

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF ACCOUNTING FACULTY IN A DIFFICULT MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Accounting department chairs responded to an electronic survey which examined the recruitment and selection process for tenure-track accounting faculty. Advertising in academic journals or on the AAA website were favored approaches. Doctoral schools obtained more applications through “cold” letters or through contacting friends at other schools than did nondoctoral schools. Nondoctoral schools conducted more AAA meeting interviews than did doctoral schools; the latter held more on-campus interviews. Doctoral-granting schools viewed teaching load and other research-related factors as the most important for successful hiring, while base salary was first for nondoctoral schools. Schools that did not quickly fill all vacancies attributed this to school reputation (doctoral) and base salary (nondoctoral). In attempting to attract faculty, schools may overweight the importance of salary and underweight factors such as the importance of a manageable teaching load in today’s environment. Breaking down schools into teaching vs. more research-oriented schools yielded similar results in many cases to those of nondoctoral vs. doctoral schools. Numerous other implications for recruiters are provided.

Key words: Accounting faculty, recruitment, selecting, hiring, factors leading to recruiting success or failure

Data availability: The authors are willing to share the data obtained in this research project.

INTRODUCTION

The success of a school's accounting program depends on its faculty. Recruiting the best faculty should improve the teaching, research, cohesiveness, and reputation of the accounting department. Hiring someone who is less than a good fit with the institution may fill a vacancy, but at a long-term cost to the school. However, hiring qualified accounting faculty, let alone hiring the very best, is problematic in today's faculty market.

A "seller's market" exists for accounting faculty (Hunt et al., 2009; Fogarty and Holder, 2012). Schools are locked in a fierce "war for talent" (Chapman et al., 2005). One reason for the accounting faculty shortage is the retirement of "baby boomers." An American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)/American Accounting Association (AAA) report (summarized by Plumlee et al., 2006) indicated that 500 to 700 accounting faculty retire every year. While new US doctoral production is up from a low of 105 in 2003, the 133 awarded in 2011 (Hasselback, 2012) are clearly inadequate to meet the needs of the profession. The shortage is exacerbated in the US by the finding that an estimated 40% of accounting PhDs earned in the US are by foreign nationals who will return to their home countries (Ruff et al., 2009). A large majority of those earning PhDs in the UK will return to their home countries (Beattie and Smith, 2012). The problem is so severe and seemingly intractable that it has been called a "permanent 'seller's market'" (Fogarty and Hogan, 2013).

The accounting faculty shortage in the US is exacerbated by the increasing popularity of accounting as an undergraduate major, creating more demand for accounting faculty. The number of accounting graduates and enrollments both increased by 19% from 2005 to 2008 (O'Reilly-Allen and Wagaman, 2008).

Accreditation is another factor driving the demand for those with accounting doctorates. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation rules require a certain percentage of faculty to be in the "scholarly academic" or "practicing academic" categories, one requirement for which is typically having a PhD or DBA.¹ Eighty-three percent of US graduates in masters and bachelors programs are from schools with business AACSB accreditation, while 40% are from schools with separate accounting accreditation. Failure to hire tenure-track faculty could lead to increased use of adjuncts or lecturers, causing possible problems with maintaining or achieving AACSB accreditation. The AACSB has expanded its accreditation efforts outside the US in recent years. For example, many Australian schools have achieved or are pursuing AACSB accreditation. Since many such schools previously hired non-doctoral practitioners as faculty, a shortage of accounting faculty has resulted (Lightbody, 2010).

The number of PhDs in accounting awarded in the UK is growing rapidly, partially due to the ability of all institutions of higher education to offer such degrees. This may help UK schools to meet the need for PhDs as required by the UK government (Beattie and Smith, 2012). However, concerns remain about the quality of some such new faculty (THES, 2009).

Although countries may differ as to the causes, the shortage of qualified PhDs in accounting appears to be a serious issue in many areas of the world. Competition for desirable faculty has led US universities and colleges to offer high salaries and other benefits and reduced teaching loads for the first several years. Some schools may believe they lack the resources to effectively compete. On

¹The percentage is determined by a variety of factors, including the size and mission of the business program (AACSB, 2013a).

the other hand, schools in the UK and Australia are dealing with problems of relatively low salaries and increasing workload for accounting faculty, making faculty recruitment difficult (Beattie and Smith, 2012; Cappoletto, 2010).

As noted earlier, a number of studies have examined the accounting faculty shortage. Others (e.g., Hunt et al., 2009; Eaton and Hunt, 2002; Eaton and Nofsinger, 2000) have examined the job search activities of accounting and business faculty. However, despite the current vital importance of accounting faculty recruitment, the authors know of no published study examining in detail the hiring process for tenure-track accounting faculty from the viewpoint of the school, and the factors believed important in success or failure of schools' searches.² The current exploratory research provides an extensive empirical examination of these issues. Information obtained may help in designing further, specialized studies as well as in helping schools in successfully competing for a limited number of desirable faculty.

This research has several major objectives. A key objective is determining how universities obtain applicants from a variety of approaches, such as placing advertisements in publications. Knowledge of methods that competitors use to obtain applicants should help in designing a recruitment strategy. Another objective is to examine how schools use phone, conference, and on-campus interviews to select preferred applicants.

Additional objectives are to examine schools' success in hiring and to identify factors that accounting department heads or business deans believe led to such success. These can be compared to previous applicant-based research to assess whether schools' and applicants' levels of importance are congruent. Greater understanding of how schools have successfully attracted faculty could be useful in better promoting a school or department to potential faculty. Another objective is to examine factors perceived as leading to lack of success in hiring; these may be helpful to schools looking to overcome them, or in the case of items that cannot be changed, such as location, ways to market their schools more effectively.

Due at least partly to differences in prestige and/or resources, schools with varying missions may differ in success levels, recruitment approaches and the factors contributing to success; knowledge of such differences may help recruiters to better compete with similar schools for desirable accounting faculty. Therefore, we examine differences between doctoral and nondoctoral schools, as well as primary orientation, i.e., teaching vs. research/balanced.³

The final objective is to determine what steps recruiters are taking to improve their future hiring success. Such information may provide useful guidance to other colleges.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews the relevant literature and presents the research questions. Next, we present the research methodology and results. The final section discusses implications of the results, describes limitations of the research, and suggests avenues for further research.

²The vast majority of work on this subject has been in human resource/management area and unrelated to hiring university faculty. Accounting faculty are very different from faculty in many liberal arts disciplines, where large supply results in even schools with limited resources being able to hire top candidates (Medina, 2012). It has been common to treat accounting faculty recruitment (from the applicant's viewpoint) separate from even research done regarding recruitment of other business faculty (e.g., Eaton and Hunt, 2002; Hunt et al., 2009; Fogarty and Hogan, 2013).

³Research-oriented schools might be seen, on average, as having greater prestige from a faculty recruiting standpoint than schools that are explicitly teaching institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Due to the very limited research performed in the details of faculty recruiting, a considerable amount of the literature discussed below is from the general employee recruitment literature. Those articles relating instead to faculty recruitment in general, business faculty recruiting, and recruiting of accounting faculty are so identified.

Recruitment

The process of hiring can be divided into recruiting and selection. Recruiting includes activities that affect the decision-making of potential and actual applicants (Barber, 1998), along with the generation of an applicant pool, while selection involves the narrowing of the pool and the ultimate choice of the best candidate(s). The techniques a school uses (its “marketing mix”) will determine the size and quality of the applicant pool and, thus, are important to the school’s ultimate success (Breaugh and Starke, 2000). Therefore, recruiting is crucial, as a decision not to apply is essentially equal to a rejection decision (Collins and Stevens, 2002).

Job seekers’ perceptions of an organization may be critical in determining a school’s hiring success. Cable and Turban (2003) developed a model in which job seekers’ perceptions are based on familiarity with the organization, general organization reputation, and recruitment advertisements. Developing a positive reputation (long-term) and determining proper advertising techniques (short-term) should be particularly useful in attracting quality applicants.

