

Interdisciplinary Junior Faculty Initiative

Request for Proposals

Background

In November 2007, President Mary Sue Coleman announced an initiative to create 100 new tenure-track faculty positions at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. These new positions are designated for junior faculty members whose research and teaching interests are interdisciplinary. President Coleman emphasized that these positions should be used in imaginative ways -- for example, to recruit scholars whose work crosses boundaries and opens new pathways, or for cluster hires that will bring scholars from different fields together to explore significant questions or address complex problems.

The goals of this program are to enhance the University's ability to engage emerging research opportunities and to increase tenure-track faculty involvement in the University's teaching mission.

This is intended to be a five-year program with approximately 25 positions allocated in Year One and annual competitions to be held each year until 2012, at which time the program will be complete. There is no limit to the number of proposals that a school or college may submit, either alone or in combination with other schools or colleges.

A proposal may request one or more faculty positions. The positions must be at the assistant professor level and may not be budgeted as joint appointments. A dry appointment in a second area will be acceptable. A cluster of positions, in which several faculty members in adjacent fields are proposed, is encouraged. All positions should be full-time, except that developmental leaves may be included in the probationary period.

Proposals may request salary and benefits and also a start-up package consisting of equipment and renovations. The proposing school or college must commit space, any additional elements of a start-up package, and subsequent merit increases. Salary and benefits will be provided to the proposing unit by the Office of the Provost until such time as the faculty member leaves the University. At that time, the original investment in salary and benefits will revert to the Provost's Office.

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of distinguished University of Michigan faculty members. The committee will provide advice to the president and the provost who will make the final decisions. Proposals not funded in 2008 can be resubmitted in subsequent years. For funded proposals, there is no fixed deadline for the completion of hiring.

Proposals should be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 3, 2008. Deans will be notified about decisions by April 15, 2008. Searches to fill funded positions can begin immediately thereafter. In subsequent years, proposals will be due by 5:00 p.m. on

March 1 (or the next working day should March 1 fall on a weekend), and decisions will be made by April 15 (or the next working day should April 15 fall on a weekend).

Proposals should be submitted as follows:

One (1) paper copy should be delivered to:
Office of the Provost
Interdisciplinary Junior Faculty Initiative
3074 Fleming Building 1340
(faxed proposals will not be accepted)

An electronic copy should be submitted to:
Sharron Schmidt, Office of the Provost, at sharrons@umich.edu

Questions about proposal preparation and submission can be directed to Sharron Schmidt at sharrons@umich.edu.

Proposal Requirements

Cover Sheet: The cover sheet for each proposal should list the following:

- 1) name and department of faculty member taking the lead in hiring
- 2) contact information for faculty lead
- 3) names of key collaborators from other departments/schools/colleges
- 4) signatures of (i) appropriate program director or chair and (ii) appropriate dean
- 5) date of proposal submission

Field of Hire: Proposals should indicate department/school/college in which the tenure-track position will be located and any additional departments, schools, colleges, programs, or centers in which the faculty member will have a significant relationship. Any potential “dry” appointments should be included as well. Proposals for cluster hires should provide this information for each requested position.

Rationale: Proposals should provide a rationale for hiring in this area. Discussion should include “big picture” trends in the interdisciplinary area; information about how this relates to the discipline in which the candidate will be hired; information about why this hire is particularly appropriate to the University of Michigan; discussion of the likely impact such hiring will have on the University and the larger academic community and the world beyond academia. Proposals should include discussion of the likely impact the proposed hire(s) would have on undergraduate and graduate education.

Potential Applicant Pool: Proposals should provide a thoughtful description of the potential pool of applicants for the position being sought. This might include discussion of the strengths of the programs from which recruiting would be done and consideration of the competition for junior faculty in this area. As with all searches, diversity within the applicant pool should be an important objective.

Budget: Proposals should provide a detailed budget for each proposed faculty hire. Budgets should include salary, benefits, costs of research support, renovation and start-up costs. Budgets should include annual costs until the normal time of tenure in the academic unit. Budgets should not include merit increases, space costs (other than renovation costs), or leave replacement costs.

Space Arrangements: Hiring units are expected to make space available for faculty hired through this program. Proposals should provide detailed, specific information about the space that will be made available (i.e., which room in which building).

Mentoring Plan: Proposals should provide a thorough plan that takes into account the issues that arise for interdisciplinary faculty seeking tenure and extends from the date of hire to the time of the tenure decision. Mentoring plans should include the names of likely mentors from the primary discipline and other fields. Mentoring plans might also include information about professional development programs that would be available to faculty hired through this program.

Tenure and Promotion Review Plan: Proposals should provide information about tenure review plans and research/teaching/administrative expectations for individuals hired through this program.

Schedule: All proposals should include a recruitment plan that provides information about how the position(s) will be advertised and the timing for each step of the recruitment process. Proposals for cluster hires should provide a timeline for the hiring of members of the cluster and a brief rationale for it.

Proposal Format: Proposals should be no more than the cover page and 5 additional pages, double-spaced, in a 12 point (or larger) font.