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Op7.10 Recruiting a Diverse Workforce:
Guidelines for Hiring
Faculty, Academic Administrators and
Executive, Administrative and Professional Staff

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Diversity is central to providing and retaining a quality educational environment. Missouri State University is deeply committed to developing educated persons equipped to contribute to the interdependent world in which we now live. The ability to adapt to rapid economic, social, and cultural changes is imperative. Skills and competencies to deal with diverse cultures and societies have not only become necessary to function in today's workplace, but they also enrich one's life and work.

Diversity is comprised of the multiplicity of people, cultures, and ideas that contribute to the richness and variety of life. It encompasses a mixture of similarities and differences along dimensions including, but not limited to, values, cultures, concepts, learning styles, and perceptions that individuals possess. Some aspects of diversity have been easily achieved, while others – including racial, ethnic, and in some disciplines gender diversity – have been more elusive and now require a focused effort. Diversity is a commitment to recognizing and appreciating the variety of characteristics that make individuals unique in an atmosphere that promotes inclusion.

Missouri State University recognizes the value diversity adds to our central mission. The University's public commitment to diversity among our faculty, staff and students is reflected in our Public Affairs Mission, our long range planning, and our federally mandated Affirmative Action program. The implementation of this commitment and the demonstration of how we value diversity rests heavily on our ability to recruit and retain outstanding faculty and staff who not only excel in their fields, but who promote multicultural understanding through their teaching and leadership and who themselves are representative of the diverse population of our nation.

These search guidelines have been developed by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance to help search committees and hiring units conduct searches that both maximize their ability to establish a diverse and well qualified applicant pool, while complying with University guidelines and state and federal regulations.

1.1 Definitions

In describing the search process, the following terms are utilized in the search guidelines:

Department Approver – The Department Approver is usually the department head or director requesting to fill a vacant or new position in their department/division/etc. S/he also assures that the search process is conducted in accordance with University guidelines and procedures.

Dean/Division Approver – For faculty searches, the Department Approver forwards search materials to the Dean for review and approval. Upon approval by the Dean, the search materials are then forwarded to the Executive Approver.

Executive Approver – The Executive Approver is the President, Provost, Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, or Chancellor. S/he also assures that the search process is conducted in accordance with University guidelines and procedures

Search Committee – This is the candidate selection vehicle and includes the Search Committee Chair. A search committee can either be a group of people or an individual. The members of the committee actively engage in

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recruitment, applicant screening and interviewing, and may make interview and/or hiring recommendations to the Department Approver.

Search Committee Chair – The Search Committee Chair is the liaison between the Department Approver and hiring unit and the search committee. The Chair ensures that the search process follows University guidelines, maintains the official record of all committee activities and serves as its official spokesperson. With respect to searches for faculty or academic department heads, the Search Committee Chair, when possible, shall not be an untenured faculty member.

Employment Inquiry – Letters received by any office at Missouri State University from an individual expressing interest in positions that may be available. Employment inquiries are not considered to be applications for specific vacancies.

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

Nominee – An individual who is nominated by someone other than him/herself for a specific vacancy. If a person who is nominated refuses the nomination, he/she shall be called an "uninterested nominee" and shall be recorded as such.

Candidate – An individual who is deemed to meet the requirements for a specific vacancy, either by applying or by accepting a nomination.

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

1.2 The Requirement to Conduct a Search

In accordance with Missouri State University's equal opportunity obligations, all benefit-eligible vacancies are subject to the full search requirements. No distinction is made on the basis of the funding source. Benefit-eligible positions that are grant-funded must be filled according to these guidelines. The existence of external grant funding is not a justification for deviating from these guidelines; however, if special considerations are indicated by the terms of the grant, the position may qualify for an exception to the standard search process.

Some form of search is almost always required. Full searches, utilizing ads in national or regional newspapers and journals, are required for most positions. Limited searches may be restricted to the University campus or even the unit in which the position resides. Missouri State University's search guidelines are specifically tailored to meet federal standards governing equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. Exceptions to these guidelines are therefore strongly discouraged.

The University encourages as broad-based a search as possible. For executive, academic administrative and faculty searches, a national search is required. For the head of a major administrative or support unit, a national search is strongly recommended; a regional search typically is required. For other professional positions, a regional search is typically required.

1.3 Appointments that Do Not Require a Full Search

The following positions do not require a full search:

- Temporary appointments.
- Formal reclassification of existing position.
- Administrative positions filled on a rotating basis.
- Collateral duty appointments where employee retains existing position (i.e., assistant department head, program coordinator, etc.)

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- Visiting and adjunct faculty appointments for a maximum of one year (up to three years if funded by a grant), made with the understanding that positions are subject to full searches should the terms be extended beyond the mandatory limit.
- Student appointments (Interns, Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants, Students Workers, etc)

Please note: While these positions do not require a full search, hiring units are still required to follow equal opportunity/affirmative action rules and best search practices in the recruitment and selection of these employees.   Hiring units must provide notice (either internally or externally, depending on the specific nature of the position to be filled) of the vacancy. This also helps to demonstrate transparency in the recruitment and selection processes and emphasizes that the University has an open and inclusive environment. Finally, the hiring unit must ensure that documentation of the process utilized to fill these positions is retained in the event there is a question or legal challenge to their recruitment and/or selection.

1.4 Training Requirements

All Search Committee Chairs and Department Approvers are required to complete the search training conducted by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance within twelve (12) months prior to the commencement of a search.   While it is not mandatory that all members of a search committee attend the training, it is advisable to ensure that all members are aware of the search processes and the necessary requirements that must be followed for a legal and effective search.

1.5 Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity

Missouri State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution. As a federal contractor and employer, the University is obligated to follow laws that prohibit discrimination.

Affirmative action refers to efforts made to expand employment opportunities for women, members of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, veterans and persons with disabilities.   These efforts are made consistent with applicable law and regulations.

Equal employment opportunity is the right of all persons to be judged on their ability and potential to perform the requirements of the job. Because equal employment opportunity does not typically change existing conditions, further action is necessary. This is where affirmative action complements equal opportunity.

Further information regarding the University's Affirmative Action Program, equal opportunity, and compliance with federal and state laws can be obtained from the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance.

1.6 [Missouri State University Nondiscrimination Policy](#) G1.01-13

Missouri State University is a community of people with respect for diversity. The University emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all persons and adheres to a strict nondiscrimination policy regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, and students. In accord with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, or veteran status in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the University. In addition, the University does not discriminate on any basis (including, but not limited to, political affiliation and sexual orientation) not related to the applicable educational requirements for students or the applicable job requirements for employees.

This policy shall not be interpreted in a manner as to violate the legal rights of religious organizations or military organizations associated with the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

The University maintains a grievance procedure incorporating due process available to any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against. Missouri State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. Inquiries concerning the grievance procedure, Affirmative Action Plan, or compliance with federal and state laws and guidelines should be addressed to Equal Opportunity Officer, Park Central Office Building Ste. 111, 901 South National Avenue, Springfield, Missouri 65897, (417) 836-4252.