Organizational Reputation Effects

Organizational reputation may significantly affect an organization’s ability to generate a high-quality applicant pool and the methods used to generate this pool. In the recruitment literature, organizational image or reputation is seen as consisting of general reactions toward a company (Gatewood et al., 1993) and beliefs about attributes of the firm that may be difficult to determine before accepting a position (Cable and Turban, 2003; Belt and Paolillo, 1982). Turban and Cable (2003) found that organizations with better reputations attracted more applicants, and some evidence existed for the proposition that they attracted better applicants.⁴

Reputation for doctoral schools has been examined largely by research productivity. A number of such measures in the accounting area are described in Fogarty and Markarian (2007). Fogarty and Hogan (2013) indicated that, for nondoctoral schools, reputation may be demonstrated by hiring faculty from prestigious PhD programs. Thus doctoral schools and other research-oriented schools might be considered to have an advantage in reputation.

Methods of Generating Awareness and Interest

The source of employment information is a key factor that influences an individual’s initial attraction to the organization (Barber, 1998; Rynes and Cable, 2003; Zottoli and Wanous, 2000). Most research has focused on organization-dependent sources such as advertising. (Breaugh and Starke, 2000; Cable and Turban, 2003). However, other methods might be used to obtain an applicant pool. These include direct solicitation to targeted individuals, requests for referrals, and receiving letters cold (not in response to an advertisement), among others.

⁴They used five measures such as GPA and work skills and found that applicant quality was related to reputation for three of the five applicant quality measures.

Advertising, as in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* or *The Accounting Review* or on the AAA website, is a way to reach a wide range of potential applicants. However, advertising costs money. An AICPA/AAA study (AAA, 2005) found that one-quarter of the schools surveyed spent nothing on advertising. The most common expenditure range was from \$-0- to \$2,500.⁵

Breaugh and Starke (2000) noted that direct mail and referrals may be more effective than advertisements in attracting potential employees. With limited numbers of accounting PhDs being awarded each year, schools might wish to send position announcements to targeted existing faculty, who might not be actively seeking a new position. A comparison of two studies of accounting faculty job search (Eaton and Hunt (2002) and Hunt et al. (2009)) reveals much greater mobility of existing accounting faculty in the later study, perhaps due to sharp increases in accounting faculty salaries. A recent AACSB study (AACSB, 2013b) found that over half of new hires in accounting were faculty from other schools.

Early in the job search process, potential applicants may rely heavily on information from others (Collins and Stevens, 2002). Such information is more likely to result in an individual's applying for a position if it is communicated by someone perceived as having high expertise (Van Hove and Lievens, 2009). Since PhD committee members and colleagues would likely be influential information sources, asking such individuals to promote one's school with PhD students or current faculty might be effective in obtaining desirable applicants.

Breaugh and Mann (1984) suggest that direct application by candidates (not in response to a position announcement) may indicate that they have done considerable research on potential employers and view the organization as possibly being a good fit with their skills, interests, and needs. Strong school or department reputation might lead to more unsolicited applications. Hunt et al. (2009) found that new accounting PhDs were approximately equally likely to contact schools cold as to respond to a job announcement.

The prestige of an applicant's PhD program is important in selection by prestigious schools (Perlman and McCann 1996). Bedeian and Feild (1980) found that 88% of the management faculty of such schools had obtained their degrees from others among the top 24 schools. Similar results were found in accounting (Fogarty et al., 2011; Nikolai and Bazley, 1977; Bazley and Nikolai, 1975). Thus, doctoral schools might be more likely to obtain applicants by directly contacting PhD candidates from such schools or asking faculty at such schools to refer top PhD students. Such practices might well be emulated by less prestigious schools that "compete for institutional legitimacy by adopting the norms of more prestigious organizations" (Youn and Gamson, 1994, p. 189), applying DiMaggio and Powell (1983) to academic faculty search. The above discussion leads to the first research question:

RQ1: Do the methods of obtaining a pool of applicants differ by type of school?

Selection

The selection stage begins with reducing the applicant pool by eliminating those who do not have the appropriate degree, research record, or teaching specialization. It continues with the ranking of remaining applicants in terms of various attributes desired by the school. It ends with the acceptance of an offer by a qualified applicant.

⁵Due to legal requirements, public schools may be more likely than private schools to advertise.

Interviews are part of the selection process. Schools choose the most desirable applicants from the pool to conduct interviews. Many schools use telephone interviews as a pre-selection device, subsequent to (or in lieu of) interviews at a conference and prior to interviews on campus. Since the interview may be used to persuade qualified applicants to continue to demonstrate interest, it has also been seen as a recruitment device (Rynes, 1989).

The AAA national convention has long been seen as a useful venue for initial face-to-face interviews. However, participation by applicants and schools has varied widely. Hunt et al. (2009) reported that only a third of job candidate respondents interviewed at this venue, compared to 68% in Eaton and Hunt (2002) and 65% in Ostrowski (1986). The number of applicant resumes on file at the annual meeting dropped from 180 in 1993 to 96 in 2007, while the number of schools recruiting increased from 110 to 222. However, in 2010, 2011, and 2012, respectively, there were 133, 158, and 138 applicant resumes on file and only 119, 133, and 117 recruiting through the AAA national meeting placement center (AAA, 2011; AAA, 2012). This change, which should help participating schools to better obtain interviews with desirable potential faculty, may be due to more current faculty attempting to relocate to take advantage of high market salaries, schools' disappointment with the previously low ratio of applicants to schools, budgetary constraints in lean economic times, or a combination of these factors.

One might expect numbers and types of interviews to vary by type of school. Due to reputation effects, doctoral and other research-oriented schools may be more selective of those they choose to interview (Fogarty and Saftner, 1993), or the types of interviews may differ. For example, such schools may feel that they can bypass the AAA Annual Meeting entirely for purposes of interviewing. Cost may affect interviewing strategies as well. For example, doctoral schools may be assumed to have, on average, greater financial resources to bring candidates to campus, partly through research workshops in which the speaker also discusses potential employment. The above discussion leads to the second research question:

RQ2: Does the number of various types of interviews conducted vary by school?

Given the limited supply of qualified faculty candidates in accounting, examination of schools' hiring success in recent years appears valuable. Higher prestige leads to the ability to hire accounting faculty from top schools, which frequently leads to ongoing recruiting success (Fogarty and Hogan, 2013). Doctoral and other research-oriented schools would be expected to have, on average, more prestige and resources.

Schools would prefer to be not merely effective in recruiting, but efficient as well. With the high competition among schools for desirable faculty, many universities might be expected to need to make multiple offers to obtain one acceptance. PhD-granting schools might be expected to have a higher acceptance-to-offer ratio. On the other hand, if doctoral schools are more selective, then their success levels may not necessarily be better than their nondoctoral counterparts because they are competing for a more elite pool. This leads to the following research questions:

RQ3a: Do success levels in obtaining tenure-track faculty vary by type of school?

RQ3b: Does the ratio of acceptances to offers vary by type of school?

Hiring success may vary by specialty. Plumlee et al. (2006) found that, of the five major accounting areas, auditing and tax accounted for the smallest percentages of PhD students, 7.4% and 5.9%, respectively. Thus, these two areas represent the greatest shortfall of potential faculty. On the other hand, financial accounting PhDs are granted in quantities that are much closer to meeting demand. New PhDs' teaching and research interests are heavily skewed toward financial accounting and reporting, partly due to availability of databases for research (Plumlee et al., 2006; Beattie and Smith, 2012). Therefore, one would expect schools to have greater success hiring financial accounting faculty than those specializing in audit or tax.

RQ4: Do success levels vary across accounting specializations?

