Management Communication Failures in Faculty Hiring Processes: A Case Study

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While universities contribute directly to the future successes of students through the delivery of content knowledge and the development of key career skills, they might also reasonably be expected to model the "best practices" of industry professionals. However, based upon a three-year study of the communications between universities and graduate students applying to nearly two-hundred faculty positions, universities often fail the best practice test when interacting with job candidates. Ironically, they do so even when recruiting for faculty positions that target candidates specializing in the pedagogies and practices of effective communication.

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

As part of their research agendas, scholars often analyze, deconstruct, critique, and suggest improvements within an exhaustive set of corporate processes—including those business processes affecting their own institutions. Regardless of whether universities operate on a for- or non-profit basis, they remain corporations, and thus they may be evaluated relative to the "best practice" principles outlined within, for example, the business ethics and business communication fields.

Maintaining timely and transparent communication between a hiring institution and its job seekers simultaneously enhances an institution's reputation for professionalism and preserves the integrity of foundational human-resource processes. Yet when it comes to faculty recruitment and its attendant communication processes, all too often universities fail to treat job seekers with even a minimal level of professional courtesy. In this study, faculty recruiters failed to provide even an initial confirmation of an application's submission into the search process for roughly one-third of the nearly two-hundred job applications tracked over a three-year period. Note that all of these job applications targeted faculty candidates in writing-intensive disciplines—specifically, Business Communication, Professional Writing, Rhetoric and Composition, English, or American Studies—yet approximately one-third of these search committees failed to compose a single simple message to acknowledge the receipt of a completed application packet, thus sentencing hopeful applicants to a tyranny of silence. Moreover, none of these committees ever appears to have followed up with rejected candidates by the end of the close of their search windows. Indeed, many of the study's application submissions were still listed as "open" on the websites used to collect and track applications more than a year after these searches had first opened. In acting in this manner, university search committees often ignored the model behaviors that both communications and management research recommends be followed as recruitment best practice—

behaviors which, in fact, the same faculty members involved in these searches would have been expected to pass on to budding management and/or communication professionals in their classrooms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the headlong search to secure instructional and research talent, savvy universities like most corporations view faculty recruiting as a potential competitive advantage. Indeed, given the increasing influx of technology across the board, web-recruitment observer Steve Fein has suggested that "human capital has become the last great competitive advantage in business" (2001, p. vii). As Jim Harris and Joan Brannick have noted, the best practices of human-resource professionals include going "to great lengths to maintain an upbeat, positive relationship with all applicants—even those not hired" (1999). Since Donald Caruth and Gail Handlogten (1997) noted that exceptional recruiters recognize the tense and emotionally fraught nature of a process requiring applicants to devote significant time, energy, and expense to a highly uncertain outcome, the best recruiters "take deliberate actions to protect the applicant's self-esteem"—including providing an explanation for a final decision to all applicants specifically because "today's rejected candidate may be tomorrow's stellar employee." Along these lines, Caruth and Handlogten stress that ethical institutions notify "rejected candidates… as quickly as possible so that they may pursue other employment opportunities," thereby ending a job seeker's anxiety and suspense about a potentially open position.

Yet if we were to ask how well universities fare relative to the fundamental recruiting communication acts that foster the positivity mentioned by Harris and Brannick, then the answer—based upon the data uncovered during this study—is poorly. Very poorly indeed. Even if such a finding seems unsurprising to an audience of current or former academic job seekers, one of the relatively unpublicized shames within academia remains the indifferent and spotty communication processes employed by search committees charged with recruiting faculty additions. Sadly, neither higher-education nor business scholarship appears to have taken an interest in the basic communications acts that all too often never occur in the case of many job applicants: namely, confirmations of an institution's receipt of an application packet and its decision to reject further consideration of a given application within the recruitment process. While this research gap may readily be explained by the difficulty of obtaining systematic data tied to job-search experiences that possibly represent potentially unpleasant reminders to faculty members of the individualistic capitalistic competition undergirding an industry that prides itself on the positive outcomes of collaborative programs, research, and scholarship, this gap still remains worthy of further interrogation and analysis.

