Search Committee Member Guidelines

Search committee members perform a variety of tasks under the direction of the search committee chair. They serve in an advisory role for the recruitment and selection of a pool of qualified candidates. The ultimate responsibility of hiring rests with the hiring manager for the position.

All search committee members should be open-minded, have a strong commitment to an inclusive and equitable search process, able to negotiate conflict to achieve group results, and knowledgeable in the area/field/responsibilities of the position. It is also encouraged to involve individuals from outside a hiring department or the University to serve on a search committee to share insights, challenge assumptions, and bring lessons of experience from other perspectives, disciplines, and organizations. All committee members should have the ability to commit time and effort to ensure fairness in the process, treat all candidates with fairness and respect, be committed to the principles of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, and maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

For faculty, specialized faculty, academic professional, and civil service overtime exempt searches, there must be at least three individuals and include a diverse representation in terms of demographic characteristics and/or expertise. The search committee chair and diversity advocate can count as two of the members on the committee but there must be at least a total of three individuals. If you choose to use a search committee for civil service over time eligible positions, there must be at least two individuals serving on the committee. The hiring manager is prohibited from serving as a committee member. This ensures that the hiring manager upholds the advisory role of the search committee, preserves the integrity of the search process, and mitigates any perception of undue influence.

The list provided below includes some of the typical responsibilities of a search committee member.

- 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.
  - Note: The program is not available to search committee members external to the University of Illinois.
- Complete the Search Committee Member training.
- Attend all committee meetings.
- Maintain confidentiality before, during and after the search of all search process discussions, candidate information and deliberations.
- Suggest good faith efforts (GFEs) to include outreach sources to attract underrepresented groups (women, minorities, veterans, individuals with disabilities).
  - Identify publications, websites, listservs, institutions, personal/direct contacts, professional social media groups, etc.
  - Actively participate in networking, seeking out and recruiting qualified, diverse candidates.
When personally conducting any outreach and recruitment efforts, save a copy of posting/email or notes regarding direct outreach and provide information to the search coordinator.

Prior to the review of any application materials, the search chair will provide a plan to screen and evaluate candidates in a fair and equitable manner, as well as how screening decisions will be documented.

- The search chair will provide job-related evaluation criteria and a written outline that will be used by all committee members (i.e., checklist, rating form, spreadsheet, etc.) The search chair will also provide the rules of discussion and voting including how to handle disagreements.
- Avoid comments (either orally or in notes) that are not job related.
- If bias is noticed, speak out and redirect the conversation.
- Be aware of the possibility of your own implicit bias.

Assist with developing specific job-related questions to ask during interviews. All candidates should be asked the same core set of questions, allowing for individualized follow-up questions as needed.

- For topics to avoid please see: pre-employment inquiries – topics to avoid.
- Consider including a diversity related interview question.

Participate in the interviews and provide your professional opinion of interviewees based upon objective, job-related evaluation criteria.

Perform additional search related duties requested by chair.

Review the Conflicts of Interest (page 8-10) and the Confidentiality (pages 11-12) sections of the Recruitment and Hiring Guidelines.

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.