Factors Affecting Recruiting Success or Failure – Studies of Applicant Perspectives

Job applicants may consider numerous factors when choosing among possible positions. Such factors may include tangible rewards, such as high salaries, as well as intangible ones. For example, the reputation of an organization may affect job decisions, partly related to social identity theory (Turban and Cable, 2003; Dutton et al., 1994). Applicants who view an organization positively are likely to feel that they would maintain a positive self-image while holding that job and, thus, would be more likely to accept the position. They may also view a school positively for reasons other than overall organizational reputation, such as their identification with the school's unique mission, as discussed later in this section. The following paragraphs will summarize research related to various extrinsic and intrinsic factors associated with recruiting success.

Very little research has focused on schools' perceptions of factors that lead applicants to accept faculty positions. Verhaegen (2005) examined faculty recruitment factors that European business deans and faculty found important. Deans considered reputation of the school in the academic community, school innovativeness, stimulating peer community, and research release time most important. Faculty considered academic freedom, research time, geographic location of the school, and opportunities for professional development most important. Both groups considered salary as considerably less important.

A bit more research has focused on job selection by faculty applicants. Several studies have focused on preferences of job applicants across disciplines. Marsh and Stafford (1967) found that salary differences had less effect on job choices by academics than persons with the same specialties in other employment. This implies that intrinsic rewards should be more important, yet salary is very important to academic job applicants. However, as Blau (1974) noted, everyone is affected by salary, but intrinsic rewards vary more with personal considerations since different individuals are more affected by different features of the job, such as location. Blau (1974) also found that large schools, which could offer higher salaries, were more successful at hiring top faculty, despite potential faculty's general preference for small class sizes and displeasure with the impersonal nature and bureaucracy of large schools.

Matier (1991) surveyed those who received offers in any discipline at two research institutions in a given year. Respondents chose not to accept the highest salary offer over one-third of the time. Eight of the ten most important items at each school were intangible benefits: reputation of institution, teaching assignments/opportunities, reputation of department, career advancement opportunities, reputation of associates, research opportunities, and rapport with departmental leaders. Teaching/research load was also important. Research funding and library facilities were others. Results indicated that decisions were influenced by minor differences on items that were not

necessarily highly ranked. Burke (1988) also found intangibles to be important, but noted the importance of geographical location as well.

Several studies have examined factors of importance to applicants in selecting academic positions in accounting (Hunt et al., 2009; Eaton and Hunt, 2002; Kida and Mannino, 1980; Holland and Arrington, 1987), management (Hunt, 2004), and finance (Eaton and Nofsinger, 2000). Most of this research was performed during a time in which conditions were more favorable for schools to hire faculty. Generally, the results in management and finance were similar to those in accounting studies.

The accounting studies have examined differences between applicants going to doctoral vs. nondoctoral schools. In accounting education, having a doctoral program might be a reasonable proxy for reputation. Therefore, doctoral-granting schools might enjoy an advantage in hiring due to reputation effects. This could lead to differences in terms of factors of importance to selecting a position between those job candidates going to doctoral vs. nondoctoral schools. These studies did not directly examine differences based on teaching vs. more research-oriented schools. Differences would be expected based on Verhaegen (2005). For example, those applicants preferring research-oriented schools want to feel comfortable with themselves as productive researchers and thus may be more concerned with various forms of research support than would be faculty going to more teaching-oriented schools. The latter might be expected to be particularly concerned with issues such as class size and ability to teach desired courses.

Kida and Mannino (1980) examined hypothetical job decisions of PhD students and existing faculty. Research support was rated highest at doctoral schools but relatively low at nondoctoral schools. For the latter, geographical location of the school was the most important item. Holland and Arrington (1987) examined actual job decisions by accounting faculty. Personal and family matters dominated for those going to nondoctoral schools. Those individuals focused on spouse's happiness, family happiness, salary, quality of life, and geographic location. Those going to doctoral schools were particularly concerned about salary, the department chair, and research opportunities and support.

Eaton and Hunt (2002) examined factors of importance for actual job selection decisions of new PhDs and relocating faculty. Teaching load, compatibility with other faculty, and spouse's evaluation of the area were highly important. Those going to doctoral schools were considerably more concerned about research-oriented issues.

Compared to Eaton and Hunt (2002), Hunt et al. (2009) found relatively few major differences in the importance of various factors in selecting a position. Teaching load was the most important factor for new PhDs going to either doctoral or nondoctoral schools. Compatibility with other faculty was in the top five items for both groups. Base salary was fourth for those going to PhD schools and eleventh for those going to nondoctoral schools, a significant difference. Unlike the results of the previous study, research support was important both for those going to doctoral and to nondoctoral schools, perhaps indicating that nondoctoral schools also expect research output and that those who perform quality research will be more mobile. Tenure criteria ranked second for those going to nondoctoral schools, but eighth for those going to PhD-granting institutions. The mean importance scores (on a 1-4 scale) were significantly different. This may indicate that those going to nondoctoral schools are looking for a more permanent position than those going to doctoral

schools.⁶ Spouse's evaluation of the area was significantly more important for females and those going to nondoctoral schools. Relocating faculty going to doctoral schools ranked teaching load first, while those going to nondoctoral schools ranked it third, behind compatibility with other faculty and likelihood of obtaining tenure, although the means were not significantly different.

Recruiters' perceptions of job applicants' factors of importance in selecting a position may not align with the views of candidates because the candidates may not share the full truth about why they accepted or rejected an offer. Recruiters' failing to understand what motivates applicants to select or reject offers could be a serious disadvantage in a seller's market.

The above discussion leads to the following research questions:

RQ5a: Do factors associated with success in hiring tenure-track faculty in the year of the vacancy differ by type of school?

RQ5b: Do factors associated with failure to fill all tenure-track positions in the year the vacancy occurred differ by type of school?

Schools lacking the resources to offer high competitive salaries or reduced initial teaching loads may still hire desirable faculty. Signaling theory suggests that recruitment practices affect job choice decisions in that the treatment of an applicant during the interview provides information on how the individual might be treated later on the job (Rynes, 1991). Inviting faculty to bring spouses or partners, allowing an extra day for them to visit the community, or spending some extra time focusing on nonacademic pursuits (such as local sports, culture, etc.) would increase the cost of interviewing potential faculty, but might also increase the likelihood of recruitment success (Swartz et al., 2007). However, many schools seem to prefer to save money on interviews; a 2005 report (AAA, 2005) found that over 60% of the schools reported spending under \$2,500 per year for campus visits by all accounting faculty applicants combined. This leads to the final research question:

RQ6: What strategies are schools employing to improve their chances of success in hiring?

METHODOLOGY

We will next discuss our approach to examining the above research questions. A survey was administered using Survey Monkey®, an online survey tool. We performed a limited pilot study by sending a draft of the survey to several department heads or heads of departmental recruiting committees, as well as other colleagues of the authors who had recent involvement in recruiting efforts, for their comments. These individuals made some helpful suggestions, which we incorporated into the survey instrument.

The survey first asked whether the school had attempted to hire one or more accounting faculty members in the last three years. Those who stated "no" were thanked for their help and directed out of the program. Those who attempted to hire in the period of interest were asked a

⁶Zhou and Volkwein (2004) found significantly higher turnover among doctoral research schools than at comprehensive regional schools. Those with a greater expectation of leaving after a few years may be more concerned with research issues in order to remain marketable.

number of demographic questions, such as degrees offered (Ph.D., Macc., BBA, etc.); public or private; and whether the primary focus was teaching, research, or equally weighted between the two. The survey then asked about their recruiting success, their methods of obtaining applicants, the types and number of interviews they conducted, and the factors that they believe affected their success or failure. The latter two areas asked for ratings of importance for twenty items, plus an “other” category. To facilitate comparison with earlier applicant-based research, we adapted the survey from Hunt et al. (2009), with a few modifications to better fit the scope of the current study. Open-ended questions asked for positive or negative experiences in the faculty search process and steps taken to improve future recruiting success.

