

Recruitment of Faculty, Limited, and Academic Staff at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

1.00 INTRODUCTION

1.01 Preface

This handbook provides information to ensure that the University of Wisconsin-Madison provides equal employment opportunity through non-discriminatory hiring practices.

State and Federal law, as well as institutional policies, commit the University of Wisconsin--Madison to provide equal employment opportunity for all, regardless of: age, ancestry, arrest or conviction record, color, creed, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, gender, guard or reserve status, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.¹

U.S. Statutes and Executive Orders have also addressed this question over the past 25 years. Besides asserting the need for evenhandedness in employment decisions involving women, persons over 40, veterans, and persons with disabilities, federal legislation has singled out four groups of racial/ethnic minorities for special attention: Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, and Asians and Pacific Islanders.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's commitment is to more than simply nondiscrimination. Our academic community combines an excellent undergraduate program, a world-class research enterprise, and the dedication to use knowledge in the service of people. Our institutional commitment to excellence and service cannot be fully attained without also acknowledging the diversity within our students, faculty, and staff.

An adequate representation of well-qualified women and minorities, in all fields and at all employment levels, adds cultural richness to the institution and enhances its vitality and reputation. A diverse faculty and staff broaden the instructional and research program. Offering young people a variety of role models promotes their growth and achievement. Diversity and pluralism in the staff attract diversity and pluralism in the student body.

Immediate responsibility for recruiting, retaining, and developing faculty talent is vested in the faculty itself. Responsibility for academic staff personnel practices is more varied, reflecting the diversity of academic staff roles. Whatever the mechanism for personnel decision-making, it is hoped that this handbook will contribute to the University's efforts to increase the diversity of our workforce.

1) For further information, please see [The Legal Basis for Non-Discrimination](#), @Appendix A.

1.02 DEFINITIONS

In describing the search process, the terms *employment inquiries*, *applicant*, *nominee*, *candidate*, *finalist* and *search committee* are used as defined below:

Employment Inquiries - Letters received by any office within the UW-Madison from individuals expressing interest in positions that may be available. Employment inquiries are not considered to be applications for specific vacancies.

Applicant - An individual who has submitted a formal application for a vacant position.

Nominee - An individual who is nominated by someone other than him/herself for a specific vacancy. (A person who accepts the nomination becomes a candidate. A person who refuses the nomination shall be called an "uninterested nominee" and shall be recorded as such.)

Candidate - An individual who expresses interest in a specific vacancy, either by applying or by accepting a nomination.

Finalist - Each candidate who in the final stages is seriously considered for an appointment or whose name is submitted for final consideration.

Search Committee - Either a group of people or an individual involved in the recruitment, interviewing and hiring decision, for a specific vacant position.

Chair/Supervisor - An individual with whom the Search Committee works closely throughout the search process.

1.03 THE SEARCH COMMITTEE AS UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATIVE

Given the current state of employment in higher education, it is not unusual for a university of the stature of the University of Wisconsin-Madison to receive several hundred applications for one job opening. The search committee, being perhaps the only contact many of these individuals will have with the University, is in a unique position to enhance the reputation and image of the University. While a search committee is evaluating a candidate, the candidate is also evaluating the search committee, the department or unit it represents, and, ultimately, the institution.

Most of the candidates for positions at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will eventually enter the profession and will, in turn, work with colleagues and students. The impression that a candidate receives of the University will reach many individuals beyond the candidate and will influence our reputation and the success of future search committees.

In order to ensure that the impression the candidate receives is a positive one, the search committee needs to pay attention to details of the search process. Specific aspects that may influence a candidate's perception: being candid and forthright with candidates,

meeting timelines, keeping promises, being warm and professional in correspondence, politely answering telephone inquiries, conducting interviews that are probing, yet cordial, and having campus visits that are well-planned and executed. As a result of these efforts the search committee will be seen as professional, humane, and sensitive and the University as a healthy, pleasant, and supportive place to work. In a very real sense, it is possible for a search committee to have been thoroughly successful even if it has failed to hire its top candidate.

1.04 SEARCHES AND THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

No committee has greater ability to make profound and substantive changes in a unit than the search committee. Members of such committees should thoroughly understand the requirements of the position to be filled and the mission and priorities of the department or unit and the University.

Generally, search committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison function as advisory to a departmental executive committee or a dean or director, recommending one or more individuals for a position. They typically work closely with the chair/director of the department or unit throughout the search process.

The search committee must, therefore, decide on the credentials it wishes candidates to submit (e.g., curriculum vitae, publications, reference letters or names of references) and the deadline for their submission. This may be included in the position description but should also be in the letter sent to persons who respond to the position announcement or who have been nominated.

The search committee should be composed of individuals who bring to it a variety of perspectives and a sensitivity to equity and diversity issues. When possible, women and minorities from within the unit should be represented on all search committees. Since these individuals tend to be asked frequently to serve on an array of committees, however, this may not always be feasible. There is certainly no objection to including women or minorities from other departments or administrative units or enlisting their help in the search process.

Each member of the search committee shares in the role of ensuring compliance with equal opportunity and affirmative action requirements, and promoting diversity and excellence. Staff of the Equity and Diversity Resource Center are available to meet with the chair or the entire committee or to serve as a resource at any point in the search process (Appendix B). In addition, an interviewing and selection training session that includes a diversity component is available. The committee will want to evaluate all steps of its search in terms of affirmative action, with particular attention to the danger of unintentionally introducing any kind of discriminatory practice into the process.

The University encourages as broad-based a search as possible. For an appointment to the faculty, a national search is required; for the head of a major administrative or support unit, a national search is strongly recommended; a regional search typically is required.

When appropriate, students should have an opportunity to meet candidates in an

informal setting or to attend presentations by the candidates. Student reactions may be useful to the search committee in its deliberations.

1.05 THE CHARGE

The charge to the search committee must be clear and precise: ambiguity in the charge, in the role of the committee, or in the extent of its authority can create confusion that will hamper and delay the selection process at crucial points.

Among other things, the committee should understand exactly how many finalists it is being asked to recommend, whether they should be ranked, and whether it should make any exploration as to their availability.

While the charge to the committee will vary depending on the kind of position being filled, some of the activities that may be assigned to the search committee include:

- \$ writing a job description, if none exists (refer to Section 2.02);
- \$ preparing the Position Vacancy Listing (Appendix C), and, if necessary, a Recruitment Efforts Plan (Appendix D), and/or Request for Authorization to Recruit (Appendix E);
- \$ drafting the position advertisement and deciding where it will be published;
- \$ planning a search that is sensitive to affirmative action issues and the need for a diverse pool of candidates;
- \$ drafting recruitment letters and other appropriate letters (e.g., status of application);
- \$ collecting the names and addresses of persons and institutions to which recruitment letters will be sent;
- \$ informing all applicants and nominees that unless confidentiality is requested in writing, information regarding their applications must be released upon request;
- \$ informing applicants and nominees that finalists cannot be guaranteed confidentiality;
- \$ establishing job-related criteria and procedures for screening candidates;
- \$ reviewing and evaluating all candidates, including reference checks and interviews for those under serious consideration;
- \$ determining or recommending which candidates will be brought to the campus for interviews;
- \$ completing all documentation on the search, including sex and heritage code information for all persons interviewed;
- \$ recommending to a designated individual, by a specified date, a specific number of finalists.

Occasionally, a search committee may have the task of recommending well-qualified finalists for any of several specialties in the department or at any of several ranks. The job description and advertisement should reflect that intended flexibility.