

Best Practices for Faculty Search Committees

Searching for a faculty member is among THE most important activities undertaken at the University. In conducting searches, we seek to identify individuals who will be exceptional colleagues, researchers and teachers, and to whom we are confident to entrust the future of the University. Additionally, the search process involves portraying the University in a positive and honest light, and in a broader context of Norman, Central Oklahoma, and indeed the Midwest. Finally, although the recruiting process typically involves hiring an individual, the University ultimately is recruiting the entire family to our community. Consequently, we should show interest in the family and do our very best to make certain we are helpful in addressing points such as the quality of life, quality of schools (as appropriate), etc.

Below are some of the best practices to consider for the faculty search committees in addition to the information that is available at the following link:

<http://www.ou.edu/content/dam/provost/documents/faculty-recruiting-procedures.pdf>

1. The Formation of the Search Committee

- a. Ensure that the search committee is appropriately diverse (gender, discipline as appropriate, perspectives, time in grade, background).
- b. Include faculty who are committed to broadening participation of traditionally underrepresented groups.
- c. Define common goals and identify concerns, biases, desires – do this as a committee.
- d. Have each member of the committee describe the role s/he plays on the committee.
- e. Discuss processes and procedures, ground rules and decision-making processes (e.g., unanimous, majority, consensus, role of the committee in defining a short list, mechanisms for engaging with and reporting to the faculty as a whole during the search process, etc.).

2. Job Description

- a. Think about how the position fits within the strategic pathway of the department, college and University, and convey this sense in the job description.
- b. Keep the job description as broad as possible to increase the number and diversity in the applicant pool, though be as specific as possible regarding the areas/expertise sought.
- c. Make the job description exciting and portray the opportunity as special, noting the strengths of the University and its many new programs and achievements. The job description should not simply be a mundane, legalistic-sounding list of requirements and capabilities.
- d. Add sentences that encourage diverse perspectives and experiences
- e. E-mail the job description to colleagues, peer institutions, organizational/professional society list serves, other relevant publications for the discipline(s) and employment websites that attract diverse audiences such as DiverseJobs (www.diversejobs.net).

3. Active Recruitment

- a. At the very beginning of the process, discuss outstanding candidates nationally and internationally that would be ideal for the position, even if they do not appear to be movable. Prioritize this list as a committee.
- b. Make personal calls and invitations to targeted PhD students, postdocs and faculty colleagues. In some situations, such as endowed chair searches, the call will convey a desire to hire that specific individual. So be very careful to **avoid** conveying a sense that they'll receive special consideration.
- c. Actively search for candidates at professional meetings, call colleagues and ask for candidate names.
- d. Use personal contact techniques when communicating with targeted candidates (e.g., "Colleague X nominated you"; "You come highly recommended"; "We were impressed by your work", etc.).

4. Recognizing and Avoiding Unintentional Bias

- a. Such as: Focus on the applicant's credentials and not the institution he/she came from
- b. How to avoid bias: Develop clear criteria for evaluating candidates to minimize subjective bias.
- c. Best articles on this are at the following website:
http://www.advance.vt.edu/resources_links/search_committees/resources_for_search_committees.html

5. Interviews

- a. Prior to setting up the interview schedule, work with the College Dean, Provost and VPR Offices to identify individuals and facilities on campus, beyond those of the home academic programs, to whom the candidate should be introduced, based upon interests, collaboration opportunities, etc.
- b. As a Search Committee, create questions together and seek input from colleagues broadly.
- c. When bringing candidates to campus, fill in their schedule with people from various parts of the University (colleagues from other departments; CTE; CRPDE; VPR; Library, etc.). Be thoughtful in scheduling, providing "down time" so the experience is memorable and not hectic.
- d. Involve both undergraduate and graduate students on the schedule, most effectively during lunches with the candidate alone and seek student input following the visit.
- e. Avoid potentially sensitive personal questions. Asking if there are barriers or challenges to accepting the position if offered might open the door in a more subtle way.
- f. As another resource, checkout OU-ADVANCE Best Practices for Faculty Search Committees: http://www.ou.edu/advance/files/OU_SearchBook_2010.pdf
- g. Various materials are available that could help promote Norman, Oklahoma, and the metro area for those unfamiliar with the area.

Some employment websites in addition to postings in standard journals in your field:
 HR can arrange ad postings for OU faculty positions. The contact person is Theresa Monnard (tmonnard@ou.edu), and there is an Employment Advertising Request form (<http://hr.ou.edu/Documents/Files/EmpAdvertisingReq.pdf>).

Ad Location	Cost as of 8/1/14*	Audience
Chronicle of Higher Education	\$285	Faculty and Administrators in Higher Education
Diverse Issues in Higher Education	\$250	African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, Disabled, Senior, L.G.B.T. and other underrepresented groups in higher education
Academic Keys with Diversity Add on	\$370	Primary audience of the site consists of faculty members and graduate students at institutions of higher education; other users include private and public funding agencies, law firms, and academic institutions
Insight into Diversity	\$319	Underrepresented groups including those based on race, ethnicity, gender, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBT groups, among others
Hispanic Outlook	\$195	Sole Hispanic educational magazine for the higher education community, and those involved in running institutions of higher learning
Diverse Jobs	\$275	Faculty and Administrators in Higher Education; Diversity to us is not a popular catchword - it has been at the forefront of our efforts to reach the higher education community for over 30 years.
ProJob Network	\$99	Posts positions to over 40 other job boards, including Monster, NYT, Washington Post, LinkedIn, etc.
Association for the Study of Higher Education	\$0	Faculty and Administrators in Higher Education
National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity	\$0	Graduate students, post-docs and faculty members

*verify current ad rate with the publication vendor

Various Guides about Oklahoma, Norman, and the OKC Metro area:

- Oklahoma Guides – request hardcopies for free: <http://www.travelok.com/brochures>
- OU Campus Maps and Visitor Materials Request: <http://visitou.wufoo.com/forms/campus-map-visitor-materials-request/>
- Community Impact Report – Contact University Print Services
- OU Fine Arts Season Planner Calendar – Contact Kris Smith, Marketing and Publications, krismith@ou.edu.
- Norman Video - <http://nedcok.com/video-tour> (copies can be obtained from the Norman Economic Development Council (405-573-1900)).