Achieving Faculty Excellence through Recruitment and Hiring

interfolio

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Case Study
Millikin University

Millikin University originally adopted Interfolio's Faculty Search to support management of their faculty hiring processes; however, as part of a institutional cost-cutting initiative, the University made the decision to use an internally-developed solution. A team at Millikin began developing a faculty hiring platform to receive applica-tion materials and store them on a shared drive, but challenges soon arose. "The short version of the story is our homegrown solution did not work well for us," said Jeffery Aper, Provost of Millikin University. "Managing documents was very difficult. People couldn't access it. It just didn't work." Faculty and administrators voiced regret in the decision to drop Interfolio and sought to re-establish Interfolio Faculty Search on campus.

Seeking accurate, systematic solutions to fundamental issues

All faculty and administrative complaints about using the internal system stemmed from the chronic challenges of faculty search processes: making sure there was an accurate and systematic way of receiving materials, compiling and maintaining applicant materials, and making those materials available to the appropriate individuals and committees for evaluation. And underlying all was the need to ensure the privacy and security of documents.

"We were trying to make sure confidential materials did not end up left on tables in conference rooms," said Dr. Aper. He pressed the case to bring back Interfolio, which had worked so well for Millikin in the past—and thankfully everyone on campus agreed. "Using Interfolio has been an immense

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> Jeffery Aper, PH.D
> Provost
> Millikin University

improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of those review processes—allowing us to set up an online format to submit materials for all of these competitive processes. Using Interfolio has benefited us significantly. I am definitely a fan."

Responding to the issues, extending the scope

As intended, the Faculty Search module quickly solved the University's faculty-hiring issues, and more. Millikin was able to expand use of Interfolio beyond faculty hiring to staff hiring and to managing faculty honors and awards processes, such as:

Managing dean searches. Millikin received and warehoused materials to allow administrators and committee members access to the materials. In addition, the University made sure the materials were maintained securely, but provided easy access for evaluators, and kept track of needed data for reporting purposes.

Supporting staff searches. The University used Faculty Search to support hiring of administrative assistants, allowing administrators to efficiently and effectively maintain applicant and institutional records to make sure documents and information were properly managed.

" Faculty members are not reticent about sharing their opinions about what works and what doesn't work. Interfolio's Faculty Search has worked very well for us. This is one of those things where you could go around campus and talk with faculty, staff, and administrators who've used the system, and I don't think you would get a single negative comment—and that's saying something. "

Jeffery Aper, PH.D.
Provist
Millikin University

Running internal application processes for faculty awards and professional development opportunities. Millikin made selections for several endowed professorships that rotated among qualified faculty applicants and involved significant amounts of supporting materials. The University was able to eliminate its paper-based system that required substantial efforts to manage and secure the unwieldy application packets.

Managing EEO reporting

Using Interfolio Faculty Search to support the efficient collection and reporting of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) data was another benefit. Instead of having individuals in the HR office compile EEO reports, Millikin was able to use Interfolio to collect records and activities faster, easier, and with more consistency. Because faculty and staff time is an increasingly precious commodity for the campus, Interfolio's straightforward functionality was especially appreciated by Millikin's HR office.

Case Study
Bates College

Bates College started using Interfolio Faculty Search to help bring consistency and ease-of-use to faculty recruiting on their small, liberal arts campus, as well as to boost neutrality in the committee search process.

Before adoption of Interfolio, Bates had separate hiring processes for faculty and staff: staff were hired through a traditional applicant tracking system (ATS), while faculty were reviewed and recruited through email and paper. Rather than bring faculty hiring into the staff applicant tracking system, Bates chose to bring all hiring onto Interfolio Faculty Search, a faculty-driven platform for committees. This decision was motivated in part by the limitations of typical application tracking systems for faculty-hiring specificities: ATS' are often not able to accommodate file sizes for the types of documents that the faculty searches require, and often do not include features to request or distribute confidential recommendations.

