

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Responsibility and Accountability for Faculty Searches

Faculty Department Chairs/Deans/Search Committees at the University of Mary Washington are committed to and responsible for the recruitment, retention, and development of an excellent, diverse, and productive faculty. These procedures are intended to provide a recruitment process that supports careful planning, describes our practices, and enhances our on-going efforts to conduct full and fair faculty searches. Primary responsibility and accountability for compliance with university policies and procedures rests with the academic deans, provost, and other senior officials of the University, including the Office of Human Resources/AEEO. Deans are expected to play an active role in searches for positions that report to their departments or programs to be sure that:

- Search committees develop and carry out aggressive recruitment plans that incorporate the strategies most likely to result in a pool of highly qualified diverse candidates;
- Search committees make recommendations to hire excellent candidates well suited to Mary Washington's mission;
- Each candidate is given full and fair consideration;
- Selection processes along the way do not inadvertently eliminate candidates because of inappropriate criteria.

When recruiting and selecting individuals for teaching faculty positions, the advice and experience of the faculty at the department and program level is essential. Search committees and department/program heads play a critical role in soliciting faculty input in the decision making process.

While hiring outcomes depend on the involvement of many people, the deans, provost, and other senior academic leadership are in the best position to determine if good faith efforts have been made across all the colleges and the University.

As we seek to hire the best faculty and academic administrative talent at the University of Mary Washington, we will need to use a variety of recruitment, advertising and networking strategies. UMW is committed to developing and sustaining relations with a full array of national and international professional associations, with other state, national, and international universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Native American, Asian and Hispanic serving institutions, and women's colleges. Academic departments, programs, and other administrative units are strongly encouraged to reach out to their discipline-based colleagues at these and other partner institutions to encourage applicants to apply for our positions and to convey the University's genuine interest in building a high quality and diverse faculty and staff.

The University also encourages faculty and staff to consider recruitment and networking while attending conferences, to maintain listings of resources, and to explore other variations on the standard recruitment processes. In some cases, this may mean advertising several openings simultaneously or using an interdisciplinary search committee. Advance consultation with the Office of the Provost, Dean's

offices, and the Office of Human Resources/Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity Office (OHR/AEEO) on alternative search plans will expedite the eventual review and approval process.

The University uses an on-line applicant tracking system in order to collect comprehensive information about faculty searches in accordance with federal requirements and to allow departments to maintain and complete the search process more efficiently. This data entry and collection system has the benefit of allowing the OHR/AEEO and hiring officials to gauge search response in “real time” for their openings.

Role of the Office of Human Resources/AEEO

The Office of Human Resources/AEEO plays an important oversight role in the faculty search process. As a federal contractor, UMW must meet the requirements set by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs for recruitment and employment practices that address the under representation of women, minorities, protected veterans and persons with disabilities in our workforce. The OHR/AEEO is responsible for monitoring compliance with federal and university policies and procedures related to faculty searches. The Recruitment staff in the OHR/AEEO will provide guidance to the committee at the onset of the search, share search tools and strategies more likely to yield a more diverse candidate pool, and assist in the progression of searches.

Market demand requires exceptional responsiveness if we are to be successful with offers to talented individuals in certain fields. If special circumstances are identified in advance, or arise during the search, it is critical that the Dean’s office, senior manager, and the recruitment staff work together throughout the search process to ensure that the search is accomplished in a timely manner.

Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues

Diversity: Diversity is a broad mix of people who reflect the general demographic characteristics of an organization’s community, customer base, industry and interests. A progressive diversity posture recognizes that the best organizations are ones that use the inherent richness of people from many different backgrounds because their unique skills, values and perspectives give the organization a competitive advantage in the marketplace to respond to the broad range of organizational challenges and opportunities. Diversity is not a legal requirement; it is business imperative for success.¹

Equal Opportunity: Equal Opportunity laws prohibit discrimination against candidates and employees who are members of protected [classes](#). This is the legal framework provided by a series of state, federal, and sometimes local laws and regulations that attempt to create a level playing field for all applicants and employees where candidates have a fair chance of succeeding regardless of their background.²

¹ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*,. Sterling, VA; Stylus, p. 153.