Certainly, the dozens (if not hundreds) of applications submitted per faculty opening each year represent a significant variable management cost for hiring institutions that seek to maintain best-practice recruiting communications. Perhaps this cost explains why so many universities fail to fulfill the basic communication obligations discussed by the likes of Caruth, Handlogten, Harris and Brannick. Over the course of this study, in fact, only sixteen schools—or roughly 8% of the study's population—responded with both a confirmation-of-application message and communicated a decision whether or not they would further pursue a given application within 20 days of a job posting's original submission deadline. Presumably, these institutions recognize that how they treat job applicants may turn out to be nearly as important to their long-term success than how they treat their current employees (as noted in Jay, 1999). Such communications acumen also helps to promote a positive external organizational *image* (even among an institution's unsuccessful job seekers), as opposed to serving what Lin Lerpold (2007) has characterized as an inward-facing corporate *identity*. Moreover, such best-practice behaviors can improve a university's odds of attracting "a high-profile workforce" and of fostering, even among unsuccessful candidates, an increased willingness to consume that institution's services in the future—perhaps by engaging with it in additional collaborative partnerships, research, conferences, or support programs down the road. In short, following the basic and fundamental practices of courteous bilateral communication confirms the professionalism shown by these more advanced search committees.

DATA AND DATA-COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Yet for many of the job applicants involved in this study, such timely search-committee professionalism proved the exception rather than the rule. The study's data was generated during the job searches undertaken by graduate students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill during the 2012, 2013, and 2014 annual faculty recruitment cycles. Collectively, these students filed a set of 52, 99, and 46 job applications (respectively) during those years. The applications targeted both tenure (TT) and non-tenure track (NTT) positions across the United States, and nearly all of them sought faculty positions in either Business Communication, Professional Writing, general English, Rhetoric and Composition, or the American Studies fields. In aggregate, the study tracked 130 TT and 67 NTT applications, most of which were filed using either email or online submission-tracking systems. The latter typically involved application tracking systems hosted either by each school or by centralized portfolio-delivery systems like Interfolio.

In addition to the basic name-and-address and application packet-requirement data tied to each submission, the study's applicants tracked the dates when each position's submission period officially opened and closed; the date when their own individual application submissions were filed; the date (if any) when each university confirmed receipt of the application in question; the date (if any) when the application was officially rejected from the screening process (or accepted for further consideration); and whether or not the position had eventually been marked as filled on each university's recruiting website. From this raw data, the author calculated whether an application had ever received any sort of submission acknowledgement from the institution. If so, a "response age" was calculated as the number of elapsed days between the end of the official application submission period and the receipt date of the application-submission acknowledgement. In the event that a receiving institution never acknowledged an application, the application was logged as having received no formal confirmation; for response-aging purposes, however, the application received a *de facto* response period of 365 days (or one full year after the initial application submission period had closed). For analytical purposes, "notification failures" were defined as those applications that never received so much as a basic submission acknowledgement from the institution (even though many applications were delivered via folio delivery services managed outside of the college or university that acknowledged successful application deliveries made to the institution on behalf of the applicant).

DATA SUMMARIES

The following summary charts illustrate the number of notification failures per year within two aggregate categories—namely, according to disciplinary field and tenure status—and likewise provide aggregated totals within those categorizations across the full study period.

TABLE 1
NOTIFICATION FAILURES FOR THE 2012 APPLICATION CYCLE
(BY DISCIPLINARY FIELD)

	English	Prof. Writing	Rhetoric / Composition	Business Comm.	American Studies	Other
Number of applications	17	8	21	4	1	1
Notification failures	7	2	9	0	1	1
Failure rate (%)	41%	25%	43%	0%	100%	100%

NOTE: The notification failure rate across all disciplines in 2012 was *38.5*%.

TABLE 2
NOTIFICATION FAILURES FOR THE 2013 APPLICATION CYCLE
(BY DISCIPLINARY FIELD)

	English	Prof. Writing	Rhetoric / Composition	Business Comm.	American Studies	Other
Number of applications	36	9	35	14	5	0
Notification failures	15	3	11	5	0	0
Failure rate (%)	42%	33%	31%	36%	0%	N/A

NOTE: The notification failure rate across all disciplines in 2013 was *34.3*%.

