Agenda

• Charge & Process
• Context
• Survey Results
• Action Steps
Members were charged to:

• Conduct an analysis of our current HR processes and policies regarding hiring, classification and compensation, including how they are enacted and communicated

• Recommend potential improvements to those processes and policies

• Bring a “trustee mentality” to the role, respecting the different perspectives involved in human resource processes and offering analysis that best serves the mission and reflects the values of the institution.
Charge

• Focused on the hiring process for faculty, UPI instructors and staff (both SPS and Civil Service)

• Examined the entirety of the hiring process, not just the role of Human Resource Services (HRS)

• Considered hiring from the point of view of hiring officials in the divisions (e.g. hiring managers, chairs & directors, business managers, division leads) and HR professionals in Affirmative Action and Human Resource Services
## Task Force Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laura Alexander</td>
<td>Senior Associate Vice President for Human Resource Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celeste Latham</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Administration and Human Resource Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dara Little</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President, Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennice O’Brien</td>
<td>Senior Director, Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing &amp; Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulchratia Smith</td>
<td>Director, Employee Services, Human Resource Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roslyn Snell</td>
<td>Executive Director, Academic Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Stang</td>
<td>Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Strub</td>
<td>Assistant Director, Center for Governmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt Thurmaier</td>
<td>Chair, Department of Public Administration</td>
</tr>
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The working group went through the following steps:

• Identifying the various personnel processes used by the university, and the distinctive employee populations

• Focused on hiring of faculty, staff and instructors

• Mapped the steps involved in those hiring processes

• Constructed, distributed and analyzed a survey of participants in the hiring process.

• Developed recommendations
Events at the local, state and federal level in the past four years have destabilized NIU’s hiring environment:

- Departures in HR-related staff have meant:
  - Fewer and newer people available to process hiring
  - Informal networks have been disrupted
- Process changes such as Applicant Tracking have required adaptation
- New AFSCME contract, new state requirements have caused increased volume of HR-related activities
- Budget constraints and changes in state & federal requirements have narrowed our options
## Context: HR Staffing at Illinois Public Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Total Univ. Staff</th>
<th># of HRS Class/Comp Staff</th>
<th>Average # of positions assigned</th>
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<tr>
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<td>State Ave.</td>
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Survey

• Distributed to hiring officials, Affirmative Action, HRS
• Segmented the hiring process into 3 employee groups & 5 phases, which were broken down into individual steps
• Survey questions included:
  • Perceived difficulty associated with each step
  • Perceived timeliness of managing each step
  • Perceived clarity, consistency and responsiveness of offices in providing information
  • Open-ended comments
• Received approximately 250 responses out of 500 surveys
Hiring Process

Stages in the Hiring Process

- **Search Authorization:**
  from initial request to authorization to advertise

- **Search:**
  from advertising to identifying interview candidates

- **Final Interview:**
  from scheduling interviews to candidate selection

- **Negotiations/Offer:**
  from candidate selection to offer acceptance

- **Onboarding:**
  from offer acceptance to start of employment
Survey Results: Perceived Difficulty

Strongest sense of difficulty centered on:

• The Search Authorization phase for staff
• The Negotiations/Offer phase for staff
• The Search Authorization phase for faculty
• The Onboarding phase for instructors
Survey Results: Greatest Difficulty

Specific steps that generated the strongest sense of difficulty were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying classification</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying salary range</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating start up package</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating salary with candidate</td>
<td>71%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating spouse/partner opportunities</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtaining permission to search</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying salary range</td>
<td>68%</td>
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</table>
Survey Results: Perceived Timeliness

Strong alignment between the steps that were seen as difficult and the steps that were seen as slow.

