

# GUIDEBOOK FOR FACULTY SEARCHES

This Guidebook has been assembled as a resource to academic units for the faculty hiring process. Throughout, attention has been focused on detailing the process such that campus protocols are followed, and the intended outcome of increasing the number of highly qualified diverse faculty can be realized. The Guidebook is organized in chronological order through the hiring process with responsible parties identified for specific action items. Supplemental information is available on the HRM website including checklists outlining the Roles and Responsibilities of Hiring Managers (i.e., unit leaders), Search Committee Chairs, and Search Committee members (See [Department Resources](#)).

## Approval to Hire New Faculty

In order to proceed with a search and hire a faculty member, whether filling a vacancy or new position, the provost or designee must approve. This normally happens through hiring plans submitted to the provost by the dean in July. The college dean and unit leaders are encouraged to work together to assemble a proposed hiring plan considering strategic plans of the university, college, and department; teaching needs; research objectives; and diversity of the faculty. Additional positions may be approved throughout the year if necessary, with requests and justifications sent from the unit leader to the dean who forwards to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA). Approvals are communicated back to the colleges with copies to HRM.

The following position information should be discussed during the approval process: position number, the rank of the new hire, salary ranges and source of funds for compensation, potential joint appointments, proposed office and laboratory/studio space, funding for laboratory renovations, and funding for startups. The first \$50,000 of startup funding must be paid by the unit/college. There is potential for but not guarantee of contribution by OAA and the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) to startup funding for new faculty members who have an expectation of securing grants and contracts that generate indirect cost.

New resources for additional faculty lines are limited and are allocated to meet the strategic goals of the campus. One such program is the Opportunity Hire Program with the aim of positioning the university to invest resources into strategic and priority areas that are well-aligned with the core values outlined in the campus strategic plan and at the same time increasing the diversity of our faculty. More information on this program can be found in Appendix A.

(Responsible parties: Dean, Unit Leaders)

## Assembling a Search Committee

The faculty search process is governed by PS 36T or PS 36NT (*Initial Appointments*) depending on the tenure eligibility of the position. The unit leader is responsible for the process, which normally includes the appointment of members of a search committee and search committee

chair. This committee should include faculty representation from the department in which the position resides, a Diversity Advocate, and it is recommended to include representation from faculty outside the department as well as staff and students with a vested interest in the outcome. Search committees must have diverse representation, with the expectation that every effort is made to include faculty members of different genders, races, and ethnicities.

(Responsible parties: Dean, Unit Leader)

### **Diversity Advocates**

A Diversity Advocate (DA) for a faculty search is a faculty member, appointed by the unit leader, who serves as a member of the search committee. In addition to his/her role on the search committee, the DA will ensure all members of the committee take an active role in promoting diversity, recognizing and intervening to address bias throughout the search process. Diversity Advocates will complete university-approved professional development on diversity, inclusion, and unconscious bias and will receive an endorsement by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to serve in this role. The DA should be a member of the department running the search whenever possible; alternately, a DA faculty member from a close discipline may be allowed to serve.

(Responsible parties: Unit Leader, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)

### **Initial Search Committee Meetings**

The unit leader of the department running the search will call the first meeting of the search committee. At that first meeting, the unit leader and/or the dean will give the charge and clarify the role and expectations of the search committee. The search committee should be made aware of:

- the importance and expectations for diversity with the goal of identifying outstanding individuals from underrepresented groups (gender, race, ethnicity) as candidates for the position
- the responsibility of crafting the job description and advertisement with selection criteria which must be approved by the unit leader and/or dean
- the need to assemble a search plan that must be reviewed with feedback provided and approved by the unit leader and/or dean
- the need to review available data on national/international candidate pools within the discipline (if available)
- the expectation of active participation in the recruiting efforts, holistic review of applicants, and collegial contribution during the interviews which should result in a minimum of two unranked acceptable candidates to recommend to the unit leader
- aggregate data provided by the unit leader on the gender/race of all faculty hires in the department over the last five years
- data on the overall composition of the faculty, with percentages of females and individuals from underrepresented groups provided according to rank available in the HRM Workforce Demographic report provided in Workday

- the expectation of confidentiality during deliberations

The search committee chair will be responsible for leading the committee in the development of a search plan. This plan will contain a detailed timeline, job description and application requirements, job advertisement and recommended placement, strategy for broad dissemination and outreach, recruitment approach for diversifying the pool, strategy for mitigating unconscious bias during the review of applications, common questions for all first-round interviews, an outline of a potential campus visit itinerary, and strategy for getting buy-in and participation from all department faculty throughout the search process. The search plan will be submitted to and approved by the unit leader and/or dean prior to moving forward with the search.

