

# UIC Faculty Affairs HR Appointment Procedures Requiring Prior Approval Process Improvement [UIC]

## Business Case

Tenured faculty appointments and some administrative appointments require prior Provost and Board of Trustees approval. In those situations, departments submit requests to obtain the required approval through the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs (OVPFA). OVPFA staff review, validate, and prepare the requests for review and approval by the Provost and Board of Trustees. While the process is well-defined within OVPFA, it is time consuming and manually intensive. Inconsistent delivery of required materials and data from the departments add to the delays experienced. Poor visibility of the status of each transaction as it progresses through the approval process and a general lack of understanding on the process frustrates departmental and OVPFA staff. OVPFA would like to both streamline the process and address the visibility concerns.

## Goal

Reduce the amount of time required to process approvals for appointments requiring prior Provost and Board of Trustees approval.

## Approach

Mapped the HR appointment process for appointments requiring prior Provost and Board of Trustees approval. Discussed issues and causes of delays with OVPFA staff. Identified opportunities for improvement and brainstormed potential solutions. Developed ideal state process map and initiated a pilot to incorporate a workflow engine into the process.

## Outcome

Identified 4 short-term and 2 long-term recommendations, expected to result in a 50% lead time reduction for processing submissions. Initiated a pilot for an electronic workflow solution, which is expected to reduce the amount of paper that is required and stored, provide college HR units with more visibility into the process, and enable OVPFA staff to more efficiently coordinate each transaction.

## Key Findings

- **Appointment submissions were often inconsistent or inaccurate, including use of templates, offer letter language, and delivery mode (i.e., hard-copy vs. electronic).**
- **Process required excessive manual processing.**
- **Process required large amounts of paper and space for the storage of the resulting documentation.**
- **Review procedures were inefficient: procedure checklist was out-of-date, duplication of effort on biosketch reviews, and often experienced delays due to hard-copy delivery.**

## Short-term Improvement Recommendations

- 1. Create offer letter templates for all types of transactions requiring prior approval** – ensure consistent use of HR language on offer letters, reducing re-work and resulting delays.
- 2. Create memo template to be used by Provost for granting approval to proceed with hire** – simplify the process, eliminating manual steps to indicate specifics on the resulting approval.
- 3. Update checklist so it is no longer out-of-date and can be used to coordinate activities while longer-term solutions are being developed** – promote better distribution of workload and ensure consistent processing through standard work.
- 4. Change process to have Board of Trustees Liaison perform review of biosketch on submission** – eliminate duplication of effort and revisions occurring post-Provost approval.

## Long-term Improvement Recommendations

- 1. Develop a workflow solution to provide electronic submission of materials from College HR representatives, electronic approval, and notifications** – reduce the amount of paper that is required and stored, provide college HR units with more visibility into the process, and enable OVPFA staff to more efficiently coordinate each transaction.
- 2. Standardize how essential information is collected and stored** – reduce confusion with a consistent approach to requesting data and simplify post-approval processing.

## Implementation of Recommended Improvements

Short term recommendations are currently being implemented. A pilot has started for the long-term solution with a tentative deadline of early FY16.