AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Equitable and Inclusive Hiring of Faculty

A Guide for Full-Time Faculty Searches

Simply put, we cannot be excellent without being truly inclusive. All of us—every faculty, staff member, student, alumnus, and board member—must recognize our personal stake in making it a reality.

Plan for Inclusive Excellence, American University, p. 4

American University is deeply committed to a diverse faculty. All faculty appointments must be consistent with the university's commitment to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and nondiscrimination. Teaching units and academic units must demonstrate that they have vigorously taken steps to fulfill those commitments.

AU Faculty Manual, Sections 9 & 14

MISSION: To advance knowledge, foster intellectual curiosity, build community, and empower lives of purpose, service, and leadership.

VALUES: » Integrity » Excellence » Human dignity » Community » Diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusive excellence » Free inquiry and seeking truth » Impact.

Changemakers for a Changing World, AU's Strategic Plan, p. 4

Goal 1, Action Step 3: Develop and launch recurring inclusive hiring training for senior leadership, staff managers, and faculty search committee chairs.

Goal 4, Action Step 4: Continue efforts to diversify faculty hiring and retention, especially for those from historically underrepresented groups, to advance excellence in intellectual engagement, scholarship, and research.

Plan for Inclusive Excellence, Phase Two

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INTRODUCTION

Building and sustaining a world-class faculty body at AU requires care and attention to inclusive excellence in multiple processes, from search and hiring to welcoming, onboarding, reappointment, tenure where relevant, and promotion. *Equitable and Inclusive Faculty Hiring: A Guide for Full-Time Faculty Searches* focuses specifically on the first steps in that chain—faculty search and hiring—while also encouraging everyone who participates in the search and hiring process to think about how their efforts contribute to the broader goals of faculty thriving and retention.

By working intentionally and collaboratively to build diverse pools of faculty candidates and apply equity-minded processes of review, selection, and hiring, every new search and every new hire can help build AU's internal community of belonging and its external reputation for leadership in anti-racism and inclusive excellence.

The seven modules that comprise this guide offer step-by-step instructions, tips, and resources for each of the seven stages of the search and hiring process (see Figure 1). In addition to explaining administrative "nuts and bolts," each module includes promising practices for equitable and inclusive faculty hiring based on current research.

Figure 1. The Process in 7 Stages

Thank you to each faculty member, staff member, administrator, and student who contributes to the activities described in *Equitable and Inclusive Faculty Hiring: A Guide for Full-Time Faculty Searches*. Your service is helping AU become a stronger and smarter institution and a leader in inclusive excellence. We hope the information presented in this guide is helpful to you, and we welcome your feedback and suggestions at AssocDOF@american.edu.

NOTES

- This guide is meant to be used alongside resources found on the MyAU portal. Log into the portal and go to: Academics > Dean of Faculty > 1. Full-Time Faculty Searches.
- Throughout the document, “deans” and “deans’ offices” refer to academic unit deans as defined in the *Faculty Manual,* including the University Librarian and the heads of OGIS and OGPS.
- The abbreviation DOF refers to the deputy provost and dean of faculty.

Why is faculty diversity and inclusion important?

Organizations can unlock enormous benefits by learning how to overcome the powerful pull toward sameness and self-replication (Stewart and Valian 2022). In the university context those benefits include, among others: larger talent pools from which to select excellent new colleagues; enhanced student learning, achievement, and sense of belonging; increased openness to new perspectives and readiness to question received wisdom; greater adaptive capacity, including the ability to navigate differences; and stronger encouragement for the whole university community that diversity and inclusion are attainable goals.

Beyond campus, AU’s commitment to inclusive faculty hiring and career development signals our willingness to challenge prevailing disciplinary conventions that have tended to undervalue or stigmatize areas of expertise in which people from minoritized groups are disproportionately found. Such conventions create arbitrary barriers to entry and advancement that deserve to be challenged not only on fairness grounds, but also on grounds of academic freedom and flourishing. Those who want “the free search for truth and its free exposition” to advance unimpeded must work to ensure the principle is applied equally to all faculty members at every stage of hiring and career development. Only then will the disciplines realize their full potential for path-breaking creativity, scholarship, teaching, and public impact.

MODULE 1: AUTHORITY TO SEARCH

STEPS

1.1 Identify Needs for Faculty Lines

1.2 Submit Requests to Provost

1.3 Singular Hire Opportunity Waiver (SHOW), where applicable

(previously known as TOP)

Step 1.1 Identify Needs for Faculty Lines

Each fall semester, your dean's office works with teaching unit chairs to request new or continued faculty positions ("lines"). As a first step in this process, teaching units need to articulate their personnel needs.

TASKS

Teaching unit head will:

1. Consult with current faculty about needs in the context of your unit's strategic priorities.
2. Discuss the appropriate scope of any new or continuing lines to be requested.
3. Check with your dean's office about timing and processes for requesting lines within your School/College.

TIPS

A. Units can collaborate to request shared lines that address shared goals and opportunities, especially those associated with AU's Strategic Plan and Inclusive Excellence Plan.
B. Cluster hires may be contemplated at this stage if budgets allow and if your dean's office agrees.

Research Insights

Cluster hiring has become a popular tool for advancing both faculty diversity and cross-disciplinary collaboration (Stewart 2021) and has shown positive results for diversity and inclusion in case studies (Flaherty 2015; Flaherty 2017; Freeman 2019; Kelliher 2022). As experience accumulates (Oldach 2022), promising practices are emerging (Urban Universities for Health 2015; Simmons and Petitt 2022, Part 1 and Part 2).

Cluster hiring is sometimes considered a more feasible option in larger universities due to the larger number of open positions in each hiring cycle.

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Step 1.2 Submit Requests to Provost

Final decisions about line allocations—including field, area, and rank—rest with the provost and DOF, who consult with academic units and consider overall university academic needs, including possible gaps or redundancies and potential collaborations among units.

Authorizations include both vacated positions (due to retirements or resignations) and new line requests. Vacated positions automatically revert to the provost for reauthorization, reallocation to another unit, or elimination.

In the case of previous tenure-line searches that were not successful, the search is typically reauthorized and labeled a "continuing search." Such continuing searches should be included in the academic unit's request for lines.

TASKS

Teaching unit head will:

1. Work closely with your dean's office to determine which lines will be requested.
2. Develop a written rationale for each line to be requested.
3. Complete related forms as instructed by the DOF, which your dean's office then submits.
4. Keep faculty informed of outcomes.
   - ✓ Provost and DOF communicate authorizations to deans' offices in the Spring.
     - Spring authorizations for tenure-track and tenured hiring anticipate searches with a year-long timetable, resulting in new hires beginning work in the Fall of the subsequent calendar year (up to 18 months later).
     - Spring authorizations for term hiring anticipate shorter searches, with new term hires beginning in the Fall of the same calendar year.

Relevant administrator will:

5. Record the date a search was authorized on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

TIPS

Articulate rationales for new faculty positions in the context of your unit's strategic plan.

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Step 1.3 SHOW Waiver (where applicable)

Occasionally a teaching or academic unit identifies a truly exceptional faculty candidate outside the usual search process. For example, such a candidate may become available before an open position has been approved or before or after the normal search-and-hiring season for faculty. In such cases, the academic unit must request a faculty search waiver before undertaking serious outreach to the candidate.