Search Committee members are required to participate in professional development on diversity, inclusion, and unconscious bias. Best practices suggest that this training should be completed and discussed at the first committee meeting to set the stage for a successful search. For information, search committee chairs should contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

(Responsible parties: Dean, Unit Leader, Search Committee Chair, Search Committee Members)

### **Job Description, Application Requirements, and Advertisement**

The job description should be written as broadly as possible with regard to the research area, discipline, and experience. Job descriptions should be designed to convey the department's expectations of how the hire will contribute to the research and educational mission of the academic unit by bridging gaps in expertise and/or fostering research in innovative and exciting fields of study. Additionally, the job description should highlight the strengths of the department and opportunities for collaboration. A well written job description will make the job attractive to candidates as well as set performance expectations. It is recommended that only qualifications absolutely necessary be listed as *required*, and other attributes be listed as *desirable* or *considered*. Applicants should be required to submit contacts for references (or letters) who can address their skill and potential in teaching, research, and service. Application materials must include evidence of a candidate's commitment to and record of contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. (See Appendix B for sample language) The job description and advertisement must include approved language regarding Equal Employment Opportunity (See Appendix C). It is recommended that job advertisements include the vision, initiatives, and accomplishments of the unit as well as references to the University Diversity Statement, Roadmap to Diversity, and accolades pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

(Responsible parties: Search Committee Chair, Diversity Advocate, Unit Leader, HRM)

### **Recruiting a Pool of Applicants**

Search committees must actively participate in the recruitment process with a goal of identifying and reaching out to potential applicants from underrepresented groups. This can be

accomplished in a number of ways. Below are a set of best practices that may be used to broaden your application pool.

1. Identify and reach out to institutions with diverse faculty and strong track records for training diverse candidates
2. Reach out to colleagues at other institutions to identify nearly or newly qualified graduates and postdocs to whom an invitation to apply could be sent
3. Broad dissemination and outreach, including faculty from underrepresented groups on campus in other disciplines who may have contacts at other institutions
4. Use national and international data on the earned doctorates and postdoctoral trainees in your discipline to better understand the overall available pool of candidates

The Search Committee Chair will be responsible for ensuring that the committee has actively worked to broaden the pool of applicants to include those from groups historically and/or currently underrepresented in their discipline. Each committee member should keep a record of contacts along with information gleaned from the interactions. A record of potential applicants invited to apply also should be kept. Appendix D provides an example of a template for use.

Additionally, the unit leader should ensure that jobs are posted in traditional outlets as well as those that serve diverse populations. The University has contracted with three diversity outlets catering to higher education, and all jobs will be posted in those sources at no cost (or, in one case, minimal cost) to the unit (See Appendix E). It is strongly recommended that units also advertise broadly in professional outlets, including journals, disciplinary societies, listservs and job boards, and any other special interest groups with diverse faculty audiences. The cost for these ads will be covered by the department/college.

(Responsible parties: Search Committee Chair, Unit Leader, Search Committee Members)

### **Reviewing Applications and Selecting the Campus Interviewees**

Candidates who do not meet the required criteria as stated in the job description may be eliminated from the pool without discussion. Notably, there are common biases that can impact the search process. Search committee members are encouraged to implement interventions, which research has shown may be used to diminish the impact of these common biases or errors in the search process (Appendix F).

All candidates who meet the required criteria should be discussed as remote interview possibilities. At every stage of review, the Diversity Advocate will collaborate with the search committee chair and search committee members to ensure that all candidates are evaluated on all criteria listed in the job advertisement and identified as meaningful in the search. The Diversity Advocate will provide aggregate demographic data of the applicant pool at each stage and document efforts to broaden the pool of applicants.

