



## **Guide for Hiring Mission-Fit Faculty at Indiana Wesleyan University**

As a Christian university established in the Wesleyan theological tradition and founded upon the liberal arts, Indiana Wesleyan University is very intentional about cultivating a mission and educational philosophy that embody its aspirations to share in God's redemptive work in the world. Accordingly, it is critical for IWU to recruit, hire, nurture, and retain faculty who are committed and equipped to contribute to IWU's distinctive academic mission.

### **IWU Mission**

*Indiana Wesleyan University is a Christ-centered academic community committed to changing the world by developing students in character, scholarship and leadership.*

*As a Christ-centered academic community committed to changing the world, IWU pursues its mission as an expression of the Church's scriptural vision of truth and goodness, promoting virtue and social holiness in service to the world.*

IWU's commitment to *developing students in character, scholarship, and leadership* means that our community places the holistic formation of students at the center of our educational mission. Whether pursuing learning on the residential Marion campus, Wesley Seminary, or our National and Global learning programs, we strive for an academic excellence that stresses the practical integration of cognitive, moral, and spiritual development in order to prepare students to share in God's purposes for the world.

### **IWU Educational Philosophy**

The IWU educational philosophy is grounded in three core assumptions:

1. The chief purpose of learning and knowledge is to discover truth in all its forms.
2. Knowledge of truth involves sharing in its realities in ways that inspire goodness and beauty.
3. A Christian vision of learning is, ultimately, a call to love God and serve others.

This philosophical approach to education--often called "Christian liberal learning"--strives to liberate students from ignorance, delusion, and vice so that they can understand and experience the realities of truth, goodness, and love more deeply. This means the IWU community aspires to think, analyze, critique, invent, create, explore, worship, develop character, and hone skills across the various academic disciplines as expressions of an integrative calling to share in God's truth, sanctifying goodness, and redemptive love. This is also why IWU prioritizes faith integration, student formation, and holistic learning as fundamental to our preparation of graduates for meaningful lives of service.

## **Assessing the Capacity of Faculty Candidates to Contribute to the IWU Mission**

This mission-fit hiring Guide articulates the unique qualifications the university seeks in its faculty based on its identity, mission, and educational philosophy. The Guide offers search committees a tangible instrument for discerning a faculty candidate's alignment with the breadth of characteristics that form the heart of IWU's mission as (1) a Christ-centered university founded upon the liberal arts (2) grounded in the Wesleyan theological tradition and (3) owned by The Wesleyan Church. With respect to the qualifications detailed below, search committees should assess candidate mission fit based on both his/her alignment and willingness to develop greater proficiency in the various areas. The vetting and deliberations of search committees will obviously extend beyond the sets of questions included here. The intent of this Guide is to help the IWU community to translate our mission and educational philosophy into criteria for mission-fit faculty hiring.

### **1. A Life-Transforming Relationship with the Triune God:**

The candidate affirms the triune nature of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and is experiencing a deepening relationship with God. Evidence of growth in Christ and fellowship with the Holy Spirit is offered and observed.

With the candidate having affirmed the major tenets of Christianity, now...

*Briefly describe your faith journey.*

*How has your life in Christ changed you?*

*What difference does the Holy Spirit make in your life?*

### **2. Submission to Scripture as God's Word:**

The candidate articulates and evidences a belief in the Bible as the chief authority for defining truth, goodness, and beauty and, thus, for faithful living into intimacy with God.

*What are your views on the Bible as the word of God?*

*Please describe the role Scripture plays in your life.*

### **3. Participation in the Local Church:**

To love Christ is to love the Church (Eph.5:25), despite her shortcomings. The candidate is an active participant in the worship, fellowship, and ministry of a local church that seeks to embody the values described above.

*Describe your affiliation with and participation in a local church congregation. Why do you identify with this particular local church?*

*Please describe how your participation in the local church contributes to your personal spiritual growth.*

### **4. Christian Academic Vocation:**

Is the candidate able to articulate his/her pursuit of excellence in teaching and scholarship as a Christian calling?

*Do you pursue your teaching and scholarship as a Christian academic vocation? Why? What does this look like in practice?*

*How does your faith inform your definition of scholarly excellence in your academic discipline?*

*How might your disciplinary expertise contribute to the Kingdom of God?*

**5. Christian Liberal Learning:**

Does the candidate possess understanding and preparation that equips him/her to contribute to the unique educational mission of a Christian university founded upon the liberal arts?

