

Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Search and Hiring

This is a guide of best practices in faculty search and hiring and is intended to assist department chairs and search committee chairs and members engaged in hiring new faculty.

TIMELINE OF A FACULTY SEARCH

1 March	CDI Faculty Request submitted by the Department Chair to the Provost.
April	Provost presents the CDI faculty requests to Leadership with justified cases.
May	Presented to the Board of Trustees
End May	Provost informs department chairs of outcomes of their faculty requests (approved/not approved)
Early June	Department chairs submit to the Provost a finalized position description, and propose the search committee members and external academic advertising sources. This will all be approved by the Provost as well as the open and close date of each search.
Early August	The Office of the Provost creates the position on Interfolio and sends the full position description to HR for advertising internally and on the AUP website. Upon this, the position will be advertised on external websites.
October	End of October to be the closing date for positions
November	Review of applications begins and longlist candidates chosen – list to be sent to the Provost for approval. The office of the Provost will organize online interviews.
Early December	Longlist candidate interviews conclude and shortlist candidates chosen - list to be sent to the Provost for approval. The Provost will have an initial conversation with the candidates regarding the AUP package and to ensure they are still interested in the position. The Office of the Provost will then contact the shortlist candidates to invite them for a 2-day campus visit.
January	From week 2 of the semester campus visits should begin and can continue into early February. (Bear in mind Spring break weeks as no campus visits then)
February	Once short list candidate campus visits conclude the search committee will send a detailed report on each of the candidates and identify their finalist candidate. The Provost will contact the chosen finalist candidate and make the AUP offer.
Early March	HR is informed of the chosen candidate and the visa application process (where needed) will begin and AUP contract details shared with the chosen candidate.

BEFORE THE SEARCH

Position Description

The department requesting a new faculty hire will prepare and approve the position description for the CDI faculty request. If a search is approved the final position description must be submitted to the Provost in early June in preparation for advertising the position in August.

Clearly describe the responsibilities of the position and provide a list of courses that a candidate is expected to teach.

Define the position description as broadly as possible to attract a wide range of applicants.

Consider where the position could be advertised to attract diverse applicants.

Selecting Search Committee Members

AUP is a diverse institution and seeks to further diversify its student body, faculty and staff. Search committees should include members from a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds, and nationalities. Generally, the search committee will be made up of four faculty members (at least one member should be from outside the department).

Consider the following when composing a committee:

- Be alert to conflicts of interest.
- Be attentive to the power dynamics of the committee.
- Identify a diversity advocate who will ensure that the committee fully considers candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- We recommend that you nominate someone who is not already overly engaged in committees or task forces, to ensure equal service distribution.

The Provost must approve the list of committee members and the search committee chair before the search begins.

The Search Committee's Charge

The search committee's responsibility is to identify a choice of top candidates for the position in question. This responsibility includes advancing the goal of identifying outstanding candidates from a wide range of backgrounds including ~~women~~, underrepresented minorities, and members of other underrepresented groups, in fields where they are in the minority.

Best Practices in the Search Process

1. Document key aspects of the search process. Creating a record of search committee discussions, advertisements, nominations, recruiting efforts, interviews with candidates, interviews with references, and the rationale for selecting or refusing candidates will allow committee members to review their process for evidence of bias, and correct as needed.
2. The Provost, or a delegate, will attend the 1st meeting of the committee to answer questions and to educate committee members on hiring biases.
3. Establish clear evaluation criteria. Decide in advance of reviewing applications which criteria will be used and how they will be weighted. The criteria must be approved by the Provost. The evaluation criteria can be set up in Interfolio for use upon reviewing applications.
4. Spend sufficient time reviewing applications to decrease the likelihood of arriving at biased judgments of applicants.
5. Create multiple rankings based on different criteria. Rather than a single ranking system based on holistic assessments of candidates, a more objective way to build a shortlist is to rank candidates on different criteria and then choose candidates who rank highly on a number of criteria.
6. Interview a wide array of candidates. Underrepresented minority candidates are more likely to be evaluated fairly when they are not the only candidates of their gender, race, or ethnicity under consideration.

7. Use a preferential ranked-choice voting process to ensure that minority perspectives are adequately represented.

A Note on Confidentiality

The search committee should establish clear guidelines at the outset for keeping deliberations, personal or background information on a candidate, and a candidate's name in the strictest confidence. Establishing such guidelines is an essential part of any search.

DURING THE SEARCH

The search officially begins once the position is approved by the Provost and is posted on the AUP website. Advertisements on specific education hiring websites will be approved by the Provost.

Active recruiting

The search committee chair and members of the committee and department faculty should reach out to colleagues at institutions that have diverse faculty and students to identify high-potential ~~females and~~ candidates from underrepresented communities and encourage them to apply to the position.

