Introduction

Northwestern University is committed to identifying and implementing ways to create and support a diverse and inclusive campus community. The institution strives to create an environment that fosters personal and intellectual growth by attracting to the University exemplary teachers and scholars with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. Toward this end, it is essential and expected that a thorough search in accordance with the following Faculty Search Guidelines (“Guidelines”) will be conducted when filling any full-time faculty position, as defined below. Such a search includes not only widespread publicizing of the position but also outreach to individuals who have not formally applied for the position. The Guidelines are prepared to assist deans, department chairs, and search committee chairs in carrying out searches for qualified candidates.

I. Scope

It is essential and expected that faculty search committees conduct a thorough search in accordance with the Guidelines when filling any full-time faculty position. “Full-time faculty” includes all tenure-line faculty, clinical faculty, instructional faculty, librarian faculty, lecturers, and faculty-in-residence, if the faculty member’s appointment is for two academic years or longer.

II. Exceptions

The Provost may approve an exception to the Guidelines in special cases, such as when a department or school has identified without a search a truly exceptional candidate who would greatly enhance its faculty, including by bringing additional diversity. In requesting such approval for the appointment of someone who is not a member of an underrepresented group (for purposes of these Guidelines, underrepresented groups include women, racial and ethnic minorities, veterans, and people with disabilities), the department or school must provide evidence that no underrepresented group member of comparable qualifications is available for appointment to the position.

III. Initial Stages of the Search

A. Before initiating a search to fill an actual or anticipated vacancy, the Office of the Provost must approve the search committee’s search plan, the proposed position announcement and venues for distribution, as well as the composition of the search committee.
B. Departments and schools are expected to define the position in broad terms so as to increase the diversity and competitiveness of their applicant pool.

C. The position announcement must include the following information:
   1. A brief statement of duties
   2. Minimum qualifications (e.g., degrees and experience requirements), other desirable credentials
   3. Rank and/or title – if either of these is negotiable, this should be stated
   4. State whether the position is full- or part-time, and whether it is continuing or for a specified term
   5. Proposed starting date
   6. Closing date for receipt of applications
   7. Contact information, including where applicants should send their credentials
   8. The following EEO statement:
      "Northwestern University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer of all protected classes, including veterans and individuals with disabilities. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply. Hiring is contingent upon eligibility to work in the United States."
   9. Proposed venues for distribution of announcement

D. The appropriate dean or department chair appoints a search committee, generally comprising three or more faculty members, including tenured and untenured individuals. Whenever feasible, a search committee should include female and underrepresented minority representation within the discipline or a closely allied discipline. Deans and department chairs are urged whenever possible to include on the search committee faculty members in related fields from schools or departments other than the school or department in which the appointment is proposed.

Search committees are expected to designate a faculty member from the department or school to serve as Equity Representative on the committee. The Equity Representative should be a senior faculty member serving on the search committee, but not as committee chair. The role of the Equity Representative is to ensure that best practices are followed during the search and that an active, affirmative, and equitable search is carried out. Equity Representatives are encouraged to consult with the Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion prior to the first formal meeting of the search committee.

Search committees are also encouraged to utilize the resources of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access, including their training in equal opportunity, diversity, and other topics relating to workplace equality.

E. The search committee develops plans for the search and completes pre-
search documentation, submitted online through Northwestern’s Faculty eRecruit system, for approval first by the department chair (or the chair’s proxy), and upon the chair’s approval then by the office of the dean, and upon the dean’s approval then by the Office of the Provost.

The pre-search documentation must include the following elements:

1. The composition of the search committee, including the name, sex, race/ethnicity, faculty rank, tenure status and department of each member, and designation of the Equity Representative
2. A copy of the position announcement

Search plans should include the specific steps that the committee will take to make active efforts to identify candidates from underrepresented groups. Such steps are expected to go beyond posting and advertising the availability of positions and may include, but need not be limited to, such active efforts as outreach to individuals who can assist in locating candidates; visits to locations where underrepresented candidates may be engaged; or individual meetings with underrepresented colleagues at professional gatherings.

F. After all approvals for the search are received, the position announcement will be posted publicly on the Northwestern Careers webpage, the Greater Chicago Midwest Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (GCM HERC) job board, and preapproved external venues.

