

**Hiring Out-of-County Faculty
Report on the Faculty Senate Discussion
May 2009**

Context:

In response to a request from Chancellor Roy Flores, the Faculty Senate conducted a discussion of considerations involved in hiring faculty members who live outside Pima County. The Senate's initial discussion happened at the February 2009 meeting under the guidance of Kimlisa Duchicela and Jodi Richardson-Delgado. The discussion continued in March via e-mail in which two questions were addressed:

- In an online class, are there benefits or disadvantages to the student of having a local instructor?
- Are there benefits or disadvantages to the management of the college in having non-local instructors?

Assumptions:

It became clear that the issue of hiring out-of-county faculty applied, in our view, only to adjunct faculty. One Senator expressed the prevailing view:

"I believe full-time faculty need to be residents and available for on-campus participation in some office hours, collegial interactions, and committee work. I see the residence issue for adjuncts as a separate issue because these other duties and responsibilities are not typically part of their contractual agreements with the college."

Our discussion eventually narrowed down to the issue to the adjunct faculty who teach online courses as opposed to face-to-face courses. However, much of the initial discussion applied to both adjunct faculty who might teach online from anywhere in the world, or adjunct faculty from nearby counties who would come to campuses to teach.

The Two Main Views:

The "con" view was clearly expressed by a faculty member:

"Hiring faculty out of the area is outsourcing. We do not want to put local people out of work, or to outsource teaching to cheaper places. We do not want to hurt our local economy or control of our local college. We should do everything we can to prevent this happening."

The "pro" view, given by a Senator was:

"The small salary going out of state that the instructor gets is offset in my mind by the quality of the education that our students get and that those educated students flow into our community, into higher paying jobs and contribute, over the long run, much more to our community."

Other Considerations:

The college should also consider the need for more adjunct instructors who are qualified to teach online courses. As the number of online courses increases, perhaps it will be necessary to hire non-locally. One case was cited where already a qualified local instructor could not be found for a specialized course.

Other participants in the discussion mentioned the need to consider practical and legal matters.

The issue of determining residency is also important. Some questions asked were: Is a “snowbird” instructor considered an in-county instructor. What about if someone moves mid-semester while teaching an online course? What if they own a home in Tucson but spend a year in Korea?

Conclusions:

While the discussion did not come to a firm consensus, a predominant opinion did emerge. The College should focus on “hiring the best-qualified candidate regardless of location,” because “the goal of the best faculty for our students is a legitimate one.” In addition, we have “a preference for local candidates where qualifications are equal” because, as one adjunct faculty member wrote, “the culture of our area and where our students live is essential to the effective delivery of our education product.” This suggests that, at least in some cases, one of the criteria for deciding the best qualifications will be knowledge of our Tucson area.

Gathering our predominant opinion into three points:

- Determine the meaning of “best-qualified candidate” for a course or discipline. The qualifications may or may not include knowledge of the Tucson area.
- Hire the person who best fits those qualifications, without regard to location.
- All qualifications being equal, hire the local candidate.