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A central challenge to faculty hiring before Interfolio was around a "single source" of failure—a common pain point among smaller colleges that run hiring out of a single office. While benefiting from staff expertise, the process is dependent on no one getting sick or retiring—when the source of knowledge is out of the office, no one is able to pick up the work and move on it in their absence.

Usability has been a highlight of the Interfolio experience at Bates. "We were looking for an interface that was more user friendly for our search committees, and that was something Interfolio delivered," said Amie Parker, Director of Staff and Student Employment at Bates

College. "Faculty love it. And, people being hired for professional-level staff jobs love it as well." Previously, because faculty hiring was paper-driven, committees had to go into an office and "sign out" materials one at a time, so review became long and laborious. Now, it's easy for committee members to review materials asynchronously. Furthermore, the process no longer requires an administrative assistant to coordinate all the applications (previously, someone had to download the applications into a folder and notify the committee). "Before," says Parker, "the system wasn't so intuitive that a search committee member could just look at the applications. Now, we have more independence for the search committees. Plus, faculty all over the world can participate. It makes committees more robust because the faculty members don't have to be on campus to review."

A favorite feature on campus has been Interfolio's ratings functionality. Previously, committee members would rate candidates individually and hiring managers would spend time coordinating and calculating the results into complicated matrices. Now, committee managers can customize criteria within the platform, and enjoy that they don't have to do any extra legwork to combine and average different ratings across committee members.

Interfolio for diversity and equity

Interfolio Faculty Search has helped contribute to the neutrality of the search process at Bates College by taking on much of the technical support. Rather than field questions from applicants themselves, committees and administrators can let applicants ask Interfolio as many questions as they need to feel confident in their submission—without interacting with the college in a way that might influence the search outcome.

As Bates College transitions into receiving federal grant money for faculty, the institution is also starting to use Interfolio's EEO data gathering and reporting tools for compliance around fair hiring. "It feels a lot better knowing that Interfolio has the tools and experience in the arena of documenting faculty diversity. I think it will be a great resource in this transition." Amie Parker, Director of Staff and Student Employment.

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Case Study
San Diego State University

San Diego State University turned to Interfolio to provide concrete outcomes for their diversity initiatives around faculty hiring, professionalize its search process, and improve labor-intensive administrative workflows. After using a paper-based system for years, leaders at San Diego State University sought to improve the institu-tion's faculty hiring by providing a clear and consistent interface for prospective faculty members. Knowing that Interfolio has led the field in faculty dossiers for more than a decade, SDSU welcomed the opportunity to use Interfolio's platform to make new faculty positions known to potential applicants.

Seeking a More Equitable Process

Like many institutions, faculty hiring at SDSU is decentralized, and often takes place between offices (the HR office is separate from the equal opportunity office, which is separate from each department's office). Now, through Interfolio Faculty Search, all parties can see job advertisement copy and search committee composition in real time, which contributes to well-informed conversations about how to improve hiring on campus.

When choosing technology, SDSU also placed a priority on relieving some of the administrative burden that the faculty search process puts on committee members and staff. "We chose Interfolio because we wanted to streamline the process for every participant, at every stage of the process, as well as ensure an efficient and equitable process for people looking for jobs, committee members, and staff who shoulder the work of administering searches," said Joanna Brooks, Associate Vice President of Faculty Advancement and Professor of English and Comparative Literature. Brooks' role at SDSU is to support fair and equitable faculty processes for the institution. Interfolio's emphasis on transparent and equitable hiring processes, as well as its tools for concrete diversity outcomes, has made it essential in SDSU's approach.

Creating a more diverse, equitable hiring process

Interfolio Faculty Search allows San Diego State University to collect information on the diversity of their faculty applicant pool in a centralized platform through self-identification forms that are included as a requirement of each application. Built-in, compliant EEO forms have allowed SDSU to assess whether they were doing a good job of attracting the diverse faculty they wanted to hire.

