

I. INTRODUCTION

Hiring and retaining exceptional faculty members is one of the most important responsibilities at UHCL. This search manual describes the procedures and provides the necessary forms for conducting a fair and equitable faculty search.

II. COMMITMENT TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The University of Houston-Clear Lake is committed to providing equality of treatment and opportunity in an environment that appreciates and respects the diversity of the community it serves. It is university policy to prohibit discrimination in employment and educational services based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, veteran status or sexual orientation, except where such a distinction is required by law, and to promote the full realization of equal opportunity through an affirmative action program. Inquiries regarding the university's affirmative action/equal employment opportunity policies may be directed to the Executive Director of Human Resources and Affirmative Action.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is the foundation of a credible search committee and trustworthy search process. Searches and search committee meetings are confidential. If any inquiries are received, in-person or by email, regarding the position, the status of an application, the status of the search, or who is on the search committee, please forward them to the Employment Coordinator. Applicants should not be aware of who is on the search committee and should not be contacting any search committee members directly. The goal is to maintain confidentiality of who is on the search committee for as long as possible.

Internal Candidates: Searches with internal candidates can be difficult for all of those involved, and can result in feelings of resentment among colleagues or applicants. Some of this is inevitable, and the situation will be awkward. It is important to follow search procedures in an attempt to conduct a fair search. Internal candidates should undergo the same procedures as external candidates. We understand internal candidates are different but the principle of equal treatment should always be followed.

V. INITIATING THE SEARCH PROCESS

All faculty positions require an approved job advertisement noting the minimum requirements, job description, and application instructions. The Committee Chair is responsible for seeing that these items are completed, approved, and then provided to the Employment Coordinator so a requisition can be created in the online application system, TALEO.

- Define the position in the widest possible terms consistent with the department's needs.
- Aim for consensus on specific specialties or requirements, while planning to cast the hiring net as broadly as possible.
- Make sure the position description does not needlessly limit the pool of applicants.
- Some position descriptions may unintentionally exclude female or minority candidates by focusing too narrowly on subfields in which few specialize.

Consider as important selection criteria for all candidates (regardless of their own demographic characteristics), the ability of the candidate to add intellectual diversity to the department, to work successfully with diverse students and colleagues, and to mentor diverse students and junior colleagues.

Preparation and Approval of Job Advertisement

In developing the job advertisement be sure to include:

- Position title, required education, required licensure, experience, essential job functions and responsibilities and other special items for consideration.
- Position announcements must be unambiguous, objective and consistently applied based on required education, experience, knowledge, skills and abilities listed in the position description.
- The job ad should include the most current information, be clearly written, and provides as much detail as possible to assist in proper recruitment.
- Be sure to include applicant instructions and information i.e. required documents (vita, teaching philosophy, etc.), application deadline if applicable, when reference letters will be required, and any other relevant information related to the candidate's success.

If the position fails to capture the appropriate required skills/job information, it will likely impact on a poor applicant pool and a poor hiring recommendation or decision.

Establishing Search Committee

All faculty searches must be directed by a search committee. Establishing a strong and credible search committee is essential for a successful search process.

- The search committee should consist of a minimum of five members, unless a written exception is granted. The Chair will be designated by the Dean.
- Professors, associate professors and assistant professors of the school are eligible for membership on the search committee. When appropriate, the Dean may name one or two committee members from outside the school, and individuals in the professional communities.
- Minorities and women should be part of the search committee membership, unless no minorities or women are available in the academic area of the search or a related area to the search.

Search Committee Responsibilities

Effective search committee members are well-connected, available to participate fully and consistently, and comfortable engaging in rigorous debate in order to effect the best outcome. The search committee is responsible for conducting the initial search, screening of applicants and presenting recommended candidates for further consideration to the Dean. All search members should be fully prepared to;

Attend all scheduled search meetings	Support recruitment efforts
Review all submitted application materials as required	Compare and rank applicants with regard to the stated position requirements
Set aside biases to fully consider all who may be qualified to assume University roles	Keep all search notes and screening information for the search file
Participate in/assist with the interviewing process	Make appropriate applicant recommendations
Follow any designated deadlines/timeframes to complete task.	

First Search Committee Meeting

The first search meeting typically involves the chair and committee discussing the job advertisement, planned recruiting activities (via Recruitment Plan), how the applications will be reviewed, timelines for completion, interviewing timelines, and what the potential hire date is. It is vital for the chair and committee to be consistent with regard to position information, position details and requirements, reviewing applications, desired candidate specifics and defined search timeline.

