

Suggested Guidelines for Faculty Searches – Faculty of Science

Revised 01/24/2018

1. After the Dean has notified a Department Head that a search for a position has been approved, the Head will convene a meeting of faculty members to recommend on the priorities of the search (clause 18.B.2.1 of UMFA contract) and complete a Request-to-Fill for submission to the Dean for approval. If a joint or cross-department search has been approved, a single Request-to-Fill will be submitted by the two Heads. Please note that tenure-track searches that do not close their application periods by January 10 will be held over to the next year, barring extraordinary circumstances (See below), so Heads and departments should act expeditiously on any positions approved.
2. A Search Committee will be established as specified in clause 18.B.2.2 of the UMFA contract. The academic staff members with faculty rank of the department meeting in committee will select five (5) persons to recommend to the Dean from which the Dean will select 3 to serve on the committee. The Departments should look to achieve diversity in their elected search committee members whenever possible.
3. The Dean will issue a memo to academic faculty members describing the composition of the Search Committee including the Chair, which normally will be the department Head.
4. At its first meeting the Search Committee will finalize the advertisement for the position for review by the Dean's Office, will determine where the position will be posted, and will review confidentiality and conflict of interest policies. The Search Chair should assure that protocol, confidentiality and all policy related aspects of the hiring process are discussed at the beginning of the first meeting of the committee, and as needed they should schedule a representative from Human Resources or the Provost's Office to come to the first meeting for this purpose.

Please pay close attention to the following points:

(a) The draft advertisement, prepared by the Chair, must use the appropriate template (attached). Once the committee has finalized the draft for the position, the Chair will transmit it to the Dean for review and approval, and the Dean will forward it to Human Resources for final approval.

(b) Changes to the template will have to be justified by a strong argument to the Dean. It is the intent to attract a large and diverse pool of candidates of high caliber consistent with the strategic goals of the Department and Faculty. Only the very best candidates will be chosen for interview and the wording provides the basis upon which to select the best. Searches within a single narrow disciplinary boundary will have to be particularly well justified to the Dean and may not be approved. Over time, this approach will lead to a strong faculty that builds the strategic goals of the department and faculty. The templates will also assure that if and when the top candidate is an international candidate, it will be possible to hire that individual.

(c) The deadline for receipt of applications and initiation of the interview process must be no later than January 10 of the year following the initiation of the search process. Any searches that are delayed beyond this date will be put on hold until the next academic year, barring strong justification and explicit approval from the Dean.

(d) The location of advertising will be discussed. Searches will normally be international in scope with an advertisement appearing on at least one site that will guarantee broad international coverage. The object is to ensure that all Canadian expatriates are made aware of the opening and to attract the best candidates. Additionally, it will be important for the individuals on the search committee and in the department more generally to reach out actively to individuals to recruit them to apply for open positions, including diverse individuals, and this should be discussed by faculty members when recommending priorities (see point #1 above) and at this first meeting. The Search Chair should make sure that a significant number of strong candidates and a diverse set of strong candidates are contacted and asked to consider applying to the position and be prepared to describe what was done in this regard to solicit the broadest possible set of applications. Postings in locations that directly address the desire to secure a diverse range of applicants are encouraged, and as needed, the Dean's Office can provide additional funding for this purpose. Normally advertisements should be posted for at least a month and remain active until the application close date.

(e) The need for and guidelines of confidentiality will be reviewed. Specifically, no applicants or information about applicants will be discussed outside of the committee or material shared until such time as the short list of candidates to be interviewed is announced. Only the short-listed candidates and their application material including CV, research plans and teaching statement will be made public to department members for review.

(f) The grounds for conflict of interest will also be reviewed. Search committee members must declare any and all conflicts of interest. If an applicant is working for or has worked with any member of the committee in the last five years, the Chair will notify the committee member(s) that he or she (they) must resign from the committee before any discussion of the candidates by the committee. The Chair will notify the Dean of these conflicts and discuss if there are any additional conflicts of interest that might negatively impact the search. If additional members must be added to the search committee, the Dean's Office will do so. A new memo to the faculty members of the department will be issued with the final composition of the Search Committee by the Dean's office. Any difficulties following this protocol should be discussed with the Dean.

(g) The search committee will decide on the steps to be followed in determining the short list of candidates to be interviewed. Three options for requesting letters of reference might be envisioned. (i) Letters of reference may be requested as part of the application. (ii) The Chair may request letters of reference from the top ranked 6 to 10 candidates after numerical ranking by committee members, but before any committee discussion of candidates (see 5(a) below). (iii) Letters may be requested only from the short listed candidates invited for interview. Approaches will vary depending on the number of

applications anticipated for a given position.

