

## **Expected Practices for UO Tenure-Track Faculty Searches**

This document outlines the practices that search committees are expected to use when hiring tenure-track faculty. These practices should be considered minimal standards, and search committees are encouraged to go above and beyond to ensure that we are maximizing the university's ability to attract and recruit outstanding, highly competitive candidates while also increasing our representation of women and underrepresented minorities.

### **1. Establish a Diverse and Inclusive Search Committee**

It is the responsibility of all search committee members and unit leadership to ensure an inclusive process that reflects best practices.

- The search committee should be diverse (in demographics, contributions to equity and inclusion, junior/senior status, areas within the field, etc.).

In situations where a department is unable to identify members from underrepresented groups, or where it would place a disproportionate burden of service on members from underrepresented groups, it is important that the committee includes members who have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and have sufficient experience to speak to these issues during the search process.

As much as is possible, ensure that committee members have effective and varied networks for outreach.

- Ensure that search committee members and other faculty who will interact with candidates understand and are committed to refraining from asking candidates inappropriate or illegal questions during the search, recruitment, and offer negotiation process. Examples of situations to avoid include:
  - Asking additional questions of one candidate that are not asked of others, except where necessary to clarify an answer to a question asked of all candidates or to clarify information in a candidate's application materials.
  - Asking questions that elicit personal information rather than job-related information. Some non-job-related information, such as number and age of children, can lead to impermissible discrimination. The less non-job-related information you have, the less that information could possibly enter into, or be perceived as entering into, a selection decision.

## **2. Ensure All Committee Members Receive Implicit Bias Training**

All search committee members must complete an in-person implicit bias training every three years prior to beginning candidate review. The first committee meeting should include a discussion on who has/not attended an in-person implicit bias training.

The training schedule is available at <https://inclusion.uoregon.edu/implicitbias>. A recorded version is available online (<https://is-cc-media.uoregon.edu/media/CODAC/20160211implicitbias.mp4>) as a refresher for anyone who would like to view it, and for exceptional situations when attending an in-person session is not possible. As there is significant benefit to engaging with colleagues in the conversations that happen during workshop sessions, the recorded version does not count toward the three-year requirement, but may be used only one time for one year's service on a search committee.

## **3. Consider Utilizing a Search Process Advocate**

Oregon State University currently offers a robust Search Advocate Program. UO has recently been exploring ways to incorporate OSU's successful program into our search processes. Search process advocates are UO employees who volunteer to serve on searches, with the goal of helping ensure that the search process is fair and equitable. The advocate does not attempt to substitute their judgment for the judgment of committee members. Rather, an advocate asks questions to help committee members test their thinking and recognize the implications of assumptions, strategies, and practices under consideration.

If you are interested in exploring whether a search process advocate would be helpful for your search, please contact Charlotte at [cmoatsga@uoregon.edu](mailto:cmoatsga@uoregon.edu).

## **4. Establish Criteria for the Position**

Carefully consider and articulate the criteria that matter for the position. Use these criteria to develop the position announcement and throughout the search process as a guide for evaluating candidates.

- Ensure that the criteria have a direct relationship to the position.
- Include contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion in the search criteria. (See options discussed in step 5 below for how these contributions can be included in the position announcement.)
- Consider whether traditional descriptions of criteria for the position may present a barrier to talented, historically underrepresented candidates.

- Consider whether there are equivalent alternative criteria that could be considered for candidates to demonstrate scholarly excellence, pedagogical strength, innovation, creativity.
- Determine whether the announcement should describe the position very broadly to signal an openness to an array of backgrounds, or if an emphasis on a particular area is more beneficial to recruiting a diverse pool of candidates (i.e., clarify that the position will work on issues specific to a certain demographic such as healthcare for African Americans as opposed to healthcare in general).
- Discuss how the criteria will ultimately be assessed (potentially creating a rubric for the evaluation of candidates) as that may impact how the requirements are framed in the position announcement (e.g., if the position requires excellence in teaching or research, how will the committee determine the candidate demonstrates these qualifications).

## **5. Develop the Position Announcement**

- As mentioned in step 4, the position announcement should articulate the hiring criteria and the search committee should have come to agreement on how the candidate can meet that criteria before the announcement is posted.
- Consider utilizing the Gender Decoder tool to better assess if the announcement potentially includes language that candidates identifying as female may find exclusionary.
- Signal explicitly that both the Department and the University value equity, diversity, and inclusion and their contributions to the intellectual life of UO. This can be done by including contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a preferred qualification and requiring candidates to address this criteria in a cover letter or separate statement (see examples below).

