



Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Search Committee Handbook

**CONDUCTING A FAIR AND EQUITABLE SEARCH:
BEST PRACTICES**

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
PREPARING YOUR AREA FOR RECRUITING DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF	3
THE POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUESTED APPLICATION MATERIAL	5
THE SEARCH COMMITTEE	6
EVALUATING CANDIDATES.....	6
ASSESSING CANDIDATES' CONTRIBUTION TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND WORK IN A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT	7
INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES	7
VETERANS INTERVIEW PREFERENCE.....	9
IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATOR ERRORS.....	10
HOW IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATOR ERRORS COMMONLY SHOW UP IN THE SEARCH PROCESS	11
REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATION ERRORS IN THE HIRING PROCESS	12
WELCOMING DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF.....	13
CONCLUSION.....	13
APPENDICES	14
Appendix A	14
Appendix B	15
Appendix C	16
REFERENCES.....	18

INTRODUCTION

This document is a resource for Faculty Search Committees as well as Administrative, At-Will Search Committees. Our intent is for this document to be a tool that you can consult throughout the search process to help meet the University's goals. The University of Wyoming is committed to equality in opportunities in hiring, professional development and career advancement regardless of race, gender, religion, color, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, creed, ancestry, political belief, or any other applicable protected category or participation in any protected activity as stated in UW Reg 1-3. We are obligated to ensure that fairness and equity takes place in every search process. Open and broad-based searches support the vision, mission, values and [2017-2022 University of Wyoming Strategic Plan](#). This also supports demonstrating diversity as an educational value. Full, fair, and open searches help us achieve our institutional goals.

You are encouraged to view the [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion website, Academic Affairs' website](#), as well as the [Human Resources website](#) for additional resources to support search committees. Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) staff are also available to discuss diversity goals and fair and equitable search practices by telephone or to meet with the Search Committee Chair and Search Committee for an in-person consultation.

PREPARING YOUR AREA FOR RECRUITING DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF

- ✓ Engage your department and staff in ongoing dialogues about diversity, equity, and inclusion. This list can be used as potential dialogue topics or to help you create your own topics:
 - Why is diversity relevant to your college, your students, your mission, and strategic plan?
 - What does diversity look like for your unit, i.e. what perspectives are missing?
 - What are the advantages for your unit and for the diverse people you hire?
 - What are some potential collaborations you could have with the diverse hires?
 - How are we keeping up with new or emerging fields in this discipline, departmental best practices, etc.?
 - How can our department better reflect the students we serve?
 - How does this position contribute to the University and department goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion?

- ✓ Reach out to colleagues at institutions that have diverse faculty and students to identify high-potential female and underrepresented minority candidates and encourage them to apply for the position.

- ✓ Sustained and successful recruitment of diverse faculty and staff are focused on relationship building. Consider recruitment to be an ongoing process. Develop, build, or maintain relationships with diverse faculty, staff, graduate, and undergraduate students

locally, nationally, and globally. Cultivating long-term relationships and building connections increases the acceptance rates. There are three highly effective ways of building a sustainable pipeline of potential diverse faculty and staff (Delamater, 2016).

- Develop deep and long-term relationships with a small number of faculty and students at other institutions. Start with faculty in your area who have already developed relationships with colleagues at diverse colleges and universities. Annual visits to these campuses are encouraged to maintain relationships, provide presentations, and highlight opportunities at UW. These relationships will develop a pool of feeder schools or departments.
 - Organize symposia or use existing opportunities, i.e., MLK Days of Dialogue, Shepard Symposium, or other events. Encourage three to five diverse graduate students and faculty attending the feeder schools to present. Hosts informal exchanges, tours, and receptions for them to showcase UW. Keep in contact with these faculty and graduate students and forward job announcements as they become available.
 - Host professional development workshops for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. Take the opportunity to showcase UW by giving tour of research and lab facilities. Provide opportunities to network with faculty and staff in your department (Delamater, 2016).
- ✓ Advertise broadly, including interest groups with diverse faculty audiences. The University of Wyoming has prepared a list of recruitment resources at: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/files/resources-for-diverse-talent-acquisition.pdf>. Additional UW hiring and search resources are found here: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/epo/hiring/index.html>. You may also find the resources listed below useful:
- **Institute on Teaching and Mentoring:** This is the nation's largest academic conference that has the greatest number of minority and underrepresented Ph.D. scholars in attendance. The website is located at: <https://instituteonteachingandmentoring.org/>.
 - **Faculty for the Future:** Links a diverse pool of women and underrepresented minority candidates from engineering, science, and business with faculty and research positions at universities across the country: http://www.engr.psu.edu/fff/misc/services_positions.asp
 - **Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), 2017-2018 McNair Scholars Directory:** The Directory provides graduate schools with access to McNair Scholars who have expressed an interest in pursuing graduate studies. The directory information for recent graduates, seniors, and rising seniors. The Directory is available for download from COE's website at: <http://www.coenet.org/mcnair.shtml>. Contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the password to access the student information by calling (307)766-6672.