² Lee, *Search Committees*, p. 153.

Affirmative Action: Affirmative Action is the legal mandate to pursue an aggressive recruiting strategy ~~to~~ that attempt to provide equal opportunity for certain groups of applicants who have traditionally not had opportunities. The groups that are targeted are those that have been identified as being underrepresented in the employing organization. Executive Order 11246 requires institutions to put forth “good faith effort” in the recruitment and selection process.³

Inclusion: Inclusion implies that all members –majority and minority –feel that their work and accomplishments are valued and appreciated just as much as any other member of the community. Mere presence and participation are not sufficient for inclusion; being a valued part of the whole is the essential criterion.⁴

Immigration: Non- citizen candidates’ eligibility to work in the United States depends on their visa status and the position they are being considered for within the University. There are many different visa scenarios. Immigrant eligibility issues should be promptly brought to the attention of the HR office. Immigrant eligibility issues should be promptly addressed with the Provost’s office to ensure timely processing.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is a fundamental requirement of any professional search. Search committee members should not reveal the candidates in their pools before, during or after a search without a candidate’s permission. Candidates expect that their pursuit of a position will be confidential until they are a finalist. This also extends to reference checking process. Permission should be sought to conduct any check on a candidate for employment. Individuals should also be given the courtesy of knowing that you are checking so they can notify references to expect a call.⁵

Related Virginia Department of Human Resource Management Policies:

- [Equal Employment Opportunity, Policy #2.05](#)
- [Hiring, Policy #2.10](#)
- [Compensation, Policy #3.05](#)

Search Process

Applicability of these Procedures

A search in accordance with these procedures is required for all faculty positions that are full-time, regular teaching appointments, whether tenure-track or renewable term contract positions. A full

³ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*,. Sterling, VA; Stylus, p. 153.

⁴ Lee, *Search Committees*, p. 154.

⁵ Lee, *Search Committees*, p. 155.

search is also expected for temporary, one-year, placements where a permanent, full-time hire is anticipated. Exceptions may apply as approved by the Provost in consultation with the Recruitment Manager.

The Dean's office may approve filling positions that are temporary for one year (with no expectation of permanent placement) and adjunct faculty positions without conducting a full search in accordance with these procedures. **However, departments are still encouraged to conduct a local or regional search for even temporary and adjunct positions, whenever reasonable, and to make strong efforts to achieve a diverse applicant pool.** In those rare instances where a search for a full-time regular faculty position is not feasible, a search exemption may be requested (see Exemption Form).

Approval to Conduct Searches: All full-time faculty searches must be approved in advance by the Dean and the Provost. This applies to searches for new positions as well as searches for existing positions that become vacant.

The Department Chair will create a new position description in Careers to initiate the approval process for a Faculty/Teaching Search. Final approval notice will be sent to the Search Committee Chair via careers email from Classification and Compensation Analyst to initiate the posting request. The Search Committee Chair as well as the other members of the panel will be able to view this status in Careers.

After the position has been approved in Careers, the chair will re-enter Careers to begin the process of posting the position for recruitment.

Committee members should determine if they wish to make use of the **supplemental screening questions feature** in Careers. This feature may be used as a screening tool to eliminate candidates who do not meet minimum qualifications or to rank order qualified candidates. The Recruitment Manager will consult with the committee or department to determine appropriate supplemental questions.

Once all approvals have been indicated in Careers, the RM posts the position in Careers, sends out targeted recruitment announcements to contacts maintained by OHR/AEEO, places newspaper ads and posts ads in one or more of the following online sources: Higher Ed.com, Diverse, Chronicle of Higher Education, Hispanic Outlook. It is the responsibility of the Search Committee Chair to coordinate the posting of the advertisement in concentration-specific sites and sources.