The SHOW process is reserved for special situations in which (1) a candidate holds the promise of bringing uniquely outstanding achievements and qualities to the hiring unit, and (2) the hiring window for this individual is likely to close quickly.

TASKS

Dean's office will:

1. Work with the teaching unit to determine if a waiver request is warranted. The following conditions must be met for the dean to approve sending a SHOW request to the Office of the Provost:
   - ✓ Resources must be available within the unit to cover the costs of a SHOW candidate's compensation (base) and any start-up expenses (cash).
     - o When possible, the Provost's Office will assist with start-up packages or, in exceptional cases, base funds that exceed what the unit has available. The base funds would then remain a permanent part of the unit's budget.
   - ✓ The prospective hire must meet one or more of the following criteria:
     - o Excellent strategic fit between the unit's goals and the candidate's distinctive scholarly accomplishments, research, and teaching expertise;
     - o Enhancement of the academic stature of the unit, doctoral training needs, AU2030 fit, and/or the individual's capacity to catalyze opportunities for faculty colleagues, the unit, and the university overall, including mentorship of faculty colleagues; and/or
     - o Substantial expected contributions by the candidate to the strategic priorities of the unit and American University.
   - ✓ The candidate must be a full-time, tenure-track faculty member at the rank of advanced Assistant Professor with an outstanding academic portfolio and a record of effective instruction, or a tenured Associate Professor or full Professor with a tenurable record at AU.
2. If the conditions above are met, the dean submits to the Provost's Office a SHOW approval request, including the following information:
   - ✓ Candidate's CV;
   - ✓ Thorough assessment of the scholarly accomplishments and teaching contributions of the candidate (candidate's credentials and/or record must be of commensurate quality to those of candidates hired in regular searches);
   - ✓ Explanation of how hiring this candidate would advance the unit's and university's strategic goals (e.g., research goals, diversity and inclusive excellence goals); and

- ✓ Statement of the strength of the unit’s support for the candidate (faculty concurrence and financial support from the academic unit).

Provost will:

3. Solicit advice on the SHOW candidate from the Chair of the CFA, who will in turn provide a written recommendation to the Dean of Faculty.

If provost approves, the process moves forward as follows with tasks assigned to the **teaching unit, dean, DOF, and provost:**

4. Unit hosts a public lecture or presentation by the candidate.
5. Candidate is interviewed by the provost and DOF.
6. Unit submits an assessment of candidate’s public lecture to the Office of the Provost.
7. Unit obtains permission from the candidate to do reference checks.
8. Dean submits final request for approval by the provost based on the materials collected.
9. If approved, an offer will be extended by the Office of the Provost.

MODULE 2: THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

STEPS

2.1 Form Search Committee(s)

2.2 Co-construct the Committee's Norms of Engagement

2.3 Develop Search Plan/Recruitment Plan and Submit for Approval

Step 2.1 Form a Search Committee

Your dean's office will work with relevant teaching unit heads to appoint a committee chair with strong leadership skills and a commitment to inclusive excellence and invite colleagues to serve on the search committee. Committees typically consist of 3-5 members.

A single committee may run multiple searches within the unit if those searches involve the same category of faculty (tenure-line or term). Different committee compositions are needed for tenure-line and term searches.

TASKS

Teaching unit head will:

1. Work with faculty to identify and recruit a diverse group of individuals to serve on the search committee, with diversity including identities and backgrounds; professional and academic experience; rank; and other relevant categories.
    - ✓ Committee composition may include faculty, staff, and students. (Please note, that the student(s) on the committee must be clearly noted when the plan is submitted for review and that they will not have access to the full application files/all applicants.)
    - ✓ Committee chair must be a faculty member.
2. Submit proposed names of the committee chair and members through your dean's office to the DOF for approval.

Relevant administrator will:

3. Record date of search committee approval on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.
4. Establish protocol for collecting and retaining records associated with the search, according to American University's policy. See Step 7.2.

TIPS

A. Keep in mind that ensuring diverse membership on the search committee requires intentionality and transparency. Committee chairs should work with members of the teaching unit and the dean's office to identify criteria for selecting committee members based not only on field/sub-field expertise, but also professional and academic experience; rank; and other relevant categories.
B. Faculty from other units may be invited to serve on the search committee.
C. Be mindful of the risk of overburdening faculty who identify as members of historically underrepresented groups or term faculty members who may be already overburdened with other service requirements.

D. Appoint a diversity advocate (DA)[1] on each search committee whose job is to:
   - ❖ Advise on cultivating broad sources for developing the applicant pool.
   - ❖ Facilitate conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion within the committee to build awareness and intentionality.
   - ❖ Help answer questions raised by training, etc.

E. Some teaching unit guidelines call for student representation. Consider how to involve students productively.

F. Check with dean's office about any other representation requirements.

Research Insights

Studies of organizations reveal a strong human tendency toward self-replication (Kanter 1977). Within higher education, this manifests as "our tendency in the academy to clone ourselves" (Bilimoria and Buch 2010, p. 29) and, more specifically, as the documented phenomenon of "subfield reproduction" or "subfield conservatism," which describes a "hesitancy" on the part of existing faculty "to expand the department in new and different hiring directions" (White-Lewis 2021, p. 1). These predispositions, in turn, can lead search committees to favor candidates who resemble themselves and their closest colleagues along multiple dimensions (Moody 2012), thus generating the high levels of bias-proneness identified by researchers who study faculty search committees (Stewart and Valian 2022).

More diverse teams (defined by researchers as gender, race, and nationality) have been shown to make smarter decisions, on average, in business settings because they focus more on facts and tend to process facts more carefully (Rock and Grant 2016).

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[1] The AU Office of Human Resources has led the way in developing DAs. Trainings are available on a monthly basis through MyAU portal.

Thinking Ahead

A growing practice in higher ed is the establishment of a single "standing search committee" (SSC) authorized to run all tenure-line or all term searches within a teaching unit over a two- or three-year period.

Teaching units interested in establishing SSCs should consult first with their dean's offices. Separate SSCs could be established for term and tenure-line searches.

SSCs are attractive because they can take a longer-term view than a committee focused on a single search. The longer time horizon enables an SSC to invest in cultivating deep and diverse recruitment networks for multiple current and future searches. As SSC members accumulate experience, they are increasingly likely to learn about target-of-opportunity hires and to spot places where cluster hires might be pursued. In addition, since members of SSCs serve for longer periods, they can:

- Undergo more extensive training in bias interruption and other inclusive hiring skills; and
- Build genuine expertise in inclusive hiring over multiple searches (practice makes perfect).

In addition to the tips above for all search committees, good practices specific to SSCs include the following:

- ❖ Stagger members' terms so that the whole committee isn't turning over at the same time every few years.
- ❖ Additional individuals from the faculty may be asked to join the SSC on an ad hoc basis when specific fields of expertise are needed for specific searches.
- ❖ Consider opportunities for cross-unit collaboration. For example, units might pursue reciprocal arrangements in which a faculty member from each unit serves on the other's SSC.
- ❖ Think about rotating students on and off the SSC annually since most student reps will not be able to serve multi-year terms.
- ❖ When recruiting SSC faculty members, aim to identify faculty with a strong interest in this form of service and then support those colleagues in seeking additional leadership opportunities that build on their SSC experience.