- **National Registry of Diverse & Strategic Faculty – “The Registry”:** This is a resource for tenure track/academic faculty members from underrepresented groups. The website is located at: <https://www.theregistry.ttu.edu/>.
- **Compact for Faculty Diversity Institute on Teaching and Mentoring Scholar Directory:** This database showcases more than 1,000 accomplished and successful doctoral scholars and doctorate recipients who are pursuing careers in the professorate. See the following link for more information: <https://dspdirectory.sreb.org/default.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2f&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>.
- **Ford Fellow Directory:** The Ford Foundation Fellowship Office of the National Resource Council maintains a searchable directory of Ford Fellowship recipients. There are more than 2,700 Ford Fellows of diverse backgrounds. Information can be accessed at: <http://nrc58.nas.edu/FordFellowDirect/Main/Main.aspx>.
- **MIT Provost’s Office Directory of Science & Engineering Faculty:** The directory profiles the achievement of African, Native, and Latino Americans to aid graduate schools and departments in their search for potential speakers, mentors, visiting and permanent faculty and other opportunities for professional growth. Copies can be ordered at: <http://web.mit.edu/provost/sef-directory/mission.html>.

THE POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUESTED APPLICATION

MATERIAL

- ✓ Develop a clear position announcement including minimum qualifications and experience desired and the priority of the criteria. This will be your screening criteria for the matrix or rubric you use to evaluate all candidates. The Office of Human Resources has a hiring toolkit at: <http://www.uwyo.edu/hr/hiring-toolkit/index.html> that has information on writing job postings as well as other useful tools.
- ✓ Review the position announcement for its ability to widen the applicant pool. Human Resources (HR) will automatically include language to the job announcement signaling special interest in applicants who contribute to the department’s diversity priorities. You are welcome work with HR to tailor this language to best fit your department and job opening.
- ✓ Request that candidates add a diversity statement when they submit their application materials.
- ✓ Request applicants share how they have contributed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their previous and current positions and what are their potential contributions to these at the University of Wyoming.

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

- ✓ The role of the search committee chair is critical throughout the hiring process. For guidance on best practices, review Purdue University ADVANCE: [Essential Elements for a Successful Search: Search Chair Workshop on Faculty Hiring](#). The information found here is useful for faculty and administrative staff searches.
- ✓ Assemble a diverse group to serve as your search committee. The search committee should reflect the diversity of the broader community that the UW serves. Consider background, ethnicity, gender, age and any underrepresented groups for your area or discipline. Studies show that having a diverse search committee that includes people of color and women has a positive impact on assessing candidates' materials (Kang et al., 2012; Sommers, 2006) and decreases the chances of discrimination (Heilman, 1980). Contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for support assembling a diverse search committee.
- ✓ Consider the staff in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to be a resource and your "Equity Advisors" during the entire search process. You are encouraged to contact them at any stage of the process at diversity@uwyo.edu or 307.766.6672.
- ✓ The search chair must provide each member of the search committee a copy of this search manual to read and you are encouraged to discuss the main points at the preliminary search meeting. ODEI staff are available to assist in facilitating this conversation if desired.
- ✓ Ensure that all applicants are evaluated only on the qualifications/criteria listed in the job announcement. These qualifications and criteria should also be in the matrices or rubrics.