Pre-Search Planning: Effective planning brings about two results: a high quality hire and a defensible hiring decision. The quality of the hire is dependent upon the quality of the pool generated from the committee and other institutional activities⁶. A defensible decision is evidenced by proper final documentation. At the end of the process you will be required to submit search documentation, including the following to the OH/AEEO office for the search file: outreach activities, correspondence with applicants, interview questions, screening matrices, completed reference checks). A Pre-Posting checklist with things to consider when entering into a search is available on the HR website.

⁶ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p. 39.

Searches may take 4-5 months to complete, from posting to hire. Positions are normally posted for advertising within 5 work days. Applications are normally accepted for period of 2-3 months before closing. Tips for expediting the search process are provided on the Human Resources/Recruitment Website under “Best Practices”.

Establish the Search Committee

The hiring department chair/program director in consultation with the Dean will determine the search committee. The search committee for full-time faculty searches must be approved by the Dean and must include at least one faculty member from outside the hiring department/program. In special cases, the Dean or Provost may consult with the search chair/committee and elect to ask an individual from outside the University to also serve on the search committee. All committee members are expected to fully participate in the search, review the candidates, and to maintain and adhere to university policies and procedures as these pertain to searches. The committee is expected to be effective in supporting the University’s commitment to excellence and diversity.

Search committees should represent a diverse population. *“A diverse search committee makes a true multidimensional and multicultural analysis of candidate applications possible. Excellence cannot be achieved without different points of view, resident multiple intelligences and different experiences and expertise. These elements also help to mitigate any natural bias found in individual decisions.”⁷*

Initial Committee Meeting: The Dean, Department Chair or Search Committee Chair convenes the initial meeting to charge the search committee with its responsibilities for achieving institutional commitment to excellence and diversity, review expectations for the search, and to specify the manner in which they wish to receive the committee’s final recommendations. The hiring official will contact the recruitment office to schedule a representative to attend the charge meeting to discuss best practices for conducting searches.

COMMITTEE DECISIONS

- Review or develop the Recruitment and Advertising Plan (see section below);
- Review recruitment and anticipated search-related costs;
- Create screening criteria and screening template;
- Develop a timetable;
- Determine frequency of meetings; and
- Make decisions about record keeping, who invites interviewees, handling of references, questions to be asked, and how to address any specific issues pertaining to the position, the hiring department, the University, and other related topics.

⁷ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus , p. 11.

Any questions about the budget/costs of the search should be resolved with the Dean. Members of the committee should agree in advance on the scope of authority of the committee and the search committee chair, how to handle any difficult questions and/or potentially problematic issues. The committee should also agree on what they believe are the strengths of the department/program/university and what academic or discipline are priorities in the selection of their candidates.

*TIP: The biggest stumbling block in the search committee process occurs when committee members use different criteria to assess candidates. Different ideas about what defines a good candidate are fodder for disagreement and will ultimately undermine success. If evaluators don't agree on what criteria to use [and what the department needs], they will not agree on what a good candidate looks like and the process will weaken in its final stages.*⁸ Equally important is deciding in advance what materials or information will be solicited from the candidates to determine their qualifications.

A successful search not only brings a new colleague to the University but should have provided as positive a campus experience as possible for all candidates. How a search is conducted is as important as its immediate result; the search process contributes to our reputation as an academic institution and as an employer.

Developing the Recruitment and Advertising Plan (the Plan)

*Tip: True recruiting identifies candidates who otherwise would not have heard about the position vacancy. It involves outreach, networking, and solicitation. It requires building professional relationships and contacts, then at some future time informing them of the advantages of working at an institution and notifying them of position openings when they occur.*⁹

The Department or Search Committee Chair will submit to the Dean the Plan for recruitment. If approved by the Dean, the signed Plan goes to the OH/AAEEO for certification (see Appendix B for Recruitment Plan Form). The department and search committee may not begin the search process, including the placement of ads, until the Plan has been approved by the Dean and OHR/AAEEO. Once approval has been received, the posting request may be initiated in [Careers](#).