Step 2.2 Co-construct Search Committee Norms

Initial meetings of the search committee offer opportunities to clarify goals and values and establish norms of working together.

TASKS

Chair of search committee will:

1. Contact your dean's office to inquire about term search briefings – these vary from unit to unit.
2. Convene members to discuss the charge to the committee, timeline, legal requirements, roles of chair and committee members, confidentiality of materials, and documentation of process (including minutes of meetings).
    - ✓ An important objective of the first meeting is to affirm the equal importance of all committee members regardless of rank or background.
    - ✓ Be sure to establish a meeting schedule and a routine for taking minutes of search committee meetings. Minutes can be reasonably brief if they capture key decisions and how they were made.
    - ✓ Identify a search administrator to handle correspondence, travel arrangements, itineraries for campus visits, and search documentation.
    - ✓ Remind search committee members that documents associated with the search are discoverable under any possible future legal action.

Full search committee will:

3. Sign up for a training on inclusive practices for search committees offered by the DOF's office. Your faculty coordinators will be able to share the training dates and how to RSVP. At minimum, search committee chairs on tenure-line searches are required to attend a training, but ideally, search committee chairs on Term Faculty searches and all members of a tenure-line search attend.
4. Discuss and agree on roles of the chair and the DA during meetings, such as:
    - ✓ Facilitating ongoing conversations among committee members about how to achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and avoid equity detours in the context of your specific search.
    - ✓ Modeling techniques for interrupting bias when necessary.
    - ✓ Ensuring equal time and equal voice for all committee members in discussions.
    - ✓ Inviting quieter members to contribute.
    - ✓ Intervening tactfully to help loquacious colleagues keep comments short and focused.
    - ✓ Encouraging the most senior faculty to hold opinions until junior members have had a chance to speak.
    - ✓ Modeling humility and active, engaged, and respectful listening.

5. Co-construct norms for collaborating and creating brave spaces to promote discussion and interactions. This includes:
   - ✓ Striving for intellectual humility.
   - ✓ Being willing to grapple with challenging ideas.
   - ✓ Differentiating between opinion—which everyone has—and informed knowledge, which comes from sustained experience, study, and practice: Hold your opinions lightly and with humility.
   - ✓ Letting go of personal anecdotal evidence and looking at broader group-level patterns.
   - ✓ Noticing your own defensive reactions and attempting to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge.
   - ✓ Recognizing how your own social positionality (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality, ability) informs your perspectives and reactions.
   - ✓ Differentiating between safety and comfort: Accept discomfort as necessary for social justice growth.
   - ✓ Identifying where your learning edge is and pushing it: For example, whenever you think, "I already know this," ask yourself, "How can I take this deeper?" (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2014)
6. Discuss and agree on "ground rules" and procedures in advance of reviewing files. These may include:
   - ✓ Expecting every committee member to explain their judgments thoroughly based on relevant information in the application file. The creation of brave spaces and co-constructed norms for collaboration should facilitate these types of interactions.
   - ✓ Expecting all committee members to interrupt bias when necessary.
   - ✓ Alternating the order of speakers so that every committee member starts the same number of discussions. This practice acknowledges that first speakers' comments tend to have outsized impact on the direction of group consensus.
   - ✓ Not allowing internet searches of clients or searches via social media. The human resources literature discourages such searches because they tend to …
     - Afford unfair advantages to candidates who have actively cultivated a strong, positive internet/social media presence in contrast with candidates who have paid less attention to publicity and those who may be victims of misinformation.
     - Reveal age, family status, and other factors that search committee members should not consider, but which may linger in people's minds.
   - ✓ If the committee decides to allow internet searches, be sure to discuss how to give candidates an opportunity to respond to any information gathered.

Search administrator will:

7. Record date of DOF or other briefing on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

TIPS

All review steps involve inherently subjective tasks where the risk of inequity and bias is very high. There are multiple approaches to building more equitable spaces. For example:

A. Committee chairs can practice "priming" at the beginning of each meeting, which includes reminders to be alert to bias, especially in ourselves.

B. Priming helps nurture equity-mindedness, which engages the core questions of why inequities exist and how the racialization of institutional practices sustains these inequities (McNair, Bensimon, & Malcolm-Piqueux, 2020). Equity-mindedness, in turn, should inform the committee's discussions about norms of engagement and collaboration.
C. The following questions (adapted from Ross 2015) can help surface biased thinking and spur intentional countervailing efforts. Each committee member can ask themselves:
   - Does this applicant's resume remind me in any way of myself, or someone I know, either positively or negatively?
   - Which elements of the application are most strongly influencing my overall impression? Are they relevant to the job, or tangential?
   - What have I already concluded about this application? Are these judgments grounded in solid information or are they more impressionistic?
D. As a committee, think about how to involve as many relevant faculty in your unit as possible at various steps in the search process to build colleagues' engagement and investment in the search and to maximize input to candidate evaluations.
E. Do not shy away from intra-committee discussions of implicit bias, but keep in mind that managing such internal discussions is challenging.
F. Remember, also, that discussing DEI values with job candidates involves a separate skill set from intra-committee discussions.
G. Watch for announcements of training opportunities for faculty search committees. New resources are being developed at the campus level.
H. Building equity-mindedness and developing skills in bias interruption takes time and requires practice. Not surprisingly, results are stronger when all members of the search committee receive training and not just the chair.
I. Note how use of a single standing search committee (SSC) affords greater opportunity for search committee members to develop these skills. See Step 2.1.

Research Insights

Research findings confirm what many of us know intuitively: academic hierarchies exert powerful influence on behaviors in faculty settings (Cowin et al., 2012; Young et al., 2015). Within the context of established power dynamics and hierarchical structures, we can expect these dynamics to surface in search committees.

"In order for search committees and department members to effectively—and, more importantly, skillfully—lead proactive conversations about diversity and inclusion with candidates, they need preparation, practice, and support" (Harder and Taylor 2018, p. 14).

Search committee diversity is not a magic bullet for avoiding bias. Gender stereotypes, for example, are so pervasive throughout society that both men and women serving on faculty search committees have been found to commit cognitive errors based on unconscious biases in favor of male applicants (Steinpreis, Anders, and Ritzke 1999).

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Step 2.3 Develop Search Plan/Recruitment Plan and Submit for Approval

A Search Plan (sometimes referred to as a Recruitment Plan) outlines procedures and initiatives proposed by the search committee to actively recruit a diverse applicant pool.

If shared lines or cluster hires are envisioned, the Search Plan should be jointly developed between the units involved and describe the joint arrangements for search and hiring.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Work with teaching unit head and other key parties to develop timeline for the search and a detailed listing of the intended outreach activities, including names of institutions, organizations, and people who will be contacted at the recruitment stage.
2. Components of a robust search plan include:
   - ✓ Posting opportunities on specialized job boards
   - ✓ Sending announcements to affinity groups
   - ✓ Contacting collaborators at other universities to ask about outstanding recent graduates, including individuals from historically underrepresented groups
   - ✓ Consulting relevant discipline availability data (for tenure-line searches)
     - o DOF office will work with AU's Office of Institutional Research to supply these data
   - ✓ Using relevant publication lists and databases to identify colleagues at other universities who may become candidates themselves or may supply names of potential candidates
   - ✓ Assigning duties for contacting possible applicants and sources of applicants to members of your committee and other faculty appropriately positioned to reach out.