EVALUATING CANDIDATES

- ✓ We recommend that the search committee is given their charge at the first full committee meeting. The matrix or rubric for evaluating the applications is shared prior to the start of the evaluation or rating process to answer questions. It is important for a fair and consistent evaluation process that all committee members fully understand the matrix and the criteria for evaluating the applicants.
- ✓ The matrix or rubric contains related criteria for screening applicants. If you need assistance in developing one your HR Recruiter can supply examples, templates, and suggestions. There is also a sample Matrix provided on the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Hiring Matrix FAQ Webpage. Please click [here](#) to find that page.
- ✓ Communicate to all search committee members that diversity and fairness are everyone's responsibility and that all candidates will receive due consideration. Consider faculty and staff from other disciplines and departments who can assess leadership skills, collaboration, communication skills, organizational skills, and other abilities that will enable the person to be an asset to your department and field.

- ✓ Instruct search committee members to listen for inclusive language in the answers of the candidates and ask follow up questions as needed to more accurately evaluate their potential contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals for your areas. If you need assistance identifying appropriate diversity related questions for the interview, please see the next section. You are also welcome to contact the ODEI staff for more ideas.

ASSESSING CANDIDATES' CONTRIBUTION TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND WORK IN A DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT

Potential open-ended questions you can ask or that can be used to help develop your own are:

- ✓ “Our university/college/division/department values diversity among its students, faculty, and staff, and we have made a commitment to promoting and increasing diversity. We would like you to discuss your related diversity work experience or working/teaching in a multicultural environment.”
- ✓ “What do you see as the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly diverse academic community?”
- ✓ “What have you done, formally or informally, to meet such challenges and utilize opportunities?”
- ✓ “How have you worked with students and others to foster the creation of an inclusive environment that supports diversity and inclusion in the curricular and co-curricular learning experiences of a college campus?”
- ✓ “How have you mentored, supported, or encouraged students on your campus? What about underrepresented minority students, women, veterans, international students or individuals with disabilities?”
- ✓ “In what ways have you integrated diversity as part of your professional development?”

INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

- ✓ For phone or video conferencing interviews, do your best to keep all interviews consistent, following the same format which should include introducing all members of the search committee as well as thanking the candidate for joining you.
- ✓ Decide on the type of technology to use for screening applicants prior to campus interviews. Telephone interviews may create a level playing field for diverse applicants. For instance, while young adults may be more comfortable with video conferencing technology, older qualified adults may not be as comfortable with its use.

Geographical location of applicants may be an issue as well and may create technology challenges from remote locations that may interrupt the interview process putting some qualified applicants at a disadvantage. Research has also shown that video interviews can cause unease and anxiety. If you still chose to move forward with video technology, we recommend offering the candidate the opportunity to choose to have the video on or off. (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Seitz, 2015).

- ✓ For in-person interviews, select a pleasant location where there will be no interruptions. Use accessible locations for on-campus interviews. Holding the interviews in accessible locations can prevent difficulties for candidates with disabilities and help prevent search committee members from inadvertently violating rules on what can and cannot be asked regarding ability during the interview process. Under no circumstances should candidates be asked during the interview to disclose a disability.
- ✓ You cannot ask an applicant if they have a disability or if they need an accommodation even if the applicant has a visible disability, is in a wheelchair, has a prosthetic limb, appears blind, etc. The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act prohibits any pre-employment questions about a person's disability. Before the job is offered, you can ask the applicant about their ability to perform specific job functions with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- ✓ Questions cannot be asked about medications, job injuries, filing of worker's compensation claims, addiction to or treatment for drugs and/or alcohol.
- ✓ You can communicate to *all* candidates the availability to request ADA accommodations for their interviews prior to coming to campus by contacting Human Resources. *The search committee should not arrange these accommodations.*
- ✓ You may ask candidates if they are able to perform the essential duties of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation.
- ✓ Ask a set of predetermined, prepared questions in the same format and order for each candidate. Let the candidates do the majority of the talking and listen carefully to their answers to help you accurately complete your evaluations. Ask clarifying and follow up questions as needed.
- ✓ Take notes documenting details pertaining to the job duties and the candidates' qualifications. Never write anything personal or anything related to an individual's real or assumed protected status or other personal characteristics.
- ✓ You may NOT ask questions regarding a candidate's race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, political persuasion, disability, age, ancestry, marital status, or family situations. For instance, you cannot ask if there is a spouse that will need location assistance if they are hired. Do not ask about plans to