Advertise broadly, including to interest groups with diverse faculty audiences.

Department faculty should reach out to qualified candidates through their membership in relevant groups or organizations and to their own personal networks.

Personal outreach to exceptional candidates can persuade some candidates to apply who might not otherwise have done so.

Faculty should share the position within their professional networks and even on their social media platforms.

Evaluating Applicants

When evaluating candidates, it is important to make sure that the process is fair and gives due consideration to each candidate.

- Established evaluation criteria: As noted above, the criteria for judging applicants, as well as the relative importance of the criteria, should be determined prior to reviewing applications. Choose criteria that can help predict the future success of the applicant.
- Adhere to the evaluation criteria. Using a standard evaluation form will help committees to rate criteria consistently across a pool of candidates.
 - Look for strengths: In the initial assessment of applicants, it will be helpful to search for reasons to continue considering individuals for the position. Such an approach will ensure that strengths are not overlooked and that all promising candidates are included.
 - Rely on evidence: When determining whether or not a candidate meets certain criteria, refer to materials in candidate's application. Ensure that similar information is collected on all applicants. For example, if one candidate receives an unsolicited reference from a colleague, then the search committee should reach out to colleagues of other candidates to obtain references.
- Spend adequate time reviewing each application.
- Each application should be assessed by more than one search committee member to ensure a fair evaluation.
- Consider each candidate's record of working with diverse students and diversity-related research. As AUP is committed to building a diverse and challenging environment, attention should be given to candidates who have such a track record.
- Avoid subjecting different candidates to different expectations.
- Avoid elitism. Be careful of rating a candidate high solely because of the reputation of their institution or advisor.
- Avoid premature ranking. Ensure that each application has been fully considered with respect to the

different criteria that were agreed upon prior to expressing preferences for particular candidates.

- Create multiple ranking lists of candidates. Ranking candidates on each criterion and then choosing individuals who placed highly in all categories will allow for a fair construction of the candidate shortlist.

Longlist Candidate Interviews

After the evaluation of all applications a longlist of 8-12 candidates should be decided upon. Use a consensus or a ranked choice voting process to create your list. This list should be approved by the Provost before going forward. These candidates will be invited to a 20–30-minute online interview with the search committee which will be coordinated by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the chair of the search committee.

The search committee should have specific questions to ask candidates which will then allow them to further evaluate their long list candidates and decide upon the 3 final shortlist candidates. Use a consensus or a ranked choice voting process to create your list.

Reviewing Candidate Shortlist

Prior to inviting individuals for an on-campus visit and interviews, the Provost will review the candidate shortlist to ascertain that all possible efforts were made to conduct a fair recruiting and evaluation process. **The candidate shortlist must be approved by the Provost** and who will speak with each shortlist candidate about the AUP package and confirm their continued interest in the position upon which the candidate will be invited for a 2-day campus visit.

THE CAMPUS VISIT

On-Campus Visits and Interviews

Once the candidate shortlist has been approved by the Provost, the Office of the Provost, will invite candidates to AUP for an on-campus visit. These visits are opportunities for candidates and AUP faculty to learn about each other as potential colleagues. Candidates will ideally have positive experiences, be able to present themselves well, and gather all the information they need to determine whether the University would be a good fit for them.

Interview Schedule

The agenda for the candidate's time at AUP should reflect department and university priorities in terms of research and teaching.

Ensure that there are different ways in which candidates may interact with faculty and students.

Consider providing interviewees with opportunities to reveal their strengths through less formal events, such as question and answer sessions, in addition to the traditional job presentation.

Social gatherings with faculty will allow visitors to observe and learn about department culture.

Candidates might also appreciate opportunities to interact with students with limited faculty involvement.

Allow the candidate input into determining the schedule. Before developing it, be sure to contact candidates about any accommodations that they may require, such as physical access needs or dietary restrictions.

Providing information about the department and the University as well as about different topics, groups, and organizations related to the University will allow candidates to determine issues of interest that they could explore further during their visit to campus.

Include a guided tour of the AUP campus.

Ensure that the schedule is not too tightly packed and that there is time for lunch and breaks. Candidates may appreciate free blocks of time between events.

An AUP 2-day campus visit typically includes:

Guest lecture in a class (members of the department and search committee attend). Students will be asked for feedback.

Research Presentation on their research/scholarship open to the whole AUP community
Meet with all department faculty
Meet with faculty from other departments
Meet with the Provost
Meet the members of Academic Affairs
Meet with the Director of Human Resources
Meet with the Department Chair
Lunch with 2 members of the search committee
Dinner with 2 members of the search committee
Meet with students
Campus tour
Final interview with the search committee

All campus visit schedules will be coordinated by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the chair of the search committee. The outline for the schedule must be approved by the Provost.