Later, in Step 3.2, search administrator will:

3. Submit the search plan/recruitment plan, together with the position announcement (see Step 3.2), via your dean's office to the DOF Office for review and approval.
4. Record the date the search plan/recruitment plan and position announcement receive DOF approval on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report*.

TIPS

A. Focus the Search Plan on active strategies that go beyond posting and circulating announcements. Include broad and direct outreach, including outreach to excellent women and historically underrepresented candidates, some of whom may become candidates for future positions.

B. Add items to your Search Plan as the process proceeds and new ideas emerge about how and where to proactively recruit. Adding ideas to the search plan in real time will make it a more useful document for informing future searches.
C. Consider less orthodox sources of potential candidates. Examples include law firms, private firms, funding agencies, government entities, arts groups, NGOs, international bodies, etc., where experts with JDs, PhDs, MFAs, and other terminal degrees may be interested in moving from practice to academia on a tenure or non-tenure track.
D. For term faculty searches: Recognize that tighter timeframes make active recruiting more difficult. To mitigate this problem, maintain candidate databases across term searches and reach out to people on those databases in subsequent searches.
E. For both term and tenure-line searches: Develop intentional year-round recruitment and talent-spotting strategies for the long term.
    - ❖ Recruit postdoctoral researchers from diverse backgrounds and encourage them to apply for tenure-line openings.
    - ❖ Invite outside faculty to be guest speakers (virtually or in person) and be sure to consider individuals from historically marginalized groups.
    - ❖ Actively encourage teaching unit colleagues to:
        - o Make connections at conferences with potential future candidates, including individuals who identify as members of historically underrepresented groups;
        - o Maintain their own diverse lists of impressive grad students, faculty at other institutions, and practitioners with academic ties; and
        - o Share these lists with search committees.
    - ❖ Generate lists of potential recruits from multiple backgrounds based on authors found on course syllabi in the relevant teaching programs.
    - ❖ Actively encourage teaching unit colleagues to diversify and center equity in their own research/creative/professional networks as a step toward improving their own work while also contributing to AU's inclusive search and hiring goals.

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MODULE 3: RECRUITMENT

STEPS

3.1 Establish Criteria for Assessing Candidates

3.2 Develop and Submit Position Announcement

3.3 Actively Recruit to Generate a Diverse Applicant Pool

(Note benefits of undertaking Steps 3.1 and 3.2 concurrently.)

Step 3.1 Establish Criteria for Assessing Candidates

Before writing the job description (Step 3.2), or concurrently with that step, draft the criteria you will use when assessing applications for the position. Drafting your review criteria early in the process will make it easier to write a position announcement that clearly expresses what you are looking for. Criteria may include research/creative success, external funding, teaching experience, community experience, and other qualifications. Criteria should consider how equity-mindedness is reflected in all parts of the candidates' applications.

Clearly articulating the qualities being sought increases the accuracy of your review process and reduces opportunities for implicit bias to exert influence over committee members' judgments. Criteria should be made final before committee members begin looking at applications.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Consult the original rationale for the authorized line and discuss desired academic attributes of a successful candidate.
2. Consult the faculty tenure, promotion, and reappointment guidelines of your teaching/academic unit to ensure consistency in expectations.
3. Translate attributes and expectations into criteria to be used in assessing applications.
4. Review your draft criteria from a DEI perspective to ensure all criteria are directly related to the requirements of the position and to uncover any hidden potential for bias.
5. Ask your School or College's DEI Liaison to review the criteria.

TIPS

A. Vet the draft criteria with as many faculty colleagues as possible in your unit to gather multiple perspectives.
B. Beware of criteria that tend to preclude individuals from historically underrepresented groups. These represent equity detours.
C. Beware of criteria that tend to preclude people whose careers have followed less-common paths.

Research Insights

Research demonstrates how the use of merit-based hiring criteria may reassure evaluators that they are judging candidates fairly and objectively while also allowing individuals to adjust the criteria to ensure selection of a certain favored individual over the others. In experiments conducted by Uhlmann and Cohen (2005), "participants assigned male and female applicants to gender-stereotypical jobs. However, they did not view male and female applicants as having different strengths and weaknesses. Instead, they redefined the criteria for success at the job as requiring the specific credentials that a candidate of the desired gender happened to have" (p. 474). While the participants expressed confidence in the process and "felt that they had chosen the right man for the job, … in fact they had chosen the right job criteria for the man" (p. 479).

The same study also found that when evaluators committed to specific hiring criteria prior to disclosure of applicants' genders, the discriminatory results disappeared. The authors conclude that their research "demonstrates the efficacy of a method to reduce job discrimination: the establishment of standards of merit prior to the review of candidates" (p. 479).

Other studies with related findings include: Dunning & Cohen (1992); Dunning, Leuenberger, & Sherman (1995); Hodson, Dovidio, & Gaertner (2002); Kunda (1987); Norton, Vandello, & Darley (2004); and Steele & Green (1976).

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3.2 Develop and Submit Position Announcement

Drafting the position announcement (sometimes called the "job ad" or "ad copy") provides an opportunity not only to describe the position and its requirements factually, but also to proactively "market" the opportunity in a way that is likely to reach and attract the widest array of qualified candidates.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Draft the position announcement/job ad, which should include:
   - ✓ Date when applications will begin to be reviewed
   - ✓ EEO statement (included automatically in the online posting).

Search administrator will:

2. Send the position announcement, with the search plan/recruitment plan (see Step 2.3), via your dean's office to the DOF for review.
3. Record the date the search plan/recruitment plan and position announcement receive DOF approval. Use the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

TIPS

A. Define the position as broadly as possible, consistent with the program's needs, to expand the number of candidates from diverse backgrounds and perspectives who apply.
   - ❖ Breadth can apply to rank, field specialization, courses to be taught, and previous experience preferred or required.

B. Briefly signal major themes from Step 3.1 (review criteria) in the position description/job ad.

C. Avoid writing a job description that contains coded language, corporate jargon, non-essential extra requirements, or other elements that unnecessarily limit who is likely to apply.
   - ❖ Note how certain adjectives may be potentially biased (e.g., "young," "energetic").
   - ❖ Refer to MIT's website on bias-free job postings for further tips and examples.

D. Also avoid narrowly defining the type of experience that can demonstrate skills.
   - ❖ For example, if your goal is for applicants to demonstrate cross-cultural skills, you do not need to ask specifically for international experience. Cross-cultural skills can be gained and demonstrated by working in various U.S. contexts.

E. Be as clear as possible about which qualifications are "must-haves" vs. "nice-to-haves."

F. Include a message about AU's commitment to inclusive hiring that goes beyond the required EEO statement. See box for examples.

