

To: Professional Status Committee
From: Multicultural Affairs Committee
Date: May 27, 2005
Re: Hiring Guidelines

Proposed Guidelines for Department Chairs and Administrators regarding hiring of faculty and staff in accordance with goals of *From Every Nation*, February 16, 2005

Introduction

In the fall of 2003, Calvin College adopted a “revised comprehensive plan for racial justice, reconciliation, and cross-cultural engagement” under the title *From Every Nation*. Among other goals, that document commits the College to “develop a more culturally diverse faculty, one that increasingly reflects the multiracial and multicultural character of the Body of Christ, a faculty able to discern and counter racism in all its forms and to embody the reconciling power of the Gospel.”(40) The document uses virtually identical language in reference to administrators and staff.(42) To reach these goals, *From Every Nation* requires administrators and department chairs to demonstrate “a satisfactory record of past efforts to recruit persons of color, both North American and international.”(FEN, 40) The following guidelines are intended to help faculty and staff to conduct job searches in a manner that is consistent with these goals.

Strategies

To recruit and retain faculty and staff of color will take time and planning. The process must be intentional if we are to become not just a more diverse community, but one in which everyone feels that they belong. Our recruitment and retention efforts are most likely to be successful when they are based upon authentic relationships. Hence, the task of recruiting persons of color presents current personnel with the challenge and the opportunity to develop richer and more complex personal networks from which to seek new members for this community. Retaining faculty and staff of color will likewise require us to be personally welcoming as well as to persist in the institutional anti-racism efforts that are already underway so that Calvin can become a truly inclusive community like the heavenly one envisioned in Revelation 7:9.

Recruiting and retaining faculty and staff of color including persons from outside North America is also connected to the goal of expanding the knowledge base of Calvin’s course offerings to include more global and universal dimensions. The implications are much more obvious in some of the academic departments than in others but all of them should be thinking about how their particular discipline fits in the context of the diverse communities of North America and in the larger and even more diverse global community. When departments do that, the value of having colleagues from diverse communities and backgrounds becomes more apparent.

Likewise, greater diversity among the staff at Calvin is a way of increasing the capacity of particular offices and the College as a whole to deal more effectively with the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

1) Prior to Recruitment:

Each department needs to develop a rationale for seeking faculty and staff of color. This rationale should consider questions such as the following:

- *How could the knowledge and expertise of a faculty person of color enhance an academic department's teaching?
- *How can this academic department become a model multicultural learning community that provides faculty and students with opportunities to engage in racial reconciliation?
- *What fresh eyes and perspectives will most enhance an administrative department's service to diverse students?
- *In sum, what research skills, scholarly interests, or life experience will best help this particular department and Calvin College as a whole to reflect the voices and views of people and groups "from every nation"?

Preparation for hiring persons of color also involves developing a long-term recruitment plan and intentionally developing stronger and deeper networks between departments and prospective faculty and staff of color. Each department should identify AHANA and international alumni and maintain current contact information and indications of whether they have pursued advanced studies that might make them candidates for a position at some time. Such alumni should be encouraged to keep Calvin in mind as they plan their careers and those with appropriate qualifications should be informed and encouraged to apply for upcoming openings as early as possible in the hiring process. In consultation with the Provost's Office, departments should also contact the Christian Reformed Church, the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities, the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education, and other appropriate professional organizations and conferences for help in developing a pool of potential candidates of color including those from outside North America.

Other actions which departments should consider include:

- *Developing an advisory group of people of color including international advisors who can help search for suitable prospects and encourage them to apply.
- *Inviting potential candidates of color to campus to give lectures or participate in summer seminars.
- *Assigning two or three department members to form a recruitment team to work with the Dean for Multicultural Affairs to develop contacts and to identify specific areas of scholarship where persons of color might be able to make a strategic contribution.
- *Identifying junior and senior students of color who are majors in the department and who have the potential to pursue graduate or advanced professional studies. Those deemed to be good prospects for positions at Calvin should be encouraged to apply for the Calvin College Minority Fellowship for the support of graduate studies.

It cannot be overemphasized that personal attention to prospective candidates of color is essential if efforts to recruit people from communities and groups that are currently underrepresented at Calvin are to bear fruit.

The long range efforts of each department to build up a pool of prospective candidates of color including those from outside North America should be documented each spring in their reports to the Multicultural Affairs Committee. Given the on-going nature of these multicultural recruitment efforts, reports of such activities should not be limited to those years in which open positions were filled.

2) The Recruitment Process:

Each department with an opening should contact the AHANA alumni and advisory groups mentioned above to identify persons of color who might be qualified and interested. This should be done as soon as possible after an opening is declared. In their assessment of such candidates, departments should keep in mind the questions that form their rationale for seeking faculty or staff of color. Departments should be especially sensitive to the possibility that a candidate of color might bring valuable multicultural and global perspectives to the department and the college.

The efforts of each department to locate and recruit persons of color must be documented in the search report that it submits to PSC when a new hire is nominated. The failure of a department to document such efforts or a record of inadequate efforts should be cause for suspension of the hiring process until such efforts are undertaken by the department in good faith.

3) After recruitment, Retention

All new faculty and staff need to be enfolded by the Calvin community in ways that make them feel welcomed. Persons of color including those from outside North America may need special attention because they are more likely to find themselves in an unfamiliar community with unspoken norms that are difficult to intuit. Departments should take the initiative to meet with new faculty and staff informally as well as formally so that the “newcomers” are made to feel like “insiders” as quickly as possible.