It is recommended that, when possible, a slate of between six and 12 applicants be invited for preliminary remote interviews. A holistic review of applications might identify contributions that are in addition to, and above and beyond, the traditional job description. Ideally, this group would have multiple viable diverse candidates. Prior to interviewing candidates remotely, the committee should decide how criteria listed in job advertisement will be discussed with candidates, weighted, and valued. Potential contributions to research, teaching, service, and diversity/inclusion must be included along with other criteria as appropriate for the particular position. Interview questions should be developed by the search committee and used consistently for all candidates. It is important that each candidate is asked about his/her demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and experience working in diverse environments by designating one person to lead the asking of these questions. This person need not necessarily be the Diversity Advocate and preferably should not be the only female or underrepresented minority committee member. Sample questions, as well as interview etiquette and protocol, can be found on the [HRM website](#).

After remote interviews, the search committee should select at least two candidates to invite for campus interviews. It is recommended that the proposed candidates be discussed with departmental faculty as necessary for additional input. These candidates must be presented to the unit leader and approved by the dean prior to extending invitations for campus interviews. The information to be reviewed will include, at a minimum: curriculum vitas for the proposed candidates, a summary of strengths of the candidates, a written report assembled by the search committee chair and Diversity Advocate of the advertisement and outreach including the records of individual contacts of search committee members, data summarizing the demographics (aggregate data, absent individual identifiers) of the overall application pool as well as the proposed finalist pool, written rationale if there are no women in the proposed list of finalists, and written rationale if there are no individuals from underrepresented groups among the proposed finalists.

An HR analyst in the unit or college will assist the committee by providing aggregate data on the demographics of the application/short list/interview pool. Applicants must be dispositioned appropriately at each phase of the search process so that accurate data is accessible for tracking the demographics of the entire pool, remote interviewees, and campus interview pool.

(Responsible parties: Search Committee Chair, Diversity Advocate, HR Analyst)

### **Campus Interviews**

The search committee should develop a plan for campus interviews that is shared with and approved by the unit leader. Campus interviews of finalists must be conducted in a consistent manner with similar itineraries, individual and group meetings, and common sets of activities. It is particularly important that attention to the consistency of the experience be afforded internal as well as external candidates. Every effort should be made to introduce all candidates to a diverse representation of the campus community. One of the goals of a campus interview is to ensure the candidate feels welcomed and can see themselves as a member of the faculty

at LSU. Feedback from all individuals who participated in the interviews will be solicited, and responses will be shared with the search committee and the unit leader.

(Responsible Parties: Search Committee Chair, Unit Leader)

### **Post Interview Recommendations**

The search committee will meet to discuss the candidates considering survey responses, references, and their own interactions during the interviews. The committee will determine whether each candidate is acceptable or unacceptable in relationship to the job description and advertisement. A meeting of the search committee may be held with departmental faculty to discuss the final recommendation for hiring. Feedback from the faculty shall be incorporated into the final recommendation presented to the unit leader.

The committee will then meet with the unit leader and provide an unranked list of at least two acceptable candidates from the pool of campus interviewees. The search committee chair should present the strengths of each candidate, a summary of the interviews and survey results, and additional commentary from departmental faculty. If the committee decision is split, a minority report shall be presented.

The unit leader will meet with the dean to discuss the results of the finalists' interviews before a job offer is extended. The search committee recommendations and feedback from the survey of interview participants will be reviewed, and all acceptable candidates will be considered, keeping in mind all aspects of the job and qualifications. Minority opinions should be included in the discussion with the dean. The Diversity Advocate will write up a short summary that will be given to the dean and the vice provost for diversity, equity, and inclusion. This summary will describe how diversity issues were handled during the search process. An offer must be approved by the dean before it is extended to the candidate.

In the case of hiring someone with advanced rank and/or tenure, these offers require presidential approval. All appropriate votes must be recorded and letters received prior to an official offer. These procedures are outlined in PS 36T or NT depending on the tenure status of the position.

(Responsible parties: Search Committee Chair, Unit Leader, Diversity Advocate)

### **After the Search**

The unit leader will make an offer to the chosen candidate, negotiate in consultation with the dean, and complete the contract with the help of HRM. A dean may inquire about the Spousal Hiring Initiative for candidates with spouses who might meet the criteria for a faculty position. The dean should contact Academic Affairs for information on this program.