1.7 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is vital in recruitment and retaining strong candidates and preserving the integrity of the search. People who are successful in their current positions and not seeking to change jobs are unlikely to let themselves be recruited without the protection of confidentiality until they become finalists.

All persons involved in a search (i.e., search committee members, hiring unit administrative staff, Department Approver, Executive Approver, etc.) are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the search process. Information obtained regarding an applicant must remain confidential throughout the process and thereafter. Under no circumstances should any person give information to any applicant about other applicants.

No search committee member or member of the hiring unit may contact an applicant individually, or discuss the qualifications of an applicant outside of the search committee, or call references without the approval of the Search Committee Chair. Furthermore, the status of an application should not be discussed, even with the applicant, without approval from the Search Committee Chair.

Search committee members may not serve as references for applicants in the pool for which they have assumed search committee responsibilities.

For faculty searches, after screening by the search committee has begun, all ranked faculty members in the hiring unit may review and evaluate applicant files and provide input to the search committee; however, non-search committee members must not engage in further screening activities. Faculty members who review applicant files assume the same responsibility as search committee members of maintaining confidentiality of information contained within the files.

For academic administrator searches, only the search committee and the administrators in the supervisory chain will review applicant files. The search committee shall make letters of application and vitas of candidates selected for on-campus interviews available to faculty members in the hiring department, and may also make them available to other members of the campus community as appropriate.

1.8 Accountability

Hiring units are accountable for making good hiring decisions and in recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty and staff who not only excel in their fields, but who promote multicultural understanding through their teaching and leadership and who themselves are representative of the diverse population of our nation.

Communication is important in keeping all administrative levels accountable. Search Committee Chairs should keep Department Approvers informed during the search process. Department Approvers should keep the Dean/Division Approver informed as to the progress of the search so that they may, in turn, keep the Executive Approver informed.

It is appropriate for the Provost and/or Dean/Division Approver to meet with the search committee during the search process to give the search committee its charge. The Provost and/or Dean/Division Approver should not, however, otherwise participate in or attend meetings of the search committee, as the presence of the Provost and/or Dean/Division Approver during search committee meetings may unduly influence or hinder the search committee's objectivity and independence in discharging its search obligations.

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Approvals occur at various stages of the search process. A summary of the search process is available online.

2.0 INITIATING THE SEARCH PROCESS – THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

No committee on campus has a greater ability to make profound and substantive changes in a hiring unit than that of the search committee. Every member of the search committee should thoroughly understand the requirements of the position to be filled, the needs of the department, University policies regarding equal employment opportunity/affirmative action, and the mission of the University, department and/or college. The search committee has an excellent opportunity to enhance the reputation and image of the University through its actions. Always bear in mind that while a search committee is evaluating a candidate, the candidate is also evaluating the search committee, the department it represents and, ultimately, the University.

2.1 Committee Activity before the Search Begins

The search committee, and/or a larger group in the hiring unit, should engage in a relatively extended review of the wider disciplinary context, as well as the department's own history of searching and hiring, before beginning a new search. The department is more likely to be able to achieve a different outcome from past outcomes if it has some understanding of factors that may have played a role in limiting past success in recruiting diverse candidates.

2.2 Composition of the Search Committee

The composition of the search committee and its charge are factors likely to have consequences for the outcome of the search. It is important that issues of composition and charge be addressed deliberately and early.

- Search committees should include members with a variety of perspectives and sensitivity to equity and diversity issues. With respect to searches for faculty or academic department heads, if possible, a majority of search committee members shall be comprised of faculty members from the academic department in which the new hire will serve.
- Each member should have adequate time to devote to search committee duties.
- Membership may include faculty, staff, and students, as well as alumni or other outside constituents.
- When possible, search committees should include women and persons who are racially and/or ethnically diverse; however, these individuals tend to be asked frequently to serve on an array of committees so it may not always be feasible. There is no objection to including diverse members from other departments or administrative units or enlisting their help in the search process.

2.3 Responsibilities of the Search Committee Chair

- Ensure that the search committee charge is understood and implemented.
- Ensure that search guidelines are followed.
- Ensure compliance with equal opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity requirements.
- Serve as a liaison between the committee and the hiring department.
- Facilitate all committee meetings.
- Coordinate administrative support.
- Ensure that appropriate search records/documentation and meeting minutes are maintained.
- Perform all regular duties of a search committee member.
- Perform other duties as requested by the Department Approver.

2.4 Responsibilities of Search Committee Members

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- Understand the University's strategic plan, as well as applicable equal opportunity/affirmative action and diversity goals.
- Understand that diversity and excellence are fully compatible goals and can and should be pursued simultaneously.
- Adhere to the search guidelines and ensure compliance with equal opportunity, affirmative action, and diversity requirements.
- Evaluate applicants fairly based on the qualifications advertised in the position announcement.
- Create an open and welcoming environment and establish positive rapport with candidates during the interview.
- Attend all scheduled committee meetings and actively participate in the search process.
- Maintain confidentiality about search committee proceedings.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Search Committee Chair.

3.0 DEVELOPING A RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH PLAN

Developing the recruitment and outreach plan is one of the most vital aspects of the search process. Including a broad spectrum of strategies in the plan will yield a more diverse pool of qualified applicants. Advertising the position is much more than simply sending out a position announcement. Search committees and hiring units should research a wide range of possible recruitment strategies and then develop an advertising plan and a carefully worded position announcement.

3.1 Requirements

Search committees and hiring units are required to develop a recruitment plan for each search which includes substantial outreach aimed at both traditional candidates as well as those candidates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. All reasonably possible outreach efforts must be undertaken including both general, broad-based outreach, as well as targeted outreach. Each recruitment plan must also include a process for articulating qualification requirements that capture necessary intellectual and scholarship standards, while not imposing unnecessarily restrictive requirements and preserving the flexibility to consider less traditional backgrounds without compromising quality.

The recruitment plan for a search must be approved by the Department Approver, Executive Approver, and the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance prior to the announcement of a vacancy.

3.2 Defining the Position

Prior to beginning a search, the Department Approver, search committee, and/or a larger group in the department, should engage in a relatively extensive review of the position requirements and job description. The position should be defined in the widest possible terms consistent with the needs of the hiring unit, division and University. Aim for consensus on specific specialties or requirements, while planning to cast the hiring net as broadly as possible. Make sure that the position description does not needlessly limit the pool of applicants. Some position descriptions may exclude women or ethnically and/or racially diverse candidates by focusing too narrowly on subfields in which few specialize.

Search committees should consider as important selection criteria for all candidates (regardless of their own demographic characteristics), the ability of the candidate both to add intellectual diversity to the department, and to work successfully with diverse students and colleagues. Search committees also need to establish selection criteria and procedures for screening, interviewing candidates and keeping records before advertising the position. It is also important that the hiring criteria are directly related to the requirements of the position, clearly understood, and accepted by members of the search committee.

