University of Mary Washington Staff Search Procedure Handbook

Responsibility and Accountability for Staff (Classified/Wage /and Other Non-Teaching Faculty) Searches

Hiring managers at the University of Mary Washington are committed to and responsible for the recruitment, retention, and development of an excellent and productive staff. These procedures are intended to provide a recruitment process that supports careful planning, describes our practices, and enhances our ongoing efforts to conduct full and fair searches. Primary responsibility and accountability for compliance with University policies and procedures rests with the Hiring Managers, AVP/Cabinet Member, and other senior officials of the University, including the Office of Human Resources. Hiring Managers are expected to play an active role in searches for positions that report to their departments or programs to be sure that:

- Search committees utilize available resources most likely to result in a pool of highly qualified candidates;
- Search committees make recommendations to hire excellent candidates well suited to Mary Washington's mission;
- Each candidate is given full and fair consideration;

When recruiting and selecting individuals for these positions, the advice and experience of the Hiring Managers and staff at the Department and program level can be valuable to the committee. Soliciting input from all levels of staff in developing the position description and designing recruitment strategies is helpful.

As we seek to hire the best talent to work for the University of Mary Washington, we use a variety of recruitment, advertising and networking strategies. Administrative units are strongly encouraged to reach out with telephone calls or e-mails to their professional colleagues, organizations and other institutions, to encourage applicants to apply for our positions and to convey the University's genuine interest in building a high-quality staff.

The University also encourages Hiring Managers and others involved in searches to consider recruitment and networking while attending conferences, to maintain listings of resources, and to explore other variations on the standard recruitment processes. Advance consultation with the Office of Human Resources on alternative/non-traditional search plans will expedite review and approval processes.

The University uses an on-line applicant tracking system in order to collect comprehensive information about all position 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 Human Resources and hiring officials to gauge search response in "real time" for their openings.

Role of the Office of Human Resources

The Office of Human Resources provides primary oversight in the search process for staff positions. The Human Resources is responsible for monitoring compliance with state, federal and university policies and procedures related to all position searches. The Recruitment staff in Human Resources will provide guidance to the committee at the onset of the search, share search tools and strategies more likely to reach a robust pool of candidates, 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 Hiring Manager and the recruitment staff work together to ensure that the search is accomplished in a timely and compliant manner.

Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues

Equal Opportunity: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and Equal Opportunity laws prohibit discrimination against candidates and employees based on protected factors. The legal framework is provided by a series of state and federal laws and regulations that attempt to ensure that all qualified candidates have a fair chance of succeeding.

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. These will be addressed and coordinated with the Provost's Office and the Center for International Education 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 the 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.

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 competitive searches for all staff positions.

Approval to Conduct Searches: All searches, including salary hiring ranges must be approved in advance by Human Resources, Cabinet Member and Budget through the online Recruitment Management System (RMS). This applies to searches for new positions as well as searches for existing positions that become vacant.

For current, existing positions, the hiring manager, search committee chair, or designee will create the posting request in the RMS to initiate the approval process after the position modification and classification review has been approved.

New positions must be created via the position description process in the RMS before a posting request can be initiated.

Search committee members should determine if they wish to make use of the **supplemental screening questions feature** in the RMS when entering the posting request. This feature may be used to eliminate candidates on the state criteria or to assist in the screening process. The Recruitment Office will consult with the committee or department to determine appropriate supplemental questions and review questions submitted for consideration.

Once all approvals have been indicated in the RMS, the Recruitment Office will post the position for applicants to view online. If requested, the Recruitment Office will also place ads in one or more online sources selected by the hiring manager, using the department's FOAP for billing. Any job postings for discipline/department specific sites will be handled by the Hiring Manager or Department directly.

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 activities. A defensible decision is evidenced by proper final documentation. At the end of the process, you will be required to submit search documentation for the search file, documentation includes outreach activities, correspondence with applicants, interview questions, screening matrices, completed reference checks, work samples and other documentation used to make a hiring decision.

Timeframes to fill, from posting to hire, will vary depending on the position, needs of the department, committee schedule, and advertising period. Our goal is to have positions filled within two months whenever possible. Tips for expediting the search process are provided on the Hiring section of the Human Resources website under "Best Practices".

Establish the Search Committee

The Hiring Manager will determine who will serve on the search committee and submit the names as part of the posting information in the RMS. If a committee is not identified by the time the posting is initiated, the Hiring Manager will be required to email the names of the members to the Recruitment Manager by the job close date. Normally, members of the committee (if classified employees) must be at the same or higher role than the position being filled.

Some exceptions may be considered for human resource professionals or individuals with a particular expertise required for the position, with Human Resources review and approval.

Committees do not have to be confined to one department. The committee should try to include other core areas with which the position frequently interacts. Occasionally, an individual from outside the University may be asked to serve on the search committee as well, due to their level of expertise in a field.