All U.S. schools listed in the 2010-2011 edition of Hasselback’s directory of accounting programs and faculty were included in the initial population. The survey and a cover letter were sent in 2010 to individuals listed as the chair or head of an accounting department, or as a director of a school of accountancy. If a school was not shown as having a separate accounting department, the survey was sent to the chair of a larger unit, such as a Department of Accounting and Finance. If no such individual was listed, the survey was sent to the Dean of Business.

Those from whom we did not receive a response within approximately three weeks of the initial appeal for participation were sent a follow-up letter electronically, urging them to participate. A third and final letter was sent to those who still had not responded.

RESULTS

A total of 237 addressees responded to the survey online. Of these, 210 respondents indicated that they had attempted to hire new faculty members during the past three years, while 27 indicated that they had not attempted to hire during that timeframe. All of the 27 were from nondoctoral-granting schools. Another 10 addressees responded personally via email that they did not attempt to hire, for an effective response rate of 29 percent (247/851).⁷

Table 1 shows demographics of the 210 institutions that indicated they had tried to hire during the timeframe of interest. As shown in Panel A, 21 respondents indicated that their schools granted accounting doctoral degrees while 189 did not. Panel B shows that 56% of the respondents who attempted to hire were public institutions. Panel C indicates that over one-half of the respondents considered their schools primarily teaching-oriented, while 44.8% of schools considered themselves primarily research-oriented or balanced between teaching and research. Finally, Panel D shows that most (134) schools had AACSB-accredited business programs, while 76 did not. Separate accounting accreditation was held by 56 schools.

Research Question One

The first research question was concerned with methods by which schools obtained an applicant pool. The results are shown in Table 2. Results were significantly different between doctoral and non-doctoral schools for two items. Doctoral schools received more cold applications,

⁷Of the 210 who indicated they tried to hire, 62 completed nine initial demographic questions and then dropped when presented with a long question asking how many applicants had been obtained by each of numerous methods in the last three years. This may have taxed the respondents’ memories or patience. Excluding these 62 respondents lowers the effective response rate to 21.7%, but does not measurably change the demographic composition (e.g., doctoral/nondoctoral; public/private, primary orientation) of the respondents who tried to hire.

TABLE 1
Demographic Information

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Panel A: Doctoral vs. Nondoctoral-Granting Institutions		
Nondoctoral-granting	189	90.0
Doctoral-granting	<u>21</u>	<u>10.0</u>
Total	<u>210</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Panel B: Public vs. Private Schools		
Public	118	56.2
Private	<u>92</u>	<u>43.8</u>
Total	<u>210</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Panel C: Teaching/Research Balance		
Primarily teaching-oriented	116	55.2
Primarily research-oriented	17	8.1
Equal weight	<u>77</u>	<u>36.7</u>
Total	<u>210</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Panel D: Accreditation		
Business program AACSB accredited		
Yes	134	63.8
No	<u>76</u>	<u>36.2</u>
Total	<u>210</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Separate accounting AACSB accreditation		
Yes	56	26.7
No	<u>154</u>	<u>73.3</u>
Total	<u>210</u>	<u>100.0</u>

i.e., not in response to an advertisement (14.0 (sd=15.1) vs. 2.9 (sd=4.0), $p=.006$).⁸ Doctoral school respondents obtained more applications by having a colleague/faculty member contact a prospective applicant (mean of 5.0 applicants (sd=6.4) vs. 1.7 (sd=1.7), $p=.053$).

We also dichotomized schools based on their primary focus, teaching vs. research or balanced (RB). Three significant differences were noted. The RB schools obtained more applications in total (means 28.3 (sd=33.7) vs. 18.0 (sd=32.5); $p=.015$), from placing an advertisement on the AAA website (means 18.5 (sd=24.4) vs. 8.1 (sd=12.0); $p=.003$), and from putting a job description

⁸Except where noted, we used a Mann-Whitney test for between-group differences due to vastly different sample sizes in some cases. Levene statistics showed unequal variances in some (not all) cases. For consistency, conservatism, and ease of exposition, we chose this nonparametric test where applicable.

TABLE 2

Method of Obtaining Applications (Mean Numbers of Applications Received)

	Doctoral School			Orientation		
	No	Yes	p-value	T	RB	p-value
Responded to applicant who applied to school "cold" (not in response to ad)	2.9	14.0	.006	2.7	5.4	.356
Placed advertisement in <i>The Accounting Review</i> , <i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i> , etc.	13.2	31.0	.139	13.5	16.4	.394
Sent announcement to universities	1.2	5.0	.286	1.0	2.0	.911
Placed ad on AAA website	12.8	22.8	.266	8.1	18.5	.003
Put job description on file at AAA meeting	6.4	6.3	.966	5.4	7.3	.030
Had a colleague/faculty member contact prospective applicant	1.7	5.0	.053	1.7	2.3	.827
Responded to resume on file at AAA regional meeting	1.3	0.0	.814	2.1	0.2	.357
Responded to resume on file at AAA national meeting	5.1	0.5	.363	5.4	4.3	.162
Contacted desired candidate directly by email or phone	2.7	3.0	.946	2.5	2.9	.890
Contacted friend at desired school to get PhD students or faculty to apply for position	1.5	5.2	.114	1.5	2.3	.613
Sent email to existing faculty in desired specialty area per Hasselback	0.1	0.0	.867	0.1	0.2	.504
Other	4.5	0.0	.189	6.0	0.2	.003

Notes:

T = Teaching, RB = Research/Balanced

Overall means for number of applications: doctoral 36.2 and nondoctoral 21.1, $p = .479$; teaching 18.0 and research/balanced 28.3, $p = .015$

Means represent the average of the number typed in by respondents

The number responding to the items ranged from 41-106 for nondoctoral schools and 3-10 for doctoral schools, from 24-64 for teaching schools and from 15-52 for research/balanced schools

P-values are from a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-test

on file at the AAA national meeting (means 7.3 (sd=8.7) vs. 5.4 (sd=9.8); $p = .03$), but fewer from other sources (means of 0.2 (sd=.8) vs 6.0 (sd=13.1); $p=.003$).⁹ However, as with doctoral vs. nondoctoral, the results for RB vs. teaching schools indicate considerably more similarities than differences.

Research Question Two

Research question two dealt with how schools conducted interviews. Doctoral schools made offers for an average of 3.0 positions (sd=1.35), while nondoctoral schools averaged 1.89 (sd=1.32). The difference is highly significant ($p=.001$). Similarly, RB schools (mean 2.46, sd=1.47) made offers for more positions than did teaching schools (mean 1.60, sd=1.10; $p = .000$). Therefore, we divided the number of each type of interview by the number of positions for which the school made an offer in order to control for these differences in number of positions. Three methods of interviewing potential faculty were examined, shown in Table 3. The results indicate considerable differences in interview use by type of school. Nondoctoral schools interviewed more candidates at the AAA national meeting per position (mean of 3.77; sd=3.98) than did doctoral schools (mean of 0.79; sd=1.23). This difference is significant ($p=.013$). Phone interview frequency was also greater for nondoctoral (mean of 3.04; sd=2.50) than doctoral schools (mean of 1.50; sd=3.46), statistically significant at $p=.008$. The number of on-campus interviews did not differ significantly

TABLE 3

Types of Interviews Per Position

Interview Location	Doctoral School			Orientation		
	No	Yes	p-value	T	RB	p-value
National AAA	3.77	0.79	.013	2.44	4.16	.038
Phone	3.04	1.50	.008	3.32	2.40	.031
On-campus	2.12	2.40	.174	2.12	2.17	.101

Notes:

T = Teaching, RB = Research/Balanced

Number in cells represent the mean number of each type of interview, divided by the number of positions for which the school made an offer. The number of observations regarding each type of interview ranged from 84-128 for nondoctoral schools, 8-13 for doctoral schools, 37-73 for teaching schools and from 45-68 for research/balanced schools

P-values are based on a Mann-Whitney U-test to examine between-group differences. This was used for consistency with other analyses and because, in the case of doctoral/nondoctoral schools, the variances were not equal (Levene statistic=.019)

⁹Somewhat different from expectations, private schools received more applications from placing an advertisement than did public schools (mean 15.7 vs. 14.1; $p=.084$) and from sending an announcement to universities (means 2.1 vs. 1.0; $p=.070$). Therefore, while it is possible that public schools have more stringent requirements about advertising, their applicant pools were somewhat less affected by placing advertisements than for private schools. Note, however, that this result deals only with applications received from these methods, not whether they used advertising.

