

CLA Committee on Hiring Practices

Kathryn Cramer Brownell, Richard Johnson, Cara Kinnally, Rebekah Klein- Pejšová, Ronald Stephens

Qualtrics Report

- ❖ 75 respondents
 - ❖ (14.5% of faculty in CLA)
- ❖ Every department/school in the college
- ❖ In the final question, only **3/61** respondents offered an overall positive assessment of the current hiring practices



Primary trends that surfaced in our analysis

Deep concerns about a lack of shared governance in the hiring process

Lack of consistency and clarity in hiring processes and procedures

1. Perceived lack of shared governance

Question 1: By what process does your unit develop and submit authorization requests for new faculty lines?

Question 7: What other concerns, if any, related to the hiring of faculty would you like to share with the committee?

Questions	Satisfied with level of faculty input/governance	Did not address the issue	Unsatisfied with level of faculty input/governance	Total Responses
Q1	7	23	36	66
Q7	2	19	39	60

Identified reasons: perceived lack of shared governance

- **Lack of transparency**
 - **29/60 faculty** highlighted this as a primary concern in response to Question 7.
- **Difference between stated HR policies and practice**
 - “**In theory**, the search committee receives writing samples, letter of recommendations, CVs, and cover letters; the committees interview a long list of candidates and then discuss the narrowing of the list to three. **In practice**, the dean hand-selects the short list.”
- **Divides between departments and dean’s office**
 - “We are told, not consulted in a unilateral process.”
 - “I’m very concerned about the centralization of hiring priorities by the Dean’s office, lack of input from faculty regarding hiring priorities. Also concerned about the Dean’s office rejecting some finalists for reasons not specified in the job advertisement.”
- **Disruption caused by covid-19**
- **Lack of faculty expertise in shaping the selection process**
 - **42/60 faculty** highlighted this as an issue in response to Question 7.

Perceived results from lack of shared governance

- **Negative work climate**
- **Concerns over the quality and fit of candidates and as a result department's national and international reputation**
 - "Sadly, the process which was marred by a lack of transparency and a disregard for the wishes of the department has resulted in general disillusionment by most members of the department and offers made to several very weak candidates."
- **Impact on teaching and quality of educational programs** (i.e. limitations on courses offered and research areas to support undergraduate and graduate education)

2. Inconsistent practices across the college and within programs

- **Lack of transparency**
 - 29/60 (48%) of respondents to question 7 indicated concern over a lack of clarity or uncertainty regarding hiring practices
- **Confusion** over the role of search committees and faculty participation in the evaluation process, including whether or not there is a vote on candidates
 - “As a faculty member, I feel that we play a performative role and our thoughts or assessments do not matter to the Dean.”
- **Unclear rationales** for how lines are decided and allocated to departments
 - **Changing goals posts** for how to select and receive faculty lines.
 - “One year it might be the number of majors, and the next year it would be how much the department brings in external funding, and the year after that, it might be something else. We get it-- these things might be different from year to year. But it's impossible to plan ahead and the criteria might even change mid-year after he's already stated what he's looking for.”

Perceived results from inconsistent hiring practices

- **Ineffective DEI efforts**

- Participants noted that potential diversity hires were repeatedly stalled, and diverse pools were undermined by the narrow constraints of lines provided by the Dean's Office.
 - According to one respondent: "Part of our training has been that diversity begets diversity—that is, having multiple people who are part of an underrepresented groups makes it easier for all of them to succeed and feel welcome. But the CLA policy does not seem to follow these principles."

- **Questions about the legality of certain practices**

- **Concern over quality of candidates**

- "CLA's centralized micromanagement of hiring risks doing further damage to curricular, disciplinary, and intellectual coverage. CLA has been unable to retain, hire, or encourage scholars who bring diversity and critical perspectives to the university. Faculty expertise and shared governance are disregarded over chasing rankings."

- **Low morale and alienation of faculty members**

- **55 respondents** noted alienation and negative work climate in response to the seven questions.

Recommended Actions

- **Best practices hiring guidelines for CLA and departments/programs**
 - We recommend that the CLA Faculty Senate works with faculty members, department heads, and the dean's office to develop a "best practices" hiring guideline that can foster productive conversations moving forward and to bring more transparency to the process.
- **Structured conversations with the Dean's office about hiring initiatives and practices**
 - We recommend that the CLA Faculty Senate leadership help cultivate concrete opportunities for constructive conversations about hiring initiatives and practices to model collaboration and effective and efficient faculty governance for the broader university.