All applicants should receive communication regarding the status of the search in a timely manner. It is recommended that the search committee chair or the unit leader follow up

personally with nonhired candidates who came to the campus for an interview once the offer has been accepted.

A final meeting of the search committee should be held to debrief about the process. Include a discussion of any candidates who turned down the offers and what might have been done to make their recruitments successful. Document these items, to the extent possible, so that they can be addressed in future searches.

The unit leader should also conduct a post-search debrief to review how the process went for the newly hired faculty member. Identify questions and issues of concern so they can be addressed in a timely fashion prior to the arrival on campus.

(Responsible parties: Search Committee Chair, Unit Leader, HRM)

### **Transition**

Once a hire is made, the Unit Leader should transition the new faculty member to an interim “liaison” (preferably faculty member) who will reach out and make regular contact to welcome them to Baton Rouge, LSU, and the department, and keep them abreast of departmental activities such as teaching expectations, lab/studio set up, and opportunities for grants or fellowships that need attention before arrival on campus. The unit leader also should give the new faculty member contact information of an HR representative who can answer their questions about relocation, their contract, both New Faculty Summit and New Employee Orientation, and other required onboarding responsibilities.

(Responsible party: Unit Leader)

## **Appendix A**

### **Opportunity Hire Pilot Program**

Limitations: Tenure track faculty member from an underrepresented group

National search resulted in two highly qualified individuals, one who would bring diversity to the department, both are hired

Hiring both would address a need in the department with regards to teaching, research, service, or administration

Cost share: Academic Affairs provides 75% of salary (up to \$67,500) for one of the finalists in the national search the first year, 50% the second year, 25% the third year, and the department picks up 100% of the salary the fourth year.

After three years, the salaries for both faculty members will be paid for by the academic department

Process When it becomes apparent that you have a search with this possibility, contact via e-mail both Senior Vice Provost Jane Cassidy and Vice Provost and Chief Diversity Officer Dereck Rovaris.

## Appendix B

### Sample Text for Job Descriptions and Advertisements

Example language from LSU units requesting materials on DEI to be included in faculty job advertisements.

- “In their application materials, candidates should include a written statement to demonstrate their commitment, experience and anticipated contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion at LSU.”
- “Our department is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and pluralistic faculty, and we strongly encourage applications from members of groups underrepresented in XXX. Additionally, we seek candidates whose research, teaching, or service has prepared them to contribute to diversity and inclusion in higher education. Candidates should include a statement describing how they will develop courses that promote an inclusive learning environment, and how their scholarship and mentoring practices support a diverse academic community.”
- “The department is committed to intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity equity, and inclusion, and recognized the intellectual value of doing so for the science and the practice of XXX. This Assistant Professor position is expected to promote diversity in the department’s teaching, research, and service missions. The candidate’s research may have a focus on diversity-related topics, but that is not required. Duties will include developing and maintaining an active research agenda, teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses, and contributing to the service mission of the department. We invite applicants who have established and documented evidence of a commitment to diversity in their teaching, research, and service missions.”
- “We are particularly interested in candidates who have demonstrated experience engaging with diversity through activities such as fostering an inclusive environment, working with students from diverse backgrounds, and/or incorporating diverse perspectives in teaching and scholarly or creative work.”
- “Where applicable, candidates should include (as relevant) how diversity, inclusion, and equity connect to their teaching, scholarship and service.”

Other possibilities adapted from some best practices for searches published by Columbia University:

- “Because the university is committed to building a broadly diverse educational environment, applicants should include in their materials for consideration information about how they will further this objective.”
- “Candidates are requested to describe how diversity issues have been or will be brought into courses.”
- “Candidates are asked to describe previous activities mentoring women or members of underrepresented groups.”
- “Applicants are encouraged to describe how their scholarship contributes to building and supporting diverse communities.”

## **Appendix C**

### **Equal Opportunity Employer Statement**

LSU is committed to providing equal opportunity for all qualified persons in admission to, participation in, or employment in the programs and activities which the University operates without regard to race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status. LSU is committed to diversity and is an equal opportunity / equal access employer.