Interfolio's reporting function has also helped SDSU to produce data on the diversity status of the applicant pool. Now, Brooks finds she can collect data that helps her determine which areas need attention and improvement when seeking a diverse faculty body.

User-Friendly, Quick to Start

Fast implementation and friendly support has made Faculty Search's adoption successful at SDSU. Users have reported that the product is easy to use and that Interfolio's Client Success team has resolved any challenges quickly. "The ease of rollout is definitely to be celebrated," says Brooks. "It's so user friendly that it's minimized any kind of problems, which is unusual in terms of any kind of faculty process."

" We've found that bureaucratic anxiety about procedural details was overshadowing the more important effort to help faculty build their careers and advance. We're excited about moving away from the physical demands of the box and towards a more digital, accessible solution that allow us to focus on substantive conversations about promotion and tenure. "

Joanna Brooks

Associate Vice President of Faculty Advancement

Professor of English and Comparative Literature

San Diego State University

Case Study
Boston College

Prior to partnering with Interfolio, Boston College experienced a demand for additional faculty. The challenge was to align multiple departments, search committee members, and the Office of the Provost to achieve greater efficiency throughout the faculty hiring process. Without uniformity, the institution's multiple, fragmented hiring processes often left individual departments disorganized and isolated, straining under the weight of burdensome paperwork while the Office of the Provost stood disconnected from the departmental committees' hiring processes. The solution? Equip the Office of the Provost with the Interfolio Faculty Search platform as an efficient system for faculty hiring.

Interfolio provides Boston College with the flexibility of the cloud, allowing all parties to complete every stage of the hiring process —and collaborate in real time—from anywhere with an Internet connection. In addition, the Provost's office now has visibility into the hiring processes of individual departments—faculty benefit from a streamlined system that maintains quality and integrity, while administrators gain transparency and insight into decision-making at their institution. "Our office understands what a hard decision it can sometimes be to implement a new technology. We are happy to be a voice of confidence to other colleges and universities that may be cautious to spend strained budgets. Seeing how the Interfolio Faculty Search has greatly benefited our office and faculty has been valuable to other institutions, and we are excited to be able

> " Having all of the college's hiring information in a single location has been an incredible value add for us. Interfolio has made it possible to streamline our efforts to efficiently evaluate new faculty members to meet the needs of our growing institution. "

Patricia Deleeuw

Associate Proffesor,
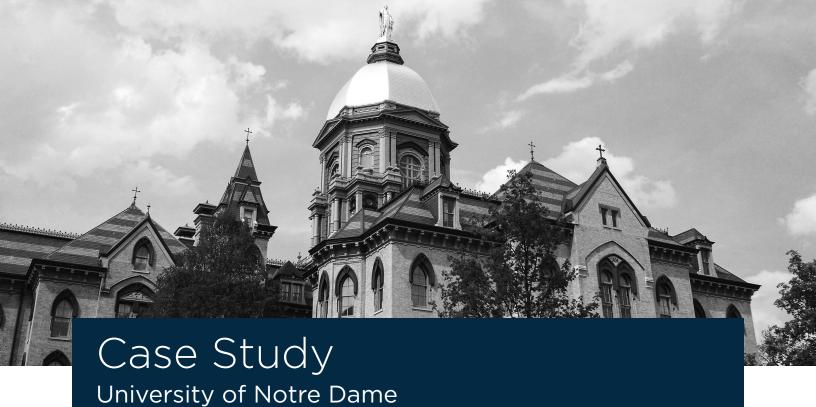Vice Provost for Faculties,
Office of the Provost &
Dean of Faculties

Boston College

to share our success with them," says Jessica Pesce, Faculty and Academic Affairs Administrator in the Office of the Provost & Dean of Faculties.

Boston College piloted the Interfolio Faculty Search platform in the fall of 2012, beginning with 10 searches through the Office of the Provost. The following year, Interfolio was introduced to the entire Boston College faculty, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Since then, Boston College has expanded to Interfolio's other faculty technology products: Review, Promotion & Tenure and Faculty180, its faculty activity reporting product. Now in its fifth year with Interfolio, Boston College remains a strong advocate for the faculty technology platform and often provides guidance to other colleges and universities considering their own implementations.