The Plan must:

- Include benchmarks to assess presence of diversity in applicant pools using data describing the availability of women and traditionally underrepresented groups in the relevant pool ([such as percentage of earned doctorates in the discipline](#)) and documented proactive search strategies.

⁸ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*. Sterling, VA; Stylus, p.63

⁹ Lee, *Search Committees*, p.43

The Dean will monitor the search results and may pause the search if the search Plan is not being followed and/or to enhance proactive strategies for targeted outreach.

- Identify all recruiting resources the committee intends to use such as listservs, websites, journals or newsletters for specialized professional associations, directories of recent doctoral recipients, contacts for pursuing targeted outreach, or other resources, as needed. At least one printed publication must be used to advertise the search. The Office of the Provost, Dean's offices, and OHR/AEEO can also assist in identifying resources.
- List all search committee members with their full titles, academic departments/positions

Complete the Discipline-Specific Outreach: The search committee carries out the remainder of the recruitment and advertising Plan by placing any departmental-initiated ads on discipline specific listservs, making personal contacts, and recruiting candidates for the vacancy as outlined in the approved recruitment plan. Search committees must keep documentation of their compliance with the approved recruitment plan. Documentation must be made available for the Dean's review to support his or her certification of the search and must be submitted to the OHR/AEEO as final search documentation.

Applicant Management

Applicant List: As applicants apply for the vacancy, the online system will provide them a confirmation number to verify receipt of their application materials. The system also provides applicants with an opportunity to complete voluntary self-identification information. A list of applicants will be generated by Careers **along with their application materials for download to support committee reviews.**

Applicant Materials: Application materials received in Careers are the official record for the search. Only applicants who apply in Careers may be considered. **If applicants submit an application by mail or to the department, they must be contacted by the chair of the search committee and asked to apply in Careers.** Applicants should be required to submit supplemental documents on line, if at all possible. Otherwise, a folder should be established for each applicant. Search chairs must keep a record of applicant contacts or other official search business. Applicants may be contacted with application instructions including notice that applications are not complete. All applicants must be treated similarly in this regard.

Mid-Progress Search Review: The Dean is responsible for monitoring the applicant pools periodically throughout the application period to note progress in applications from [underrepresented groups](#). The Dean and search committee chair can access summary EEO statistics on applicant pools based upon voluntary self-identification information reported in Careers. The Dean may pause the search if the committee has not followed their search plans and/or to work with the committee to devise additional proactive and targeted outreach.

Certification of the Final Applicant Pool: Immediately upon the search closing and prior to any official communication with any applicants, the Dean certifies that the recruitment plan was followed. The Dean will then forward the signed certification section of the recruitment plan to the OHR/AEEO, noting any exceptions. OHR/AEEO will review and acknowledge the certification for the file.

Conduct Initial Screening of Applications: Committee members will have access to candidate applications through Careers as indicated by the Search Committee Chair or OHR in the online posting request. Committee members will visit Careers, and select the user type of “Search Committee Member” to view applicants for the searches in which they are involved.

Every search must include a written screening instrument used by all committee members to ensure that everyone uses the same criteria to evaluate each candidate.

Initial screening of candidates should be totally objective.¹⁰ First, evaluate applicants against a common standard to determine whether they are qualified; then evaluate them again to determine how competitive they are among the other applicants¹¹.

For example, if the position requires a terminal degree by the date of appointment, all those who do not expect to have this minimum credential by the time the position begins would be eliminated.

The committee chair or designee (may be office manager) will update the Careers website at this time to indicate which candidates are not being advanced further in the search process.

Screening matrices must be collected from members and submitted as final search documentation. Alternatively, the committee may review the entire applicant pool as part of the in-depth screening process described below.