TABLE 3
NOTIFICATION FAILURES FOR THE 2014 APPLICATION CYCLE
(BY DISCIPLINARY FIELD)

	English	Prof. Writing	Rhetoric / Composition	Business Comm.	American Studies	Other
Number of applications	18	9	11	7	1	0
Notification failures	4	3	3	2	1	0
Failure rate (%)	22%	33%	27%	29%	100%	N/A

NOTE: The notification failure rate across all disciplines in 2014 was *28.3*%.

TABLE 4
NOTIFICATION FAILURES FOR THE 2012-14 APPLICATION CYCLES
(BY DISCIPLINARY FIELD)

	English	Prof. Writing	Rhetoric / Composition	Business Comm.	American Studies	Other
Number of applications	71	26	67	25	7	1
Notification failures	26	8	23	7	2	1
Failure rate (%)	37%	31%	34%	28%	29%	100%

NOTE: The notification failure rate across all disciplines from 2012-14 was *34*%.

TABLE 5
NOTIFICATION FAILURES BY TENURE STATUS FOR THE 2012 APPLICATION CYCLE

	Tenure Track (TT)	Non-Tenure Track (NTT)
Number of applications	16	36
Notification failures	8	12
Failure rate (%)	50%	33%

TABLE 6
NOTIFICATION FAILURES BY TENURE STATUS FOR THE 2013 APPLICATION CYCLE

	Tenure Track (TT)	Non-Tenure Track (NTT)
Number of applications	70	29
Notification failures	29	5
Failure rate (%)	41%	17%

TABLE 7
NOTIFICATION FAILURES BY TENURE STATUS FOR THE 2014 APPLICATION CYCLE

	Tenure Track (TT)	Non-Tenure Track (NTT)
Number of applications	44	2
Notification failures	13	0
Failure rate (%)	30%	0%

TABLE 8
NOTIFICATION FAILURES BY TENURE STATUS ACROSS ALL APPLICATION CYCLES

	Tenure Track (TT)	Non-Tenure Track (NTT)
Number of applications	130	67
Notification failures	50	17
Failure rate (%)	39%	25%

TABLE 9
NOTIFICATION FAILURES BY TENURE STATUS (PER YEAR)

	Notification failure rate (% of total apps)	TT "fail" rate (%)	NTT "fail" rate (%)
2012	39%	50%	33%
2013	34%	41%	17%
2014	28%	30%	0%

TABLE 10
AVERAGE APPLICATION RESPONSE "AGING" FOR THE 2012-14 APPLICATION CYCLES

	Total Applications	Avg. initial response time (in months)	Notification failure rate (% of total apps)
2012	52	6 months	39%
2013	99	5.9 months	34%
2014	46	5.5 months	28%

FINDINGS

At an aggregate level, over the course of the study fully one third of all applications never received even a simple receipt acknowledgement from the college or university in question (per Table 4). While a general decrease in notification failure rates occurred over the study period—dropping from 39 to 34 to 28 percent annually—even this last failure rate indicates that only 72% of the applications for some of the most writing-intensive disciplines in the Academy received a single formal submission acknowledgment. On a typical grading scale, 72% amounts to a C- grade…or "below average" performance…from search

committees whose members practice and teach written communications on a daily basis. One might suggest, too, that such weak performance borders on the hypocritical: given the writing-intensive nature of the positions being sourced, search committees are themselves failing to exhibit the sort of best-practice recruiting behaviors characterized by open, transparent, and two-way communication.

In fact, fifty-four of the study's colleges and universities never offered a single "application received" message to job applicants within a full year of the closing of the relevant job application's submission period. When such messages did arrive, their relative tardiness could astonish: the longest initial response times in each of the study's three annual cycles were 7.2, 10, and 9.7 months (respectively). Furthermore, the average initial response times of 6, 5.9 and 5.5 months (calculated by assigning a 365-day *de facto* response period even to those institutions that failed to respond at all) imply that even as search committees likely identify a short-list of candidates when a submission window closes, the process of informing most applicants that they are no longer under consideration tends rarely, if ever, to occur (see Table 10). And while it occurred less frequently, the fact that five universities (e.g., Penn State, Elon, Miami of Ohio, North Carolina State, and the University of New Haven) provided very rapid and professional initial responses to some job postings while simultaneously providing no response at all to other postings testifies either to inconsistent recruiting processes and/or process executions at those institutions. More encouragingly, the fact that an additional set of fifteen schools delivered receipt notifications within three weeks of an initial application-submission deadline indicates that it is perfectly possible for colleges and universities to burnish their reputations as employers of choice with both successful and unsuccessful job seekers alike—if they so choose (see Appendix I).

