

# **An Informal Response to Questions of Hiring and the Internet**

*Response by Marshall Rose, OED Director*

## **Electronic Submissions**

This is an area that continues to evolve. Interestingly, I received a call recently from my colleagues at Miami who are currently involved with an audit with the U.S. Department of Labor. They had been told that they needed to place their affirmative action data information in some kind of electronic tear-off. I plan on following up with them to get more information about this request, but it was something new to them and they were polling other Ohio universities to see what we were doing. Obviously, the Labor Department is examining more closely those institutions where they solicit applications via the Internet. Consequently, my concerns continue to be that if we go in this direction that we should be prepared to demonstrate that we can fulfill our Office of Equity and Diversity/EEO obligations.

There are other issues to consider if we are moving to accept electronic submissions. We will have to make sure that the websites advertising our positions are accessible and disability friendly. We'll need to evaluate against Labor Dept. guidelines exactly who will be considered an applicant. This may not be as clear as it may appear. For example, I have heard from colleagues that they have been told by OFCCP compliance officers that they are to count every hit. We would need to hear from our regional compliance people what they expect us to do. Of course, there also may be issues of security, confidentiality and how to validate someone's application material.

## **Affirmative Outreach**

Generally, near the top of the list of the reasons proffered for why Internet recruiting is preferred is that it will save money. While traditional recruitment costs may be rising, it would be a mistake to allow this consideration to preclude us from doing affirmative outreach to underrepresented groups. Since we continue to be underrepresented in most academic job groups, it would be profoundly unwise to adopt a recruitment strategy that does not target our outreach. When there is underutilization, it is reason to do more affirmative and focused recruitment--not less.

If we are moving toward a more electronic search environment, then I think we should know the impact on underrepresented people of color and women. If we find that there are still viable and reliable non-electronic recruitment outlets, which effectively reach these populations, then we should not abandon them.

I am not as concerned about searches in which we use the Internet more broadly to supplement our established recruitment efforts. This is a good thing. In fact, we are constantly adding to our "Casting the Net" document which provides departments with more and more electronic search outlets.

Another concern is with our ability to fulfill our INS requirements to document that we have done appropriate searches before hiring non-resident immigrants. We will have to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the government that our recruitment efforts have been adequate and up to the standards of the discipline. If, at this point, the prevailing recruitment outreach for a given discipline is not the Internet but some journal or other publication, then I don't think we will be able to get away with just posting electronically.