The Role and Responsibility of Search Committee Membership

The Administrator/Department Head and the Search Committee Chairperson usually confer as to who will be represented on the Search Committee. The Search Committee members should have a legitimate interest in the selection process. For example, in the selection of a Recruiter, it might be advantageous to include a few of the primary recipients of the service provided by the Recruiter position. For administrative positions, persons who will be subordinates, peers, and/or superiors of the person selected should serve on the Search Committee. Where the dean of a college is being sought, it is customary to include subject matter specialists as well as prospective peers and supervisors. The composition of all Search Committees should be well balanced across gender and ethnicity. Generally, search committees are comprised of staff and faculty who have an interest in the function served by the position. However, on occasion, individuals outside of the university may serve on the Search Committee.

Search Committee members should not be related by kinship, personal relationships, or be engaged in business ventures with persons who apply for the vacant position. Persons who are known adversaries of applicants likewise should not be members of a Search Committee. It is incumbent upon a Search Committee member to disclose when such a conflict arises. Upon having knowledge of any conflict of issue potential, the committee Chairperson should discuss the matter with the Department Head/Administrator and take appropriate action.

Committee Member’s Responsibilities

- Attends all meetings scheduled by the Chairperson.
- Assists in establishing a timetable.
- May assist with writing the vacancy announcement and determining media for distribution, when requested.
- Develops lists of interview and reference questions, if requested.
- Participates in all interview sessions.
- Calls references and former employers, when assigned by the chair, and reports findings to the committee.
- Evaluates applications according to education, experience, and other relevant criteria defined in the vacancy announcement.
• Assists the Chairperson with travel accommodations and interviewing schedules, if requested.

• Recommends from two to five (preferably a minimum of three) of the best-qualified candidates, unraked, to the employing Administrator/Department Head. The committee's work usually ends with the recommendation to the Administrator/Department Head.

• Forwards all records to the Chairperson after the search.