G. AU-HR's Inclusive Hiring Toolkit (module 1) recommends gender-neutral pronouns (they/them). Also note that pronouns can often be avoided altogether with careful wordsmithing.
H. Include as much information as possible about the hiring process in the announcement/ad. Transparency helps build confidence in the process generally and may help specific candidates feel more confident about applying.
I. Consider asking applicants to include a diversity statement. This practice signals that AU is serious about inclusive excellence.
   - ❖ The request for diversity statements may be included in the job ad, which applies to all applicants, or it may be asked later of short-listed applicants only.

Research Insights

Education researcher Damian White-Lewis (2021) identified a phenomenon in faculty search committees that he calls "sub-field conservatism," defined as "hesitancy to expand the department in new and different hiring directions." Such resistance to change may be motivated by various reasons, include the appeal of "sub-field reproduction." Acknowledging this phenomenon and discussing it within a search committee can help suppress its counter-productive forms.

Researchers have found a positive correlation between including proactive diversity language in ads and the diversity of the subsequent applicant pool.

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Examples of Proactive Language

Excerpted from University of Michigan Office of the Provost (2018):

"The [[University/academic unit]] …

- is especially interested in qualified candidates who can contribute, through their research, teaching, and/or service, to the diversity and excellence of the academic community."
- is interested in candidates who have demonstrated commitment to excellence by providing leadership in teaching, research, or service toward building an equitable and diverse scholarly environment."
- is committed to fostering and maintaining a diverse work culture that respects the rights and dignity of each individual, without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression, height, weight, marital status, disability, medical condition, age, or veteran status."

Step 3.3 Actively Recruit to Generate a Diverse Applicant Pool

Once the DOF has approved both the Search Plan/Recruitment Plan and the position description, it is time to implement the plan.

At the beginning of each Fall semester the DOF places a university-wide (omnibus) advertisement listing all AU tenure-line vacancies in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, and *Hispanic Outlook*. Costs of these ads are split among the units. These ads do not replace individual ads, but rather serve to showcase the range of tenure-line faculty positions available at the University. The DOF coordinates the compilation of the ads early in the Fall. Units must be prepared to answer queries about all advertised positions by the time the omnibus ads appear in print.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Begin to implement the search plan/recruitment plan (Step 2.3).
2. Submit a copy of the ad initialed by the DOF and an electronic copy to your HR faculty coordinator, who will include the position on the HR website.
   - ✓ Ads must include at minimum a description of the position (including rank), qualifications, and the name of the contact person.
   - ✓ Display ads must use the AU logo.
3. Place the ad and distribute the announcement widely, including multiple locations where URM candidates are most likely to see it.
4. For tenure-track and tenured searches:
   - ✓ Ads must be…
     - Placed in at least one national professional journal; and
     - Viewable to the public without charge (including membership or subscription requirements).
   - ✓ Note: As long as the above conditions are met, placement of ads in print journals is no longer required.
5. For term faculty searches:
   - ✓ Ads must be placed on the HR website.
   - ✓ Print ads are not required.
   - ✓ Ads can be placed locally rather than nationally if the unit prefers.
6. Ensure that the announcement is posted on as many different (but relevant) listserves and social media platforms, etc. as possible.
7. Develop a suggested list of hashtags or handles that can be included in a social media announcement.
8. Leverage the networks of all your unit's faculty to ensure the job description spreads as widely as possible and beyond traditional fields and subfields.

9. Do the “retail” work: Reach out to individuals as their names are suggested, and if they express no interest, ask them for further suggestions.

Once the pool is complete, the **chair of the search committee or designee will**:

10. Work with relevant administrators to record the demographic information required in Table (A) “Initial Application Pool” on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

Search administrator will:

11. Submit the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form with the completed table to the dean and DOF for review and record the date of submission on the form.

TIPS

A. Try reaching out to mid-career professionals with terminal degrees and strong records of professional achievement who might consider a career shift to academia. Do not stereotype these individuals as suited only to clinical or in-residence positions. Those who are interested in embarking on scholarly work in their career’s “second act,” and who show potential for success, may be hired into tenure-line positions.
B. Foster relationships with relevant department chairs and graduate program directors in relevant disciplines, including at HBCU’s and HSI’s.
C. Join and/or form relationships with professional organizations and societies that cover multiple disciplines. Examples include STEM Women of Color and The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), as well as discipline-specific groups, such as the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP), the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers (NOBCChE), and many others.
D. All candidates want to be hired on the basis of their qualifications for the position. Contacts with all candidates for faculty positions should stay focused on credentials and qualifications, which may include the ability to work successfully with diverse students and colleagues but not the candidate’s own demographics.

Research Insights

Studies in both field-based and experimental settings suggest that individuals tasked with evaluating candidates for jobs produce less biased evaluations when the pool includes larger numbers of candidates from historically underrepresented groups. Based on their review of this literature, Stewart and Valian (2022, p. 174) conclude:

> …in addition to our commonsense motivation to develop a diverse pool—that we cannot hope to hire a more diverse faculty if we do not attract more diverse applicants for our positions—there is also a data-based rationale. That is, our capacity to fairly assess women and minorities (and those from rare groups in general) is lower when we have only a very small number of people from those groups in our applicant pools.

***

MODULE 4: INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

STEPS

4.1 Develop a Scoring Rubric

4.2 Review Applications

4.3 Select Short List and Submit for Approval

4.4 Select Interview List and Submit for Approval

4.1 Develop a Scoring Rubric

A rubric is not a magic solution, but, if used carefully and equity-mindedly alongside other promising practices, it can help evaluators focus on relevant attributes and reduce opportunities for ad hoc, idiosyncratic, and biased judgments. Rubrics can also make evaluation processes more efficient. Rubrics should capture the criteria identified in Step 3.1 and reflected in the position description (Step 3.2).

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Incorporate the criteria from Step 3.1 into a rubric for each committee member to use when assessing applications.
   - ✓ This step should be undertaken collaboratively with opportunities for discussion to ensure shared understanding of how the items on the rubric are to be interpreted.
   - ✓ Rubrics are often presented as tables (grids) but also may take the form of a simple bullet-point list.
2. Design a system for scoring each criterion within the rubric.
   - ✓ Scoring systems may attach different weights to the various criteria where applicable.
3. Discuss and agree on the types of evidence relevant to each rubric item.
   - ✓ This practice can channel the attention of committee members away from instinctive responses toward more objective modes of evaluation.
4. Consider running an inter-rater reliability test to see if committee members are using the system consistently and to identify sources of discrepancies, which may inform modifications to the rubric.
5. Include space in the rubric form for reviewers to explain the rationales for their assessments and identify the evidence they used (i.e., which parts of the application influenced each score).
6. Agree in advance on how scores will be reported to the committee.

TIPS

A. Consider incorporating one or more separate rubric items to capture candidates' level of knowledge, skills, and experience in the spheres of diversity, equity, and inclusion. These items can help counteract the tendency for DEI-related competencies to be undervalued in academia.

B. Adopt a scoring method rather than a ranking method. Ranking can lead to excessive focus on a small number of applicants who occupy top spots on committee members' ranked lists.

C. Use smaller score ranges (such as 1-3 rather than 1-5 or 1-10) to avoid over-emphasizing small differences between individuals.

D. Establish threshold scores that represent an acceptable level of each qualification based on the job description and rubric, and then give serious consideration to every applicant with scores above the thresholds.