The Employment Coordinator, serves as ex-officio member of all search committees and is generally present at the first committee meeting. Questions related to policies and procedures may be addressed at this time, as well as throughout the search process.

Preparation of Recruitment Plan

The recruitment plan includes the position data and the names of each committee member. Additionally, it indicates the search committee's plans for additional external advertising. The goal for external advertisement is to ensure the advertisement reaches the most diverse pool of applicants possible. It is critical that search committees adopt a proactive approach to selecting non-traditional methods of posting position announcements to increase their ability to attract diverse candidates.

Please note: Human Resources will automatically advertise the position on the UHCL jobs site, HigherEdjobs.com and the Texas Workforce Commission.

When recruiting applicants, the overall goal is to reach those looking for new opportunities in addition to capturing the attention of outstanding individuals who are not "on the market". Below are some techniques to consider:

Technique/Source
Ask current department members to identify potential candidates.
Network with people who "know people" in the field (who may be called upon to nominate individuals).
Identify journals read by people in the discipline/profession.
Identify Professional associations for people in the discipline/profession.

Identify websites that are visited by people in the discipline/profession.
Identify the relevant professional or community organizations, caucuses, etc. that respond to the needs of women, people of color, people with disabilities, etc.
Identify the names of people who are publishing interesting research, giving strong presentations nationally, etc.
Identify affinity groups and placement offices at other Universities and institutions and the best way to share the recruitment with them.
Identify ways to obtain nominations from alumni, and members of the University community.
Placement in local or national publications.
Placement on specific electronic resources (listservs, job banks, Web sites, etc.)

Indicate recruitment plans by checking the appropriate box(s). The immediate supervisor and Executive Director of Human Resources must approve the Recruitment Plan. Upon obtaining Supervisor signature, forward to the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources.

VI. RECRUITING

Advertising

HR will post all full-time faculty positions on the UHCL jobs site, TWC and higheredjobs.com. Any additional advertising is the responsibility of the hiring department.

If the committee anticipates receiving applications from foreign nationals, it is imperative to run a print ad as this is required when applying for U.S. permanent residency.

- Run at least one print or online ad.
- The ad must appear in a national professional journal or other widely recognized professional publication.
- The ad must include employer name, job title, job duties, and minimum requirements.
- Please make sure additional advertising is done only after the position is posted by HR and open for applications. It is confusing for potential applicants if you advertise a faculty position that has not yet been posted/opened for applications.

Minority Recruitment

In keeping with UHCL's commitment to diversity, it is important a search committee focus on a recruiting plan to increase the pool of underrepresented individuals. With that in mind, the importance lies in what is the current make-up of existing employees, how there can be more focus with regard to underrepresented groups, and how past search activities can be changed/broadened. Previous efforts may not have resulted in a "diverse pool" of candidates, or not enough effort was made in recruitment activities. UHCL is committed to diversity and a minority resource list can be found at the end of this manual.

VII. ACTIVITIES DURING THE SEARCH

Candidate Pool Screening and Rationale

Search Committees will review all applications and advance candidates based on job-related criteria without regard to subjective judgments or impressions.

We encourage you to review the applications on-line versus printing every application. Applications can be screened on-line 24/7 from any computer. Should you choose to print any of the applicants' documentation please remember the documents contain very personal information, should not leave your office or the campus, and should be destroyed when the search is complete.

All applicants whose applications are complete, as specified in the advertisement, must receive full and consistent consideration by the Search Committee.

Step 1: Determine whether each candidate meets the minimum requirements for the position and whether each candidate has provided all required materials. It may be helpful to create a checklist from the advertisement. Those who do not meet the minimum requirements and/or who haven't submitted all materials should be removed from consideration.

Step 2: Once the Search Committee has determined which applicants meet the minimum requirements, these applicants should be evaluated further based on preferred qualifications, College/Department needs, and any other selection criteria the Search Committee has agreed upon in advance.

Documenting the Search

Human Resources provides the search committee with the necessary documents to use during the screening process including;

1. **Matrix Summary:** This excel spreadsheet includes the names of all committee members and is an accumulation of each committee members scores for each candidate. It also includes a column for Veterans Preference. Please indicate Yes or No in the appropriate column based on the applicant's answer to the question.
2. **Screening Matrix:** This form lists the minimum and preferred requirements with suggested scoring. The committee is able to revise the matrix and submit to the Employment Coordinator for approval prior to reviewing applications. It also includes a column for Veterans Preference.
3. **Minority Recruitment Resources:** This is a list of suggested places to advertise the vacancy to increase the diversity of the applicant pool.
4. **Collaborator How-To:** Included to help the committee navigate the online application site. Ensure that documentation provides rationales for search committee decisions and recommendations. This can be as extensive as notes to the candidate files, or as brief as a note on the matrix (e.g., "Does not have required education"). Notes should indicate specific job-related reasons for selection or non-selection.