Conducting an In-Depth Screening: Using multiple screening methods is mostly likely to ensure a sound hiring decision. Committees should use different techniques at different stages of the process with an increasingly smaller group at each stage. For example, the written material of all applicants is screened; however, only a small number of candidates may be offered a telephone or skype interview, and a smaller number will be asked to present a work sample and /or invited to campus.

Here again a screening instrument to assess qualifications against pre- established required and preferred qualifications ensure a sound decision and fairness.¹² All candidates in each stage of the process must be treated similarly; for example, all must receive phone interviews if phone interviews are utilized. Applicants are then selected for further consideration e.g. short list.

Using reference checks as part of a ranking is NOT recommended; see section below on reference checks for more information.

NOTE: The review of reference letters (also known as recommendations) submitted as part of the candidate application will not satisfy the requirement to conduct a reference check on the selected candidate.

¹⁰ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p. 64.

¹¹ Lee, *Search Committees*, p.61.

¹² Lee, *Search Committees*, p.65.

Interviewing Candidates:

Review Interview Questions: The search committee reviews a core set of job-related interview questions that will be asked of all candidates at each stage of the interviewing phase. Additional questions may come up throughout the process in the context of specific interviews, teaching demonstrations.

Questions should seek information that is related to the applicant's knowledge, skills and ability to perform the job. Questions that are not job related or that violate EEO standards are not permissible. Please review guidance on appropriate and inappropriate interview questions. OHR and AAEEEO is available to provide advice and review for non-discriminatory language.

Off-Site/Initial Interviews: Normally, the committee chair or a designated member will invite candidates to interview. Interviews may be held with Search Committee members off-site at conferences or other events related to the field of study. While it is preferable that all members of the Search Committee be present at all steps of the interview process, it is not required for off-site interviews as long as a consistent panel is still used during each stage of the process.

Telephone or Skype Interviews: This is a good tool to help avoid cost associated with in-person interviews to determine if a candidate will be invited for further consideration and to help narrow down a large field of minimally qualified candidates. Questions should be prepared in advance and used consistently in all interviews. This may also be a good time to answer any outstanding questions from application materials.¹³

Determine On-Campus Interviews: *The Dean must approve candidates to be invited to campus interviews before they are notified.* A minimum of three candidates is recommended for onsite interviews. If only one candidate is referred or accepts an on-site interview, the Dean will consult with OHE/AAEEEO before proceeding further with the search process. The search committee will provide the Dean with materials on each candidate. If questions arise about the search at this point, all of the necessary parties involved will seek resolution in a timely manner.

Notify Candidates to Be Interviewed: Once the Dean has approved the interview list, the search committee or designated representative notifies the candidates. All candidates at each stage must be treated similarly, regardless of prior salary history, current job, if they work for UMW or other factors.

Develop Schedule/Conduct Interviews: The search committee and Dean's Office will work together to develop a schedule of activities for the campus visits of the selected candidates. The basic elements of the schedule should be consistent for all candidates, with an opportunity for candidates to request additional meetings as appropriate to their interests or needs. The Dean or his or her designee usually meets each candidate who is invited for an interview. The committee sets up interviews, makes travel and lodging arrangements, and arranges candidate presentations and interviews with relevant parties.

¹³ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p.104.

The experience for all candidates must be as consistent as possible, regardless of whether they are local or traveling from out of town. It should be made clear what parts of the campus visit will be evaluated and what will not be to give candidates the option to participate or not (example: meals the night before the formal process).

Interview Notes: All panel members will record the candidates' responses to the interview questions in writing or via electronic means (iPad, laptop). The responses for each round of interviews must be kept as they are part of the official interview documentation. Information should be kept in a secure place between interviews to maintain confidentiality of the questions and responses from the candidates.

OBTAIN SIGNED APPLICATION FORM AND, AS APPLICABLE, SIGNED SELECTIVE SERVICE FORM FROM ALL MALE, IN-PERSON INTERVIEWEES.