Aspects of the concerns about timeliness:

- Time spent waiting in the approval process for action
- Time spent being bounced back and forth because of technical issues (incorrect information, job descriptions not conforming to expectations, etc.)
- Time spent being bounced back and forth because of disagreement/debate/dissatisfaction/dismay about outcomes
Survey Results: Perceived Clarity, Consistency, Helpfulness

- Respondents had the greatest concerns about clarity of information
- Highest levels of concerns about clarity and consistency were expressed at the college/division levels
- Respondents were generally positive about the helpfulness of the units that they interacted with
  - All units received more positive comments than negative
  - College offices and “informal networks” received the most consistent praise
Survey Results: Comment Analysis

Approval Process

• Time required for initial authorization and for extending offers to candidates
• Amount of “back and forth” in the approval processes

Staff Salaries

• Advance notice to candidates of salary range
• Participation of department in salary discussion
• Low salaries

Onboarding

• Quicker access to IT resources
• People want to see orientation spread over a longer period and with more depth
Summary

Strategic Challenges

• Balance of responsibility, authority and involvement in classification and compensation issues
• Balance of compliance and university mission in respecting external constraints
• Balance of HR salary expectations against fiscal realities
• Building trust & respect

Tactical Opportunities

• Timeliness of processing, decisions and approvals, particularly for classification and compensation
• Ease of execution for operational processes: e.g., advertising, reimbursements, filing forms, onboarding, and securing furniture
Guiding Principles for Moving Forward

• Processes will be built on trust & respect

• Position authorizations will balance mission and fiscal responsibility

• Classification decisions will be strategic and thoughtful within the framework of applicable state & federal law

• Salary decisions will balance internal equity, market demand and fiscal responsibility

• We will minimize operational friction, taking reasonable cognizance of resource commitments and institutional risk tolerance

• We will work within policy (both internal & external) as we seek to improve it
## Action Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools for Classification &amp; Compensation</th>
<th>Process Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Job Families</td>
<td>• Posting &amp; Advertising Positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Custom Classifications</td>
<td>• Applicant Tracking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Specialty Factors</td>
<td>• Onboarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Salary Benchmarking</td>
<td>• Policy Refinements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assessment</td>
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### Communication & Training

- Action Steps
Action Steps: Custom Classifications

Broad classifications, which we have the authority to customize:

• We can add qualifications to individual positions, beyond those specified by SUCSS

• We can create *job families* that provide professional advancement opportunities without requiring an individual to change positions

• We can differentiate salary based on job descriptions

We have been working with the SUCSS office to convey your interests and refine implementation
## Custom Classifications

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>ACAD</th>
<th>ADMIN</th>
<th>DoIT</th>
<th>ATHL</th>
<th>EMMC</th>
<th>OERD</th>
<th>RIPS</th>
<th>STAF</th>
<th>UNIV ADV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting Associate</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Action Steps: Communications & Training

Ongoing Communications

• Build a communications network that reaches all hiring officials
• Form user group(s) of hiring officials
• Create a user-friendly website for HR processes
• Create a listserv for hiring officials, HRS staff, …

Training

• Provide onboarding of hiring officials
• Provide annual training cycle to provide updates
• Provide improved job aids for key steps such as constructing job descriptions or providing salary comparisons
Action Steps: Process Improvement

Employee Onboarding

• Incorporate SEM goal of “becoming brand advocates” into the onboarding process

• New online process and site www.niu.edu/employee-welcome/
  • Online portal to replace multiple paper forms
  • Ongoing messaging and engagement across first six months of employment

• Streamlined IT access

• RFP for online I-9 processing
Next Steps

- Form focus groups to obtain additional feedback on:
  - Authorizing Faculty Positions
  - Spouse/Partner Opportunities
  - Startup Packages
  - Special Hires: Grants; International; Extra Help; Research & Clinical Faculty

- Form ongoing user groups
- Disseminate detailed information on all Action Steps
- Examine staffing implications
- Continue exploration of other human resource processes
Closing

For hiring processes (and all HR processes), we will continue to:

• Improve collaboration
• Add clarity
• Increase and improve communications
• Make the processes easier to navigate
Discussion