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TO: Organizations recruiting accounting students at New Mexico State University

FROM: New Mexico State University Accounting Faculty

SUBJECT: Principles for recruiting accounting students at New Mexico State University

On the recommendation of our Accounting Advisory Council, we, the accounting faculty at New Mexico State University (NMSU), have established the following “principles-based,” as opposed to “rules-based,” guidelines for recruiting accounting students at NMSU. In general, NMSU asks employers to adhere to the standards set forth by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). The additional guidelines presented here are intended to complement those standards and thereby improve the recruiting process.

Preamble

As faculty, we use our unique position to take an active and significant role in the recruitment of our students. Throughout the recruiting process we seek to honor the position of trust we hold with our students. For organizations new to recruiting at NMSU, we help them understand our university’s recruiting process. We also help facilitate interactions between recruiters and students to help build relationships, help recruiters identify promising candidates, and help students identify employers of interest. Underlying every activity is our belief that one of our primary responsibilities is to serve as advocates for our students throughout a process that to them is unfamiliar and oftentimes stressful.

We understand and appreciate the pressure our recruiters face in a competitive job market driven by an increased demand for accounting services and a tight supply of qualified accounting graduates. Nevertheless, we believe that it is in the long-term best interest of our profession, our University, our recruiting organizations, and, most importantly, our students, that our graduates accept the positions that are the best fit for them both personally and professionally. With that in mind, we are offering the following two principles to serve as guidelines for the recruitment of accounting students at New Mexico State University.

Principle 1: Recruiting organizations shall refrain from making offers of full-time employment that include start dates prior to a student's successful completion of the minimum education requirements of the related career path.

- **The 150-hour requirement.** If a career path eventually requires or recommends a CPA, students shall not be given offers that require them to begin working full-time before they have completely satisfied the 150-hour requirement and any other specific course requirements mandated in the state(s) in which they will foreseeably be licensed. Expecting students to earn additional hours of course credit and study for the CPA Exam at the same time that they are beginning their careers dramatically increases the likelihood of failure in their career and will ultimately lead to a loss of talent within the profession.

Principle 2: Recruiting organizations shall refrain from making offers of full-time employment that do not give students an adequate opportunity to evaluate their options.

- **Expiration date for offers.** Although informal recruiting occurs and is encouraged at NMSU on an almost perpetual basis, our formal recruiting season begins in late September with *Meet the Firms*. The majority of employers complete their second interviews and extend offers by mid-October. Thus, by that time, employers should have had an adequate opportunity to recruit students, and students should have had an adequate opportunity to evaluate their options. In keeping with Principle 2, **offers of full-time employment shall remain open until mid-October of the academic year in which a student expects to complete the minimum educational requirements of the position and the career path.**
 - Example: If a student expects to meet the 150-hour requirement in December 2006, May 2007, or August 2007, an offer for full-time employment should remain open through mid-October 2006. If an offer of full-time employment is extended to a student who expects to meet the 150-hour requirement in December 2007 (or later), that offer must remain open through mid-October 2007 (or later).
 - Early offers: Note that Principle 2 (and the more specific expiration date for offers) does not preclude employers from extending offers before formal recruiting starts nor does it preclude students from accepting offers at any time prior to the expiration date. In particular, employers may extend offers to students who have completed an internship or who have initiated contact seeking full-time employment. Principle 2 is not intended to force either employers or students into the formal recruiting process; it is intended only to give students the opportunity to fully participate in that process if they choose to do so.
- **Early signing bonuses for accepting offers.** First, by definition and design, early signing bonuses for accepting offers reduce the amount of time a student has to evaluate an offer. Second, early signing bonuses are generally immaterial, approximately 2% of starting salaries (gross), but appear significant to a college student. Early signing bonuses add a substantial amount of unnecessary stress to an already stressful process for students. **Early**

signing bonuses are not consistent with Principle 2 and should not be included with any offer extended to our students.

- **Follow-up contact.** It is entirely appropriate for recruiters to follow up with students after offers have been extended. Within the context of Principle 2, however, follow-up contact should not be designed to pressure students to make a decision about the offer. In follow-up contact with students, recruiters should not specifically discuss the offer or inquire about a student's decision unless the student initiates the discussion.

The list of specific items under Principles 1 and 2 is not intended to be exhaustive. Instead, these represent specific practices with which both recruiters and students have taken issue. As expected with principles-based guidelines, our hope is that our recruiters will collectively follow the spirit of the principles and, when in doubt, err of the side of acting in the interests of the students.

We appreciate your support of the accounting program at New Mexico State University, and we look forward to continuing to work closely with you in the future.