start a family, child-care arrangements, number of children, etc. These types of questions might inadvertently be asked as part of unstructured conversation during a meal or a walk across campus. While this may seem like casual and cultural friendly small talk, there is no down time during the interviews and all conversations are considered part of the interview process. **Search committees and people on the interview schedules must be made aware of this.**

- ✓ It is unlawful to ask applicants or candidates where they were born, the origin of their last names, or the country of their citizenship. You can ask applicants or candidates their legal authorization to work in the position being filled but this must be asked of ALL applicants. Applicants cannot be asked questions about their native languages. You can ask if they speak languages other than English, if it is helpful or required for them to be bilingual or multilingual to perform the job being filled. This would be listed in the job announcement and part of the criteria assessed on the matrix or rubric during screening as well.
- ✓ Use caution when inquiring about an applicant's personal history and business. You cannot make inquiries about political affiliation, memberships in professional organizations that suggest race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, genetic information, health, sexual orientation, age, etc.
- ✓ Comments about the candidate's skin color, height, weight or perceived sexual orientation cannot be asked as well. We recommend steering clear of comments about hair and clothing because these could also have or be perceived as having racial, gender, religious connotations or overtones.
- ✓ You may ask questions about candidate's related military experience if it is listed in their application material but you may not ask about type of discharge. Questions about arrest record and conviction cannot be asked.

VETERANS INTERVIEW PREFERENCE

The University of Wyoming modified its interviewing practices effective July 1, 2017 to comply with Wyoming State law, W.S. 19-14-102, as amended. The intent of the law is to help veterans and surviving spouses' entry and re-entry into the workforce. The University supports and honors this act.

Pursuant to the new law, an honorably discharged veteran who has been a resident of the State of Wyoming for one (1) year or more at any time prior to the date when the veteran applies for employment. A surviving spouse who was married to such veteran at the time of the veteran's death, who is receiving federal survivor benefits based on the veteran's military service and is applying for employment, shall receive an interview preference during the applicant screening process with the University of Wyoming. At the time of application, the applicant must possess

the business capacity, competency, education or other qualifications required for the position. Appropriate documentation of veteran status must be provided at time of application as outlined in the application process. No preference is given to a veteran currently employed by the University or State agency.

To meet this mandate, the University will interview all veteran applicants who meet the new guidelines and meet the minimum qualifications of the job. Human Resources will provide information to the chair of the search committee regarding any veterans who may qualify for this preference.

IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATOR ERRORS

Research shows that unconscious bias and assumptions can influence searches. This occurrence is implicit bias. Implicit bias is the unconscious and often unnoticed stereotypes people can have that can influence decisions that often negatively affect women, racial minorities, persons with disabilities, and other diverse groups during the hiring process. Read more about implicit bias by visiting: http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/docs/BiasBrochure_3rdEd.pdf.

Other resources on implicit bias can be found here:

- ✓ Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). (n.d.). What you don't know: The science of unconscious bias and what to do about it in the search and recruitment process [Online video tutorial]. Retrieved from:
 - https://www.aamc.org/members/leadership/catalog/178420/unconscious_bias.html.
- ✓ Kang, J. (2013). Immaculate perception: Jerry Kang (UCLA law professor) at TEDxSanDiego 2013 [Video, 13:58 min]. Retrieved from:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VGBwNI6Ssk>.
- ✓ Funchess, M. (2014). Implicit bias – how it effects us and how we push through: Melanie Funchess (director of Community Engagement at Mental Health Association) at TEDxFlourCity 2014. [Video, 16:12 min.]. Retrieved from:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fr8G7MtRNik>.
- ✓ Pressner, K. (2016). Are you Biased? I am: Kristen Pressner (global head of human resources at a multinational firm) at TEDxBasel 2016) [Video, 8:48 min.]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bq_xYSOZrgU.
- ✓ Harvard University- Project Implicit. Online Implicit Bias tests found at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

