

GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
Guidelines for Search and Screening Committee
(Faculty and Academic Administrative Positions)

The highest priority of the University is to maintain the excellence of its teaching and research activities and support an effective equal employment opportunity program. Both needs can be met by undertaking careful and thorough searches each time a faculty or academic administrative appointment is made. Efforts made to locate and attract outstanding female and minority candidates will increase the likelihood of identifying other excellent candidates as well.

While the nature of the University make iron-clad rules for searches impractical, the following guidelines will (1) familiarize search and screening committee members with the process, (2) clarify a search and screening committee's responsibilities, (3) outline a procedure that can be followed or adapted to fit specific needs, and (4) suggest effective strategies for increasing the participation of women and minorities in the recruitment process.

1. Appointment of the Search and Screening Committee

When regular faculty positions and/or whenever certain academic administrative positions (as determined by the President or Vice President for Academic Affairs) are to be filled a search and screening committee will be appointed to recruit and screen candidates. To ensure the search committee is familiar with its responsibilities, the Director of Human Resources should be invited to attend search committee meetings.

2. Size and Composition of the Search and Screening Committee

The size of the search and screening committee will vary but it will be between three and ten members. Ideally, there should be female and minority faculty committee members, but in some cases this might not be possible. A department with few female or minority faculty might utilize its female or minority graduate students or perhaps enlist appropriate faculty or academic administrators from outside the department who could review the search process at several points. Both techniques have been successful. Student input should be included in the process. Students may serve on search and screening

committees and/or may participate in the interview process.

One University goal is to “mainstream” equal employment opportunity practices so they become a routine part of the process. In this way, affirmative action practices become everyone’s responsibility. When affirmative action practices become automatic, the race/sex composition of an individual search and screening committee will be less crucial.

3. Request to Fill Position Vacancy

The VPAA in conjunction with the school dean will determine rank(s) for which candidates will be considered, duties performed, availability of funds, and the appropriate salary range. When filling a job vacancy, the school dean should submit a "Request to Fill Position Vacancy" form.

<http://www.gsw.edu/~hr/forms/requesttofillform.pdf> The completed form should be forwarded to Human Resources. Before a search can be initiated, the search must be approved by the President, the Vice President for Business and Finance and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Human Resources will notify the department head that the search has been approved, and, in consultation with the hiring official or search committee chair, the search process will be initiated. Should you have any questions regarding the search process, please contact Human Resources.

After approval is obtained to initiate a search, the Department Head should prepare a draft of a vacancy announcement using the job description for the position. The duties should be clear and concise. The minimum qualifications should be clear about what is required and what is preferred regarding years of experience and educational background.

4. Recruitment Efforts

The department head should provide a draft of the job description and announcement to the Human Resources Office and require that they initiate recruitment activities in compliance with the University's Affirmative Action procedures. Application deadlines can be set for a specific end date (at

least thirty (30) days from the start of the search), or can be “open until filled”. Specific application deadlines result in applications received after the deadline date not being considered. An “open until filled” application deadline means that all resumes must be considered up until a hire is made. These activities shall include but not be limited to the following:

- a) Academic administrative positions will be advertised in the University System Applicant Clearinghouse, appropriate professional publications, Georgia Southwestern's web page and in the Chronicle of Higher Education.
- b) Recruiting at national conferences is also an effective and economical way to reach potential candidates.
- c) Notification by e-mail to all employees on campus of the job posting on the GSW web site and on the Human Resources Job Posting board. Full and careful consideration will be given to all internal candidates who meet the minimal qualifications for the position. Under no circumstances should an internal applicant be subjected to retaliation by his/her supervisor for making such application for a transfer or promotion.
- d) All advertisements should include the AA/ADA/EEO statement.

If under-representation of females and/or minorities exists in the unit, the Affirmative Action Officer should be requested to assist the search and screening committee in an active recruitment campaign to attract female and minority applicants to include:

- a) Advertisements in special newsletters, journals, and job listings aimed at women or minorities in a particular field.
- b) Letters written to the professional organizations of women and minorities in the appropriate field requirements that the position vacancy be circulated and publicized to its members.
- c) The University administration encourages efforts by department heads/deans to make personal contacts with colleagues at other colleges/universities or professional organizations to increase the diversity of the applicant pool.

5. Selection Criteria

The search committee in conjunction with the department head should develop selection criteria that are measurable, demonstrable, job related, and necessary to perform the work successfully. It is important that valid minimum and final selection criteria be established by the search committee to ensure consistency in the search process.

Documentation of questions developed for telephone interviews and on campus interviews should be kept in the search chairs file to document consistency throughout the search process for all applicants.

Upon completion of the search process and subsequent hire, the search committee chair will complete the required forms included in this search packet and submit them to Human Resources. Efforts to increase the diversity of the applicant pool should be documented on the appropriate forms.