## **Appendix D**

### **Search Committee Contact Sheet Template**



## **Appendix E**

### **Advertisements**

The following vendors provide advertising opportunities that reach diverse applicants interested in positions in higher education. For 2020-2021, there will be no charge to the unit for posting jobs in these sources with the exception of a co-payment for the Diversity and Inclusion e-mails. It is recommended that all faculty positions be advertised in these outlets. Advertising in discipline specific outlets remain the responsibility of the unit or college.

#### **HIGHEREDJOBS.COM**

This email is sent to 343,257 job seekers, featuring job postings from colleges and universities that are actively recruiting candidates in accordance with diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity policies. HEJ states that the positions advertised in the Diversity and Inclusion email received an average of 89% more application clicks. Departments pay \$345 for the initial posting (up to 90 days on HEJ). The institution purchased 50 Diversity and Inclusion Emails and will automatically upgrade the first 50 jobs posted on HEJ, a value of \$125 each.

#### **DIVERSITYJOBS.COM**

This job board package scrapes and posts all jobs posted on the Workday Career Site to their own job site and an additional 10 job boards. This package also includes access to their resume database which can be used to actively recruit candidates.

#### **DIVERSEJOBS.NET**

DiverseJobs.Net scrapes all jobs posted on the Workday Career Site to their own job site. Each posting would be live for 30 days.

## Appendix F

### Interventions to Avoid Common Biases in the Search Process

(Adapted from the Columbia University in the City of New York “Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Search and Hiring”)

Numerous studies have demonstrated the role that bias plays in hindering the recruitment of individuals from diverse backgrounds.<sup>[1-5]</sup> Acknowledging that we are all subject to bias is a critical step to mitigating its impact. Consider incorporating the following evidence-based interventions<sup>[6, 7]</sup> to minimize bias and ensure an equitable search:

1. **Document the entire search process.** Creating a record of search committee discussions, advertisements, nominations, recruiting efforts, interviews with candidates, interviews with references, and rationale for selecting or refusing candidates will allow committee members to review their process for evidence of bias, and correct as needed. The Diversity Advocates may be tasked with documenting the search process to support the committee in recognizing and interrupting bias and in leading reflection on lessons learned during the search.
2. **Educate committee members on hiring biases.** Research has shown that when decision-makers learn about hiring biases, they are more likely to evaluate candidates fairly.<sup>[8-10]</sup>
3. **Establish evaluation criteria.** Deciding in advance of reviewing applications which criteria will be used, and how they will be weighted, will help evaluators avoid common cognitive errors<sup>[9]</sup> such as:
  - **elitism**—assuming that individuals from prestigious institutions are the best candidates without viewing all applications more closely and/or considering the needs of the department;
  - **shifting standards**—holding different candidates to different standards based on stereotypes;
  - **seizing a pretext**—using a minor reason to disqualify a candidate without properly considering all other criteria;
  - **ranking prematurely**—designating some candidates as more promising than others without fully considering the strengths and weaknesses of all applicants; and
  - **rushing to judgment**—having strong group members, particularly those with seniority, reach and express consensus without sufficient discussion, which may make it difficult for others to challenge those conclusions.
  - **confirmation bias**—seeking or interpreting information about candidates which confirms our preconceptions about the candidate, which may limit a broad and open assessment of the candidate and their merits;
  - **affinity bias**—identifying with candidates that are similar to us or that reminds us of someone that we like, which often works against individuals from backgrounds dissimilar to our own.

4. **Spend sufficient time reviewing applications.** Allow adequate time (15–30 minutes per candidate) for the committee to evaluate applications, to decrease the likelihood of arriving at biased judgments of applicants.<sup>[11]</sup> At all stages of review, ensure that all candidates are evaluated on all criteria listed in the job ad and identified as meaningful in the search. Discuss prior to interviewing candidates how criteria listed in the job advertisement will be discussed with candidates, weighted and valued. Potential contributions to research, teaching, service, and diversity/inclusion must be included along with other criteria as appropriate for the particular position.
5. **Create multiple rankings based on different criteria.** Rather than a single ranking system based on holistic assessments of candidates, a more objective way to build a shortlist is to rank candidates on different criteria and then choose candidates who rank highly on a number of criteria.

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