HOW IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATOR ERRORS COMMONLY SHOW UP IN THE SEARCH PROCESS

While we all like to believe that we are objective and neutral, each person has a unique lifetime of knowledge and cultural experiences that informs our review of applicants. Cultural norms influence our perceptions toward one another all the time. This is true for every demographic. We may be conscious and unconscious about these influences. Therefore, whether we know it or not, we often apply generalizations that may or may not be valid when evaluating candidates during a position search. Here are some examples:

- ✓ A common cultural norm screening committee error is the *Similar to Me Effect*. This is a tendency for people to favorably judge other people who are more similar to rather than dissimilar to them in background, attitudes, interests, and behaviors.
- ✓ Another common search committee error is the *Contrast Effect*. This happens when applicants are evaluated relative to other applicants in the pool rather than to the extent to which the person could fulfill the job requirements. Other screening committee errors are:
 - *Halo Effect* – Evaluators’ overall assessments of the applicants influences their scoring of the applicants for all job requirements being rated.
 - *First Impressions* – Evaluators’ first impressions dictate their ratings for all areas during the interview, whether by telephone, video conference, or in person.
 - *Central Tendency* – Evaluators are reluctant to give good or bad ratings to applicants, even when there are applicants who deserve high or low ratings.
 - *Leniency* – Evaluators give all the applicants favorable ratings, even when there are applicants who deserve average or poor ratings.
 - *Tough Mindedness* – Evaluators gives unfavorable responses about applicants, even when not deserved.
 - *Random Assessment* – Evaluators haphazardly assigns ratings to give the appearance of being thorough evaluators of the applicants.
 - *Logical Rating* – Evaluators give high ratings to an applicant on one performance measure because they gave another applicant a high rating on a different performance measure.
 - *Raising the Bar* – Evaluators fall into negative stereotypes and hold certain groups to a higher standard to prove they are NOT incompetent rather than focusing on the criteria as outlined in the job announcement, matrix or rubric.
 - *Group Momentum* – When evaluators seem to be heading in the direction of one candidate without fully considering all the candidates.
 - *Filtering Out rather than Filtering In* – Evaluators looking to quickly move through the applications may miss diverse contributions and candidates when quickly moving through applications.

REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS AND EVALUATION ERRORS IN THE HIRING PROCESS

Encourage members of the search committee to learn about the potential impact of implicit or unconscious bias in the search process. To have personal implicit bias information, we recommend that search committee members take the implicit-association test (IAT) sponsored by Harvard University. This social psychology measure grounded in decades of research has contributions from scholars from around the world. To learn more about Project Implicit that was founded in 1998 and IAT where you can access the confidential test online visit: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html>. This test can raise personal awareness and help reduce implicit bias during the hiring process.

Another good research to support reducing implicit bias is a video by Brian Welle, posted by Google Ventures. The video includes questions, answers, and solutions to address implicit bias. Visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLjFTHTgEVU> to access this online resource. (Time commitment: 1 hour.)

Focus on following suggestions to ensure that you have fair and equitable search practices to fill positions in your area:

- ✓ Work to broaden your search and to increase the number of minorities, women, veterans and individuals with disabilities in your pools.
- ✓ Work with your search committee to make sure that you are recruiting outside your comfort zones.
- ✓ Decide upon screening criteria prior to evaluating applications (using the minimum and preferred qualifications from your position ad as your guideposts).
- ✓ Review the criteria with the search committee and apply these criteria consistently to all candidates during every stage of the evaluation process.
- ✓ Be able to defend each decision for eliminating or advancing a candidate.
- ✓ Step back and evaluate yourself. Are biases or assumptions influencing you? Are you applying equal scrutiny to each applicant? Are you worrying about how a candidate will “fit in” to your department or program?
- ✓ Be open to what constitutes excellence in a candidate:
 - Value non-traditional career paths.
 - Appreciate non-traditional or outside-the-mainstream research interests or publications.