3.3 Diversity Leadership Requirements for Executive, Administrative, Faculty, and Professional Staff Positions

Each member of the University community contributes to the development and maintenance of a healthy academic and working environment in which diversity is valued. Executive, administrative, faculty and professional staff positions have a unique responsibility for promoting a fair and equitable environment.

As a requisite job qualification, a statement must be included in the job description and position announcement that candidates be able to demonstrate job-related experience with and/or commitment to diversity in the work/academic environment. Samples of language that may be used to satisfy the diversity leadership requirement are posted online at http://www.missouristate.edu/equity/81265.htm.

Including the diversity leadership requirement in the position description and announcement informs candidates of the University's commitment to diversity and encourages them to be forthcoming about such experience during interviews. In addition to soliciting prospective candidates, the language serves to communicate the University's mission to the general public.

3.4 Reviewing the Job Description and Preparing the Position Announcement

To ensure equal opportunity, the hiring unit and search committee are required to adhere to the announced position description. Care must be taken to make the announcement flexible enough to cover contingencies that may arise and broad enough to describe all viable potential applicants. Once a position is advertised, the applications must be screened according to the published qualifications.

- The position requirements should not be too vague – quantify and specify as much as possible:

    "teaching experience is required."

    …might be better written as…

    "At least two years graduate level teaching experience is required."

- The job description/position announcement may include two levels of qualifications, those which are required (the minimum qualifications) and those which are preferred.

    Minimum Qualifications Statements. These typically include "must" or "required:"

    "Experience working with diverse populations is required."

    Preferred Qualification Statements. Typically includes "should" or "preferred."

    "Experience working with diverse populations is preferred."

- If the search committee cannot fully understand the position from the job description/position announcement, assume that applicants will have the same problem. In this case, the search committee should request clarification or revisions from the Department Approver.

The job posting must include the following information:

Position title/area of specialization - This is the title of the position. For administrative positions, this must be the same title that is listed on the job description.

Qualifications and selection criteria – Advertised qualifications must be consistent with the qualifications outlined in the job description or position announcement. Minimum qualifications must be clearly stated. To

obtain the largest possible pool of applicants, identify only the minimum required qualifications. Desired qualifications that are not actual requirements should be specified as "preferred" qualifications.

Compensation - A salary range may be published if there is a compelling reason to do so (for example, if publishing the salary range may attract applicants in a difficult-to-fill position).

Application procedure and required materials - The Position Announcement should clearly indicate how to apply for the position. All applicants for academic administrative, faculty, executive, administrative and professional positions are **required** to complete a *Missouri State University Application for Employment*, submit a curriculum vitae/resume, and provide the names and contact information for 3-5 professional references*.*

Application deadline – Searches may have either a specific closing date or a date of first consideration. Flexibility is built into the process by the use of phrases such as: "Review of applications will begin [date] and continue until finalists are identified." This allows the committee to begin reviewing when there are a suitable number of candidates, but also allows latecomers to apply. In most cases, the stated date of first consideration of applicants will be at least 30 calendar days from the date the position is first advertised.

EEO statement – An EO statement is mandatory on all announcements and publications. See the *[Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance Publication Policy](#)* for information about the required wording.

3.5 Proactive Language Emphasizing the Commitment to Diversity

Proactive language should be included in job descriptions and position announcements to emphasize the University's commitment to diversity. This may make the position more attractive to female and ethnically and/or racially diverse candidates as well as others with experience working with diverse students and colleagues. Examples of approved statements are available online at http://www.missouristate.edu/equity/81265.htm.

4.0 ADVERTISING

A robust applicant pool is the most useful tool for recruiting highly qualified candidates who can further the University's educational mission and goals. It also helps ensure that hiring units are recruiting diverse candidates, including candidates who are women and/or from underrepresented ethnic or racial groups, who can fulfill the University commitment to diversity. To achieve a diverse applicant pool, search committees and hiring units must be committed to *'diversity through action'*, a proactive approach to developing a diverse applicant pool. The search committee and hiring unit should not wait for applicants to come to them. Instead, the search committee should seek out the best journals, newspapers, associations and other networks in which to recruit. Keep seeking until the search is complete.

4.1 Strategies to Enhance the Diversity of the Applicant Pool

It is vital that the hiring department and search committee devote time and resources to develop and implement strategies which will enhance the diversity of the applicant pool. Some strategies include:

- Developing a broad knowledge of the applicable marketplace and where to target the search to yield a diverse applicant pool.
- Considering non-traditional advertising venues.
- Consulting with Missouri State University employees to identify successful strategies and to obtain referrals for prospective applicants who diverse.
- Maintaining ongoing professional contacts with colleagues at other institutions to solicit nominations of well-qualified women and people of color.

- Advertising positions in a variety of publications and with professional organizations that reach diverse populations.
- Personally inviting women and people of color to apply for position openings.
- Identifying professionals and scholars who are women and/or from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups and inviting them to recruit and refer diverse candidates.
- Soliciting the names of prospective applicants from caucuses of women and people of color within relevant professional and academic associations
- Reviewing applicant pools from prior searches to identify promising candidates who are female and/or from underrepresented groups for current or future searches.
- Utilize the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance listing of Targeted Recruitment Resources.

4.2 Networking

Making direct contact with professional departments in the field, professional organizations, and colleagues is an extremely effective method of expanding the search. In fact, the informal, word-of-mouth approach to recruitment is one of the most successful practices for identifying qualified candidates.

4.3 Personal Contacts

It is highly recommended that the hiring unit and search committee make direct contact with professional colleagues in the field notifying them of the department's open position and requesting names of potential qualified candidates. Many outstanding candidates are not necessarily looking for new positions and do not apply for advertised positions.   A Department Approver or search committee member has to personally ask them to apply. This indicates that the University recognizes and values that person's professional contributions. It is important to always stress the University's commitment to diversity and the special efforts it has undertaken to that end.

Some successful personal contact strategies include:

- A personal phone call or e-mail from a colleague or committee member;
- A personalized letter from the director, department head, or search committee chair, or;
- A colleague meeting the candidate(s) at a professional meeting.

4.4 Additional Recruitment and Outreach Recommendations for Search Committees

Encourage faculty and staff who will be attending professional conferences or who will be delivering papers at other universities to **combine their visits with recruitment efforts** for present and future positions. They should be encouraged to solicit curricula vitae from promising applicants.

Make contact with diverse professionals and scholars who have received professional recognition or whose work or contributions you admire and encourage them to apply, as well as to ask for the names of other promising candidates who the University could contact about the position.

Establish a working relationship with departments and units at institutions with substantial numbers of women and ethnically or racially diverse scholars and students. This will allow a host of mutually beneficial activities to be undertaken, such as a sharing of research facilities and exchanges of faculty and staff. Teaching for a semester, delivering a paper, or simply making an informal visit will allow Missouri State University faculty to discuss job openings with the staff and students at these institutions.