Work Samples or Teaching Demonstrations: You may choose to include a work sample to be completed by each candidate that comes in for interview. If used, each candidate must receive the same work sample and instructions. This is usually approved by recruitment manager during the interview question review. If the sample is to be timed, make sure the candidate is aware of the constraints before they begin.

Finalizing a Selection and Recordkeeping

Selection Documentation: The search committee reviews written feedback from all those involved in the interview process. In the case of teaching/instructional faculty positions, the departmental/program faculty is the primary source of feedback and advice. The search committee prepares written summaries of the strengths and weaknesses of the interviewed candidates and their overall suitability for the position. Only job-related information should be considered and documented. This summary becomes part of final search file. If an interviewed candidate is deemed no longer viable by the committee, that should be documented in the search file and updated in Careers as a status change.

A signed application and selective service form for the selected candidate are submitted in the final search file.

Conducting Reference Checks: *It is encouraged to reserve reference checks as the last screening activity for only the selected candidate. Reference checks are time consuming, involving several contacts and sometimes require follow up. They may also prematurely expose a candidate's search activity. However, some committees may choose to do limited reference checking at this stage in the process to as a basis for ranking.*¹⁴

¹⁴ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p 112.

In all instances, when reference calls are made, they must be conducted in the same manner for all candidates and must be documented as they are part of the selection decision. Use of a standard form is highly recommended. Normally the committee chair or a pre-designated committee member will conduct reference checks. In addition, written references from persons preferred by the candidate can be requested as part of the initial application packet, or requested later from a subset of applicants of interest to the committee. If the reference checker is referred to another individual as a better source of information, the committee should seek permission to pursue references from these individuals.

If referees for the selected candidate have not been contacted earlier in the search process, a reference check **must** be completed at this point. A documented reference check with previous supervisors, including immediate past supervisor is required on the selected candidate. This may have been provided on the candidate's application. Reference check calls must be documented as they are part of the selection decision. In addition, written references from persons preferred by the candidate can be requested as part of the initial application packet. Remember that reference check documentation must be submitted to OHR/AAEEO with final paperwork on the selected candidate. A reference check form is available to use as a template for this process.

Recommendation to the Dean: The Search Committee Chair reviews the search and interview processes, and the final search record for the recommended candidate with the Dean. Normally, recommendations to the Dean will be made only for final candidates deemed suitable by both the department and the search committee, if these groups are not the same. While ranking candidates may be useful in the earlier stages of candidate reviews, **it is not recommended in these final stages of the process.** Rankings can create factions and winners and losers. It also tends to make those in the minority feel as though their voice was not heard. Instead, a full explanation of all the factors considered is the better approach and should rely on the collective judgment of the committee, with the final analysis resting with the appointing authority.¹⁵

Approval by the Dean and Provost: Once the Dean has made his/her decision, this must also be reviewed and approved by the Provost. **No offer can be made to a candidate until it has been approved by the Provost and, as appropriate in certain cases, the President.**

Extending the Offer

Making the Conditional Job Offer: The conditional job offer (contingent upon background check) can be made after approval by the Dean and the Provost (and as appropriate, the President); this is usually done by the department/program head. If further negotiations are necessary, these are ordinarily resolved between the candidate and the department chair/program director, confirming with the Dean as necessary. If the successful candidate is an international candidate, contact the Provost Office concerning visa issues.

Once the conditional offer has been accepted and approved, the department/program will provide the Dean's Office with all information necessary to generate the pre-contract letter to the candidate with

¹⁵ Lee, C.D. (2014), Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p 125.

copies to jobs@umw.edu and the chair of the search committee or department chair. A copy is also sent to the Office of the Provost accompanied by the CV.

Request the Background Check: All University employees must successfully complete a criminal background check before hire. Background checks are conducted by a third party vendor and normally take up to 10 days to complete. However, this time may vary depending on the residential and employment history of the candidate. Only the selected candidate is subject to the background check. Upon acceptance of the conditional offer, the hiring official or designee may [initiate the background check](#).

This consists of two parts: The State Police check and the TrueScreen check.