### Examples:

1) Address the criteria as a preferred qualification (e.g., “A successful candidate will support and enhance a diverse learning and working environment”).

2) Suggest that candidates address criteria in cover letter (e.g., “UO is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and pluralistic faculty committed to teaching and working in a multicultural environment and strongly encourages applications from minorities, women, and people with disabilities. Applicants are asked to include in their cover letter information about how they have furthered/will further this goal”).

3) Specify that candidates are required to submit a statement addressing their contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion in more detail such as discussing:

- An understanding of inequities in academia faced by historically underrepresented or disadvantaged groups,
- Evidence of successful mentoring, teaching, or outreach aimed to reduce barriers for underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, and
- Specific plans for how the candidate could contribute to departmental goals to create a diverse and inclusive community through current campus programs or new activities, or through national or off-campus organizations.

Note: UO position announcements will automatically include official language regarding the UO's non-discrimination & Affirmative Action policy.

#### **6. Advertise the Position**

- Distribute the position announcement widely, using availability data to inform targeted outreach.
- Advertise in forums, groups, or organizations that serve underrepresented groups. Refer to the Diversity Resources list (at the bottom of <https://hr.uoregon.edu/recruitment/hiring-faculty-and-staff/recruitment-advertising-guide/faculty-position/faculty>) for potential options and/or address other appropriate locations that you have identified.
- Include discipline-specific affinity groups (e.g., Association of Black Psychologists and the National Latina/o Psychological Association).
- Use cross-disciplinary listservs and hiring platforms if appropriate.

#### **7. Use Additional Contacts for Active Recruitment**

Identify candidates who might not otherwise apply. Specifically and methodically seek out highly qualified candidates from underrepresented communities.

- Encourage all members of the unit – not just those on the search committee – to reach out to connections in the field.
- Make the direct contact. Have every search committee call, email, or text at least three contacts (e.g., former colleagues, mentors, students). Keep a common spreadsheet and hold each other accountable.
- Directly engage established mentors. In any field, there are likely to be a few professors who have a proven track record of mentoring underrepresented students onto faculty trajectories. Find out who those people are, and contact

them for their recommendations about possible candidates. Also, ask them to share the position announcement with others and encourage their mentees to apply.

- Attend meetings of discipline-specific groups, interact with potential candidates, and encourage them to apply for positions.
- Maintain a list of potential recruits who will be on the market within a year or two.
- Obtain and study lists from societies that mentor students and postdocs for academic jobs.

## 8. Evaluate the Pool

Prior to the closing date for applicants, work with the Active Recruitment Team contact to review the demographic representation of the candidates. This should be done with enough time to be able to make further efforts to broaden the pool.

If at the closing date the applicant pool seems limited or unrepresentative in comparison with availability, engage in an evaluation of the search to explore reasons for the data discrepancies. This evaluation may lead to new insights or confirm known barriers and obstacles.

- Review the preceding process and take additional steps to broaden the pool.
- Consider extending the date before reviewing applicants and contacting applicants with incomplete files.
- Consider postponing search for a year to allow for additional active recruiting.

Note: Consistent with the Active Recruitment for Tenure Track Searches process (<https://provost.uoregon.edu/conducting-ttf-search>), HR will provide the applicant pool data<sup>1</sup> to the search committee and the Active Recruitment Team twice-- at one point prior to the application deadline and immediately after the deadline. If the applicant pool data after the deadline is not reasonably consistent with availability data, and after discussions with the Active Recruitment Team, dean, and the Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (EVPAA), no compelling case can be made to continue the search with the existing applicant pool, the search committee, dean, and/or EVPAA have the option to fail the search. If a search is failed at this

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the utility of the applicant pool data may be impacted by the number of applicants. If there is a very small number of applicants in a particular demographic, the data may not be shared as broadly as when there are large numbers of applicants in order to ensure that each candidate's privacy is protected.

step, it will be expected to continue as part of the subsequent year's IHP-approved searches.