On a macro-level, the study's findings also indicate that applications for some disciplinary groups featured significantly worse notification response rates than others (see Tables 1-4). Collectively, notification failure rates were 24% higher among the Humanities fields (English, Rhetoric and Composition, and American Studies) than they were for the more overtly pre-professional fields of Business Communication and Professional Writing. Though the failure rate for Business Communication ranked the lowest among the study's five disciplines, it also still showed significant room for improvement at 28%. Other data trends highlighted the relative rate of notification failures between manual packet submissions and those submitted through a university's application tracking systems (ATS). Manual application submissions (typically transacted via email or via the US Mail) were characterized by a significantly higher notification failure rate (40%) than ATS submissions (30%). However, though the initial notification timeframes for institutions that provided submission responses of any kind remained lengthy across the board, response duration appears to be increasing despite the more frequent dependence upon applicant tracking systems over the three-year period. When notifications were actually provided to an applicant, the average elapsed time beyond the initial submission deadline to first notification increased annually from 2.3 to 2.5 to 3 months. And while most job postings (i.e., 54% of the total) were managed through applicant tracking systems, fully 30% of the applications processed via those systems never received a submission confirmation; moreover, the status of 12% of those job postings remained open or otherwise unresolved on ATS sites as much as three years after the initial submission period had officially closed.

One additional (and rather surprising) trend involves an institutional failure to communicate on a timely basis with a specific group of job seekers. The search committees that most often violated the communication proprieties of the recruiting process did so when facing off against the very pool of applicants destined to become the bedrock of future departmental efforts (including recruiting): namely, tenure-track hires (see Tables 5-8). The study's data suggests that the notification-failure rates for TT applicants remains 52% higher than the corresponding rate for NTT applicants (see Table 8). Precisely why this result holds true remains the subject of speculation. Perhaps NTT positions represent more common, regular, or even a form of "commodity" hires; therefore, they may be processed by administrators more fully versed in an institution's official hiring processes and systems. Perhaps, too, tenure-based search committees spend more time and energy on attempting to forge a consensus among peers and deans about the requirements of successful candidates than on concerning themselves with maintaining the value of an institutional brand or mitigating a potential reputational risk through poor

human-resource communications. Finally, perhaps, the large number of applications processed during tenure searches (in light of a steep national reduction in the number of tenured positions) means that TT job applications dwarf the number of applications submitted for fixed-term positions. Whatever the case, the poor TT response trend seems stubbornly clear: for even though notification-failure rates appear to be declining on a year-over-year basis (see Table 9), TT failure rates *significantly* exceeded NTT response failure rates every year during the period covered by this study.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the data produced over the course of the study, it seems clear that universities all too often ignore the human-resource messages that should minimally be transacted during a notoriously difficult search cycle—one in which thousands of qualified candidates will fail to secure postdocs, visiting instructorships, or tenure-track positions. Sadly, it seems that those charged with hiring instructors into positions that require exceptional communication skills engage in slipshod and neglectful recruiting communications. Furthermore, not only do some committees wait many months before indicating that an unsuccessful candidate's application has been denied, but they also fail a third of the time even to acknowledge the simple receipt of an application packet in the first place. Despite the prevalence of applicant tracking systems easily capable of updating applicants about the receipt *and* the changing status of their submitted materials, search committees continue to fail to generate the good, bad, or even neutral status messages that should occur during the recruiting process.