Request the names of potential candidates from relevant professional or academic associations and organizations with caucuses and special interest groups focused on diversity issues.

Keep national higher education associations informed of present and possible future positions. Several such associations contain special interest groups (e.g., the American Educational Research Association has Hispanic and Black caucuses).

Maintain ongoing contact with professional organizations, associations, and agencies that have job referral services.

Maintain close contact with diverse graduates of Missouri State University.

Contact women and ethnically and/or racially diverse professionals and scholars who have received significant grants or professional recognition, and ask for the names of other promising professionals and scholars who they might recommend.

Invite diverse scholars from other institutions to participate in department-sponsored symposia and visiting professorships. A one-year visiting professorship to replace a faculty member who is on leave will not only help a department in meeting its instructional responsibilities but will also strengthen the link between the department at Missouri State University and a similar department at another institution.

Request nominations. When requesting that a person or organization nominate potential candidates, it is important to always stress the University's commitment to diversity and the special efforts it has undertaken to that end.

4.5 How to Avoid Having Active Recruitment Efforts Backfire

Diverse candidates wish to be evaluated on the basis of their professional experience and scholarly credentials. They will not appreciate subtle or overt indications that they are being valued on other characteristics, such as their gender or race. It is important that contacts with diverse candidates focus on their professional experience, scholarship, qualifications, and potential role in the hiring unit, division, and at the University.

5.0 SCREENING APPLICANTS

The screening process begins after the published deadline/date of first consideration with an analysis of application materials submitted by applicants in response to the announcement of an open position. The search committee is responsible for selecting the candidates for interview who meet all minimum requirements and are most qualified to fill the vacancy based on the stated requisite and desirable qualifications.

Hiring units and search committees must uniformly apply the evaluation process to all applicants. For criteria that are deemed to be essential components of the job, it is difficult, if not impossible, to explain why a certain criterion is necessary for successful job performance if there is a lack of consistency regarding that component within the hiring process. For example, if a search is challenged by a particular applicant, how can the hiring unit and Search committee prove that the applicant was not qualified for the position if his/her experience was not evaluated in the same manner as other applicants?

5.1 Diversity Outreach Requirements

Search committees are required to have the relevant Department Approver and Executive Approver certify the adequacy of diversity outreach efforts before the application process is closed and a list of candidates to be interviewed is completed. If all reasonably possible outreach has not been undertaken and the pool of applicants is not broadly diverse, including applicants who are ethnically and/or racially diverse, then the search

committee will be required to continue outreach before the applicant pool is closed and the potential candidate pool is complete.

5.2 Internal Applicants

In external searches in which there is an internal applicant(s) (whether internal to the hiring unit or to the University), applicant files must not be made accessible to that person(s). The internal applicant(s) will not attend any activity, presentation, or interview for any other applicant. In no instance should the internal candidate vote or decide who is to be interviewed or offered the position. If tenure deliberations are an element of the hiring decision, an internal candidate(s) waives his or her right to participate in those deliberations regarding other candidates.

5.3 Nominated Applicants

No individual is an applicant until he or she has contacted the University by letter, or electronically, and submitted all of the required documents. Only bona-fide applicants who submitted a letter of interest, resume/ curriculum vitae, employment application, and provided references, may be evaluated by the search committee.

5.4 Screening Resumes/Curricula Vitae

Prior to reviewing resumes or curricula vitae, search committees shall determine the criteria they will use to screen applicants based on the qualifications specified in the position announcement. Sample screening tools are available online.

The following tips help ensure a fair screening process:

- Assign several committee members to screen application materials.
- Create a well-documented screening process in which each applicant's qualifications are compared with the qualifications specified in the position announcement.
- A screening matrix which charts each applicant's qualifications vis-à-vis the requisite and desired qualifications allows the search committee to compare each applicant's qualifications at a glance.
- Telephone interviews may be used as a screening tool to determine or clarify whether applicants meet the requisite and desirable qualifications.

5.5 Creating the Evaluation Form

Although evaluation procedures vary, the search committee shall develop an evaluation form based on job-related criteria.   Job relevance should be broadly defined.   In the evaluation of applicants, the search committee shall utilize only information that is relevant to performance in all aspects of the position. Sample evaluation forms are available online.

Written comments reflecting the judgment of the search committee should be made for each applicant; however, it is not necessary that each committee member individually rate each applicant. Most committees work best in a consensus environment in which committee members review and make initial rankings. These initial rankings are then discussed in committee meeting and consensus decisions are documented in the search summary report.

- The form should have both qualitative and quantitative information.
- For quantitative information consider ranges (i.e. low, average, high; 1-10; etc.)
- Include a measurement for every requirement, including preferred qualifications.
- Utilize objective measurements whenever possible.

- If using subjective measurements, provide a mechanism for explaining what is meant (i.e. communication skills – cover letter easy to follow and no grammatical errors; cover letter poorly written and spelling errors, etc.).
- Include a place for additional comments.
- All evaluation forms must identify the name of the evaluator and become part of the official search record.

Note: No individual who reviews applicant materials should make any notes/notations directly on the application materials of any applicant.

5.6 Best Practices to Enhance Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Diversity

Evaluating applicants is the part of the recruitment process where potential, often unintentional, bias and discrimination may be more likely to occur. It is important that search committees and hiring units take a methodological approach when evaluating applicants. It is also important for each member of the search committee to be knowledgeable about personal biases that might influence perceptions about applicants. Some best practices include:

- Get consensus on the multiple criteria that will be used to choose candidates for interviews. Notice that different criteria may produce different top candidates. Be sure to consider all criteria that are pertinent to the department's goals (e.g. experience working with diverse students might be one). In addition, discuss the relative weighting of the different criteria, and the likelihood that no or few candidates will rate high on all of them.
- Assess ways the applicants will bring rich experiences and diverse backgrounds to the University community.
- Screen applicants to be inclusive rather than for the sole purpose of narrowing the applicant pool.
- Refrain from assessing applicant qualifications based on a single standard. Consider creating separate short lists ranking applicants on different criteria. Examples might include but are not limited to teaching, research potential, collaborative potential, mentoring capacity. Develop the final shortlist by taking the top candidates across different criteria.
- Evaluate applicants on potential, not just experience already performing the duties of the job.
- Examine each applicant's accomplishments, his or her potential for growth, the diversity or perspective that s/he will bring, and any unique contribution s/he could make to the hiring unit, division, and University. Nontraditional career patterns should not exclude or inhibit otherwise qualified candidates from being considered.

5.7 Pre-Employment Inquiries

What questions may and may not be asked during an interview or at any other pre-employment stage of the search process? A list of examples of appropriate and inappropriate questions is available online.