Knowing yourself and having an awareness of your tendencies towards any of these evaluator errors can help you take steps to avoid them. Make a conscious effort to keep them out of the evaluation process to keep the search process fair and equitable. This knowledge can help you treat each applicant with fairness and equity. Search Committee Chairs can use these strategies to address evaluator errors:

1. Coach your committee and provide reminders.

2. Check in with your search committee members at every stage in the process to provide support.
3. Set expectations of reading the Search Committee Handbook and raising awareness about evaluator errors and implicit bias.
4. Use your leadership to insist on evidence for filtering out candidates.
5. Contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to discuss any concerns you may have at any point during the hiring process.

WELCOMING DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF

We recommend providing all candidates with information about campus, local and regional diversity resources. The list is as follows:

- ✓ University of Wyoming department and office resources: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/resources/departments-and-offices.pdf>.
- ✓ Local resources: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/resources/local-resources.pdf>.
- ✓ Accessibility resources: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/resources/accessibility-resources.pdf>.
- ✓ Veterans and military resources: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/resources/veterans-and-military.pdf>.
- ✓ Nontraditional and graduate student resources: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/resources/nontraditional-and-graduate-resources.pdf>.
- ✓ Calendar of holidays and religious observances: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/religious-calendar/index.html>.
- ✓ DACA Fact Sheet: <http://www.uwyo.edu/diversity/outbox/daca-fact-sheet-9-18-17.pdf>

We also recommend that candidates are asked if there are other colleagues or resources they would like to have access to while researching the University and upon their visit to Laramie and UW. This will provide diverse candidates the opportunity to request and meet other diverse faculty, staff and UW community members who may help them make the decision to join the UW community. (Pauline Kayes, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at 307-766-6672 to discuss ways to diversify your search and work towards fulfilling the UW Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 as it relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The office staff is available for in-person consultations with the search committee. Telephone consultations and email support are also available. There is also information on our website: www.uwyo.edu/diversity. A focus on ensuring that we provide an inclusive, welcoming, and diverse learning environment for students is a priority. The research shows that diverse faculty and staff has a positive impact on recruiting and retaining diverse student populations. Diversity and inclusion are necessary to prepare University of Wyoming students for success after graduation in increasingly diverse and global work environments.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Evaluating a Search

Date: _____ Department: _____ Position: _____

Search Committee Chair: _____

Search Committee Members: _____

Timing:

- ✓ Did you follow the time-line established at the start of the search?
- ✓ Did you spend less/more than what was allocated for the search?
- ✓ What issues or concerns do you have about timing in this search?

Advertising:

- ✓ Did you make special effort to increase the diversity of the pool?
- ✓ What were these special efforts?
- ✓ What were the outcomes of these efforts in the applicant pool, interview candidates, offers made and offers accepted?

Campus Interviews:

- ✓ Were all candidates' visits to conducted as similarly as possible?
- ✓ Were all candidates treated respectfully and asked the same questions?
- ✓ Were candidates given the opportunity to request specific visits or meetings?
- ✓ What issues or concerns do you have about the campus interview?

Communication:

- ✓ Did you respond in a timely manner to prospective candidates?
- ✓ Did you promptly notify candidates who were no longer under consideration?
- ✓ Did you notify the finalists who were not selected as promptly as possible?
- ✓ What issues or concerns do you have about your communication with candidates?

Resources:

- ✓ What on-campus resources were most helpful to you during the search?
- ✓ How did you obtain these resources? From what office(s) or website(s)?
- ✓ What additional support was needed?

Search Evaluation Form

What were some of the strengths of the process? What went well?

What are some areas of the process that need improvement? What did not go as well?

Why did your recent hire accept the position? What went right in the search?

Why did any candidate reject your offer? What went wrong in the search?

[Appendix C](#)

Sample Search Committee Written Guidance and Expectations from Search Committee Chair



Department Letterhead

To: List Intended Recipients
From: List Sender
Re: Search for INSERT POSITION
Date: Insert Date

I would like to thank you all for agreeing to serve on the advisory committee for the search INSERT POSITION TITLE. This new position will be critical in supporting UW's mission as a land grant university dedicated to teaching, research, and service to the state of Wyoming and beyond. INSERT ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE SEARCH COMMITTEE TO KNOW.