If notification-failure rates remain so shockingly high, then why might academia be failing to model the very behaviors that communications and human resource professors extol in the classroom? For those who would suggest that the effort of communicating more thoroughly with job candidates is simply too arduous or time consuming, one wonders how this claim could universally apply…given that two-thirds of the institutions covered within this study managed to conduct an at least minimally transparent process. Many universities employ applicant tracking systems, of course, and these tools offer hope that better institution-to-candidate communications might ensue. Along these lines, according to Steve Fein (2001) institutional recruiting effectively "is no longer possible without Web-based technology." While 46% of the applications submitted within this study were not managed through applicant tracking systems, David Cohen claims that the ubiquity of contemporary web technology has established a broad expectation within the recruiting cycle that each "organization's response…be quick and provide a rationale for whatever decision has been made." A more consistent use of recruiting portals would offer job seekers a potentially positive "first impression" and simultaneously would promote a view of the institution as an employer of choice (2001).

However, what appears to be missing from the general faculty recruiting process is not only an insistence upon acknowledging initial packet submissions, but also the introduction of an intermediate step in which committees would mark those applications that did not pass an initial screening in order to send automated notification messages to the affected applicants. In this way, applicants would feel more respected (or at least not fully ignored) as job candidates. Additionally, they would no longer be subjected to either the false hope or the anxiety that stems from an unresolved application submission, as all search candidates should be notified of the eventual success or failure of their application in order for the recruiting institution to maintain a strong human-resources reputation.

Yet even if more fully utilized applicant tracking systems can provide universities with the workflow tools to enable timely applicant communications, this study's failure rates (when combined with its average six month-long "first notification" timeframe) suggest that search chairs may be all too passively *administering* a process, rather than actively *questioning and managing* one that jointly benefits both the institution and the complete candidate pool. Appropriate ATS training should be provided to support a single and consistent recruiting process within the institution, and this training should target all of the tenure-track faculty members, since they will likely chair future searches. Part of the training's goal, in fact, would be to show tenured faculty members (who likely endured spotty communications during their own job searches) that the relatively indifferent status quo documented in this study can—and should—be

improved upon. Finally, senior human resource managers should, at the institutional level, annually audit their university's applicant tracking system to ensure that the process is being properly executed.

For if members of the Academy hope to be recognized as professionals relative to faculty recruiting, then they should act more respectfully towards those applicants whom they hire and towards those they do not. By deploying and using robust applicant tracking systems, faculty recruiters can demonstrate their compliance with the goals set forth by the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) and with the various regulations stemming from its *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (1978). Like most competitive business concerns, universities that aspire to "employer of choice" status in order to attract the most qualified candidates should deploy the robust human resource processes necessary to promote such a perception. Alternatively, institutions that skip the process of comparative industry benchmarking (and thus fail to understand the human-resource capabilities and functionality of their competitors) risk failing to maintain their institution's level of "competitive parity" (Barney & Wright, 1997).

Certainly, failing to maintain even a minimal level of communication transparency with job seekers is hardly a problem unique to faculty recruitment. In banking and finance, for instance, "the number one complaint of job applicants is that employers never advise them of their status" (Kinsey, 2013). Yet if one considers the principles of ethical recruiting, then systemic or web-based tools are not the only foundational issue underpinning the failures noted in this study. The dismal results summarized in Tables 1-10 also represent failures of administrative leadership. If "as ethical managerial leaders, we must be willing to challenge the status quo" relative to our standard workflows (Roebuck, 2012), a concerted effort to institute process improvements in faculty-recruiting communications would simultaneously increase the integrity of the recruiting process and the perception of institutional responsibility within the broader academic community. Indeed, Marvin Brown (2015) insists that any institution's "ongoing verbal and nonverbal communication patterns" as well as "the quality of the communication patterns" it deploys offer observers invaluable "data [with which] to evaluate a corporation's integrity." Any positive demonstration of what Brown refers to as an institution's *relational awareness* in its interactions with job applicants augments what Brown characterizes as the interpersonal dimension of corporate integrity.

In the final analysis, universities would be well advised to exhibit a more fundamental sense of empathy towards their job seekers by engaging in a more committed communications process in order to burnish their "employer of choice" reputation; to meet the expectations of job seekers who offer up confidential information during the application process; to encourage a more transparent and less unidirectional recruitment process; and to bring recruiting transactions to a reciprocal close through an overt and timely communicative act. Adopting these behaviors would help universities to avoid the reputational risks of failing to observe basic communication civilities, since according to Rod Troester and Cathy Sargent Mester, the strongest corporate recruiters consider their job-search efforts to be unsuccessful if they ever "offend an applicant who in turn proceeds to bad-mouth [the] organization to anyone who will listen" (2007). Troester and Mester likewise insist that recruiters act contrary to the principles of civility when they fail to follow up even minimally with job applicants. Thus, electing to communicate thoroughly with job seekers remains the choice of institutional leaders who act according to the highest ethical standards.