While it is an employer's right to establish job-related requirements and to seek the most qualified applicant for a job, inquiries about race, sex, disability, religion, etc. usually are not relevant to an applicant's qualifications and are not legitimate. Only those inquiries necessary to determine an applicant's qualifications and eligibility for employment, that is, job-related inquiries, should be made during job interviews.

Any pre-employment inquiries which express any limitation, specification or preference due to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, disability or age violate both Missouri State University policy and the Missouri Human Rights Act unless they are based upon a bona fide occupational qualification.

Information obtained through application forms and interviews is presumed to be used by employers in making hiring and work assignment decisions. For this reason, only those inquiries necessary to determine the applicant's qualifications and eligibility for employment shall be made.

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5.8 Affirmative Action Applicant Information Form

As required by federal regulations, Missouri State University requests information from job applicants to monitor and report on equal employment opportunity and Affirmative Action programs. The Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance accommodates this policy with the *Affirmative Action Applicant Information Form.* The questionnaire is built into the online Application for Employment and submission of this information is voluntary. The information provided is kept confidential and may only be used in accordance with the provisions of the applicable laws, executive orders, and regulations, including those that require the information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement.

5.9 Use of the Internet and Social Media in the Screening and Selection of University Employees

Conducting Internet research on applicants for employment by entering their names in search engines such as Google or Bing can result in the discovery of information about applicants not otherwise available to a search committee; however, much of what would be found would be unverifiable, anonymous, or untrue. That is particularly true of information that would be found on blogs, social networks, and websites such as Facebook, Fickr, Twitter, Second Life, and YouTube. Moreover, some of the information would be protected under the University's nondiscrimination policy, such as race, age, disability, religious preference, and political affiliation. Finally, some of the information would not accurately predict how well an applicant would perform in the job. As a result, the University has adopted the following internet search rules for search committees and hiring administrators:

1. No Internet search of any applicant shall be performed until after applicants have been selected for telephone interviews.
2. No reference to anything found through an Internet search shall be made in a search committee meeting unless it is verifiable and job-related.
3. Protected information shall never be referenced in any search committee meeting or considered by a hiring administrator.
4. An applicant shall be allowed to respond to any information found on an Internet search that will be considered by the search committee or hiring administrator.
5. If Internet searches are to be done of any finalist for a position, they shall be performed on all finalists. Internet search results shall be retained in the search committee file.
6. Search committees or hiring administrators shall never use fake identities to gain access to information on social networks.

This policy does not prohibit verifying an applicant's current employment by accessing an official website of the applicant's employer, or verifying an applicant's listed publications by directly checking websites which list publications.

Failure to follow these search rules may result in closure of a search, removal of a search committee member who failed to follow the search rules, or other action necessary to correct the situation.

6.0 REFERENCES

Reference checks can be conducted pre- or post-interview at the discretion of the hiring unit.   Reference calls are required prior to extending an offer of employment. Department Approvers and/or Executive Approvers may determine when in the search process such calls must be completed and, in the event a reference cannot be reached, if adequate background information is known about a candidate to extend an offer. This flexibility is provided so that the search process is not delayed in the event a reference cannot be contacted. In most cases reference calls are made after the individual has been scheduled for an interview and before the negotiation of an offer, but the exact timing may vary.

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The search committee is not obligated to contact every reference the candidate submits. Hiring units shall not ask for more references than they are willing to contact.

The University *Application for Employment* grants permission to conduct reference calls as part of the screening process; however, as a courtesy, the Department Approver and/or search committee shall contact the candidate prior to making reference calls. This is also an excellent strategy to let the candidate know they are still being seriously considered for the position. Candidates shall be asked if there is anyone they do not wish to be contacted at the present time. The Department Approver and search committee shall not contact any party who was identified unless that candidate becomes a finalist under consideration for hire. In that case, another call shall be made to the candidate, informing them that they are a finalist and previously excluded references will now be contacted. If the candidate continues to refuse permission to contact certain references, the Department Approver and search committee shall respect the candidate's request, but may wish to reconsider the candidate's status as a finalist or recommendation for hire.

6.1 General Guidelines Regarding Reference Calls

Information from references shall be solicited in good faith, in an unbiased manner, given appropriate (not sole) weight, and not used as a pretext for discrimination. Questions shall focus on the candidate's job-related experience, qualifications, and accomplishments. Search committees shall ask the same basic questions about each candidate so that all candidates can be evaluated fairly. Written notes shall be taken by the individual interviewing the reference and shall be retained in the search files. No "off the record" information may be solicited.

For positions for which diversity leadership skills are a requirement (see Section 7.4) – the candidate's professional references should include people well-situated to evaluate past performance or future potential in this area. Such references might include heads of diversity programs with whom the candidate worked, department chairs, heads of commissions and councils, directors of women's and ethnic studies departments, or directors of multicultural student services programs.

6.2 Off-the-List Reference Calls

It is presumed that a candidate will list references who would recommend them for the job; therefore, it is recommended that the Department Approver and/or the search committee contact at least one "off-the-list" professional reference to obtain job-related background information prior to extending an offer of employment. For professional staff, academic administrative and faculty searches, a minimum of one (1) off-the-list reference call is required.

Frequently, the question arises as to how to identify an "off-the-list" reference. Some recommendations include:

- In most cases, "off the list" references will include current and past supervisors, dissertation advisor, etc.
- In speaking with the references provided by the candidate, ask if there is anyone else with whom to discuss the candidate's background and qualifications.
- A candidate may have been involved with a significant "off campus" project – perhaps they were working with industry as part of their research – the community contacts may be appropriate "off the list" references.
- A candidate may have been involved with a significant "on campus" project – perhaps they were chair of faculty senate or headed a Presidential Committee, for example – persons affiliated with these activities may be viable "off the list" contacts.

6.3 Checklist for Letters of Reference (if required by the Hiring Unit)

It is important to read reference letters carefully, as it often happens that a reference will contain what initially appears to be a glowing recommendation. For instance, the former or current duties of the candidate may be described, but no qualitative assessments of how those duties were performed may be provided. Some elements to consider when reviewing letters of reference include:

- Does the reference state their relationship to the applicant?
- Is specific knowledge of the applicant's subject matter background mentioned?
- Is the quality of research and publications mentioned?
- Are applicant's duties in current position noted? Does the reference state how well the applicant performs his/her duties?
- Are interpersonal relationship abilities noted? Are administrative skills mentioned?
- Are specific instances of excellent performance documented?
- Does any part of the letter raise additional questions about the candidate's skills, abilities, knowledge, or judgment?
- Are there negative components that are echoed in other letters of reference?
- Are student-professor or superior-subordinate relations mentioned?

7.0 INTERVIEWS

The interview is an important opportunity for the hiring unit to communicate some key messages:

- The hiring unit is seriously interested in the candidate's scholarly credentials and professional background;
- Missouri State University is a good place to come because it is intellectually lively, and committed to diversity in the faculty, staff and student body;
- The University is a good place to come because it has a variety of humane, family-friendly policies in place (i.e., dual-career assistance program, flex-time, etc).

