<h1 style="text-align:center">[School/College]</h1>

2025 Standard IHP Proposal Template
Proposals for 2025-26 TTF Searches

Proposal number	[completed by school/college/division]
College/School/Division	College of Education
Department/Program	Special Education and Clinical Sciences
Requested TTF Specialty	Assessment Innovations in Special Education and School Psychology
Requested TTF Rank (assumption is Assistant Professor)	Associate, or Full

Expectations

The Provost expects proposals to describe TTF hiring needs using appropriate information and metrics:
- Please refer to relevant institutional metrics as part of the IHP proposal process.
- Use data to make a clear, concise case for the applicable elements.
- Proposals should not exceed 2-3 pages in length. Brevity is appreciated; bullet points are welcome.

Proposal

1. **Describe the primary rationale for the position, including how the proposal aligns with the strategic vision, values, and needs of the university, and the priorities of the college/school. All proposals should indicate how the search will do the following:**

- *Contribute to growth or maintenance of excellence in national and international leadership of the university within the proposed field.*

The mission of the College of Education (COE) and the Department of Special Education and Clinical Sciences (SPECS) is "to improve the quality of education, employment, and community living for children and adults with special needs and their families." In line with this mission, the Special Education (SPED) and School Psychology programs in SPECS, seek to hire a tenure track faculty (TTF) at the rank of associate or full professor with expertise in educational assessment to support the instruction of students with or at-risk for learning disabilities, who represent one-third of all students with disabilities (44th Annual Report to Congress, 2022).

The purpose of this position is twofold. First, the TTF will support undergraduate and graduate programs in SPED and SPSY in training future educators in fields with critical shortages in Oregon and the nation[1]. For example, nationwide, 365,044 teachers in 2024 were not fully certified for their teaching assignments. Second, the TTF will further enhance the COE's cutting edge work in educational assessment to inform data-based decision making and instruction for students with learning disabilities. Specific to this second purpose, the department will recruit a scholar who leverages data science and generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop advanced assessments that directly inform educational programming for students with learning needs and disabilities.

---

[1] https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/state-teacher-shortages-vacancy-resource-tool-2024

- *Help catalyze inclusive excellence in new areas of research or creative activity, maintain or strengthen established premier areas of research or creative activity, or draw together multiple areas of research or creative excellence.*

The UO COE has a longstanding history of the innovative work in development, validation, and scaling of educational assessments (https://research.uoregon.edu/news/head-class-innovators-set-college-ed-apart). Work in this area has been driven by two research centers – Behavioral Research and Training (BRT) and the Center on Teaching and Learning (CTL). This development of cutting-edge educational assessments over the last four decades has positioned these centers as leaders in the highly competitive educational assessment marketplace and has resulted in significant financial return to the University. Of the UO's Fiscal Year 24 licensing revenue of approximately 7.8 million dollars, roughly one fifth (18% @ 1.4 million dollars), was generated by these two centers through educational assessments and related products provided directly to educators or through licensing agreements with business partners. These assessment software platforms have been copyrighted to the UO and used to support innovative research and development.

Faculty who hold roles both directing a research center and instructing in the college, generally align their research and teaching to enhance the multi-directional pathways among and between research, practice, and instruction that provide immersive experiences for undergraduate and graduate students.
Within the past five years, however, Directors of these two centers leading this work have either retired (Dr. Tindal from BRT) or left the UO (Dr. Fien from CTL), leaving gaps in vision, leadership, research, instruction and innovative entrepreneurship. Another challenge is the movement within the field toward the use of data science and generative AI to drive the design of educational assessments. Without this expertise, the UO is unlikely to remain competitive for large scale federal contracts/grants and for partnerships with external business partners. In the past year primary funding agencies of educational research have explicitly requested or funded grants and centers focused on generative AI. For example, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), jointly funded multiple large scale research centers focused on the use of AI in education (https://ies.ed.gov/blogs/research/post/accelerating-research-on-generative-artificial-intelligence-ies-announces-four-new-research-and-development-centers) with additional solicitations and specific grant competitions providing further federal funding opportunities within the area (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2025_84305T.pdf) that "focus on accelerating learning and reducing persistent education inequities by leveraging evidence-based principles from the learning sciences coupled with advanced technology to create high-reward, scalable technology solutions".

Without investment in faculty with specific expertise in educational assessment supported by data science and AI, the COE risks losing a long standing competitive edge in securing federal research dollars and the development of intellectual property that serves as the cornerstone of the UO's licensing revenue portfolio and efforts to expand innovation (https://research.uoregon.edu/innovate/uo-entrepreneurs/launch-oregon)

- *Grow and/or maintain areas of demonstrated prospective/future undergraduate student interest.*
- *Grow and/or maintain successful graduate programs, where there is faculty capacity for building areas of excellence and/or new programs of institutional need.*

The proposed position will advance undergraduate and graduate programs in multiple ways. In SPED, students can take a minor that serves as entry into the field and access to advanced (graduate) coursework and degrees. SPED consistently enrolls approximately 85-125 students in the minor and 75-100 students in the graduate programs (AY19-AY23). The SPSY program also is experiencing significant growth in the master's degree program, with enrollment increasing from 16 students in AY19 to 40 students in AY23. A cornerstone of both degree programs is their focus on educational assessment to drive best instructional practices. By hiring a scholar focused on integrating data science and now generative AI into these practices, SPED has the potential to support increased interest in these fields to drive societal change. This interest can directly address significant state and national shortages and support high level doctoral training. By training next generation practitioners and scholars interested in data driven decision-making with incorporation of AI in educational assessment, the SPED program can continue to enhance its legacy of serving as a pathway for recruiting doctoral students, post-doctoral faculty, and research associates and remain ranked in the top three programs in the country (along with Vanderbilt and University of Kansas).

2. **If there are other significant factors, describe them briefly below. Please use the other proposal template for searches that have a primary role of supporting Oregon Rising, but for searches where supporting Oregon Rising is a secondary significant factor, you can indicate so in this proposal.**

The proposed position will "create and expand programs and areas of scholarship that promote the effective translation of scientific discoveries into transformative societal benefits to Oregon and the nation". This outcome is consistent with one of the four goals of Oregon Rising: "Accelerate the University of Oregon's Impact on the World". Incorporating research and development currently being conducted in SPED research centers, UO's innovation portfolio can not only be maintained but expanded, which is fully aligned with the goals of Oregon Rising.

Active Recruitment Considerations:
Each approved IHP search will create a search plan including best practices for a diverse search. These plans should address relevant field availability estimate data, and include a robust active recruitment plan as described on the Office of the Provost website.

If approved, the proposed position will create a robust search plan grounded in best practices to recruit a diverse and exceptional pool of candidates.