1. State Police Background Check Documentation

The State Police Background Check is initiated during the candidates' visits to campus for the interview. Instructions are provided both on this page and in information about the Interview process.

To properly complete the State Police check for the hiring process, we ask the following:

Confirm the names, interview dates and times for your on- campus interviewees with the Recruitment office via email at jobs@umw.edu.

On the day of the interview, bring each interviewee to the Office of Human Resources to complete the background check authorization in front of the Recruitment Office notary. It is recommended that you schedule enough time prior to each interview to have the interviewee escorted to the Recruitment office. The authorization will take approximately 5 minutes.

The background check will be completed on the selected finalist only, as you will indicate in your online background check request after your conditional offer of employment has been accepted. All other candidate authorizations will remain secured and will then be destroyed.

2. TrueScreen and formal initiation of checks by Human Resources.

Once the Recruitment Manager receives the hiring official's confirmation of the conditional offer and acceptance, the Authorization Form, and the UMW Background Check Form, staff from the Recruitment Office will initiate the background search process with TrueScreen, the investigating agency as well as the State Police.

TrueScreen will contact the candidate directly by email with login instructions to authorize the background check. Once authorized, the investigation starts immediately. Background checks are conducted by a third party vendor and may take up to 10 days to complete. This time may vary depending on the residential and employment history of the candidate.

The hiring official will be contacted concerning the outcome, and if additional follow-up is required.

Special Circumstances

If the candidate does not have an email address, the hiring official should ask if there is an email address that the candidate is comfortable using temporarily. They may also recommend that the candidate create an email address through a free email service for this process.

If the candidate will need special assistance to complete this process, please contact the Recruitment Manager.

Hiring officials should contact the Recruitment Manager with any questions about this process.

As a reminder, all conviction information received from a background check is reviewed by HR and shared by our office with the Provost, as needed, to finalize a hiring action. HR will handle all communications with a candidate, as appropriate, if an adverse report results in withdrawal of an employment offer.

Closing the Search

Notify Unsuccessful Applicants: The Search Committee Chair is responsible for notifying unsuccessful applicants and on-site interviewees after an offer is accepted or a decision is made to close the search. Candidates who actually had an interview should be handled differently from others. Extending a personal touch, like phone call or personal email from the committee chair, will make a difference in the reputation of the university as well as in the ability to attract future talent.¹⁶ Phone calls should be scripted and made consistently to ensure that only the intended message is delivered. Chairs are asked to contact interviewees within 10 days of the pre contract letter being completed. All correspondence and documentation of contacts are to be retained for the final search documentation file.

Any remaining updates to candidate statuses in Careers must be made at this time. The committee chair will update Careers to show candidates not referred for interview as “Not Interviewed-Not Hired”. Candidates who were interviewed via Skype, conference or telephone should be entered as “Interviewed-Not Hired” in Careers by the committee chair or office manager, and so on.

Final Search Record: At the conclusion of the search, the department/program will provide the following documents to OHR/AAEEO:

1. Justification Summary for final selection
 - a. Refer to experience and specialization advertised for the position to keep the criteria job relevant.
 - b. Compare strengths of selected candidate to those of the others interviewed.
2. Search documentation from all committee members
 - a. All interview notes (phone and in person), screening sheets, work samples, teaching evaluations, electronic media (USB drive or CD/DVD) etc.

¹⁶ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*, Sterling, VA; Stylus, p.135.

- b. **Hard copies** must be received of this documentation by the time the contract has been sent out for the selected candidate.
3. Documentation of outreach based on Recruitment Plan.
 - a. Copies of advertisements from specific websites used by the Department.
 - b. Copies of advertisements placed by HR in national publications/websites.
4. Reference checks documentation for any candidates whose references were contacted.
Reminder: a reference check and documentation are required for the selected candidate. These are not the same documents are “letters of reference”.
5. Letters of reference for selected candidate.
6. Signed application form and (as applicable) signed selective service form for the selected candidate.
7. Copy of selected candidate’s CV and cover letter

All documentation is crucial and needs to be kept for the final HR search file. This official file is what helps defend the search in case of inquiries and, often, the documentation is used to provide needed information when submitting to Federal requirements for work visas/immigration.