Veteran's Preference

Veterans who are disabled, who served in the active military in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods, who were discharged or released under honorable conditions, or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others in employment with or appointment to a state agency or institution of higher education as long as they meet the minimum qualifications and any preferred qualifications for the position to which they apply.

The question, "do you qualify for Veteran's Preference?" is on all employment applications.

Interviews: An individual who qualifies for veteran's employment preference is entitled to a preference in the interview process over other applicants who do not have a greater qualification.

1. If there are 2 equal candidates and one qualifies for Veteran's Preference, the Veteran is entitled to an interview over the other candidate.

2. If the hiring department intends to interview five or fewer applicants, at least one must qualify for veteran's employment preference.

3. If the hiring department intends to interview six or greater applicants, at least 20% of the total number interviewed must qualify for veteran's employment preference.

4. The interview process shall remain the same for all applicants including veterans. For example, if the hiring department is instructed by HR to interview applicant A, who is a veteran, they cannot be given a phone interview while the other applicants are interviewed in-person. Applicant A should be brought to campus and included in the same interview process.

Important Notes: Veteran's employment preference does not guarantee the veteran a job. Positions at UHCL must continue to be filled with the most qualified applicant.

Communicating with Candidates

The names and information of the search committee are confidential and should remain so for as long as possible. However, many times applicants will reach out to the hiring department and members of the search committee asking questions about the status of the search and their application. If this happens you should respond with the following;

- Thank the candidate for their continued interest in the position.
- Inform the candidate that you cannot comment on an ongoing search and let them know you will be forwarding their inquiry to Human Resources.
- Forward the email to the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources and he/she will respond on the department's behalf.

Selection of Interviewees

Determine persons to be interviewed utilizing scores given, discussion among the committee, and reviewing the needs of the department.

- Determine whether telephone interviews are necessary and proceed as appropriate. (Must have interview questions approved by HR prior to conducting interviews).
- Develop and design a plan and schedule for the interview process and campus visits.
- Schedule all persons, groups, locations to be involved in the interview process.
- Develop uniform job-related questions to ask each candidate. Phone interview questions should be more technical and knowledge based. Avoid questions that address interpersonal skills, as it is difficult to assess these skills over the phone.

- All candidates should be asked the same questions, allowing for individualized follow-up questions as needed. (Must have interview questions approved by HR prior to conducting interviews).

**Please note if you elect to do phone interviews, all candidates have a phone interview. We do not phone interview some and not all. Each candidate experiences the same treatment.

VIII. CAMPUS VISITS

Planning an Effective Interview

With careful planning, a campus visit can create a positive impression on the candidate while also gathering specific information on which the University can make an informed decision about which candidates to nominate.

- Identify all people and groups to be involved in the interview process and provide them with relevant information about the position: job description, essential functions of the position, necessary areas of inquiry, and standard interview questions.
- Schedule and reserve appropriate spaces for interviews and communicate those times and places to interviewers as far in advance as possible. Send reminders a few days before the event.
- Review the structure of the visit and the interview process with all interviewers, especially those who may be conducting individual interviews.
- Provide information about the candidate and his or her scholarly work to all faculty and encourage them to read it. Faculty who are prepared ask better questions and make a better impression on the candidate.
- Ask faculty to provide feedback about specific facets of the candidate's potential, rather than just requesting generic feedback.
- Provide a rating sheet or other systematic feedback mechanisms, and detail how feedback should be given to the committee or chair.
- Encourage faculty to take notes during the interview that focus on required skills and relevant applicant responses.
- Notes can be helpful when reflecting on individual applicants or when discussing them with others who interviewed the same persons for other positions.

Making a Good Impression

Remind participants that the campus visit is an important opportunity to communicate three messages: 1) We are seriously interested in the candidate's credentials, experience, and the value they can add to UHCL, 2) UHCL is committed to diversity in its leadership, faculty, staff and student body, and 3) UHCL's faculty and staff are dedicated to framing the future of our university.