- ❖ Candidates with aggregate scores above the committee's threshold and those with scores above the threshold on specific rubric items merit detailed discussion.

E. Be sure to apply the same criteria to every candidate and use the agreed weights consistently.

Research Insights

Several recent studies shed light on the importance of using rubrics deliberatively in faculty search and hiring processes, monitoring their impacts across multiple searches, and avoiding the temptation to rely too heavily on them. Based on observations, document analysis, and interviews with members of five faculty search committees at four different universities, Culpepper et al (2022) drew the following lessons:

- "Rubrics seemed to mitigate bias and enhance decision-making when committees took time to deliberate the criteria, ensuring that all committee members agreed about what the criteria meant and what evidence they would use to assess whether candidates met the criteria" (p. 13).
- "We found that committees that took time to discuss how to score candidates seemed to render less bias in their decision-making …", and "committees that used time during their committee meetings to discuss scoring inconsistencies also strengthened the use of rubrics" (p. 15).
- "Committees that generated strategies for considering candidates who scored well across areas *as well as in specific domains* seemed to advance a broader pool of candidates" (p. 16, emphasis in the original).
- "Committees that explicitly weighted criteria from the beginning seemed to navigate candidate evaluation more effectively …", while "bias seemed to play a role when committee members had implicit weighting strategies" (p. 17).

An earlier study by White-Lewis (2020) similarly found that "Jointly creating *and* calibrating rubrics allows faculty to explicitly state and defend their own leanings, expose their biases, and ensures that equal and fair criterion is applied consistently" (p. 852).

A 2022 study published in Science (Blair-Loy et al 2022) found that the practice of rubric scoring alone did not eliminate gender bias in evaluations of research productivity due to the tendency for some search committee members to apply double standards to varying degrees when scoring candidates. "As our analysis shows," explained Blair-Loy in an interview with Inside Higher Education, "individual evaluator bias can get smuggled into evaluations in this seemingly objective process" (Flaherty 2022). The study's authors concluded with a recommendation that "rubric usage be accompanied by strategic application in departmental meetings to counteract individual bias and check interactional bias during the discussion of candidates" as well as "holistic evaluation of the short-listed candidates" (p. 37).

With respect to scoring systems specifically, Rivera and Tilcsik (2019) found that using a scale of 1-5 produced more consistent evaluations of teaching across genders than a scale of 1-10.

***

4.2 Review Applications

The hallmarks of a fair review process are consistency and germaneness. This step requires discipline on the part of search committee members to stay focused on the criteria developed earlier (Step 3.1) and apply those criteria consistently to each application. The rubric should help everyone stay on task and avoid detours.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Use the rubric developed in Step 4.1 to review and "score" applications based on material provided by candidates.
2. Explain your scores qualitatively using spaces provided on the rubric form.

TIPS

Bring an equity lens when reading letters of recommendation.

- ❖ Keep in mind that letters for women and candidates from historically underrepresented groups tend to reflect more implicit bias and often include more inappropriate personal information.
- ❖ Consider only the academic information provided and try to ignore statements about personality, style, etc.
- ❖ Beware of vague, unsupported statements about candidate quality. These may produce subjective reactions when we read them, but they do not supply real information.

***

4.3 Select Short List and Submit for Approval

A short list of candidates is the first product of the careful, focused work from Step 4.2 followed by a holistic and open-minded discussion of applications within the search committee as laid out in this step. The dean and DOF must approve the short list.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Share all results of the scoring exercise from Step 4.2.
   - ✓ If criteria are assigned weights, corresponding scores should be weighted accordingly in any overall summation and in the holistic discussion.
2. Use a "wide-angle lens" to consider results. In other words, discuss convergences and divergences among scores from a holistic perspective that considers all parts of the rubric, including qualitative comments.
3. Agree on a short list of candidates from which 3 or 4 will be selected for interviews in Step 4.4.

Chair of search committee will:

4. Work with relevant administrators to record the demographic information required in Table (B) "Short List" of *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

Search administrator will:

5. Submit *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form with completed table to dean and DOF.
6. Record date of submission on form.

TIPS

A. Begin the meeting by reviewing rubric scores and the rationales for them. This represents a form of "priming" aimed at focusing committee members' attention on facts and reducing the risk of the conversation detouring toward more impressionistic forms of evaluation.

B. Resist the temptation to move too quickly to a short list. Look for reasons to include rather than exclude candidates on the cusp. For example:
   - ❖ Instead of focusing on what is missing from an application, focus on what the candidate brings to the table that your department or division doesn't currently have, including the types of students the candidate might better serve.
   - ❖ If a candidate is strong in one area of the rubric, but weak in another, discuss how lack of opportunity may have contributed to the imbalance and consider ways the individual might gain the missing skills/experience at AU. (In HR-speak, consider the trainability of the competencies.)

C. Be accountable: Maintain official minutes of search committee meetings where applications are discussed. These can be brief if they document how decisions are being made and why.

D. If the committee struggles to agree on the shortlist:
   - ❖ Try to determine if committee members are implicitly weighting component scores differently. If so, revisit the weighting scheme and seek consensus on whether to confirm it, modify it, or (worst-case scenario) drop it.
   - ❖ Consider engaging an outside facilitator (from CTRL or elsewhere in the University) to help members work through disagreements.

Research Insights

Researchers have consistently demonstrated a tendency for search committee members to insert their own idiosyncratic preferences into their evaluations of candidates (White-Lewis 2020). Nonetheless, strategies are available to check biases and reduce their impacts on judgment. For example, Stewart & Valian (2022, p. 209) summarize research indicating that bias may be reduced by regularly reminding oneself of one's equity goals (i.e., priming, as mentioned earlier) combined with the practice of humility, which means "*not* patting oneself on the back for one's principles but acknowledging that one may not always live up to them" (emphasis in the original). Deliberately thinking about previous times when we fell short of our aspirations reminds us that we are not entirely in control of our own tendencies to use cognitive shortcuts and need to stay vigilant. This approach can be practiced individually and as a committee.

***

4.4 Select Campus Interview List and Submit for Approval

The search committee recommends candidates (usually 3 or 4) to the dean for interviews. Following approval of the dean, the DOF must approve each candidate on the list before any interviews or visits are scheduled.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Gather additional information to inform assessment of the candidates on Step 4.3's short list.
   - ✓ If this includes preliminary ("airport-type") interviews, please look carefully at Step 5.1.
2. Again, use a "wide-angle lens" and a holistic perspective to assess candidates on the short list.
3. Agree on 3-5 candidates to be invited for campus interviews.

Chair of search committee will:

4. Work with relevant administrators to record the demographic information required in Table (C) "Campus Interview List" of *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.

Search administrator will:

5. Submit *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form with completed table, plus CVs of all candidates on the Campus Interview List, to dean and DOF.
6. Record date of submission on form.

TIPS

Same as Step 4.3.

***

MODULE 5: INTERVIEWS and CAMPUS VISITS

STEPS

5.1 Plan and Conduct Equitable and Inclusive Interviews

5.2 Plan and Conduct Equitable and Inclusive Campus Visits

(where campus visits are applicable)

5.3 Follow Up

5.1 Plan and Conduct Equitable and Inclusive Interviews

Interviews enable search committees to gather further information relevant to making a strong hiring decision. Well-planned and well-run interviews also provide candidates with a favorable experience that may affect their later decision to accept an offer from AU, if one is extended.