How these messages are communicated can make a critical difference in recruiting diverse employees to Missouri State University.

7.1 Interview Approval Process

Once applications have been screened and a preliminary determination of candidates for interviews has been made, the search committee chair or administrative support person initiates the process requesting permission to conduct interviews. The Department Approver, Dean/Division Approver, and Executive Approver shall carefully review the applicant pool and the justifications provided in support of the candidate rankings and interview recommendations. In addition, the Department Approver, Dean/Division Approver, and Executive Approver shall evaluate the depth and breadth of the candidate pool, the diversity of the candidate pool, and any other job-related information to determine whether interviews shall be approved.

Interviews cannot be conducted (including telephone, in-person interviews at professional conferences, videoconference, or on-campus) until reviewed and approved by the Department Approver, Dean/Division Approver, Executive Approver, and the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance.

7.2 Diversity Requirements

The Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance will review the potential candidate pool and interview recommendations for every executive, administrative, faculty, and professional staff search. The review will be

conducted either in advance of telephone/videoconference interviews <u>or</u> in advance of on-campus interviews. Search committees and hiring units utilizing telephone/videoconference interviews in the selection process must initiate a request to conduct interviews in advance of scheduling the telephone/ videoconference interviews. Search committees and hiring units who do not utilize telephone/ videoconference interviews, but intend on proceeding directly to on-campus interviews, must initiate a request to conduct interviews in advance of scheduling on-campus interviews.

For national searches, if the pool of potential candidates presented for interviews (via telephone, videoconference or on-campus, as outlined above) is not broadly diverse, including candidates who are ethnically and/or racially diverse, the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance will not approve interviews. In such an event, the search committee and hiring unit are required to do additional outreach to broaden the applicant pool and provide an opportunity to broaden the potential candidate pool. If additional outreach is required, no candidate shall be removed from the interview list as a result of actions taken by the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance. Upon completion of such additional outreach efforts, the potential candidate pool must again be submitted to the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance for review and approval. If at that time, the interview list is still not racially and/or ethnically diverse, the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance will approve interviews if it determines that reasonable and timely efforts have been made to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and that further efforts would likely be fruitless. Interviews cannot be scheduled until approved by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance. The final decision on hiring will be based solely on the applicant's qualifications and not on his/her personal characteristics.

7.3 Interviewing Candidates

The interview process serves two primary purposes: (1) to allow the search committee to assess candidates' qualifications for the position; and (2) to allow candidates to assess their interest in employment at Missouri State University. Candidates' impressions of the University will be influenced by the consideration, competence, and sincerity of each search committee member.

An [Interview Questionnaire Guide](#) is available online.

The following recommendations help ensure a fair selection process:

- Structure the interview to be as consistent as possible for all candidates. Use the same basic questions, setting, time allotment, and interviewers.   Please note that it is appropriate to use follow up questions tailored to the candidate's answers or their professional background.
- Ensure the questions are related to the requirements of the job and the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform those functions.
- Avoid theoretical questions such as "How would you go about influencing those you supervise and work with on the benefits of diversity?" A better question would be "How have you influenced those you supervise and work with on the benefits of diversity?"
- Assess whether the answers to the questions, if used in making a selection, will have a disparate impact on applicants in protected classes and whether the questions are essential to judge an applicant's qualifications for the position.
- Do not draw conclusions on candidates prematurely; instead, use the entire interview as an opportunity to gather as much pertinent information as possible.
- Avoid making assumptions based on perceived race, ethnic background, age, disability, veteran status, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, religion, or other personal characteristics.
- Ask only for information that can legally serve as a basis for the hiring decision.
- When the search committee and/or Department Approver have concluded with their questions, the candidate should be provided time to ask questions.   To some extent, the quality of the candidate's questions may indicate how serious they are about the position.

- Since candidates are generally concerned about time frames, they should be informed of the anticipated date by which they will next hear from the University regarding the search process.

7.4 Assessing Diversity Leadership Skills in the Interview

Search committees and hiring units can use the following methods to assess candidates' diversity leadership skills, a required qualification for executive, administrative, faculty, and professional positions. These suggestions are not designed to probe a candidate's personal beliefs; rather, they are offered to help the search committee ascertain effective leadership and management style for an increasingly diverse, multicultural workforce.   A sample Diversity Leadership Evaluation Form is available online.

Inquiries about equity and diversity need to be consciously incorporated throughout the interview and raised in varied contexts. Avoid compartmentalizing questions about fairness, equity, and affirmative action as if they were separate from issues regarding effective management, leadership, and planning. Similarly, questions about diversity and multiculturalism need to be asked by various members of the search committee and/or the Department Approver. Frequently, members of constituency groups assume the responsibility for asking the "diversity" questions during the meeting. Making a conscious effort to share responsibility for questions regarding diversity ensures that diversity issues will be raised regardless of the gender, racial and/or ethnic makeup of the group.

Keep in mind that questions regarding diversity need to be directly related to the responsibilities of the position for which the candidate is interviewing. The committee may want to identify questions which address specific areas of concern for the hiring unit such as retention, recruitment, or conflict resolution.

Solicit quantifiable information about the candidates' work in the areas of diversity. Ask about specific studies, policies, procedures, or programs they have initiated to further develop the campus or workplace as a multicultural environment, and ask for a statement of initiatives they would propose if appointed.

Inquire whether candidates had opportunities to recruit, retain, and promote women and persons from ethnically and/or racially diverse groups in previous positions they have held and, if so, their success at these efforts. Ask about committee memberships in his/her previous positions.

The following examples of open-ended interview questions are useful and appropriate for assessing a candidate's diversity leadership experience and skills.

- What do you see as the most challenging aspects of an increasingly diverse academic community?
- What initiatives have you taken in your previous capacities to meet such challenges?
- What is your sense of the complexities and leadership challenges related to these issues?
- How have you fostered a climate receptive to diversity in the workforce, in the curriculum, in faculty/staff meetings?
- Suppose that in working with a University unit you discover a pervasive belief that diversity and excellence are somehow in conflict. How do you conceptualize the relationship between diversity and excellence? What kinds of leadership efforts are needed to encourage a commitment to excellence through diversity?
- In what ways have you integrated multicultural issues as part of your professional development?

It is also important to be attentive to a candidate's mode of interaction. Communication and attention to group dynamics are important aspects of leadership style and may indicate a candidate's potential effectiveness. Is the candidate at ease discussing diversity-related issues and their significance to the position? Does the candidate listen actively and accurately hear the issues posed? Does the candidate address all members of the search committee?

7.5 Telephone and Video Conference Interviews

The purpose of a telephone or video conference interview is to determine the candidate's interest in the position, to clarify, verify and/or confirm the candidate's experience, and/or to determine whether the individual should be brought to campus for a face-to-face interview. Telephone or video conference interviews are an extremely helpful evaluation tool during the selection process and serve as an efficient and cost-effective way to screen candidates in advance of scheduling on-campus interviews. It is strongly recommended that search committees conduct telephone or video conference interviews prior to inviting any candidates for on-campus interviews.