(means 2.40 to 2.12; sd=1.00 and 1.61 for doctoral and nondoctoral, respectively), $p=.174$. Using the RB v. teaching dichotomy yielded similar results in that the between-group results are significant for AAA interviews (2.44 for teaching vs. 4.16 for RB, $p=.038$) and phone interviews. (3.32 vs. 2.40, $p=.031$), while there remains no significant between-group difference for on-campus interviews (means 2.12 for teaching vs. 2.17 for RB; $p=.101$).

TABLE 4

Relative Hiring Success of Doctoral-Granting and Nondoctoral-Granting Institutions

	Successful*		Total
	Yes	No	
Panel A: Doctoral-Granting vs. Nondoctoral Granting			
Yes	9	5	14
No	<u>81</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>134</u>
Total	<u>90</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>148</u>
Panel B: Teaching vs. Research/Balanced			
Teaching	52	27	79
Research/Balanced	<u>38</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>69</u>
Total	<u>90</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>148</u>

* Success as stated in Panels A and B was measured as indicating that the school successfully hired for all vacancies in the year the vacancy occurred.

	Ratio **
Panel C: Ratio of Acceptances to Offers Made - Nondoctoral vs. Doctoral schools	
Doctoral Degree	
Yes	.73 (n=14; 0.273)
No	.75 (n=124; 0.312)
Total	.75 (n=138; 0.308)
p-value	.644

Panel D: Ratio of Acceptances to Offers Made - Teaching vs. Research/Balanced	
Orientation	
Teaching	.80 (n=69; 0.294)
Research/Balance	.69 (n=69; 0.313)
Total	.75 (n=138; 0.308)
p-value	.002

** Numbers represent the mean ratio, with number responding and standard deviation in parentheses.

Research Question Three

Research Question 3a examined the success levels across schools in obtaining tenure-track faculty members. We defined “success” in this case as indicating that a school hired faculty for each vacancy in the year the vacancy occurred. Panel A of Table 4 shows a breakdown for doctoral and nondoctoral schools on this measure. Doctoral granting schools had a success rate of 64.3%, compared to 60.4% of nondoctoral schools. This difference was not significant (Pearson Chi-Square = 0.078; $p=.780$). Panel B shows that teaching (65.8%) and RB schools (55.1%) also did not differ (Pearson Chi-Square = 1.786; $p=.181$).¹⁰

Research Question 3b dealt with another measure of relative success, the ratio of acceptances to offers made. We asked respondents for the total number of offers accepted and made, and computed a ratio from zero to 100% (Table 4, Panels C and D). The mean ratios were .75 ($sd=.312$) for nondoctoral schools and .73 for doctoral schools ($sd=.273$); the difference was insignificant ($p=.644$). However, teaching schools had a higher acceptance/offer ratio than did RB schools (means .80 vs. .69; $p=.02$).

Research Question Four

Research Question 4 was concerned with whether the success levels differed for the various faculty specializations (financial, audit, etc.). Table 5 shows the specializations of faculty hired and of faculty sought unsuccessfully. Most faculty hired were in the area of financial accounting, with 91 schools hiring 129 faculty. Only 21 schools were unable to fill all financial faculty positions in the year of the vacancy. On the other hand, “other” (which might include forensic accounting, oil and gas, and theory, among others) (9 schools hired, 5 were unsuccessful), tax (29 schools hired, 13 were unsuccessful), governmental/not-for-profit (5 schools hired, 2 were unsuccessful) and auditing (38 schools hired, 13 were unsuccessful) were areas presenting considerably more difficulty in hiring faculty. When viewed in terms of number of openings, tax, governmental/not-for-profit, and auditing were the areas of most difficulty in filling vacancies.

TABLE 5

Specializations of Faculty Hires and Unsuccessfully Sought

Specialty	Schools Successful			Positions Filled		
	Yes	No	Percent Unsuccessful	Yes	No	Percent Unsuccessful
Financial	91	21	18.8	129	23	15.1
Cost/Managerial	39	11	22.0	42	11	20.8
Audit	38	13	25.5	39	13	25.0
Tax	29	13	31.0	32	14	30.4
Systems	28	4	12.5	31	4	11.4
International	6	1	14.3	6	1	14.3
Government/Not-for-Profit	5	2	28.6	5	2	28.6
Other	9	5	35.7	16	5	23.8

¹⁰A chi-square test was used here because we had two nominal categories (doctoral/nondoctoral and successful/unsuccessful).

Research Question Five

Research question 5a examined factors believed important in successful recruiting efforts. Table 6 shows a breakdown of those factors. Respondents from nondoctoral schools gave only two factors a rating of “3” (important) or above, compared with nine factors for doctoral schools.

TABLE 6

Factors Believed to Affect Success in Hiring - Doctoral vs. Nondoctoral Schools

Item	Doctoral*		Nondoctoral*		p-value
	Mean**	Rank	Mean**	Rank	
1 Base salary	3.21	T7	3.11	1	0.765
2 Location of school	2.57	12	3.03	2	0.023
3 Applicant's compatibility with faculty	3.29	T5	2.99	3	0.223
4 Ability to teach desired courses	2.64	11	2.92	4	0.251
5 Teaching load	3.71	1	2.89	5	0.000
6 Benefit package	2.46	13	2.82	6	0.158
7 Reputation of school	3.36	4	2.76	7	0.005
8 Tenure requirements	3.08	9	2.75	8	0.212
9 Applicant's compatibility with chair	2.43	14	2.74	9	0.269
10 Spouse/partner's view of area	2.71	10	2.68	10	0.932
11 Other research support (e.g., databases, conferences)	3.21	T7	2.25	11	0.001
12 Class size	1.71	T18	2.23	12	0.026
13 Applicant's compatibility with dean	1.54	20	2.11	13	0.023
14 Summer research grants	3.64	2	2.09	T14	0.000
15 Research interests of current faculty	3.57	3	2.09	T14	0.000
16 Job opportunities for applicant's spouse/partner	2.21	T15	2.04	16	0.447
17 Amount of service (committee, etc.) work expected	1.71	T18	1.89	17	0.269
18 Other	2.00	17	1.78	18	0.868
19 Recommendation of PhD committee chair	2.21	T15	1.61	19	0.003
20 Existence/nonexistence of PhD program	3.29	T5	1.46	20	0.000
21 Existence/nonexistence of union	1.08	21	1.21	21	0.686

* The number of responses to items ranged from 112-121 for nondoctoral schools and 13-14 for doctoral schools, except for “Other,” for which the “n” is 27 and three for nondoctoral and doctoral, respectively.

** A four-point scale was used, with 1 = unimportant, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = important, and 4 = extremely important

Note: p-values are for a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-test

Not surprisingly, a research-supportive environment was perceived as a key factor for PhD-granting schools, with teaching load (item 5), summer research grants (item 14), and research interests of other faculty (item 15) being the items with the highest mean scores. All of these items, along with other research support (item 11), such as availability of databases and travel to conferences, were significantly higher for doctoral than nondoctoral schools at $p < .001$. Teaching load ranked fifth for nondoctoral schools, and was the only research-oriented factor in the top ten for that group. Reputation of the school (item 7) and existence of a PhD program (item 20) were viewed as highly important by doctoral schools, and were rated significantly higher than for nondoctoral schools.

Location of the school (item 2) was second for nondoctoral schools, and was viewed as significantly more important than for doctoral schools ($p = .023$). Class size (item 12) and the applicant's compatibility with the dean (item 13) were also significantly more important for nondoctoral schools.