6. Handling Nominated Candidates

If nominations are accepted, letters should be written inviting each nominee to submit an application.

If the women or minorities who have been contacted declined to apply, consideration should be given to making a special approach to these candidates. A telephone call from the search and screening committee, Department Head or person making the original nomination, or some other appropriate communication urging them to apply is appropriate. This kind of outreach, that has been used successfully, would be important in cases where the absence of these candidates means that no other women or minorities are likely to be in the pool of candidates. If these measures are not effective, it is especially important that vigorous recruitment of women and/or minorities be pursued.

7. Receiving and Processing Vitae

As the vitae, letters of reference, and other documents are received, a dossier should be established for each candidate. Upon receipt of an application, an acknowledgment letter along with a Voluntary Employment Information form <http://www.gsw.edu/~hr/forms/voluntaryemployform.pdf> should be sent to the applicant. It must be clearly stated that self-identification is voluntary and will not be considered in the screening and selection process. The Voluntary Employment Information form is returned to Human Resources. This form may be useful in identifying female and minority candidates as well as in providing the necessary data on the race and sex composition of the applicant pool.

8. Screening Candidates

Review of candidates' dossiers is accomplished by matching the selection criteria established by the Committee against the information provided on the resume and related documents. It is important that all committee members agree upon and use the same screening criteria for all candidates.

The first screen is for minimum qualifications; any candidate not meeting the minimum qualifications is excluded. After the first screening, it is desirable to have every committee member read and rate the dossiers of candidates meeting the minimum requirements. In cases where many candidates survive the first cut, it may be necessary to divide screening of remaining candidates. To assure uniformity of screening, a second level screening criteria instrument should be developed outlining the factors to be taken into consideration.

If a large number of candidates are involved, letters may be sent to the applicants who did not survive the first cut, thanking them for applying and informing them that they are not among the finalists. **The Committee should notify the other candidates of their status as soon as it is determined.** This is a matter of courtesy and good public relations.

In some cases, however, the Committee may decide to defer notifying any candidate of their non-selection until an appointment has been made. It is essential that the same criteria be applied to all the candidates and that all candidates be treated equally. Techniques or procedures (i.e., discussions with references or evaluations of written materials) used to select or screen candidates must be applied uniformly to all candidates.

When the top candidates have been identified, the interview phase of the search begins. A minimum of three candidates must be interviewed. If the applicants selected for interviews do not include minorities and women, particularly if the unit has goals for one or both, a justification should be provided to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs and/or Dean, in consultation with the search and screening committee Chair may review the recommendations with the search and screening committee and may request that qualified minority and/or female candidates be included in the interviews.

In cases where an objective exists to increase women and/or minority candidates and few or no applications have been received from women or minorities, the Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or appropriate Dean, in consultation with the Affirmative Action Officer, may request that the search and screening committee re-open the search.

In units where traditional search procedures have consistently failed to identify minority and female candidates, a special committee may be established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, to identify qualified women and minorities for future

openings in the Unit. Thus, when a position does become available, the search and screening committee can obtain recommendations from the special committee. This procedure might be most effective in units where the number of women and minorities is especially low and qualified personnel difficult to find.

9. Interviewing Candidates

Depending upon resources available, the distances that the interviewees must travel, and the wishes of the search and screening committee, finalists should now be brought to campus for a formal interview. Search and screening committees are encouraged to conduct preliminary telephone interviews with candidates, with the whole committee present, to ascertain the candidate's continuing interest in the position and to obtain a preliminary assessment of the candidate's match for the job requirements. Candidates invited for an interview will be reimbursed for travel expenses.

As in the previous phases, it is important that all candidates be treated equally during the interview. If one is invited to make a presentation or give a seminar, all must be so invited. All candidates must have an equivalent opportunity to present their credentials in person and receive equal consideration. It is recommended that some predetermined questions be asked all interviewees, that efforts be made to have the same interviewers present in each case, and that the allotted time and other conditions be as identical as possible for all interviewees.

It is also recommended that each candidate makes a presentation and that faculty and students are invited. This is an effective way to obtain student input.

10. Selection of the Appointee

After the interviews have been completed, all candidates will be discussed by the search and screening committee and a list of three to five unranked candidates will be submitted to the Department Head/Dean. The Department Head will make a final recommendation to the School Dean, who will in turn make his/her final recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will then make an official appointment within the salary range authorized for the position. The Department Head/Dean will also be responsible for reviewing and verifying, through transcripts, that the appointee has the proper credentials.

At the conclusion of the search, the search chair is responsible for completing forms relating to the search. These forms are the Affirmative Action Checklist <http://www.gsw.edu/~hr/forms/affactioncklist.pdf>, the Priority Listing <http://www.gsw.edu/~hr/forms/prioritylisting.pdf> and the Applicant Flow <http://www.gsw.edu/~hr/forms/applicantflow.pdf>

Human Resources Department

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