Consistent with Sections 5.4 and 5.5, the search committee shall develop an interview screening tool to use for each candidate. All questions asked and issues raised must be job-related and similar for all candidates. Notes shall be taken during the telephone or video-conference interview so that a written record of the conversation can be retained in the search file.

7.6 On-Campus Interviews

When scheduling on-campus interviews, it is important to ask each candidate if they have any accommodation needs during the on-campus visit. For example, some candidates may need a non-smoking room or have specific dietary restrictions. Although hiring committees may not ask questions related to medical information, this also provides time for a candidate to request disability accommodations for the on-campus interview, if needed.

All candidates should also be asked if there is anyone at the University or in the community with whom they would like to meet during the interview. For example, candidates may have questions regarding the availability of a community or resources identified with a particular race, ethncitynationality, religion, family status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other characteristic. If a candidate states that he or she wishes to meet with relevant EEO constituent group/s at the University or in the community, the search committee chair may provide time in the candidate's interview schedule for said meetings, provide contact information, or otherwise be helpful in arranging the candidate's meetings. This should only occur upon the candidate's request.

Finally, if a candidate has not supplied a copy of his/her official transcript, the Department Approver should remind them of this requirement.

The hiring unit sets the agenda for the on-campus interview. [Note: In faculty searches, departments should schedule on-campus interviews with the Deputy Provost or Provost Designee for tenure-track faculty candidates. On-campus interviews should be scheduled with the Provost for Department Head, Director, Associate Dean and Dean candidates.] The agenda should be designed in such a way to provide the candidate with information about the department, the University and the community. The Office of Human Resources is available to meet with applicants regarding the Missouri State University benefits package. Consider scheduling a University tour, a community tour, and any other activity that will leave the candidate with a favorable impression of the University and community.

As part of the interview process, candidates should meet with members of the department, the Department Approver, the Dean/Division Approver, the Executive Approver, and other appropriate administrators and staff members. Candidates for a Department Head position will meet with faculty members and staff of the academic department. To obtain the maximum benefit from these interviews, the hiring unit should circulate a copy of each candidates resume, a copy of the job description and a copy of the interview schedule.

7.7 Interviewing Individuals with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the University to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities who are employees or applicants for employment, except when such accommodation would cause an undue hardship. The ADA also establishes rules about "disability-related

inquiries," which consist of a question or series of questions that is likely to solicit information about a disability. The ADA prohibits all disability-related inquiries before an offer of employment, even if they are related to the job.

Key points to remember when interviewing a candidate with a disability:

- Ensure that the interview location is accessible to all people with disabilities.
- Do not assume that an applicant needs assistance.
- Do not ask questions regarding:
  - The nature of a disability
  - The severity of a disability
  - The condition causing a disability
  - Any prognosis or expectation regarding a disability
  - Whether or not the person will need treatment or special leave because of a disability
- You may ask an applicant:
  - To describe or demonstrate an essential position function(s) and whether they can perform the functions with or without accommodation.
  - If they are aware of any reason that she or he cannot perform the essential functions of the position.

More information about the University's disability accommodation policy and procedures is available online.

8.0 HIRING

The search committee is charged with providing a list of the finalists' strengths and weaknesses to the Department Approver. Evaluations from open forums and other search activities should also be provided to the Department Approver.   In addition, if any questions remain about a finalist, these should be documented for the Department Approver.

Key considerations in making the hiring recommendation:

- Utilize a team interviewing process to prevent errors and omissions in screening applicants.
- Each search committee member should give his/her honest input on each candidate interviewed.
- Think broadly rather than narrowly about the types of experiences and/or skills each candidate might bring to Missouri State University.
- Avoid attempting to "clone" those already in the hiring unit. Doing so discourages diversity and prohibits the hiring unit from enjoying the many advantages that diversity and the varying perspectives can bring.
- Acknowledge that candidates with diverse paths and experiences can make positive contributions that have previously been untapped by the hiring unit, division, or University.
- Avoid falling victim to the "halo effect" that can occur when one positive aspect of a candidate's talents or skills is inappropriately transferred to other aspects of her/his qualifications. The phenomena of racial, ethnic, and other forms of prejudice can be manifestations of the halo effect – avoid stereotyping on any grounds.
- Provide information regarding the finalists' strengths and weaknesses to the Department Approver and Executive Approver based on advertised position requirements and substantive qualifications, including diversity objectives.

8.1 The Hiring Decision

The search committee is not responsible for deciding which candidate is to be hired for a particular position. Rather, the Department Approver, in consultation with the Dean/Division Approver or Executive Approver, will select the finalist to be offered the position based on the ability of the finalist to perform the job requirements

as evidenced by the credentials, interviews, references, job-related criteria, and diversity objectives of the University.   When the Department Approver is ready to recommend a candidate for hire, the Department Approver or administrative support person submits a request to extend an offer of employment.

This is the final documentation of the search process, indicating the recommended finalist and comparing all interviewed candidates. This documentation allows the hiring unit to briefly explain how the recommended candidate met the qualifications for the position and provide written documentation for review and auditing purposes. The Department Approver must ensure that the hiring recommendation covers all *interviewed* candidates relative to basic and desirable qualifications, and any other criteria that distinguish the recommended candidate from other applicants, such as years of experience, references, publications, record or honors received.   All explanations for the hiring decision must be factual and specific. If the proposed salary exceeds the proposed salary range, salary approval must be obtained from Human Resources prior to making the offer to the candidate. For faculty positions, proposed salaries must be approved by the Dean and Provost.

Before a position is offered to a candidate, a request to extend an offer must be completed and approved by the Department Approver, Dean (for faculty searches), the Executive Approver and the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance.   At any step in the approval line, the search committee chair and/or the hiring unit may be contacted for further information on how the search committee came to their decisions. This could include requesting further information on why certain candidates were not selected.

8.2 Negotiating the Offer

The way an offer is negotiated can have a huge impact not only on the immediate hiring outcome, but also on a new hire's future career. Candidates who feel that the Department Approver conducts negotiations honestly and openly, and aim to create circumstances in which they will thrive, are typically more satisfied in their positions and more likely to stay at Missouri State University than those who feel that a Department Approver has deliberately withheld information, resources, or opportunities from them. With respect to the decision on granting rank and tenure to academic administrators, it will be based on departmental guidelines (see Section 10.2). Initial equity in both the negotiated conditions and in the hiring unit's follow-through on the commitments it makes are important factors in retention as well as recruitment.

