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March 2010

Best Practicers Checklist for Running a Faculty Search

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SERT
Science & Engineering Recruiting Team

A faculty member team working as a resource for search committees to help with the recruiting process

CONTACT SERT (advance@cc.usu.edu)

Get Search Committee Tools from the ADVANCE website:
http://websites.usu.edu/advance

Best Practices Checklist for Running a Faculty Search:
From Identification of Needs to Invitation to Interview

The practices outlined in this worksheet include both recommended best practices and legal requirements for faculty searches. Contact the AA/EO office to discuss specific legal requirements. Please contact the SERT committee (rdupo@cc.usu.edu) with suggestions for improving this worksheet.

☐ **1. Clarify faculty needs prior to search**

   a. **Faculty members**
- ☐ Identify departmental needs prior to formation of search committee
- ☐ Discuss and prioritize departmental needs and desires for new faculty positions

   b. **Department Head**
- ☐ Appoints committee after position needs are identified
- ☐ Calls additional faculty meetings, as necessary, to discuss and refine the position further
- ☐ Invites SERT committee to search committee meeting for briefing and assistance, if desired

☐ **2. Prepare position announcement and evaluation matrix**

   a. **Entire search committee**
- ☐ Meets and defines position further, identifying specific research/teaching/extension needs
- ☐ Drafts job position announcement (Click here to view a sample job description)
- ☐ Begins to develop evaluation matrix by which candidates will be screened (Click here to view a sample matrix)
- ☐ Reaches consensus on relative importance and weighting of matrix criteria

   b. **Department Head**
- ☐ Circulates announcement and solicits feedback from faculty

   c. **Entire search committee**
- ☐ Meets again (at least by e-mail) to discuss faculty feedback and revise job announcement, as necessary
- ☐ Develops long and short versions of position announcement for use in print and web publications
- ☐ Creates final evaluation matrix

☐ **3. Advertise position**

   a. **Department Head and entire search committee**
- ☐ Discuss, identify, and implement specific advertising and networking strategies to improve recruitment of women and minorities (identify and defines 5 points of diversity contacts and advertising plan, submits to AA/EO)
- ☐ Request faculty support to implement these strategies and broaden applicant pool diversity

   b. **Department Head**
- ☐ Works closely with AA/EO and Human Resources to publicize position
- ☐ Works with office staff to confirm receipt of applications as received

☐ **4. Conduct initial screening of applicants**

   a. **For application pools of any size, entire search committee**
- ☐ Reviews all applications confidentially to protect the identity of applicants
- ☐ Discusses applications with no one but other search committee members

   b. **Individual search committee members**
- ☐ May divide workload in large searches (over 50 applications) by doing the following:
  - Work with another committee member to evaluate an assigned subset of applications
  - Work with another committee member to review assigned applications using matrix criteria and eliminating applicants who do not meet minimum requirements or score poorly in the opinion of both members
  - Repeat the previous process with additional sets, as time allows. All committee members should feel free to review their colleagues' decisions.
- ☐ Request that the whole committee review any specific applications that warrant special attention.
- ☐ Review all applications in smaller pools (fewer than 50) using the evaluation matrix

SERT Best Practices, p. 1
April 16, 2004
Please send comments about this checklist
to Ryan Dupont, SERT Chair, at rdupo@cc.usu.edu

□ 5. **Conduct in-depth screening of applications**

a. **Entire search committee**
- ❑ Meets to review and discuss individual committee member's evaluations of candidates (based on evaluation matrix)
  - – All members may present their evaluations during the discussion of each candidate, or
  - – The committee chair may assign specific candidate files to individual committee members to present. (Committee members become familiar with all files, but the individual members bring assigned candidates into better focus for committee. If the committee chooses this strategy, then the entire committee participates in a candidate review session in which committee members present candidate files and evaluations for group discussion.)
  - – Systematically discusses all viable candidates for the position (those not eliminated in initial screening)
- ❑ Sorts applicants into three categories:
  - – *Group 1*: Very strong candidates (working short list), who are recommended for closest further look. The committee should aim for a list of twelve or fewer candidates from which they will select a group to interview
  - – *Group 2*: Reasonably strong candidates (backup for short list); these individuals may become candidates on the short list at a later time
  - – *Group 3*: Clearly less qualified candidates (can be eliminated at this point for all practical purposes, given the number ranked higher in the pool)
- ❑ Using the evaluation matrix criteria, identifies why all applicants not in Group 3 or those eliminated in the initial screening have not been ranked in the top two groups.
- ❑ Check references for those in the top two groups

b. **Committee chair**
- ❑ Maintains records of all rankings
- ❑ Concludes the in-depth screening meeting(s) by reviewing candidate groupings and identifying reasons for applicant elimination from the pool
- ❑ Requests consensus from the group for the decisions made
- ❑ Communicates with applicants and notifies those who are not selected for the finalist pool.

□ 6. **Conduct final screening of applicants (selection of candidates for on-campus interviews)**

a. **Individual search committee members**
- ❑ Review highest ranking applications again, reviewing and refining the evaluation matrix as needed
- ❑ Review other lower-ranking applications, as necessary, to assure themselves that all candidates have been judged fairly
- ❑ Alert other committee members by email if he or she thinks an eliminated application deserves additional screening or consideration and request reconsideration

b. **Entire search committee**
- ❑ Considers whether any lower-ranked applicants require reconsideration or re-evaluation of rank
- ❑ Pauses to consider whether any other reconsiderations should be made (especially to move a candidate from the third to the second category or second to first category)
- ❑ Arranges phone interviews for all those in the top group. Individual committee members conduct phone interviews to determine each candidate's interest, assess communication skills, clarify resume, and gather additional information. (Click here to view sample phone interview questions.)
- ❑ Integrates results from phone interviews and obtains consensus on which candidates among the top group should be invited for an interview
- ❑ Identifies reasons why other applicants are not selected for interviews
- ❑ Identifies reasons why the applicants invited to campus were chosen

□ 7. **Get administrative approval and invite candidates to interview**

Department Head
- ❑ Submits paperwork to request interviews
- ❑ Upon approval, invites identified candidates to campus
- ❑ Committee consults with SERT member on best practices for on-campus interviews
- ❑ While candidates are on campus, schedule meeting for candidate to meet with a SERT member

SERT Best Practices, p. 2
April 16, 2004
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