Some factors had relatively high importance mean scores for both groups, but without statistically significant between-group differences. Base salary (item 1) was seventh for doctoral schools, but first for nondoctoral schools. The applicant's compatibility with existing faculty members (item 3) was also highly important for both groups. The ability to teach desired courses (item 4) and tenure requirements (item 8) were also of some importance to both groups.

Research/balanced schools' results (shown in Table 7) were similar to those for doctoral schools in the preceding discussion in that RB schools placed significantly more weight than did teaching schools on teaching load (item 6), summer research grants (item 18), other research support (item 16), research interests of other faculty (item 14), recommendation of PhD committee chair (item 19), and the existence of a doctoral program (item 20). Marginally significant were reputation (item 8) and compatibility with faculty (item 4). Class size (item 11) was the only factor perceived as significantly more important by teaching schools. Unlike the results of the doctoral/nondoctoral comparison, location (item 2) and compatibility with the dean (item 12) did not differ between teaching and RB schools.

Research Question 5b dealt with factors perceived as causing a lack of hiring success, defined as not filling one or more positions in the year the vacancy was announced. Fifty-eight schools (five doctoral and 53 nondoctoral; 27 teaching and 31 RB) were in this category. Table 8 shows factors attributed to such lack of success. Base salary appears to "trump" the other factors for nondoctoral schools, with a mean importance rating significantly greater than that for doctoral schools ($p = .019$). Reputation of school was the most important item for doctoral schools. Nondoctoral schools cited location as more important than did doctoral schools.

One major difference between the factors of importance for success vs. lack of success in hiring is that, in the latter, very few items were seen as important. Only two factors achieved a score of 3.00 or higher, i.e., salary for nondoctoral schools and reputation of school for doctoral schools. The "other" category was below 2.0 (somewhat important) for both groups. Respondents were asked to explain their use of this category; the most important reason was not finding qualified candidates.

In terms of school orientation, as was the case with doctoral/nondoctoral schools, few factors had high means. Notably, teaching schools rated salary significantly higher (mean 3.52 vs. 2.93; $p = .025$). RB schools rated summer support (mean 2.25 vs. 1.76) and school reputation (mean 2.39 vs. 1.81) marginally higher (p -values .075 and .073, respectively).

TABLE 7

Factors Believed to Affect Success in Hiring - Research/Balanced vs. Teaching Schools

Item	R/B		Teaching		p-value
	Mean*	Rank	Mean*	Rank	
1 Base salary	3.19	2	3.06	1	0.563
2 Location of school	2.95	T4	3.01	2	0.572
3 Ability to teach desired courses	2.83	9	2.96	3	0.349
4 Applicant's compatibility with faculty	3.16	3	2.90	4	0.082
5 Benefit package	2.78	11	2.79	5	0.974
6 Teaching load	3.22	1	2.75	6	0.001
7 Spouse/partner's view of area	2.64	13	2.73	7	0.480
8 Reputation of school	2.95	T4	2.71	8	0.097
9 Tenure requirements	2.90	T6	2.67	9	0.120
10 Applicant's compatibility with chair	2.79	10	2.63	10	0.357
11 Class size	1.97	18	2.37	11	0.009
12 Applicant's compatibility with dean	2.02	16	2.09	12	0.717
13 Job opportunities for applicant's spouse/partner	2.05	T14	2.06	13	0.994
14 Research interests of current faculty	2.65	12	1.90	14	0.000
15 Amount of service (committee, etc.) work expected	1.85	T19	1.89	15	0.682
16 Other research support (databases, conferences)	2.90	T6	1.82	16	0.000
17 Other	2.00	17	1.67	17	0.545
18 Summer research grants	2.88	8	1.64	18	0.000
19 Recommendation of PhD committee chair	1.85	T19	1.51	19	0.003
20 Existence/nonexistence of PhD program	2.05	T14	1.32	20	0.000
21 Existence/nonexistence of union	1.12	21	1.27	21	0.201

* A four-point scale was used, with 1 = unimportant, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = important, and 4 = extremely important

The number of responses to items ranged from 65-71 for teaching schools and 59-64 for research/balanced schools, except for "Other," for which the "n" is 18 and 12 for teaching and research/balanced, respectively.

Note: p-values are for a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-test

Research Question Six

To address the sixth research question, we asked respondents what steps their schools had taken to improve their hiring outcomes. Only 36 individuals, 32 from nondoctoral schools and 20 from teaching schools, responded. The greatest number (12) indicated that they increased or were trying to increase faculty salaries. Three of the four doctoral schools, nine of 16 RB schools, but

only three of the twenty teaching schools gave this answer. Four schools reduced teaching load, and three indicated that they were attempting to “grow their own” PhDs by encouraging top students to enter PhD programs in the hope they would later return as faculty. Surprisingly few schools mentioned steps taken to make applicants feel more comfortable with the institution. Due to the

TABLE 8

Factors Attributed to Lack of Success in Hiring - Doctoral vs. Nondoctoral Schools

	Doctoral		Nondoctoral		p-value
	Mean*	Rank	Mean*	Rank	
Base salary	2.00	T2	3.32	1	0.019
Location of school	1.60	T9	2.60	2	0.048
Teaching load	1.80	T7	2.41	3	0.194
Benefit package	1.60	T9	2.29	4	0.128
Summer research grants	2.00	T2	2.05	5	0.780
Spouse/partner's view of area	2.00	T2	2.02	T6	0.942
Reputation of school	3.20	1	2.02	T6	0.030
Other research (e.g., databases, conferences)	1.80	T7	1.98	8	0.544
Ability to teach desired courses	1.40	T13	1.93	9	0.220
Compatibility with faculty	1.40	T13	1.91	T10	0.281
Job opportunities for spouse/partner	2.00	T2	1.91	T10	0.846
Tenure requirements	2.00	T2	1.84	12	0.914
Vacancy opened up too late to hire tenure-track faculty	1.00	T19	1.81	T13	0.065
Other	1.00	T19	1.81	T13	0.472
Research interests of current faculty	1.40	T13	1.80	15	0.268
Compatibility with chair	1.40	T13	1.70	16	0.410
Compatibility with dean	1.20	18	1.64	17	0.297
Amount of service (committee, etc.) work expected	1.40	T13	1.59	18	0.405
Recommendation of PhD committee chair	1.60	T9	1.48	T19	0.680
Class size	1.00	T19	1.48	T19	0.079
Existence/nonexistence of PhD Program	1.60	T9	1.47	21	0.647
Existence/existence of union	1.00	T19	1.16	22	0.340

* A four-point scale was used, with 1 = unimportant, 2 = somewhat important, 3 = important, and 4 = extremely important

Note: p-values are from a two-tailed Mann-Whitney U-test

Five responses were received on each item for doctoral schools, with between 40 and 47 responding from nondoctoral schools, except for “Other,” which generated only one response from doctoral schools and 16 from nondoctoral schools.

small number of responses to this item, we did not attempt to perform statistical analyses by type of school.

ADDITIONAL ANALYSES

A number of individuals responded to an open-ended request for either positive or negative experiences they had encountered in the hiring process. Negative comments outweighed positive ones by a wide margin (55 to 6). The most frequent comment was that the applicant pool was of poor quality (mentioned by 14). Four of these stated that applicants lacked teaching and/or practical experience. Thirteen noted that salary requirements of applicants represented a major obstacle to hiring desirable faculty. Seven complained that there were few applicants. Seven faulted their schools for various reasons, such as onerous human resources requirements or delays in authorization to extend an offer. Two individuals indicated that an applicant had accepted a position and then later reneged on that decision to accept a better offer.¹¹

We also compared public and private schools in examining the research questions. This proved unproductive except for the limited differences in obtaining applicants noted in footnote 9. Unlike doctoral vs. nondoctoral, public and private schools did not differ in terms of hiring success or types of interviews held. In terms of success and failure factors, many of the differences we observed for the doctoral/nondoctoral dichotomy, including school reputation, were not significant for public vs. private schools.