Finally, by their very nature job searches involve decision-making processes, and per Peter Northouse (2007), the "choices leaders make and how they respond in a given circumstance are informed and directed by their ethics." Faculty search chairs who elect to notify candidates upon application submission and who provide a timely final application status thereby avoid propagating an institutional form of what Northouse would characterize as *ethical egoism*, instead of utilizing the more *utilitarian* approach marked by a deontological (i.e., a duty-bound) awareness of the needs of both the hiring institution and its job seekers. Just as exceptional leaders demonstrate an institution's core value-set in their actions, those leaders' communicative behaviors offer perhaps the clearest public evidence of the practical strength of those values. Finally, the failure to notify a job seeker of his or her application's status is essentially a form of dishonest behavior if we accept Northouse's contention that "being honest is

not just about telling the truth. It has to do with being open with others and representing reality as fully and completely as possible."

To avoid the perception of such dishonesty, therefore, the author recommends that all universities uniformly adopt a simple standard: at a minimum, all job search chairs should explicitly acknowledge the receipt of completed application packets. Moreover, the recruitment cycle should be terminated on a timely basis by some form of final communiqué to both successful and unsuccessful candidates alike, thereby fulfilling the communicative trust implicit within all recruiting transactions. For as Pelsmaekers, Jacobs & Rollo (2014) noted in Trust and Discourse: Organizational Perspectives, any organization that is "broadly conceived as a social unit of people…structured and managed to meet a particular need or to pursue collective goals" acts by definition within the context of "locally situated practices which may bring along their own presuppositions and expectations." As this study has demonstrated, all too often the discursive actions—or rather, the inactions—of the universities engaged in faculty recruiting have violated the most basic expectations of job seekers. In so doing, they have promulgated a set of poor human-resource behaviors that should be deemed entirely unacceptable with the Academy.

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APPENDIX I

1. Survey institutions that provided a candidate with an acknowledgment of application submission *within 20 days* of the closing of a job application's submission period:
   Barnard College, California State-Fullerton, Carnegie Mellon University, Elon University, Miami University of Ohio, North Carolina State University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Louisville, the University of New Haven, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Temple University, Texas Tech, and Washington & Lee University.

2. Survey institutions that provided a candidate with an acknowledgment of application submission *more than six months after* the closing of a job application's submission period:
   George Mason University (192 days), the University of Houston (209 days), the University of Memphis (216 days), the University of North Carolina at Asheville (291 days), and Marquette University (298 days).

3. Survey institutions that *never provided* a candidate with an acknowledgment of application submission *at any point before or after* the closing of the job application's open submission period (for a total of 54 institutions):
   Appalachian State University, Bard College, Bucknell University, Claremont McKenna College, the College of Charleston, East Tennessee State University, Elon University, Florida Atlantic University, Francis Marion University, Franklin and Marshall College, the Georgia Institute of Technology, Hamilton College, Hampton University, High Point University, James Madison University, Miami University of Ohio, Moravian College, Morgan State University, the New York City College of Technology, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University, Oklahoma State University, Old Dominion University, Pennsylvania State University, Rider University, Robert Morris University, Rutgers University, Sacred Heart University, St. Edward's University, Skidmore College, the State University of New York at Old Westbury, Swarthmore College, Thiel College, Tusculum College, the United States Military Academy at West Point, the University of Alabama, the University of California (Davis), the University of Delaware, the University of Dayton, the University of Maine, the University of Massachusetts (Boston), the University of New Haven, the University of South Carolina (Columbia), the University of Southern California, the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, the University of Utah, the University of Virginia, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, the Virginia Military Institute, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and Washington University.

FINAL NOTE: Five institutions—Elon University, Miami University of Ohio, North Carolina State University, Pennsylvania State University, and the University of New Haven—provided prompt responses for at least one application (see item 1 in Appendix I, above), but they never provided a response for a candidate who had applied to a different position at that same institution (as in item 2 in Appendix I, above).