Preliminary interviews may be used to move from the official, approved "Short List" to the shorter "Campus Interview List." Campus interviews are more extensive than preliminary interviews. Please note that both types of interviews should follow the inclusive practices listed below.

When interviews are due to occur during a campus visit, also see best practices for campus visits (Step 5.2).

TASKS

Throughout the process, the **chair of the search committee will:**

1. Ensure the flow of communication with each candidate is prompt, informative, and welcoming as the interview is being set up.
   - ✓ Logistics of each interview should be confirmed with candidates.
   - ✓ Multiple interviews should be scheduled for the same day to respect the candidate's time.
   - ✓ All candidates to be interviewed must be provided with Clery Disclosure information.
2. Arrange in advance for the committee to debrief after interviews.

Prior to interviews, **full search committee will:**

3. Write questions in advance to be asked of all candidates.
   - ✓ Questions should be closely associated with the position description and criteria developed in Step 3.1.
   - ✓ Only ask for information related to the job and avoid illegal categories of questions (listed in HR Toolkit, Module 5, p. 9 – maybe copy?).
4. Decide whether to share questions with candidates prior to the interviews. Do the same for every candidate.
5. Establish interview structure and roles in advance, including …
   - ✓ Mode (in person or virtual)
   - ✓ Time allocation
   - ✓ Members of the interview panel (should be the same for every interview)
   - ✓ Who will serve as host, which includes kicking off the interview, introducing interviewers, briefly describing the position, keeping time, and guiding the conversation
   - ✓ Who will ask each question and in what order
   - ✓ How notes will be kept
   - ✓ Debriefing procedures.

During the interviews, **full search committee will:**

6. Consistently follow procedures laid out above in each interview. Don't let biases creep into processes.
7. Provide candidates with a realistic timeline for follow-up and clear next steps.

After each interview, **full search committee members will:**

8. Evaluate each candidate individually.

TIPS

CONDUCTING VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS – DO'S & DON'TS

(with thanks to AU Office of Human Resources)

❖ ***Do's*** for Virtual Interviews:

A. Use the admit/waiting room feature and place someone in charge of admitting people. The waiting room feature allows the committee to set up completely before admitting the candidate.
B. Choose a quiet, well-lit interview space for each interviewer.
C. Be mindful that interviewees may not have equal access to technology and may not be equally adept at using it.
    - Video or sound quality could impact the interviewee's experience and how they perform.
    - Focus on the interviewee's content, not the video quality, environmental surroundings, or background noises.
D. Adapt as needed. Let interviewees know it is okay to interrupt if they cannot hear or if they experience technical problems. Consider a back-up plan, such as switching to telephone.
E. Recognize that virtual interviews can feel uncomfortable. The virtual interview may be a first-time experience for candidates, who may find it challenging to put their best foot forward.

❖ ***Don'ts*** for Virtual Interviews:

A. Do not record the interview. This is an AU policy. A designated note taker should provide an overview for search committee members who miss the interview.
B. Do not share documents via the video service. Use email to ensure confidentiality.
C. Do not read too much into body language. The interviewee may be nervous or unfamiliar with the technology. Interviewees may seem to be "looking around" so they can view the committee members in different areas on their screen(s).

***

5.2 Plan and Conduct Equitable and Inclusive Campus Visits

(where campus visits are applicable)

The campus visit offers an important opportunity for two-way information exchange between the candidate and the campus community beyond the search committee. It is a required step for hiring in tenure-track and tenured positions.

TASKS

Before the campus visit, **chair of search committee or designee will:**

1. Assign a point person to handle logistics and shepherd candidates through the visits.
2. Work with the point person to arrange full schedule, including breaks, and confirm all meetings with expected AU attendees, including meals.
   - ✓ Candidates for tenure-track positions must
     - o Meet with the search committee, students, all faculty in the teaching unit or academic unit, the teaching chair or program director, the dean, and the DOF. (In addition, consider whether your unit-level DEI leader should also meet with candidates)
     - o Make a public presentation on their scholarly work. (Be sure to advertise these talks widely to faculty and students.)
   - ✓ In addition to the above points, candidates for positions with tenure must meet with the provost. (Note: please plan to schedule meetings with the DOF and Provost through their administrative assistants as soon as possible to avoid scheduling challenges.)
3. Send the schedule to the candidate as early as possible.
4. Communicate to candidates that spouses, partners, and significant others are invited to join the visit.
5. Ensure that the flow of communication with each candidate is prompt, informative, and welcoming as the visit is being planned. This includes asking candidates:
   - ✓ What they might need for a successful visit (such as time alone before a job talk, time between meetings to check in with family, etc.)
   - ✓ If there are people they would like to meet, facilities they would like to visit, or resources they would like to learn more about during the visit.
8. Monitor consistency in treatment of candidates by committee members and other faculty and staff.
9. Establish a system for members of the community to provide input based on their interactions with candidates.
   - ✓ Candidates' talks should be evaluated in writing by all attendees, including students, staff, and faculty.

During the visit, **full search committee will:**

10. Create a welcoming environment for each candidate and their significant others.

11. Consistently follow all agreed procedures with each candidate.
12. Clear their calendars to enable attendance at meetings with candidates and the candidates' talks (where applicable).
13. Encourage colleagues to attend candidates' talks.

Search administrator will:

14. Record on the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form dates on which candidate interviews were scheduled with DOF and provost (where applicable).

TIPS

A. Structure the campus visit to ensure the candidate meets a wide range of students, faculty, and staff.
B. If the candidate has a physical disability, ensure that rooms and pathways are accessible.

***

5.3 Follow Up

Keeping candidates engaged throughout the search and hiring process is critical for maintaining equitable processes and producing a successful outcome. Ongoing communication with candidates should be coordinated to hit the sweet spot—not too much and not too little.

TASKS

After interviews and campus visits, the **chair of the search committee or designee will:**

1. Follow up with the candidate.
   - ✓ Try to answer any questions that emerged after the interview/visit. Where applicable, put the candidate in touch with others at AU who might have additional answers or insights for the candidate. The DOF is an important resource for answering a wide array of questions.
   - ✓ Ask about the candidate's experience at AU. Elaborate on positives and address any negative reactions without defensiveness.
2. Send follow-up communication to keep candidates engaged as final decision-making steps proceed.

TIPS

A. Thank the candidate for frank input and emphasize AU's commitment to continuous improvement.
B. Individual search committee members should not communicate with candidates privately before offers are extended. All communication with candidates should be shared with the committee.

***

MODULE 6: FINAL SELECTIONS and OFFERS

STEPS

6.1 Evaluate and Make Final Selections

6.2 Obtain Final Approvals

6.3 Develop, Extend, and Negotiate Offers

6.1 Evaluate and Make Final Selections

This is where all your hard work in modules 1-5 comes together.