*Briefly describe the basic nature and significance of a liberal arts approach to learning within the context of Christian higher education.*

*How have your training, experience, and interests prepared you to teach in a collegiate context that prioritizes holistic learning, student formation, and faith integration?*

**IWU's Mission is grounded in a Wesleyan Theological Vision of Higher Education**

The beauty of the Wesleyan tradition is that, rather than promoting a novel or partisan theological approach to the Christian faith, John and Charles Wesley immersed themselves in the depths of historic Christian orthodoxy in hopes of drawing every area of their lives into the life-giving narrative of truth and human flourishing it offers. The Wesley's believed God promises to not only forgive human sin, but likewise to nurture the divine gift of love so thoroughly within the human heart and mind that a Christian can live a life of holiness in Christ free of willful sin. Accordingly, they were passionate about experiencing Christian salvation as a communal, intentional, and holistic participation in God's reconciling and redeeming work in the world; and called Christians to embrace Spirit-filled lives of personal and social holiness. As a Christian university in the Wesleyan tradition, IWU seeks to participate in God's reconciling and redeeming work by integrating the cultivation of personal and social holiness into a transformative community of liberal learning across academic disciplines.

Therefore, the following prompts are offered to help clarify candidate mission-fit.

**6. Evidence of Holiness (Personal):**

Holiness is expressed in the Wesleyan Tradition as an active love for God and for others that is demonstrated by the fruit of the Spirit expressed in Galatians 5:22-23. This holy love and spiritual fruit is developed in the believer, primarily but not exclusively, through the practice of spiritual disciplines. The candidate engages practices that foster personal holiness.

Briefly describe the significance of holiness in the cultivation of a Christian life.

*How would you say the fruit of the Spirit has been developed and is evident in your life?*

*How are you intentional about leaning into God's work of holiness in your life? What spiritual disciplines and practices do you find most helpful in this regard? What role does community play in your spiritual growth?*

**7. Evidence of Holiness (Social):**

Love for God is expressed through love for others (I John 4:11). As a regular pattern of life, the candidate seeks to cultivate a life of holiness in relation to others, whether stranger, neighbor, coworker, friend, family member, or enemy. The candidate is growing in humility and compassion, with a desire to see others come to know Christ and find comfort in Him. He/She consistently demonstrates respect for all people as well as a commitment to fairness, reconciliation, and justice. The candidate is capable of

acknowledging personal (implicit) biases, working to identify and correct these as much as possible.

*Talk about your respect and love for people. What are some ways that you demonstrate this in your life?*

*How do you share God with others? What are some ways that you contribute to social holiness by working for justice and reconciliation?*

*What steps have you taken to identify and address personal biases (e.g., in regard to gender or race/ethnicity)?*

### **IWU's Mission is shaped by its Affiliation with The Wesleyan Church**

IWU is not merely a university grounded in the Wesleyan tradition; it is an academic community owned by and accountable to The Wesleyan Church (TWC). The history of this denomination dates back to 1843 when its abolitionist leaders broke with the Methodist Episcopal Church over the latter's refusal to take a stand against the institution of slavery. This abolitionist impulse was rooted in an intense fervor for personal and social holiness that meant TWC likewise became a pioneer denomination in its promotion of lay leadership, the temperance movement, and the rights of women. TWC established IWU as Marion College in 1920 as part of its efforts to promote holiness through the pursuit of liberal learning and career preparation. While IWU faculty members are not required to attend a congregation of TWC, the expectation is that they will respect and be willing to abide by the doctrinal and social standards TWC esteems as fundamental to Christian flourishing (see the available Summary of Wesleyan Beliefs, the Lifestyle Statements, and current Wesleyan position statements ratified by the General Conference).

Therefore, the following prompts are offered to help clarify candidate mission-fit.

### **8. Wesleyan Convictions: General Agreement and Sincere Respect**

While a mission fit candidate does not necessarily need to attend a Wesleyan Church, the candidate will fundamentally agree with Wesleyan theology and agree to conduct himself/herself in harmony with The Wesleyan Church's position on doctrinal and social issues.

*Across all denominations and theological traditions, there are few Christians who could honestly say they agree with their church's position on every doctrinal and social issue. Can you share with us a topic where you personally come to a different conclusion than your church, and how you live within that tension?*

*What would you say makes an institution of higher learning distinctly Wesleyan (both in terms of the broader Wesleyan tradition and the Wesleyan Church)? Is there anything about being a faculty member at a Wesleyan university that you imagine would be different from any other university? Is there anything about being a faculty member at a Wesleyan university that you would find unacceptable, or feel the need to correct, or to speak out against?*

*The Wesleyan Church is committed to honoring the dignity and equality of all persons; an egalitarian view of gender and the support of the ordination of women; a Wesleyan (Biblical) view of human sexuality and marriage; and to living holy and disciplined lives. Do you fundamentally agree with the doctrines and practices of the Wesleyan Church? Can you support these views as a faculty member at IWU?*