(h) Whereas, the application materials of short listed candidates, including CVs, research plans, and teaching statements can be shared with faculty members in the department, they should be kept in a secure location for viewing, and reference letters must not be shared. The latter are for the confidential search committee only.

5. Once applications are received, the committee will meet to rank the candidates, declare any new conflicts of interest and to define the search protocol.

(a) The process of creating a short list of candidates for interview will differ among departments, but one commonly used expedient, particularly when there is a large number of applications, involves a pre-ranking step. Each committee member reviews the candidates in advance of the ranking meeting and provides the Chair with grades or a ranked list of all the candidates for which they have no conflict. Experience shows that there is usually good agreement on the top-ranked candidates. From that information the Chair creates a long list of candidates for discussion by the committee, which may include outlier candidates in addition to the consensus top candidates. Care should be made to reviewing and providing opportunity for diverse candidates to be considered in the long list. Electronic/written references can be solicited for the long list prior to committee discussion (see point 4(g) above). At this point, before any discussion of candidates takes place, committee members having a conflict with the long list of candidates must resign from the committee (see 5(b) below). Pre-interviews by video conferencing of long list candidates may be helpful at this point in constructing the final short-list for campus interview. If pre-interviews are arranged, they should be done in a timely manner so as not to extend the timeline of the search. Additionally every effort should be made to create a diverse set of short listed applicants. If there are strong candidates who are members of underrepresented populations who fall naturally just outside the final short listed candidate pool, the Dean's Office will, as necessary, provide extra funding to include an additional such candidate in the short list. In general, budget for travel should never limit consideration of the best candidates.

(b) All hiring committee members must make a declaration of any conflict(s) of interest including a close relationship with any of the candidates. If an apparent conflict arises at this stage, the Chair will immediately take the matter to the Dean for resolution. As noted in point 4(f), once the committee meets to discuss candidates, no committee member can have supervised or worked with any of the candidates in the past five years.

(c) The protocol to be followed during the interview process will be defined. This will also vary among Departments but will include the number and types of seminars, the format of the meeting with the committee, entertainment, etc. Each candidate must be treated similarly and undergo the same steps during their interview.

(d) Candidates should be ranked without regard to nationality.

6. The Chair will send the short list of candidates along with their CVs and a summary of the process followed by the committee to the Dean for review and approval, prior to bringing candidates in for interview. The Dean may wish to review with the Chair the top 1/3 of the candidates to better understand the final ranked candidates. Once the short list is finalized, the CVs and attached information will be made available to all members of the Department in a secure location.

7. The interview provides an opportunity for the Department to sell itself to the candidates as well as to assess the candidates. There should be wide participation from among faculty members (ideally all) and students in the department. This will facilitate both the candidates learning about the department and the department learning about the candidate. Likewise, if a candidate has interests outside the department or faculty (e.g. engineering, health sciences, environment, agriculture, etc.), they should be accommodated.

8. It is critical to put forward the most inviting face to all candidates; we are selling the Department, the Faculty, the University and the City of Winnipeg. All candidates should be met at the airport and ferried to the hotel on arrival. During the interview process, candidates should be picked up at the hotel each morning and escorted between all interview sessions. Professionalism should be observed throughout.

9. The Chair should discuss startup needs with the candidates as part of the interview process.

10. The members of the search committee should actively solicit and utilize input from Department members on the short listed candidates following the candidate visits/presentations and take that input into account in their decision making/development of a recommendation to the Dean. Likewise, the search committee may collect input from appropriate involved individuals outside the department.

11. The Committee will meet to discuss the interviewed candidates, taking into account all input received. The suitability of candidates will be determined, the pros and cons of each candidate identified and the suitable candidates will be ranked. The Chair will prepare a summary of the ranked candidates with pros and cons of each candidate and rationale for the ordering clearly identified for submission to the Dean.

12. The Chair will call the referees to confirm the references of the ranked candidates.

13. The Chair will meet with the Dean to review the recommendations of the committee and to agree on the order of making the offer. At this meeting, an appropriate range for salary range and start-up research support will be established for each candidate to provide the Chair with room for negotiation.

14. The Chair will then contact the top-ranked candidate to inform her/him that a formal offer is being formulated and to confirm that he/she is still interested in the position. At this time the Chair should inquire about spousal/partner hiring needs.

15. The Chair will complete a summary of search outlining the ranked candidates for submission to the Dean. The Dean will forward the f recommendation and the summary of search and the Dean's recommendation to the Provost for approval.

16. The Chair will make a formal offer only after Provost approval is received. The Dean will be kept informed of any subsequent negotiations and the status of all hiring stages.

17. Questions concerning the search should be directed by the Chair to the Dean's Office, who can follow up, if needed, with the Provost's Office or HR.