TASKS

Full search committee will:

1. Perform reference checks for all candidates who receive offers.
   - ✓ At least 3 references are needed for each candidate. References should address:
     - o Academic work and future promise
     - o Teaching experience
     - o Character and working relationships with colleagues.
   - ✓ If candidates are being considered for appointment with tenure, there should also be at least 3 off-list reference checks that probe the same issues. Before any off-list calls are made, search committees must notify the candidate and obtain authorization. In unusual cases, when the teaching unit requests, the DOF may waive the requirement for off-list reference calls.
2. Assemble all available information from the process and discuss each candidate based on the evidence record.
3. Select one finalist and identify other candidates who may be elevated to that position if the finalist either is not approved or declines an offer.
4. Take minutes of meetings to document the decision-making process and rationales for decisions (as always).

TIPS

A. Avoid discussion detours that veer off toward attributes such as personality.
B. Avoid common pitfalls in hiring selection processes, such as those in Table 1.

Table 1. Common pitfalls for search committees

Common Hiring Decision-making Risks	Methods to Mitigate Risk
Follow the Leader: Consensus tends to follow preferences of a senior stakeholder.	Expect senior faculty member(s) and administrators to give their opinions last.
Pressure Cooker: Pressure from internal or external sources may induce shortcuts or other detours from the agreed process.	Train search committee members to be alert to subtle detours and to self-monitor process.
Groupthink: Individuals may hold back important insights to avoid standing out from a perceived majority opinion.	Appoint a moderator to encourage diverse opinions.
Visceral Reaction: Candidates may be declined due to factors unrelated to qualifications and job requirements.	"Norm" committee processes to expect objective rationales for each assessment.
Deciding in a Fog: Due to time constraints, etc., evaluators may abandon data and make choices based on instinct.	Assemble information centrally and make access as easy as possible.
Playing it Safe: Search committee may opt for the safe candidate rather than the best candidate.	Before confirming final decision, list reasons for declining other candidates.

Adapted from AU Office of Human Resources, Module 5, p. 12

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6.2 Obtain Final Approvals

Please remember that the DOF must give final approval before any offer, written or verbal, is made to the finalist. In cases where the new hire will come with tenure, the provost must give final approval.

Note: All checklists for new full-time faculty hires are available on the DOF's page on the MyAU portal. Log into the portal and go to: Academics > Dean of Faculty > Full-Time Faculty Searches.

TASKS

Chair of search committee will work with relevant administrators to obtain approvals as follows:

1. Submit finalist's file to your dean for approval.
2. If the dean approves the finalist, recommend the finalist to the faculty of the hiring unit for a vote according to AU and unit voting procedures.
3. If faculty vote in favor of the finalist, send the candidate's file with all documentation, including the vote tally, to other review bodies within the academic unit (as applicable) and the dean.
4. Once approved, the dean submits the file to the DOF for final approval or to the CFA in the case of a finalist to be hired with tenure.
    - ✓ The file should include all applicable documentation from the respective checklist, including the *Faculty Applicant Data Report* form.
    - ✓ Before asking the Senate Committee on Faculty Actions (CFA) to review a file for a new hire with tenure, see "Instructions for Submitting Files for Action," posted as a Quick Link on the DOF website.
5. Following CFA review, files for new hires with tenure proceed to the provost for final review and approval.

6.3 Develop, Extend, and Negotiate Offers

Congratulations to the search committee on reaching this milestone. The center of gravity now shifts toward the teaching unit head and dean's office.

The DOF and dean should discuss the candidate's credentials and salary offer, as well as start-up funding where applicable.

TASKS

When developing the offer:

1. Consider where the candidate's experience places them within the advertised salary range.
2. Consider current salaries of faculty similarly positioned.
3. Do not ask for the candidate's current or most recent salary, or their salary history. This can perpetuate systemic bias.
4. Decide in advance if there is room for negotiation.
5. Decide in advance whether relocation and or start-up funding will be offered. Please refer to the "Spending Policy for Faculty Start-Up Funds and Institutional Support Funds" as well as the "Relocation Allowance Policy".

When extending and discussing the offer:

6. Be sure to inform the candidate about AU benefits and provide a link to the relevant website.
7. If the candidate requests a written statement, the dean may provide a summary of the recommended offer. The summary must be accompanied by a statement of the University's policy that only the DOF or provost may approve final appointment terms.
8. According to federal law, all candidates offered positions must be asked whether they are authorized to work in the United States.
9. If the candidate does not respond promptly to the offer, give them a set deadline (such as number of days) to accept or decline.

Once the finalist has been offered the position:

10. They are now referred to as the "recruit" rather than the "finalist."
11. Congratulatory phone calls or messages from other faculty can communicate the enthusiasm of the teaching unit and help the recruit feel welcome, which may increase their likelihood of accepting the position.

TIPS

Recruits may have a wide variety of topics on their minds beyond the expectations of the job. These include housing, family leave, childcare, school options, and spousal/partner employment. In addition, many recruits may have concerns about belonging and the potential for isolation, possible excessive work burdens, or whether local communities offer accessible social/cultural activities of interest.

Because many recruits are reluctant to raise topics like these, the teaching unit and dean's office should signal broad openness and responsiveness. Questions raised by a recruit should be answered as quickly and completely as possible. The DOF is a resource for assistance in responding to such questions.

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MODULE 7: CLOSE OUT

STEPS

7.1 Close Communication Loops

7.2 Manage Search Records

7.3 Conduct a Debriefing

7.1 Close Communication Loops

This moment in the search process offers an opportunity to enhance AU's reputation in the higher education sector by treating all job candidates with the utmost care and respect, which includes keeping them informed about the search and hiring process.

TASKS

Search committee and teaching unit head should coordinate to:

1. Make sure interviewees who are not selected are informed soon after the recruit has accepted the offer in writing. This is common courtesy.
2. Follow up with any finalists who rejected an offer of employment at AU to discuss reasons for the decision and gather feedback about the search and hiring process.

TIPS

Consider a final communication about the successful hire to a wider set of candidates, such as the whole short list. Thank those people for applying. Wish them well. Include a link to the latest AU news.

***

7.2 Manage Search Records

American University's policy on "Records Retention and Disposal" requires originating units to comply with the following rules:

- ✓ Academic search plans and statements are to be retained for three years after the search is completed.
- ✓ Academic search records are to be retained permanently for the successful candidate.
- ✓ Academic search records for other candidates are to be retained for three years after the search is completed.

TASKS

Relevant administrators will:

1. Compile record.
2. Store record appropriately according to timeframes listed above.
3. Watch for updates to the "Records Retention and Disposal" policy.

***

7.3 Conduct a Debriefing

Please resist the temptation to move on immediately after the hire is secured (or the search is halted for any reason). This moment in the process offers enormous opportunities to document lessons learned and improve the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of future searches.

TASKS

Teaching unit head and/or administrators in the dean's office will:

1. Assemble the search committee and gather insights about the search, with a focus on what went more and less well and what they would have done differently in hindsight.
2. Identify any different practices that were implemented for this specific search and ask committee members how those practices worked.
3. Ask for suggestions to improve future searches.
4. Write up notes from the meeting.
5. Consult cumulative notes when new searches are initiated in subsequent years.

TIPS

Departments or divisions should keep on file the names of candidates who were identified as promising scholars, especially those from historically underrepresented groups. These individuals may become strong candidates for future positions.

***