Approximately 15% of respondents indicated that their school would accept a person without a doctorate for a tenure-track accounting position. We compared hiring success of this group (n=21 for those who tried to hire) with other respondents (n=127) and found no significant difference in terms of whether they were successful in filling all vacancies in the year announced (Pearson Chi-Square = .13; $p = .692$).¹² However, those requiring a doctorate had a marginally lower acceptance ratio (mean of .73 vs. .89), $p = .075$. Those requiring a doctorate reported receiving more applications from placing an ad on the AAA website (means 14.5 vs. 4.2), ($p = .066$). Those who would accept

¹¹To test for nonresponse bias, we compared early and late responders, which has been found defensible in accounting (e.g., Ballas and Theoharakis, 2003) and subsequently has been used often in accounting survey research (e.g., Fleischman et al., 2007; Burney and Widener, 2007; Hunt et al., 2009). The vast majority of respondents did so within a week of either the original or the follow-up email. Therefore, responses received more than one week after the original wave or the followup were classified as "late" and a dichotomous (early/late) variable was created. This variable was not significant for recruiting success, methods used to obtain applicants or any of the success factors from which we drew inferences. Therefore, we do not believe that early vs. late responders biased any primary findings.

Another test for nonresponse bias is to compare attributes of the respondents' institutions with those of the population of schools in Hasselback (2010). As noted earlier, of the 210 respondents who indicated that they had attempted to hire accounting faculty in the last three years, 21 (10%) were from doctoral schools. Removing the 62 who dropped out after the demographic questions results in doctoral schools representing 9.5% of the remaining respondents. Dividing the 91 active accounting doctoral programs by the 851 U.S. schools in our population yields 10.7%. Thus our respondents are reasonably representative of the population of doctoral programs. In order to determine if the doctoral schools responding were similar to all schools offering doctorates in accounting, we compared doctoral respondents to the list of top schools published in Glover et al. (2006) and based on work by Trieschmann et al. (2000). We found that seven of 21 were from top 25 schools; five of the seven completed the survey. Thus we believe our doctoral-school respondents are representative of the population of such schools.

¹²The total of 148 represents those who remained after completing the demographic questions, as explained in Footnote 7.

faculty without doctorates were significantly more likely to use “other” means of obtaining applicants ($p = .004$). These might include newspaper advertisements on a more regionalized basis because applicants are perhaps less likely to be relocating a long distance. Those who would accept faculty without doctorates indicated that research support and compatibility with faculty were less important than did other schools.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study is the first known project to examine the accounting faculty hiring process from start to finish. As exploratory research, the paper can contribute to the literature by increasing understanding of important topics and, thus, directing further research that focuses more on specific areas of interest. However, we also include a number of tentative implications that should provide valuable insights for those schools seeking to hire desirable faculty.

The most commonly used methods of obtaining faculty applicants, placing job announcements in journals or on the AAA website, are broad approaches that would be expected to be commonly used in a period of high demand for accounting faculty. Schools wishing to hire faculty may want to expand their techniques of developing an applicant pool. Nondoctoral schools wishing to compete more effectively with doctoral schools might consider adopting some techniques frequently used by such schools. For example, doctoral schools obtained more applicants by contacting a colleague at a desired school to get PhD candidates or faculty to apply. Nondoctoral schools might consider working to develop ties with several doctoral universities in an attempt to gain visibility and possibly attract interest among potential faculty. Doctoral schools got more cold applications not in response to an advertisement, perhaps representing greater prestige. Other schools lacking the prestige of some doctoral schools may wish to work on developing and promoting aspects of a “brand,” such as small class sizes, close ties to business, or student success rates on the CPA exam.

Nondoctoral schools interviewed more applicants at the AAA national meeting, perhaps to spread a fixed cost among a wider applicant pool, unless the recruiter(s) were attending the meeting anyway, in which case there would be zero marginal cost. This may indicate that lower-prestige schools cannot be as selective in those with whom they choose to interview (Fogarty and Saftner, 1993) or that doctoral schools may be less likely to use that venue to obtain candidates for later on-campus visits. On the other hand, teaching schools did not interview as many candidates at the AAA as did RB schools, perhaps because of difficulty in attracting a candidate pool that has been encouraged to first seek research-supportive environments. These two results suggest that nondoctoral but somewhat research-oriented schools do considerable recruiting at the AAA national convention. Combined with the differences found in the use of phone interviews, the results suggest that school types differ in how they narrow down the list of potential campus invitees, although all groups were similar in the total number that they ultimately invite.

As expected, schools were considerably more able to hire financial accounting faculty than those in audit or tax. Additionally, governmental/not-for-profit faculty were found to be difficult to hire. These results show the need for accounting doctoral programs to support those wishing to write dissertations in audit, tax, and governmental/not-for-profit.

When measured by the ratio of acceptances to offers, the success of doctoral and nondoctoral schools was very similar, which may indicate that there are really “two markets,” as one respondent indicated. Those who apply to and are considered by doctoral schools may be very different from those who apply to other schools. Doctoral schools with very high standards may find it just as

difficult to hire the faculty they want as do other schools. Doctoral schools brought more candidates to campus but did not enjoy a greater offer to acceptance ratio, so they may have been very selective of those to whom they made offers or were more willing and able to spend money to bring candidates to campus. Similarly, RB schools had a lower acceptance to offer ratio and brought more candidates to campus than did teaching schools, perhaps as a result of RB schools' greater emphasis on research potential.

Differences were noted between administrators' perceived success factors and those stated by candidates accepting accounting faculty positions in Hunt et al. (2009). The considerably higher importance placed on base salary for nondoctoral schools than in Hunt et al. (2009) may indicate overweighting of that factor by such schools in the current study. Also, direct research support (such as research databases and funding for travel to meetings) for nondoctoral schools was viewed as less important in the current study than in Hunt et al. (2009). This may indicate underweighting the importance of such support by nondoctoral respondents in the current study. Teaching load was perceived as considerably less important by nondoctoral schools than doctoral schools in the current study, but was the most important factor for nondoctoral schools in Hunt et al. (2009). This may indicate that nondoctoral schools in the current study are underweighting teaching load. If nondoctoral schools are underweighting teaching load and overweighting salaries, reducing teaching load may be more effective than raising salaries for such schools. Reducing teaching load could be offset by increasing class sizes for a gain in hiring with limited extra cost. Online classes may provide a way to accomplish this.¹³

With the exceptions noted above, the results are similar to those in Hunt et al.'s (2009) study of candidates' factors of importance in accepting a position. This consistency provides evidence that university administrators generally are able to identify important factors in applicants' job selection decisions, in addition to providing some validation for our results.

The findings that reputation of the school was more important for doctoral schools and location was less important may imply that those who want a prestigious school are less concerned with its location, possibly due to greater likelihood of leaving for another school after a few years. Teaching load and research support were perceived as considerably more important for success by doctoral schools. These factors will tend to affect research success, which in turn affects faculty marketability, which is important if such faculty have greater turnover intentions.

Base salary was perceived as the most important factor leading to lack of success in hiring preferred faculty for nondoctoral schools and was considerably more important for this group than for doctoral schools, which may indicate greater variance of salaries among nondoctoral than doctoral schools. Salary may be less important for doctoral schools if they tend to provide significant raises for publishing. It is also possible that salary for accounting candidates is of greatest importance at the extremes. Once a school is "in the ballpark," perhaps smaller increments do not matter as much as other factors due to the decreasing marginal utility of money, especially considering the respectable salary levels suggested by current AACSB averages (AACSB, 2014). This view is supported in that base salary only ranked seventh among success factors in both the

¹³This suggestion might be more appropriate for RB schools, since our results show that class size was relatively more important for teaching schools. The class size result could be due to the realization that candidates project a heavier teaching/service workload at such schools, while also expecting to have to publish some. Alternatively, those who truly value teaching strongly over research may find that smaller class sizes enhance their experience.

current study and in Hunt et al. (2009) for those going to doctoral schools. Respondent complaints about the poor quality and small size of the applicant pool and the high salary requirements of applicants appear to be interrelated in that schools offering low salaries may find few applicants willing to meet with them, and these few may be less qualified than the school desires. Hunt et al. (2009) indicated that, in the strong seller's market, applicants were becoming more selective in choosing schools with which to interview.

