

College of Arts & Letters Spousal/Partner Hire Decision Guidelines

MSU Spousal/Partner Hiring Policy

College guidelines follow the MSU hiring policies for spousal/partner hires as outlined in the MSU Academic Hiring Manual (Section 1.5) updated in May 2018. This is true for all part- and full-time tenure and non-tenure stream faculty and academic staff positions. Following this policy, “All employment openings must be posted with the appropriate employment service delivery system” with several exceptions, including that for “Recruitment/Retention Contingent Hire (Spousal or Non-Spousal):

Recruitment/Retention Contingent Hire (Spousal or Non-Spousal) – The recruitment and retention of world-class faculty and academic staff often rely upon support for the accompanying partner/spouse of the recruited individuals. MSU will facilitate contingent hiring as an exception to the regular posting requirements, as these positions are not considered employment openings. In other words, were it not for the recruited individual, the position of the accompanying spouse/partner would not exist. Similarly, we will apply this policy to the hiring of non-spousal/partner recruitment contingent academic staff (i.e., research faculty and postdocs from the lab of a recruited individual).

(See <https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/academic-hiring-manual/hiring-procedure-waiver.html>).

General Framework

- The Provost’s Office generally provides bridge funding for academic and non-academic spousal hires equal to 1/3 of their salary for the first three years. If the spouse’s partner is outside of CAL, that College/unit also contributes 1/3 of the salary for the first three years. There are no additional funds from the Provost’s Office, once they have been used.
- For every three hires each year, the College sets aside funding in its budget for one spousal/partner hire.
- The term “internal candidate” refers to an MSU employee who is applying for another position at MSU.
- The term “spousal/partner hire” refers to a person who is being hired as part of an attempt to recruit or retain a member of the faculty.

Some general principles about spousal hires in the College of Arts & Letters include:

- College faculty and academic staff have priority over non-College faculty and academic staff when considering spousal/partner hires.
- We try to bring in high caliber faculty and academic staff with competitive packages to the best of our ability.
- No unit will be forced to accept a spousal/partner hire.

- For financial reasons and due to qualifications, most spousal/partner hires are accommodated with non-tenure stream faculty or academic staff positions.
- In the absence of a recruitment/retention situation, if a spouse/partner occupies a non-tenure stream or academic staff position and a department's request to establish a tenure-stream position for the spouse/partner is approved, there must be a national search to which the spouse/partner must apply.
- No non-tenure stream position is simply converted to a tenure-system position.

Tenure-system position approval only in the case of recruitment/retention contingent hires

When considering a request for a tenure-stream spousal/partner hire, a number of complex factors must be considered by the department, the Dean, and the Provost's Office.

- The 30-year, multi-million dollar commitment made on the part of the university.
- The Provost's Office has limited funds and ability to commit to this type of position.
- The spouse/partner's qualifications and their pathway to intellectual leadership need to be of high quality and to align with the mission and vision of the College, department, and degree program.
- The home unit of the proposed tenure stream position spousal/partner hire is critical.
 - If the hire is to be in the same degree program, the spousal/partner hire counts against the broader hiring strategy of the degree program. The Chair must consult broadly with the degree program and department faculty for approval and make a recommendation to the Dean.
 - If the hire is in another unit and that unit finds the hire to be in alignment with its mission and vision, hiring into that unit will not count against its broader hiring strategy.
- The impact on the unit that receives the spousal/partner hire and on the career of the spousal/partner must be considered.

Rev. 3/19/19, 1/12/20, 3/20/20, 10/13/20