

On Friday, April 4, the University of Utah announced that it was instituting a hiring freeze, as summarized in the university announcement below. (See the [@TheU article](#) as well.)

As the University of Utah works with our students, faculty and staff to navigate these uncertain times, our campus community deserves our gratitude – and our full support. Accordingly, to focus available resources to support our people and ensure that we emerge well-positioned for ongoing success, we are instituting a temporary hiring freeze. This directive does not apply to University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics or other mandatory Health Academics employees, whose employees are at the forefront in helping our state manage this health care challenge. Additionally, the university will make exceptions to the hiring freeze for other essential hires, with approval from the cognizant Vice President. We know that this pause in hiring will present challenges for many of us, and we appreciate your patience, understanding and partnership as we strive to fulfill our mission as the University for Utah.

We know the announcement has raised questions about open positions, interviews underway, and offers already extended or accepted.

First, all written offers to hire faculty or staff that have already been extended or accepted will be honored. Reflecting our core principles of fairness and dignity, we stand behind all commitments to potential future members of the University of Utah family.

Second, our research enterprise is critical to our success as a research-intensive university. You can continue to fill positions supported **entirely** by non-state sources (e.g., existing federal research grants and contracts or foundation funding).

Finally, for all other situations (i.e., open positions for which interviews have not occurred or where interviews have occurred but no written offer has been extended), we are asking you to complete the attached spreadsheet for your unit. We will then examine all requests for critical exceptions centrally and holistically to ensure fairness and equity.

As you complete the spreadsheet, **please focus on mission critical, immediate needs**, whether for staff, career line faculty, or tenure line faculty. These critical needs include essential teaching coverage and critical support services. Be thoughtful and intentional, including asking if existing faculty or staff could temporarily fill in before requesting an exception.

Aspirational objectives, though important to our future, should be of lower immediate priority as we focus resources on protecting existing faculty and staff. As our fiscal situation becomes clearer and more robust, meeting these objectives will again be our top priority.

These are extraordinary circumstances. Working together, in a One Utah spirit, we will weather this storm of COVID-19 pandemic and economic uncertainty and emerge positioned to accelerate our trajectory of excellence.

Thank you for all that you are doing.

Dan Reed
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs