Offer Letter Guidelines

System regulations and university rules require certain elements to be present in every offer letter. The reason for this requirement is proper compliance with current policies, clarity in the communication and protecting the institution from any potential exposure to liability.

When drafting an offer letter, you must include the required and necessary contingency statements for all positions, tenure, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track. Accordingly, a properly drafted offer letter for all positions (tenure, tenure-track and non-tenure-track) must contain the following:

- A disclosure indicating the need for final administrative approval, for example:
  
  “Upon acceptance of this offer, your employment will require further and final administrative approval.” OR for TOA, “The offer of tenure is contingent on the approval by the University and System Administration and the Board of Regents.”

- All necessary and required contingency statements:
  
  “This offer is contingent upon your ability to provide employment eligibility documentation to work in the United States as required by federal law. In addition, the approval of this offer is also contingent upon the successful completion of the degree verification and criminal background check processes, and your compliance with the Selective Service law if applicable to you. In order to help expedite the administrative approval, we request that you visit the following website: http://dof.tamu.edu/Forms/Download-Forms. Please complete, sign and submit to us the Transcript/Degree Verification form. For any foreign degree/s you may have, please proceed with requesting the official transcript from the institution, and request that they be mailed directly to the Dean of Faculties, Texas A&M University, 1126 TAMU, College Station, Texas, 77843-1126. You will be reimbursed for costs (verifiable by receipt) associated with obtaining the verification/s after the hire date up to $30.00. If this cost is exceeded, prior approval is required from the Dean of Faculties office. As for the criminal background check, instructions are attached on how this process will be conducted. This offer will not become final and thereby vest until the degree verification and criminal background check have been successfully verified and cleared by the Dean of Faculties Office.”

(**NOTE Please encourage your hiring coordinators to follow up with an email reminding the new faculty member to order the foreign degree transcripts, and that email needs to have the statement about checking with the DOF if the expense is over $30. **)

- If the offer letter includes a granting of tenure on arrival it must contain the following additional provision:
  
  “Offer of tenure on arrival is contingent on the approval by the University and System Administration and the Board of Regents.”

For your guidance and convenience, sample offer letters are posted on our website. These samples detail what the letters must contain in order to be in compliance. While you are free to change the wording on the sample as you deem appropriate and necessary, we do require, however, that the contingency paragraphs be inserted in your offer letters as provided herein (please feel free to copy and paste).

**WHAT HAPPENS IF OFFER LETTER IS LACKING THE CONTINGENCIES?**

The offer letter is a key element of the employment of the faculty member. If the offer letter lacks the necessary and required contingencies:

- We would be out of compliance with the applicable System regulation and University rule.

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We may ask you to clarify and document with the prospective faculty member the fact that the offer is contingent.

As a practice point, approvals to hire will not be signed until the Dean of Faculties receives notice that the degree verification process and the background checks have been successfully verified and cleared. Therefore, you will not be able to employ the faculty member until such time in which verification and clearance has been obtained and the hire has been approved by the Dean of Faculties. Only under very extraordinary circumstances, will you be able to request permission for temporary placement pending background check completion, or permission to commence employment pending official transcripts and/or verification of degree completion.
SAMPLE OF OFFER-TO-HIRE LETTER

TENURED ON ARRIVAL POSITIONS

(NOTE: The Department Head must sign Offers of Employment)

(Please Read Before Proceeding)

This sample is provided only with the purposes of serving as guidance to the academic department head on what an offer letter must contain for the purposes of compliance with University rules and System policies. This is not a template. A properly drafted offer letter for all tenure on arrival positions must contain the following:

- A disclosure indicating the need for final administrative approval (as provided in first sentence of the MANDATORY GENERAL CONTINGENCIES IN OFFER section below). For tenure on arrival, the offer of tenure is contingent on the approval by the University and System Administration and the Board of Regents.
- All necessary and required contingency statements (employment authorization, criminal background check, degree verification, as provided in the sample below).
- If the offer letter includes a granting of tenure on arrival it must contain the following additional provision: “Offer of tenure on arrival is contingent on the approval by the University and System Administration and the Board of Regents.”

(Date)

Dear Dr. __________________:

MANDATORY CONTINGENCY IN OFFER FOR TENURE ON ARRIVAL: The purpose of this correspondence is to extend to you a formal offer of employment as a tenured (Full Professor, Associate Professor) in the Department of __________________________ at Texas A&M University. Note, however, that the offer of tenure is contingent on the approval by the University and System Administration and the Board of Regents. Your official start date will be __________________________ (day/month/year).

The offer of __________________________ (Full Professor, Associate Professor) is at a salary of $ ______________ (monthly/annual). (If not employed full time, please enter the percentage of FTE and the monthly salary earned). In addition, you will receive (state any other salary package offered and support). (If not employed full time, please enter the percentage of FTE and the monthly salary earned).

The Department will provide you with __________________________ (indicate office, equipment, startup funds and any other financial, tangible or intangible support).

As an __________________________ (Full Professor, Associate Professor) your duties for the position will include (describe in detail the duties of the job). In addition you will be responsible for (describe in detail additional responsibilities assigned to the faculty member such as research and service). You will be expected to __________________________ (relate in detail the expectations).

This position is eligible for a generous benefits package and participation in a retirement program. Upon employment, you may choose to immediately enroll in a Texas A&M University System sponsored insurance plan, including health insurance, provided you pay the full cost of premiums. You may also defer enrollment in a health plan until the first of the month following a 60-day waiting period from your date of hire. At this time the State of Texas will pay for a significant portion of the total health insurance premium amount. This position also participates in a retirement program effective on your date of hire.

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Since you will be making your benefit selections on or before your first day of work, you may want to familiarize yourself with the New Employee Benefit Enrollment Booklet which can be found at http://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/benefits/pdf/guidebooklet.pdf. You can also go to http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits to find more detailed information. An annual performance review is conducted for all faculty members (describe the performance review according to the position offered).

MANDATORY GENERAL CONTINGENCIES IN OFFER: “This offer is requires further administrative approval and is contingent upon your ability to provide employment eligibility documentation to work in the United States as required by federal law. In addition, the approval of this offer is also contingent upon the successful completion of the degree verification and criminal background check processes, and your compliance with the Selective Service law if applicable to you. In order to help expedite the administrative approval, we request that you visit the following website: http://dof.tamu.edu/Forms/Download-Forms. Please complete, sign and submit to us the Transcript/Degree Verification form. For any foreign degree/s you may have, please proceed with requesting the official transcript from the institution, and request that they be mailed directly to the Dean of Faculties, Texas A&M University, 1126 TAMU, College Station, Texas, 77843-1126. You will be reimbursed for costs (verifiable by receipt) associated with obtaining the verification/s after the hire date up to $30.00. If this cost is exceeded, prior approval is required from the Dean of Faculties office. As for the criminal background check, instructions are attached on how this process will be conducted. This offer will not become final and thereby vest until the degree verification and criminal background check have been successfully verified and cleared by the Dean of Faculties Office.”

(**NOTE Please encourage your hiring coordinators to follow up with an email reminding the new faculty member to order the foreign degree transcripts, and that email needs to have the statement about checking with the DOF if the expense is over $30. **)

We are delighted at the prospect of your joining the faculty at Texas A&M University (closing statement).

Sincerely,

Dept Head.

Signature __________________  Date __________________

I accept the terms and conditions of this agreement:

Signature __________________  Date __________________

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