All committee members are expected to fully participate in the search. The committee is expected to be effective in supporting the University's commitment to excellence.

Initial Committee Meeting: The Hiring Manager will meet with the search committee to set forth its responsibilities throughout the search. This focuses on reviewing the position requirements and the qualities important for success in the position.

Committee Decisions

- determine if screening will be done by all or one of the members,
- develop a timetable,
- determine search steps and
- make decisions about 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.

Any questions about the budget/costs of the search should be resolved by the Hiring Manager in consultation with the department head or budget as needed. Members of the committee should understand in advance 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 priorities in the selection of their candidates based on the criteria of the position and University need.

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. 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 hire to the University but should have provided as positive a campus experience as possible for <u>all</u> 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.

Completing the Posting Request

The Hiring Manager will enter the initial request for posting in the RMS. This will include:

- the advertisement they wish for applicants to see on the University's site
- the salary range for the position as they wish to have it advertised
- a close date, or first review date for Open Until Filled postings
- screening questions, with or without disqualifying criteria
- search committee members (if known at the time)
- additional advertising sources they wish to use

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 in the RMS for the search committee chair, search committee members, and/or Hiring Manager for searches they are currently involved in.

Applicant Materials: Application materials received in the RMS are the official record for the search. Only applicants who apply online will be considered for an opening. **If applicants submit an application by mail or directly to the department, they must be contacted by the Search Committee Chair/Hiring Manager and asked to apply in the RMS.** If supplemental documents are required as part of a search (cover letter, resume, etc.), applicants should submit these online, as well. Search chairs/Hiring Managers must keep a record of applicant contacts or other official search business.

Conduct Initial Application Screening

Committee members will have access to candidate applications through the RMS as indicated by the Hiring Manager.

Every search must include a written screening instrument used to evaluate all applications. The Hiring Manager will determine if the Search Committee Members are to complete their own screenings as well. If multiple screenings are completed, all committee members are to use the same criteria to evaluate each candidate.

Applicants must be evaluated against a common standard (the advertised criteria) to determine whether they are qualified

The Hiring Manager will send the screening sheet and list of selected interviewees to the Recruitment Manager to review and follow-up with any questions regarding applicants or the matrix. The Hiring Manager will be notified when the screening review has been completed and that interviews may be scheduled. A screening matrix must be submitted for review before the interviews are scheduled by the Department.

Alternatively, the committee may review the entire applicant pool as part of the in-depth screening process described below.

Conduct 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 of candidates at each stage, e.g., the written material of all applicants is screened; a smaller number of candidates may be offered a telephone or virtual interview, and from that group, a smaller number will be asked to present a work sample and /or invited to campus. 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.

NOTE: The review of reference letters submitted as part of the candidate application will NOT satisfy the requirement to conduct a supervisory reference check on the selected candidate.

Interviewing:

Review Interview Questions. The search committee and/or Hiring Manager will develop a core set of job-related interview questions that will be asked of all candidates at each stage of the interviewing phase. These will be submitted to recruitment office for review and approval prior to any interviews being conducted.

Additional questions may come up in the context of specific interviews, teaching demonstrations, etc., but it is important to be sure that all candidates are asked the same set of questions. 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. Human Resources is available to provide advice and review for non-discriminatory language.

Off-Site-Initial Interviews: Normally, the committee chair or hiring official will invite candidates to interview.

Telephone or virtual Interviews: This is a good tool to narrow the pool when there are many candidates who meet the minimum qualifications. Questions should be prepared in advance and used consistently in all interviews.

In-Person Interviews: Off-site interviews are optional depending on the applicant pool and circumstances regarding distance.

Notify Candidates to Be Interviewed: Once the recruitment office has approved the screening and interview questions, the search committee or designated representative contacts the candidates to be interviewed. All candidates at each stage must be treated similarly.

Conduct Interviews: The search committee will set up a time and place for each of the interviews and determine the order of questions to be asked. The process should be consistent for all candidates, with time scheduled for follow-up questions and an opportunity for candidates ask their own questions. You may choose to include a department or campus tour as part of your process as well. The experience for all candidates must be as consistent as possible.

Interview Notes: All panel members will record the candidates' responses to the interview questions in writing or via electronic means. 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.

Work Samples: 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 the recruitment office 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 their notes from each of the interviews and makes a recommendation to the Hiring Manager based on the knowledge, skills and abilities that were advertised and incorporated into the questions. The Hiring Manager will make changes in the RMS to indicate who they wish to hire, using the appropriate reason code. Statuses for other candidates who were interviewed will also be updated at this time with reason codes.

