure-track faculty member. All startup needs will be negotiated with the dean through the department head. All startup costs will follow the College of Arts and Sciences guidelines for startup.
- c. Job Title. Faculty hired through the ACES Faculty Fellows program are hired as an ACES Assistant Professor (pre-tenure clock for one or two years). The option for reclassification after one year should be negotiated at the time of the hire, explaining the terms of the transition to tenure track on the basis of an annual review. The option of starting on the tenure clock after the first year may be more desirable for candidates who have already completed multiple years of postdoctoral fellowships or are already Assistant Professors. Similarly, the option of having up to two additional years might be more desirable for a candidate who has recently completed their PhD.
- d. Reclassification. Offer letters for faculty who choose to start as an ACES Assistant Professor will include the following:
 - i. information on the process and timeline to reclassify,
 - ii. information on whether or not publications and grants completed during the pre-tenure clock phase of their appointment will count towards tenure, and
 - iii. information on the option of coming up for promotion and tenure early.
 - iv. At the time of hire, ACES Faculty Fellows will have the option of reclassifying after one or two years, after considering the pros and cons of each option.
- e. Start Date. ACES Faculty Fellows may start their appointment as early as July 1st and no later than August 10th of 2023. The Office for Diversity may allow a later start date in exceptional cases.
- f. ACES Fellowship Benefits. All faculty hired through this program will be considered ACES Assistant Professors until reclassification and will receive the unique benefits of this program throughout this time period. The Office for Diversity will provide one-time relocation costs (up to \$5,000). ACES Assistant Professors will have dedicated time to focus on research for their first two years through a reduced teaching load. ACES Assistant Professors will be part of a community of ACES Fellows through cohort meetings and the ACES network. ACES Assistant Professors will be part of the ADVANCE Scholars Program (offered by the Office for Diversity) and will receive executive coaching (funded by the Office for Diversity).



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- g. University, college, and departmental benefits. The offer letter would also include standard language included in all offer letters (e.g., medical benefits; retirement benefits; research/travel allowances; mentoring support).
- (2) If there are Dual Career/Partner Placement needs, this may be discussed with the dean and department head at the time of hire, as consistent with normal hiring procedures for tenure-track faculty.

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