Some items of importance to success or failure, such as location, cannot be changed and many others, such as reputation, salary, and research support, may be difficult to change quickly. However, as Fogarty and Hogan (2013) noted, some aspects can be altered in the short run to increase recruiting success. Earlier research (Hunt et al., 2009; Eaton and Hunt, 2002) suggested that resource-strapped schools might enjoy some hiring success by emphasizing compatibility with faculty and focusing on making prospective faculty feel welcome. While unlikely to fully compensate for a school's inability to pay market salaries, such actions may represent the best chance for schools lacking financial resources. Teaching schools' being less likely than RB schools to raise salaries implies that they may be well-advised to seek other ways to distinguish themselves from competitors. A similar argument might apply to doctoral schools of varying reputations, since this group rated reputation as the most important factor in hiring failure.

Schools might consider having new faculty fill out a survey such as ours. This could help to identify particularly positive features of the schools that could lead to future hiring success, as suggested by Verhaegen (2005).

Schools' rating fewer items as important for failure than success in hiring suggests that administrators may be relying on a small number of reasons provided by applicants who rejected the positions. An alternative explanation is that some schools may blame their hiring difficulties on lack of money simply because accounting faculty salaries are currently a very salient issue, and may, therefore, fail to focus on a broader range of issues. The most common steps schools took to improve their chances of hiring desirable tenure-track faculty members, improving salary offers and cutting teaching loads, are consistent with the perception that money concerns may have led to lack of success in hiring. Nondoctoral schools may overweight money issues in the factors considered important for success, as evidenced by their perceiving considerably fewer items to be important to those accepting positions than did those at doctoral schools.

The very similar results found in examining research questions by the teaching/RB dichotomy to those obtained using the doctoral/nondoctoral breakdown provides evidence that most of the comments in this section relating to factors of success or failure for doctoral/nondoctoral also have implications for teaching/RB schools. Many "balanced" schools may have more in common with more heavily research-oriented schools than they realize.

On the other hand, differences in methods of attracting applicants and in number of interviews between doctoral/nondoctoral and teaching/RB may demonstrate the prestige advantage that doctoral schools have over the average RB school. Teaching schools' lower use of the AAA for interviewing at the national convention or for posting job announcements on its website may reflect a belief that these techniques are more appropriate for more research-oriented schools. The AAA may wish to consider how it can help teaching-oriented schools in their recruiting.

Several universities are offering "Bridge Programs" to enable individuals with PhDs in a variety of areas to receive limited training in accounting and then apply for accounting faculty positions. This is supported by Marshall et al. (2006), who suggest that critical thinking and research

skills obtained in one area of specialization can be transferred to the accounting area. Schools having difficulty hiring new accounting PhDs due to salary requirements may wish to consider this option. Another possibility, raised by a few respondents, was to send top masters' students to doctoral programs in an attempt to "grow their own" PhDs. This could also be done with instructors. Part-time programs such as that at Kennesaw State may enable such faculty to teach at their employer school during the school year, thus not damaging the school's ability to offer courses. Such an approach might be especially fruitful in areas such as tax and auditing.

The general lack of differences between public and private schools may indicate that this distinction is not an effective proxy for resources and prestige. While there are a small number of highly prestigious private schools with significant resources, a much greater number of quality private schools with less national prestige may have either comparatively fewer resources, or a liberal arts focus in which the administration has not yet allocated sufficient resources to attract expensive business faculty. Therefore, the percentage of private schools with a meaningful faculty recruiting advantage over public schools may be relatively small.

Recent AACSB changes may assist schools in hiring. The 2013 change (AACSB, 2013a) in its accreditation standards allowing schools to have a certain percentage of "Practicing Academic" faculty may make some experienced faculty more marketable. These individuals may do considerable consulting to obtain first-hand experience with practical accounting issues, while performing limited amounts of traditional intellectual contributions, such as publishing journal articles. Such faculty might have had a hard time relocating in the past due to their limited research output. Schools may be more interested in recruiting such faculty in the future. Recent practical experience has been found to be an important factor in students' perceived quality of accounting faculty (Mounce et al., 2004). Of course, recruiting more experienced faculty is a zero sum game for schools as a whole and is not sustainable, but may help certain schools hire desirable faculty in the short run. It has been suggested that the 2013 accreditation standards may make it easier for non-US schools, with perhaps fewer doctorally qualified faculty, to become AACSB accredited.

The fact that the great majority of schools required doctorates of new tenure-track faculty may imply that many non AACSB accredited schools plan to seek such accreditation in the future. On the other hand, a small percentage of respondents indicated that they did not require doctorates for tenure-track faculty. Some schools may decide that if they are currently recognized for the teaching ability of their accounting faculty and the placement of their students, they can achieve their goals without AACSB accreditation (and without the high-priced terminally-qualified faculty which it requires). This could have enabled them to hire more efficiently (greater acceptance to offer ratio and using different techniques than other schools).

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The current research should be considered in light of its limitations. First, some of the information we obtained was based on administrators' perceptions of job applicants' factors of importance in accepting or rejecting a position. It is possible that these perceptions are incorrect. However, understanding such perceptions is valuable, since perceptions may lead to actions. Second, in performing exploratory research, we put more questions into the survey than many potential respondents were willing to take the time required to answer. Certain portions of the survey somewhat taxed respondents' memories and required estimates, e.g., the number of applications received by various methods. This challenge, combined with the length of the survey, may have caused some to drop out. However, excluding those who dropped upon encountering that section

of the survey did not appear to change the demographic composition of the remaining group. Thus we believe the respondents are reasonably representative of the population.

Our assertions about whether factors appear to be over- or underweighted are based on qualitative comparisons with prior research (Hunt et al., 2009) rather than upon statistical inferences from comparing recruiter vs. candidate perceptions on the same position. We believe this latter limitation is somewhat mitigated by the two studies' being conducted during similar prevailing conditions of limited supply.

An additional limitation is that the number of doctoral schools responding is fairly low. The small number of doctoral schools may have resulted in a lack of power, which could have mitigated against finding more significant differences between doctoral and nondoctoral schools. However, the number of schools that offer doctoral degrees with a concentration in accounting is small (91) in relation to the total population of schools offering accounting programs. The percentage of doctoral schools in the sample actually approximates the percentage of doctoral schools to total schools in the U.S. Further analysis determined that the percentage of respondents from "Top 25" doctoral schools was slightly greater than that of total US doctoral programs. Thus, we have considerable evidence that doctoral school respondents are representative of the population of doctoral schools. Analyses of teaching vs. RB schools produced generally similar results to those obtained by using the doctoral/nondoctoral dichotomy, with much larger numbers of respondents in the smaller group. This provides additional support for our findings.

The much greater number of negative comments than positive comments about the recruiting process may indicate that individuals from schools that were dissatisfied with the hiring process were more likely to respond to the survey. We have no way of knowing if this is true. However, one might expect that in a very difficult market for hiring accounting faculty, more schools would be displeased than pleased with various aspects of the process.

Another limitation is that we surveyed only US schools. This makes drawing global implications about accounting faculty recruiting more difficult. Future research could examine international differences in methods of attracting and selecting candidates.

Future research could determine if schools take different approaches in attracting new PhDs vs. enticing faculty members away from other schools or if they believe different factors may affect success or failure in hiring these different groups of faculty. Research also might examine the issue of whether faculty were expected to teach in more than one area, such as auditing/systems or financial/governmental.

Future research could attempt to determine the relative quality of applicants attracted by different techniques. Some methods may attract a number of unqualified applicants while others may attract a much smaller, but higher-quality, pool of applicants.

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