Conduct Reference Check. It is encouraged to reserve reference checks as the last activity for only the selected candidate. Reference checks are time-consuming, involving several contacts and may sometimes require follow up. They may also prematurely expose a candidate's search activity.

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 hiring official 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 hiring official or other employee conducting the reference check is referred to another individual as a better source of information, the committee should seek permission to pursue references from these individuals.

A documented reference check with the current and at least one former supervisor of the applicant as indicated on the University application **is required for the selected candidate and must be conducted at some point prior to making the final recommendation** (see below). If there is no current supervisor, a reference check with at least two former supervisors is required. The recruitment office should be consulted if there are concerns or problems with reference checks. Remember that reference check documentation must be submitted to Human Resources with final paperwork on the selected candidate before an offer can be extended. A sample reference check form is provided on the Human Resources website.

Recommendation to Hire: The Hiring Manager reviews the search and interview documentation to determine the recommended candidate. While the Hiring Manager will take into account the collective judgement o the committee, the final analysis and decision rests with the Hiring Manager.

Approval by Human Resources: Once the committee has made their decision, the Hiring Manager will submit the interview documentation and hiring decision rationale to the recruitment office for review, including:

- question responses from each candidate, as noted by each interviewer, in hard copyform
- work samples, if completed
- reference check forms
- any other documentation used to evaluate the candidates during the interviewprocess

All interview documentation must be received and reviewed by HR before any offers are extended.

Extending the Offer

Make The Conditional Job Offer. The conditional job offer (contingent upon background check) can be made after recruitment office approval. This is usually done by the Hiring Manager and is typically given verbally. If further negotiations are necessary, these are ordinarily taken back to HR for review or options depending on budget, funding and other factors. Exceptional recruitment options may be applied when there are significant recruitment problems for positions that are critical to the University's mission and on-going operations. These options include sign-on bonuses, compensatory leave, annual leave, etc. All exceptional recruitment options must be reviewed by the recruitment office and approved by the appropriate Cabinet Member.

Once the conditional offer has been accepted and approved, the chair/hiring official will update the Recruitment Manager to confirm the final salary, any exceptional recruitment options, requested start date, moving and relocation expenses if applicable, and any updates to the candidate's information (address, phone number, etc.).

Background Check

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 should initiate the background check.

This consists of two parts: The State Police check and the TrueScreen check. The candidate will receive an email with instructions for authorizing the background checks.

Special Circumstances

If the candidate does not have an email address, the Hiring Manager should ask if there is an email address that the candidate is comfortable using temporarily. The Hiring Manager 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 Office.

Hiring Managers should contact the Recruitment Office 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 appropriate Cabinet member, 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: While the RMS does allow for automated emails to be sent to unsuccessful, interviewed candidates, some managers prefer to make personal contact via phone call or email. Extending this personal touch may make a difference in the reputation of the university as well as in the ability to attract future talent. Phone calls should be scripted and made consistently to ensure that only the intended message is delivered. If choosing to make personal notifications, hiring officials are asked to contact interviewees within 10 days of the offer letter being sent to the selected candidate. All correspondence and documentation of contacts are to be retained for the final search documentation file.

Internal candidates should be notified directly from the Hiring Manager whenever possible, even if the automated message is utilized for all other candidates. Any remaining updates to candidate statuses must be made at this time. The Hiring Manager or designee will update the RMS to show any remaining candidates not referred for interview as "Not Interviewed-Initial Screening". Candidates who were interviewed in person should be changed to "Interviewed-Not Hired" status in the RMS by the committee chair or office manager, and so on.

Search Exceptions:

Closed without Hire or Failed Searches: Despite the best efforts of a search committee, 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 occur for several reasons, including an ill –defined position, or an inadequate pool of candidates. The Hiring Manager should attempt to diagnose the variables that may have led to the failed search before deciding to reopen, extend or end the search.

In all cases, before a search is declared closed without hire, the chair of the search committee and the department head will contact the recruitment office to discuss the status of the search and what, if any, options may still be available to fill the vacancy. If the search is closed without hire, the chair of the search committee or hiring official must work with recruitment office to close the position, using the appropriate codes for the cancellation/non-hire.

Search Exemptions (*applies to Administrative/Faculty positions ONLY*)**:** 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 to their Cabinet member. All exemptions must also be approved by the Executive Director of Human Resources and 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. This form is available from the HR office or may be downloaded from the HR website.

Target of Opportunity Positions (*applies to Administrative/Faculty positions ONLY*)**:** All full-time, Administrative/Professional faculty positions 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 staff 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 staff members.

While appointments through a target of opportunity hire are expected to be infrequent, they can be critical hires, sometimes transforming an academic or regulatory 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 appropriate Cabinet member as well as the Executive Director of Human Resources 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 hire.

In discussing the particular circumstances for a proposed exemption the Cabinet member or Human Resources 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.

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