

Frequently Asked Questions about Belmont University's Affirmative Action Plan

Belmont University's Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) requires us to use recruitment processes that will obtain a diverse applicant pool for all staff and faculty positions. All faculty and staff open positions are posted on the Belmont Human Resources web site using the PeopleAdmin software system – Belmont Jobs Online. Training is offered to all managers and faculty search committees to ensure awareness of the University's AAP goals and to assist with recruiting.

1. *Why did Belmont University decide to adopt an Affirmative Action Plan?*

Belmont wants to do a better job of including in its campus community minorities, women, veterans, and persons with disabilities. Increasing the diversity of the campus community is one of President Robert Fisher's main priorities for Belmont. Promoting diversity in the curriculum and among students and employees is consistent with the university's Christian nature and identity. The Affirmative Action Plan is an important tool in accomplishing diversity in all these areas. Belmont did not adopt the plan out of a desire to be "politically correct." Rather, it adopted the plan because it will help the university better live out its mission of providing an academically challenging education in a Christian community.

2. *What is the purpose of the Affirmative Action Plan for Belmont University?*

The purpose of the AAP is to promote a more diverse workforce on campus by articulating Belmont's policy of equal employment opportunity and building an infrastructure that facilitates achieving this goal.

3. *What is required in the Affirmative Action Plan?*

The AAP contains a narrative section - divided into two parts that describes university policy for promoting equal employment opportunity. The first part addresses women and minorities. The second concerns hiring veterans and persons with disabilities. The plan includes an analysis of the university's current workforce by job category, an availability analysis for women and minorities in each job category, and an assessment of those areas in which the university underutilizes women and minorities. The AAP establishes voluntary goals and a timetable to correct the areas where women and minorities are underutilized.

4. *Aren't these goals really quotas?*

No. Quotas are associated with involuntary affirmative action plans that are imposed on an employer by a court or government authority. Belmont's plan is voluntary. As

such we can set our own goals in light of our own policies. The goals take into consideration a timeline by which Belmont can realistically hope to hire minorities and/or women who are qualified for open positions. Some of the goals may be achieved by promoting employees who currently work at Belmont. Other goals will be achieved over a one to five year period of time as routine turnover occurs.

5. *Does this mean Belmont University will hire unqualified individuals to meet our goals?*

Absolutely not. Belmont will hire only qualified individuals for its vacant positions. If two equally qualified candidates are vying for a position where women or minorities are under-represented, Belmont will ask its hiring managers to consider gender and race of the candidates as a factor in the employment decision.

6. *How will this change the current hiring process?*

The AAP will require the university to increase the applicant pool for each vacant position of employment to include as many qualified women, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities as possible. Belmont will do this by more broadly spreading word of its open positions and by explicitly encouraging qualified minorities and women to apply for all staff and faculty positions. The AAP will require the university to keep better demographic records of all of the applicants who apply for its jobs. The Office of Human Resources will work with hiring managers to help them with their recruiting efforts. The Belmont Jobs Online process asks all applicants to voluntarily self-identify their race and gender.

7. *How can I learn more about the changes to the hiring process and the Affirmative Action Plan?*

The AAP and all recruiting information and training can be found on the Human Resources web site at www.belmont.edu/hr. Human Resources offers two Legal Wellness workshops in half-day sessions for hiring managers which addresses the AAP and other legal issues that all supervisors should be familiar with. These will be offered at least twice a year. HR will work with faculty search committees and hiring managers to go over the new process or to address questions and concerns.

8. *What else should I know about the Affirmative Action Plan?*

The AAP is a dynamic document that will undergo revision and updating on an annual basis. The plan year is September 1 through August 31.

9. *Will the federal government look at the Affirmative Action Plan?*

Maybe. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) have the right to inspect the AAP. In addition, Belmont must make a copy available to any member of the general public who wishes to review it. For these reasons, the plan is available on the university's HR web site and is in hard copy at the Office of Human Resources. The EEOC and OFCCP conduct random audits and respond to complaints from individuals. Over time, it is likely that our plan will be reviewed. During inspection, Belmont must show that we have made a good faith effort to achieve our goals.