## **9. Evaluate Candidates**

- Establish search committee ground rules regarding deliberations. Discuss how the search committee will deal with concerns regarding implicit or known biases if they arise during candidate review.
- Review implicit bias training materials before discussion of candidates.
- Ensure the first review focuses on candidate materials. If candidates are known to members of the search committee, reserve feedback derived from additional sources for later stages in the selection process.
- Consider redacting identifying information for candidates to help lessen the possibility that biases (e.g., related to demographic data, where candidates attended school) may impact the review.
- Utilize the rubric or other evaluation tool developed in step 4 to guide the assessment of candidates. The committee should be discussing and evaluating the exact same criteria for each candidate. If deliberations reveal that additional criteria are being taken into account, adjust the criteria for evaluating all of the candidates in a manner that is clear to all search committee members.
- Budget sufficient time to fully discuss and evaluate candidates. Time-pressured deliberations can contribute to biased judgments.
- Take contemporaneous notes at all stages of review.
- Try to spend equal time on each candidate.
- If the short list pool looks materially different from the applicant pool, assess whether talented candidates were inadvertently overlooked.
- Focus on objective criteria, not subjective characterizations such as “fit” or “I know it when I see it” as that may inadvertently incorporate implicit biases.
- Provide interview lists to the dean for review.

**Note:** Consistent with the Active Recruitment for Tenure Track Searches process, evaluation of candidates can begin after search committee, the Active Recruitment Team, the dean, and the EVPAA agree that the search has a strong applicant pool. There are typically several parts to this process that are very discipline-specific. For example, some units rely heavily on conferences to help with initial reviews of candidates. Other units will conduct online interviews for upwards of twenty candidates. No specific process is mandated during this stage. However, it is highly recommended that the dean submit the names of the short-list candidates and those coming for on-campus interviews to HR for another report on the

demographics of the candidates. The reason for review of demographics at this stage is to confirm that the selection discussions do not raise concerns about potential bias or discrimination.

#### **10. Structure the Campus Visit**

- Candidates are evaluating UO as well as being evaluated. Take steps to help them feel welcomed and valued.
- Offer equitable accommodations to all candidates, being mindful that some candidates may need reasonable accommodations.
- Provide standard materials for each candidate (e.g., agenda, parking and accommodations instructions). Provide each candidate with a standard UO [Welcome Packet](#) that contains information on benefits and other programs, such as dual career support, and where to go to ask questions.
- Ensure that selection activities for all candidates are consistent. For example, ensure visits are the same length, with the same people, meals are included in the same format, etc. Remember that group meals are part of the formal selection process and should continue to follow general guidelines, such as not asking personal questions.
- Use structured interviews as much as possible for formal interview periods (e.g., every candidate is asked the same questions).
- Brief the faculty who will be evaluating candidates on the job-specific criteria and provide everyone with a rubric or evaluation tool for their completion and to share back with the search committee.
- Ensure that everyone participating in interviews understands and is committed to refraining from asking inappropriate or illegal questions during the interview process (see step 1).
- Include a meeting between each candidate and the department head to address questions and to provide standard information, such as standard teaching, start-up packages, benefits, etc.

#### **11. Evaluate Final Candidates**

- Recall objectively the articulated job criteria from step 4, including contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Review ground rules for deliberation and refer to notes during discussion.
- Keep an open mind.
- Record rationale concerning why each shortlist candidate who will not proceed to the finalist stage does not advance, use evidence to support statements.

Note: Consistent with the Active Recruitment for Tenure Track Searches process, at the finalist stage, deans must receive finalist approval from the EVPAA and salary approval from the Executive Vice Provost for Academic Operations (EVPAO) before extending an offer. Before approving recommended candidates, the EVPAA or EVPAO may ask for a rationale explaining the recommendation.

## 12. Help Candidates Evaluate UO

- Change the frame of mind from “Search” to “Hire.” Committee and department should commit to enthusiastically recruiting every candidate receiving an offer, regardless of prior deliberations.
- Carefully curate any return visit.
- Connect candidate to parts of the university that intersect with their scholarship, teaching and service. This shows an interest in integrating them into the broader university community.
- Think carefully when choosing local professionals with whom to connect candidates (e.g., to tour around Eugene/Portland), to ensure they share UO’s commitment to non-discrimination.
- Dean or department head should clarify expectations concerning tenure and promotion standards.
- Take full advantage of resources to support recruiting and retaining diverse faculty, such as the Underrepresented Minority Recruitment Program (<https://provost.uoregon.edu/UMRP>), Initiative for Faculty Diversity (<https://inclusion.uoregon.edu/content/initiative-faculty-diversity-ifd>), and Dual Career Support (<https://provost.uoregon.edu/dual-career-support>).