As soon as you are able, I would like you to begin to undertake the following responsibilities:

1. **OFCCP Training** – This course is required training for anyone involved in personnel decisions. The presentation covers Equal Opportunity Employment, Affirmative Action, and specific regulations related to Protected Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities. Please register for the 15-minute online training as soon as possible. **UW Employees:** <https://www.uwyo.edu/hr/employee-relations/professional-development/index/html>. **Non UW Employees:** <https://nccc.uwyo.edu> (The training is on the second page under “UW-A Diverse Workplace OFCCP Training”)
2. **Development of a pool of high-caliber applicants.** PLEASE NOTE IF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE WILL UTILIZE A SEARCH FIRM. The firm or the committee will work to develop a strong, deep pool of applicants. The position will require a strong record of professional accomplishment, a keen understanding of INSERT DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS. Please pay attention to the diversity of the applicant pool and to the principles of fair hiring and equal opportunity,
3. **Screening of applicants to produce a list of INSERT DESIRED NUMBER RANGE OF CANDIDATES FOR INTERVIEW.** This screening process should include the development of a short list based on well-defined criteria, the solicitation of references from candidates on the short list, references checking and telephone, Skype, or Zoom interviews, and careful scrutiny of each candidate's credentials and qualifications against the requirements announced in the position description. NOTE: If using a search firm: The search firm will assist in the screening and vetting of candidates.

To facilitate the screening, a secure website will be established by UW or the search firm so committee members may view electronic versions of each applicant's materials. To ensure fair comparisons among short-list candidates, the committee should develop a set of common questions to ask candidates and their references during the telephone interviews and reference checks.

4. **Helping orchestrate and participate in any screening interviews with the public, campus interviews.** Each campus interview should involve opportunities for the candidate to interact with the deans and directors, PLEASE INSERT ANY IMPORTANT OFFICES FOR THE CANDIDATES TO MEET WITH.
5. **Follow up.** As soon as possible after the interviews, develop a refined list of each interviewee's strengths and weaknesses to help focus a discussion of the committee following the interviews.
6. **Delivery of this list to the INSERT RESPECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE no later than INSERT DATE.** If you have a list earlier, all the better. Please leave the list unranked, but include a summary of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses. This list should be a confidential communication from the committee to the committee chair.

I have asked PLEASE INSERT NAME in INSERT OFFICE to provide staff assistance as you do your work. INSERT NAME will chair the committee.

A few tricky topics commonly arise in searches. I hope the following observations help clarify matters:

- **Salary.** The committee need not try to answer candidates' questions about salary, which will be subject to negotiations after the interviews.
- **Tenure and rank.** (If applicable) During your screening process, questions about tenure and academic rank may arise. I expect the successful candidate to have a professional record that is ongoing and impressive. (If Applicable) Administrative assignments are at will, and any discussion outside of the specific administrative appointment is beyond the scope of the committee's responsibilities.
- **Confidentiality.** Please keep the identities of applicants confidential, except insofar as it is necessary to discuss their applications with people during the reference-checking stage. The final interview will be open to the public, at which point confidentiality is no longer an issue.
- **Contacting references.** It is a matter of courtesy not to contact references or others about an applicant's candidacy until you have selected the applicant for a short list. At that point, it is appropriate for the chair of the search committee to contact the applicant to ask (a) if the person is still interested in the position and (b) if we may speak with references. This is also a good time to ask whether the candidate objects to the committee's contact with people not listed as references – a screening measure that is strongly recommended.
- **Appropriate conduct.** Please also conduct the interviews with professionalism. Internal candidates deserve special care. These people take a personal risk by offering to serve in a demanding job. Those who do not make the committee's short list deserve not to have this potentially discouraging fact circulated among their colleagues. Instead, they deserve our discreet and sincere thanks. Those who interview and do not get the job experience an unusually public disappointment. Please treat our colleagues' candidacies with the same high level of discretion, confidentiality, and dignity.

Thank you again for your willingness to serve. If you have any questions during any phase of the search, please do not hesitate to ask.

REFERENCES

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