Inform Candidates of the Agenda for the Visit

Candidates should know the schedule for their on-campus visit and receive clear guidelines regarding any presentation or lecture that they are invited to give and all well in advance of their visit. A detailed visit schedule should show the times, names of 'activity' (what it is and with whom) and locations. They should receive logistical details on hotels, refunds for expenses, AUP security card and link to campus map, on campus WiFi access, and request for dietary restrictions.

Class lecture: the chair of the search committee will confirm the course in which the candidate gives the class lecture and the topic for the lecture as well as any readings. These are then shared with the candidate in adequate time for preparation. The Office of the Provost will build the 2-day visit schedule around the class time.

Research Presentation: request the candidate to send the topic of their 30-minute presentation, an abstract and a short bio of themselves. This will be circulated to all faculty and a Teams calendar invitation sent out. The presentation will be recorded.

Prepare to Conduct Interviews

1. Have the candidate's visit schedule, including times and locations of interviews.
2. Have application materials submitted by the candidate.
3. Know how to present the strengths and advantages of AUP to all candidates.
4. Have a relatively similar list of interview questions to be asked of each candidate. By posing the same questions to each interviewee, each member of your committee will be able to collect comparable information from all candidates.
5. Have evaluation/rating worksheets and other feedback forms that are to be submitted to the search committee after the interview. Requiring interviewers to provide feedback on specific criteria will assure a fair assessment of candidates.

Coordinate Visit to Campus

1. Provide a warm welcome to all candidates. Make sure department staff know of a candidate's arrival and are available to welcome them. A search committee member or department faculty member can escort the candidate to different events and interviews during the visit.
2. Have the candidate meet with the department chair and all department faculty, particularly faculty they may be interested in collaborating with, and persons of similar background and interests. Ensure these interactions are positive and friendly, and that all who meet with candidates have information about their professional background. Ensure underrepresented minority faculty meet with all candidates, not just underrepresented minority candidates.
3. Communicate that the department/University is a supportive and friendly place to work by sharing its policies on evaluation, promotion, and mentoring for junior faculty. A department with clear policies on these issues will appeal to candidates as a work environment that allows faculty to flourish.
4. Connect candidates with the Office of Human Resources. This can be a great resource for candidates who want to learn about benefits and resources that are available to support them, and that they may prefer not to raise with

their recruiting department.

6. End the campus visit on a positive note. Ensure that the candidate's last interactions are with those who are enthusiastic about AUP. Don't make a premature offer but inform the candidate of a general timeline for the next steps in the hiring process.

7. Reimburse candidate for expenses promptly after the end of the on-campus visit.

Checking References

References provide a valuable complement to interviews, allowing search committee members to gain further understanding of candidates' professional accomplishments and approach. A consistent method of reviewing these references will contribute to a fair assessment of candidates.

Notify candidates that their references may be contacted. When interviewing references, be sure to only ask job-related questions. Questions that are not suitable to ask candidates are also not appropriate to ask of references.

Selecting Candidate and Making Offer

Presenting Candidates

Once all candidates have been thoroughly evaluated, the search committee presents its final hiring recommendations to the Provost. Along with the final list of candidates, committees should include the criteria used to evaluate candidates as well as documentation showing the rationale behind the choices made. The rationale should contain the perspectives of all committee members rather than just the prevailing ones.

The final list of candidates should be as diverse as possible and should be accompanied by a statement outlining the efforts made to recruit candidates from underrepresented communities.

Making the Offer

The Provost will contact the chosen candidate to make the offer to join AUP.

Transparency and fairness about negotiating the offer will build trust in the institution among new hires, result in successful recruitments, and have a positive impact on long-term retention. Some topics that can be discussed during negotiations: • Salary • Course release time • Faculty Development funds • Moving expenses • Other issues of concern to the candidate.

Evaluating the Search

The search committee should reflect upon the search it just led. By documenting and sharing lessons learned, future searches can better employ practices that will recruit top faculty to the University.

Some questions to help guide the committee's evaluation of the search:

1. Did the committee use the noted best practices in faculty recruiting?
2. What parts of the search process worked well?
3. What parts did not work well? How could they be improved?
4. Was the applicant pool diverse? Did it include underrepresented minorities?
5. Could the job description have been constructed in a way that would have brought in a broader pool of candidates?
6. Could the department have recruited more actively?
7. Were any promising candidates discovered during this search? If so, it will be helpful to keep these individuals on file for future searches.
8. How did finalists perceive the recruitment process? Interviews with members of the shortlist can yield valuable feedback.
9. Did candidates, especially underrepresented minority candidates, refuse an offer? If so, why? Consider

interviewing these candidates and asking them their reasons for refusal.

10. Are there ways that the department can become more attractive to underrepresented minorities?

Once the search committee has considered these questions and documented its analysis, its report can be shared with the department chair and the Provost.