Hiring Manager Guidelines

The hiring manager makes the final hiring decision, in consultation with their organizational leadership. They also provide the search committee with the charge before the committee commences their work.

For faculty, specialized faculty, and overtime exempt staff searches (academic professional and civil service), the hiring manager appoints a search committee to recruit, review, interview, and make candidate recommendations. The search committee must include at least three individuals and be diverse by demographic characteristics and/or expertise.

For overtime eligible civil service and academic hourly vacancies, a full committee is optional, and the search can be coordinated by the hiring manager. The hiring manager should follow the same best practices as a search committee would in evaluating applications, to ensure a fair and equitable search process. If a search committee is designated, the committee must include at least two individuals and be diverse in terms of demographics and/or expertise.

If there is a search committee, the roles of search chair and diversity advocate must be assigned. Also, the hiring manager must avoid serving on the committee to maintain the appropriate advisory role of the search committee, to preserve the integrity of the search process, and mitigate any perception of undue influence. For additional guidance on forming a search committee, please see the Forming a Search Committee document in the Search Process Toolkit.

The following are hiring manager responsibilities:

- Complete the DiversityEdu training at least once every three years. It is recommended to complete the course as soon as feasible when you are assigned the role. For anyone who has not completed it by the time the announcement is posted, OAE will send an email and will temporarily remove access to view applications until the program is complete.
- Complete the Hiring Manager training.
- Review and be familiar with the University of Illinois Recruitment and Hiring Guidelines, as well as other resources available in the Search Process Toolkit.
- Identify and assign the person(s) responsible for the following: completing and processing required search paperwork, coordinating meeting/travel arrangements and correspondence with applicants.
- Identify and invite search committee members.
- Ensure there are no obvious conflicts of interest on the search committee, and that no search committee member is interested in applying for the position being filled.
- Confirm that all search committee members have completed the Inclusive Hiring at Illinois training (required every two years).
- Meet with the search chair, diversity advocate, and others to develop a search plan that ensures the following:
  - Using gender-neutral titles, checking pronouns and avoiding use of gender-charged words and superlatives (use Gender Decoder Tool).
  - Limiting the number of minimum requirements to broaden the pool of qualified applicants.
Posting duration is a reasonable amount of time to recruit a diverse pool of applicants.

Deciding what types of materials applicants will be required to submit that are job related (i.e., cover letter, resume/CV, teaching philosophy, diversity statement, etc.).

The Committee Charge

Once the above has been completed, the hiring manager should provide the search committee with their expectations of the committee’s performance and results of its efforts. This discussion is commonly referred to as the charge. The charge should ensure that the committee understands its tasks, timeline, budget considerations, and other factors including the number of finalists the hiring manager wishes to bring to campus.

It is recommended that the charge be both verbal and written. This will ensure that the hiring manager’s wishes are understood and acted upon. The verbal charge allows the committee to ask questions. The written version is valuable as a point of reference throughout the process, particularly if deliberations over candidates should stall. The purpose of the committee and the manner in which the committee’s work is completed should be predetermined and explained during the charge.

It should be noted that the hiring manager may decide not to follow the committee’s recommendation. This way, no one is surprised, and no one is insulted or made to feel as if their work, efforts, and opinion were not as important as they were led to believe. It is recommended that committees provide a slate of candidates with a description of their strengths and weaknesses. This approach provides flexibility for the hiring manager, offers the department a contingency plan in case a candidate withdraws from the search, and prevents the formation of coalitions among committee members, which could either promote or undermine specific candidates. Such dynamics could impact the reception of the new hire, leading to either a welcome or unwelcoming environment.

The hiring manager should draft a written charge and present it at the first committee meeting. The charge should include the following information:

- Provide members with a position description/copy of the advertisement or announcement.
- Discuss the hiring manager’s vision for the position, its scope, short- and long-term challenges and opportunities, and the specific criteria that are important to the department and the institution.
- Discuss criteria for selection (essential, preferred, minimum, specialties, disciplines, etc.).
- Discuss the expected timeframe for the search and anticipated start date for the new hire.
- Have the diversity advocate discuss unconscious biases and diversity on campus.
- Scope of authority of the committee and chair: what tasks and decisions will be the responsibility of the committee (recruiting, screening, interviewing, references, recommendations, etc.).
- Establish the hiring manager’s involvement during the search process (i.e., semifinalists, approve of interviewees in advance, etc.).
- Discuss alternatives to rank ordering of applicants, such as summaries of each semi-finalist.
- Discuss the preferred number of finalist candidates to visit campus and a general idea of the conduct of the campus visit.
- Final recommendation: How is it to be brought forward (i.e., strengths and weaknesses of all finalists, single candidate recommendation, ranked candidates, narrative, etc.).
- Discuss any Ex-officio members, staff assistant support during the search.
Discuss/clarify where and how committee will receive administrative and logistical support.

Discuss the financial resources that are available for the search, to include travel, meals, refreshments, entertainment, advertising budgets, and search support.

Discuss documentation or reports required of the search.

Discuss any special requirements of the search.

Emphasize importance of committee work.

Thank members for their service.

After the search committee has completed the committee work, the hiring manager should do the following:

Meet with search chair and search committee to discuss finalists/interviews.

Make the final selection decision and ensure the explanation for selection, as well as all non-selection decisions, are based on specific job-related qualifications, skills, experiences, interview performance and references. Vague statements such as “best qualified” or “not a good fit” are not sufficient justification.

Assign someone to complete search paperwork and obtain required approvals before making the offer.

Ensure the offer letter is prepared for the proposed appointee.

Resources

Affirmative Action

- Review affirmative action laws, regulations, required posters, and the University’s commitment statement.

Search Process Toolkit

- Recruiting and hiring individuals to work at the University of Illinois is one of our most important cooperative responsibilities. The Search Process Toolkit is designed to provide resources to guide you through the various stages of the search process, to ensure the university is recruiting talent and making hiring decisions, in a fair and equitable way.

Recruitment Sources

- The recruitment resources section provides a broad range of recruitment ideas to help you optimize your hiring process and achieve your affirmative action goals.

Applicant Tracking System (ATS)

- The ATS is the web-based tool that job applicants use to browse and apply for open faculty and staff positions at the university, and which search committees and HR professionals use internally to manage recruitment workflows. Review job aids here.