IV. The Search

A. Undertake search as set forth in the approved search plan and supporting documentation.

B. Include approved position announcement with all publicity (advertisement, letters, etc.).

C. Create complete records, including:
   1. Copies of all advertisements and letters
   2. Notes on efforts to publicize, including recipients of advertisements and letters, special efforts to identify candidates from underrepresented groups, and phone calls

D. Acknowledge applications
   1. For each application, send written acknowledgement. Self-identification information must be solicited from all applicants, using the Self-Identification for Faculty Candidates procedure in the Faculty eRecruit system. It is the responsibility of the hiring department to enter

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1 For purposes of these Guidelines, an applicant is an individual who (i) is considered for the position; (ii) possesses the basic qualifications for the position; and (iii) at no point during the selection process removes himself or herself from consideration for, or indicates that he or she is no longer interested in, the position.
candidate email addresses into the Faculty and Staff Information Systems (FASIS) for this purpose. **It is essential that self-identification emails are promptly sent to applicants (within a business day after receipt of the application) to ensure compliance with federal law.**

2. Form letters may be used for initial acknowledgement and these should contain a brief statement to the effect of:
   a. receipt of application
   b. further contact will be forthcoming if deemed warranted

E. Conduct review of candidates

1. Search committee members should familiarize themselves with key findings in the literature on unconscious bias in academic hiring. Information on unconscious bias, including suggested strategies for minimizing bias and links to relevant studies, may be found in the Resources on Unconscious Bias page on the Office of the Provost website. Further assistance may be provided by the Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion.

2. If possible, the committee should ensure that the same group of two or more committee members conducts the initial review of each application, and that applications are screened using a uniform procedure at each stage.

3. It is helpful to date the receipt of all materials and maintain a log sheet recording all review steps for each candidate.

F. Create a “short list” of ideal candidates.

1. Rank-order the most likely candidates.

2. Submit the short list to the department chair and then the dean before any on-campus interviews are arranged. Documentation for each of the persons on the short list should be included.

3. If the short list does not include a candidate who is a member of an underrepresented group, the search committee chair, in consultation with the Equity Representative, should provide to the department chair and the dean documentation concerning each candidate who was seriously considered by the committee, and who is known to be a member of an underrepresented group.

4. Schools are encouraged to expand the number of candidates for on-campus interviews (e.g., four or five instead of three) if this will allow for a more diverse pool of finalists. All candidates must be deemed competitive in the overall pool.

5. Whenever possible, on-campus interviews should follow the short list as approved by the dean.

6. Search committees are responsible for asking candidates whether they require accommodation in order to participate in the interview process.
G. Recommend to make an offer

1. Recommendation should be made to the department chair or the dean.
2. Recommendation should be accompanied by:
   a. Completed Faculty Search Guidelines Summary Form.
   b. Material pertaining to the achievements of the proposed candidate (CV, letters of recommendation, etc.).
   c. If the proposed candidate is not a member of an underrepresented group, include the CV and other supporting materials for each short-listed candidate who is known to be a member of an underrepresented group.
3. Recommendation should include specific comparison of the proposed candidate to all other short-listed candidates (in particular, candidates who are members of underrepresented groups), and the reasons why the other candidates were not chosen.

V. Review by the Office of the Provost

A. The school dean submits the search committee’s recommendation to the Office of the Provost for review, using Northwestern’s Faculty eOffer form in the Faculty eRecruit system. The recommendation should include all of the supporting materials referenced in Section IV.G.

B. No offer, oral or written, may be made for a full-time faculty position before the Office of the Provost has reviewed the materials submitted and approved the appointment.

VI. School or Department Responsibility

A. After the appointment is made, assemble search records for maintenance, including:
   1. Pre-search approval documentation.
   2. All correspondence between the department and dean, the chairperson’s request to fill the position, the dean’s authorization to search, and the dean’s authorization of a campus visit.
   3. All advertisements and notices of the position, photocopies or scans of the actual ads and notices, and correspondence pertaining to placement of ads, including names of websites and associated links.
   4. All notes and other documents pertaining to the department’s special efforts to seek out candidates who are members of underrepresented groups for the position.
   5. All letters of application, CVs, and other supporting materials of candidates. Notations on correspondence (such as “Send standard NO letter”) are especially useful.
   6. All letters of recommendation, solicited or unsolicited
   7. All interview notes (interview notes should reference only
considerations that relate directly to job responsibilities).

8. All follow-up correspondence and notes of follow-up telephone calls about candidates' qualifications.

9. All written evaluations about candidates' written work.

10. Lists of those who advanced beyond the first screening and were seriously considered – e.g. candidates interviewed in their graduate departments, at professional meetings, on the telephone or virtually via Skype, etc.

B. Retain all search records, including letters relating to unsolicited applications, for at least three years, whether or not a formal offer was made. Pre-search approval documentation, the Faculty Search Guidelines Summary form, and copies of the position announcement should be kept for at least ten years or indefinitely.

VII. Responding to Unsolicited Applications

Departments and schools occasionally receive unsolicited applications for positions that have not been advertised or do not in fact exist. These letters should be acknowledged. It is important not to make any commitment that implies that the department or school will review the application. Instead, the acknowledgement should state that no appropriate vacancy currently exists.