" Overall, I'd just like to say thank you very much for the chance to use this great tool. In the old days, the schlepping of files, the worry about whether people would check their mailboxes etc., and (not least) the wear and tear in copying and filing for our admin assistants, were quite cumbersome. Interfolio has really lightened our load and made everything a lot easier. "

Robert Stanton
Associate Professor
Boston College

Case Study
University of Notre Dame

Before working with Interfolio, University of Notre Dame tried to fit their faculty hiring needs into overly-complicated, HR-driven software, which led to inefficiencies and potential inaccuracies. Users were forced to adopt "workarounds" to make the existing system work with their process—for instance, administrators often "applied" on behalf of a faculty candidate already recommended for hire. The system was used less to support recruiting and hiring decisions at the department level than it was used to support approval workflow in an electronic system. The sheer volume of applications caused some departments to seek and create their own web-based tools, which resulted in a lack of standardization, visibility, and potential compliance concerns.

Collaborative Tools for Faculty

After speaking with peers in the academy, university leaders turned to Interfolio Faculty Search because it addressed a critical component of the hiring process: faculty collaboration in the hiring decision. Not only did Interfolio address the specific requirements of committee work with conversation, rating, and reviewing tools, it also eliminated inefficiencies like photocopying, document distribution and storage, and provided an applicant software "front-end" with an academic feel.

Standardization and Customization

Previously, practices for managing applicant files at Notre Dame differed from department to department. Now applicant file management and required components of the applicant file are standardized across campus—even with over 400 searches this year. Most importantly, Notre Dame achieved standardization without undue limitation on disciplinary autonomy.

Individual departments initiate new searches according to their unique specifications—customizing the position description and required materials—but the institution as a whole benefits from a process with reliable standards for electronic document collection, information gathering, secure storage, and oversight. Hiring is now a visible, trackable process, from department to Dean's office to the Office of the Provost. "The cloud-based system was especially easy to use," said Joe Lyphout, Assistant Director of Budget and Planning, Office of the Provost. "I didn't have to wait for your team to set up our system; I was able to quickly set it up in a day or two and use it right away."

Data and Reporting

Data visibility was an important additional benefit for Notre Dame in choosing Interfolio. The ability to attach customized forms to every application opened up a world of possibilities for understanding the applicant pool. Departments are now using custom forms to find out about disciplinary sub-fields, conference attendance, and other applicant information. And, where previous diversity reporting was a very manual process, now EEO information is gathered auto-matically, with compliant and pre-approved forms automatically attached as a requirement of every application submission.

"Recruiting and hiring future colleagues is one of the most critical services a faculty member provides to her institution, at Notre Dame, we felt that we needed to provide better tools to our departments in managing the volume of information considered by each committee member in each search. The less time that a committee member spends wrestling with a system (or paper), the more time that a committee member can devote to considering the merits of each candidate..

Christine Maziar

Vice President and Senior Associate Provost for Budget and Planning

University of Notre Dame

About Interfolio

Conceived by academics for academics, Interfolio is an education technology company headquartered in Washington, DC, USA and in Cambridge, England, UK. Founded in 1999, Interfolio operates the acclaimed Faculty Information System for colleges and universities, the Researchfish impact assessment platform for funders and research organizations, and the widely used Dossier service for individual scholars. Over 400 clients based in 15 countries choose Interfolio's technology for hiring and recruitment, academic appointments and timelines, activity data reporting, faculty reviews and promotions, and research impact analysis. Interfolio provides scholar-first products for the full academic lifecycle—from job seeking to professional accomplishments, committee service, funding award compliance, career growth and advancement, administrative leadership, and beyond.

For more information about Interfolio, please contact team@interfolio.com, or visit www.interfolio.com