Search Exceptions

Closed Without Hire/Failed Searches: Despite the best efforts of a search committee, department/program faculty, and others, there are legitimate reasons why a search may fail, as well as several possible points in the search process when this might occur.

*A failed search can be an indicator of an ill –defined position, inadequate recruiting techniques, an inadequate pool of candidates, or ineffective selection methods. The appointing authority should attempt to diagnose the variables that undermined the previous efforts before deciding to reopen, extend or end the search.*¹⁷

In all cases, before a search is declared closed without hire, the chair of the search committee and the department chair/program director will meet with the Dean to discuss the status of the search and what, if any, options may still be available. If the search is closed without hire, the chair of the search committee must work with Recruitment Manager to close the position on Careers, *using the appropriate codes for the cancellation/non-hire*. Additional documentation of why the search has been closed without hire may be sent via email to jobs@umw.edu as part of the official record.

Search Exemptions: There are rare occasions when an exemption to the search procedures requirement is reasonable and acceptable. A request for an exemption along with appropriate justification should be submitted by the department chair/program director first to the college Dean. All exemptions must also be approved by the OHR/AAEEO, the Provost, and in some cases the President. When requesting an exemption, please submit a [Faculty Search Exemption Form](#), detailed justification letter, and the resume/CV of the individual identified for the position.

¹⁷ Lee, C.D. (2014), *Search Committees, A Comprehensive Guide to Successful Faculty, Staff and Administrative Searches*. Sterling, VA; Stylus, p.127.

Target of Opportunity Positions: All full-time, regular faculty members are expected to be hired through a national search in accordance with these procedures whenever a reasonable and appropriate pool of candidates can be developed.

However, when a unique opportunity for an exceptional appointment presents itself, it may be appropriate to seek an exemption to search so that an individual may be recruited. A target of opportunity hire may happen in several ways. For example, the President or Provost may announce that one or more positions would be made available for exceptional, usually senior scholars, whose credentials are stellar and whose appointment would make unique contributions to the UMW's mission and programs. In this case, the position and discipline may be left open or very broadly defined, with one or more outstanding candidates eligible for appointment. Alternatively, a department may identify someone with exceptional credentials for special recruitment where a national search would not yield a reasonable pool of similarly qualified candidates. Or an exceptional scholar may approach UMW about joining the faculty when there are no advertised openings at the time. Other examples include the opportunity to attract an exceptionally well-qualified candidate who can make an important impact on programs and students at UMW, or the case where the university is pursuing the appointment of an intact team of exceptionally high quality faculty members.

While appointments through a target of opportunity hire are expected to be infrequent, they can be critical hires, sometimes transforming an academic program by virtue of the expertise and other resources they bring to the university.

Requests for exemptions in support of a target of opportunity appointment must provide full justification and require advance approval by the Dean, the Provost as well as the OHR/AEEO. While most such appointments are expected to be for instructional faculty, there may be a similar compelling rationale for a targeted search for an academic administrative appointment which also includes faculty status; any such exemption would require specific approvals.

Departments recruiting through a target of opportunity hire exemption are expected to conduct an interview, pursue references, and ascertain the appropriate fit in the department as they would for any other new faculty appointment. The Dean and the Provost must be consulted before pursuing a target of opportunity candidate for a teaching faculty position..

In discussing the particular circumstances for a proposed exemption the Dean, Provost, or OHR/AEEO staff may recommend instead a search limited to the local area or internal to the University. These alternatives allow notice of a vacancy and opportunity to develop at least a minimal candidate pool within a relatively short timeframe.

Related forms and resources:

- [Reference check form](#)
- [Search exemption form](#)

Additional forms and resources may be found on the UMW Human Resources Website under "Hiring".