Additionally, first impressions are important:

- ✓ Consider appointing a host for the visit who takes responsibility for all aspects of the visit including escorting the candidate to and from interviews.
- ✓ Do not schedule the candidate's interview day so tightly that there is no time for breaks. Candidates should be given windows between appointments to take care of personal and professional business and to gather their thoughts.
- ✓ Be sure departmental staff know that candidates will be visiting so that they can greet visitors appropriately.
- ✓ Plan schedules that are similar in format to ensure an equitable basis for evaluation. Internal and external candidates should be given equal opportunity to interact with campus colleagues.

Conducting the Interview

Before meeting with selected applicants, you will establish the list of interview questions to be asked of each candidate, which must be approved by the Employment Coordinator. In doing so, obtaining question input and feedback from committee members is helpful. Questions can be informational, situational or behavioral in nature. Below is a list of standard guidelines to prepare you for this stage:

1. Standardize your process. Make sure you are consistent, equal and fair to each candidate, and that they each are exposed to the same interview format, plan, and questions.
2. Ask only job-related questions that are unambiguous and consistent with the job advertisement.
3. Inquire into the candidate's education, work history/experience, job-related educational experiences, and technical skills/knowledge. Constantly assess candidate to assure the best fit.
4. Ask about problems and challenges the candidate experienced in previous jobs; what he/she liked or disliked.
5. Assess the candidate's stability, job accomplishments, progression, job interests, research, goals, and reasons for leaving current position. Be cautious of potential age biases here and remember to be consistent with each candidate.
6. Ask if you can contact listed references. Make sure names and contact information are correct. Information may have changed since applicant initially submitted documentation.

Interview Questions to Avoid

You absolutely cannot ask any question during an interview that relates to an applicant's race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. The following are merely a few of the questions prohibited.

Are you a U.S. citizen?	What is your spouse's name?
Where were you born?	What is your maiden name?
What is your birth date?	Do you have any children?
How old are you?	Do you have childcare arrangements?
Do you have a disability?	What is your race or ethnic origin?
Are you married?	What is your religion? What church do you attend?

After the Interview

It is helpful to discuss the candidate with the committee immediately following the interview. The focus of the evaluation could cover everything from candidate knowledge/skills/abilities, professional character, work ethic, communication/interpersonal skills, match with current organization and position, and candidate reservations (if any). Notes should be made on screening matrix forms, templates, checklists, or via other screening devices. It is important to remember any notes documented during the search process will remain part of the search file. Please make your comments carefully.

- Review the candidates interviewed with the Search Committee.
- Document all decisions, comparing credentials and qualifications of the semi-finalists, evaluate candidates on their qualifications and the full range of strengths, contributions and ability to work well within the department.
- Consider only the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the job and avoid making assumptions based on perceived race, ethnic background, religion, marital or familial status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

- Ensure the final discussion of the candidates' remains focused on the search criteria and evidence about the qualifications of the

candidates for the position. Do not engage in or permit others to engage in discussion of personal characteristics that are not job-relevant, or global evaluations unsupported by specific evidence.

IV. FINAL STAGES OF SEARCH PROCESS

Making a Recommendation and Approval

All search committee recommendations should be made by majority vote of committee. A quorum shall consist of 60 percent of the committee membership.

The recommendations for finalists for the position should be submitted to the Convening Authority. The Dean may require additional documentation, such as the search committee's assessment of each finalist or any related input from faculty/staff groupings. This assessment by the committee should present all key evidence, major support and any dissenting opinions.

If an acceptable candidate is identified, the Dean is responsible for conducting informal discussions with the candidate regarding his/her availability, salary requirements and other related employment matters. On the basis of these informal discussions, the Dean may contact the Provost (or President in select situations) to discuss the candidate and his or her requirement for employment. During this discussion, a determination could be made regarding the ability

to recommend this candidate for employment. If the discussions support an unofficial recommendation of the candidate, the Dean will be charged with the responsibility to re-contact the candidate and discuss mutual agreement of the recommendation for employment.

With the agreement of the candidate and the Dean regarding conditions of employment, the Dean will submit the recommendation and candidate file to the Provost (or the President in select situations). After approval is obtained the Provost's Office submits the recommendation to the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources. The offer letter is created by the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources. Upon final approval by the President, the offer letter will be sent to the candidate electronically from the online application system. Upon acceptance of the offer the candidate will complete the onboarding process.

Final Steps

The Employment Coordinator will bring closure to the search by emailing the remaining active candidates regarding the status of the search and the search will be considered closed and filled.

The chair will be responsible for bringing closure to the search by completing all necessary documentation as required by the Office of Human Resources. The search documents (matrix summary, search committee matrices, interview notes, etc.) are to be submitted to the Department Contact in your area for retention. The documents must be retained for five years.