8.3 [Criminal Background Checks](#)

It is the policy of Missouri State University that *all new hires* ("Applicant") will be subject to a criminal background check as a condition of appointment (student hourly positions, per course faculty, part time and temporary employees are exempt except for "sensitive positions" and some departmental per course faculty). Criminal background checks (including the sexual offender registry) shall be completed on finalists before an offer of employment is made. Results of the background checks shall be provided to the Office of Human Resources (HR) and the responsible Vice-President, Chief Financial Officer, Chancellor or Provost.

8.4 Completing the Appointment

With approval from the Executive Approver, an appointment letter is prepared and issued to the finalist. (Note: The Office of the Provost issues all appointment letters for faculty and academic administrator positions.) The hiring unit also must initiate the University process to appoint the finalist. Once the University has received the acceptance of an appointment from a finalist, the original applicant file of the finalist must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources. When approved by the Board of Governors, the appointment becomes binding subject to the University's bylaws and policies. No employment is official until approved by the Missouri State University Board of Governors.

8.5 Notification of Search Closure to Non-Selected Applicants and Candidates

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Each applicant and candidate, especially those interviewed, have invested time and other resources into the search process. It is important that the hiring unit and search committee treat each of them with courtesy and sensitivity. Upon request of an applicant, it may also be necessary to provide pertinent information to the applicant regarding the reason he/she was not selected for the position. Applicants who were not interviewed should be notified by the search committee chair and the Department Approver of their non-selection as soon as a firm decision of their non-selection has been made, rather than waiting until the entire search has been completed. As soon as possible after an offer is accepted, interviewees not chosen should be notified by letter or e-mail. A Department Approver may also wish to contact the finalists not selected for the position via telephone. It is important to notify unsuccessful candidates before public announcements of appointments. Official timely notification to internal candidates is especially important. It is the responsibility of the hiring department to communicate in a timely manner with all interviewed candidates who were not selected for the position. Sample notification letters are available online.

8.6 Evaluating the Search from a Diversity Perspective

If the department hires a women and/or a person who is ethnically and/or racially diverse, consider the factor that may have enabled it to do so and keep a record of good practices and successful searches for future reference.

If the applicant pool was not as large, as qualified, or as diverse as was anticipated, consider:

- Could the job description and/or position announcement have been constructed in a way that would have brought in a broader and more diverse pool of candidates?
- Could the hiring unit have recruited diverse applicants more actively?
- Were there criteria for this position that were consistently not met by women and/or persons of color?
- If women and/or persons of color were offered positions that they chose not to accept, what reasons did they offer? Are there things that the hiring unit could do to make it more attractive to such candidates in the future?

8.7 Documenting the Search

All searches must be documented to ensure compliance with Missouri State University policy and the U.S. Department of Labor records retention requirements. Careful completion and retention of these files by the hiring unit provides protection in two ways: (1) the files provide documentation of "good faith" recruiting procedures; (2) should it be necessary, the files also provide an official record for use in investigating complaints of discrimination in the selection process.

The hiring unit is required to retain the resumes/curricular vitaes and all search documents for all applicants for a period of two years following the closure of the search. Search committee members should turn over all notes and files they have to the search committee chair at the end of the search. The hiring unit is responsible for maintaining the search file. In some cases the search file may be stored by the college or administrative unit, particularly for high level searches.

The electronic applications, resumes/curricular vitas, and other documents uploaded by applicants are stored on the central server; therefore, hiring units need not keep paper copies of the resumes unless the Department Approver and/or Executive Approver require that they do so. Any materials sent by applicants directly to the hiring unit (e.g. writing samples, portfolios, etc.) should be maintained by the hiring unit in a secure location.

9.0 EXCEPTIONS TO STANDARD SEARCH PROCESSES

In light of Missouri State University's goal to diversify its employee population, it is the University's policy that the pool of applicants for all positions being filled at the University be as broad as possible and that all current employees have the opportunity to be considered for open positions for which they are qualified.

Missouri State University, in accordance with state and federal law and University policy, is committed to providing equal opportunity in employment through nondiscriminatory, open recruitment and hiring practices. Exceptions to these guidelines are therefore strongly discouraged. Occasionally, such factors as financial constraints, program continuity, or the existence of highly specialized qualifications and requirements for a particular position, require making an exception to the University's normal employee recruitment and selection procedures.   Exceptions to this policy may be granted by the President, based on a prior written request endorsed by the appropriate Executive Approver and reviewed by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance and Office of Human Resources. Ordinarily, such requests will be based on documented evidence that qualified candidates are unlikely to be available through an open search, or that an extended search would risk negating a unique hiring opportunity.

Should an exception to standard search procedures be approved, the hiring unit will ordinarily use the same forms and processes as required for a regular hire with a full search. To the extent possible, all the requirements of a full search must be met. While it must be recognized that there are occasions when no search is feasible, whether because of timing, funding, or position duration, there will be other times when it makes sense to conduct a search that is merely shorter in duration or smaller in scope (local or regional rather than national, for example). In all cases, the criteria for selection of a candidate must be job-related and non-discriminatory.

Requests for exceptions or variances may be granted under the following circumstances:

Internal Searches - Under certain circumstances vacant positions may be filled through internal recruitment. The depth and breadth of the internal recruitment must be approved in advance by the appropriate Executive Approver, the Director of Human Resources, and the Equal Opportunity Officer. Therefore, the filling of all positions shall be accomplished through a process that includes announcement of the opening as widely as appropriate in terms of the level of duties and responsibilities of the position. Missouri State is committed to fostering promotional opportunities for its regular, full-time employees by conducting internal searches whenever consistent with the University's public commitment to diversity, our long range planning, and the federally mandated Affirmative Action program. Regular full-time University employees can receive consideration in internal searches based on job-related qualifications as determined by the job description and position announcement.

Individuals not employed by the University on a full-time basis are not eligible to apply for positions posted with the statement "Internal posting for promotion and transfer consideration of full-time, regular University employees only." However, in rare cases of business necessity upon the recommendation of the Vice President of the area in which the vacancy is being posted and with the prior approvals of the Director of Human Resources and the University's Equal Opportunity Officer, an individual not employed on a full-time basis may be allowed to apply.

Internal searches may not be appropriate when: (1) no regular full-time employee is qualified for the vacancy, or (2) the Department Approver requests an external search to fill the vacancy, or (3) diversity issues cause the policy to be inappropriate. Internal searches should not be conducted for faculty vacancies or for the positions of Vice President, Provost, or President.

The procedures for an internal search are the same as those for an external search, except that the open position is only advertised at the University. The screening, interviewing, and selection process and required documentation will follow the normal procedures for an external search.

Whenever an internal search is utilized to fill a vacancy, the resultant vacant position <u>must</u> be filled through an external search.

Business and/or Instructional Necessity - An exception to the standard search procedures may be requested when conducting a full search would negatively impact the operational effectiveness of a department/unit or would violate a formal contractual obligation of the University.

Qualified, Diverse Applicant Pool - An exception to the standard search procedures may be requested if a hiring unit has recently conducted a full search that yielded a diverse applicant pool.

Special Circumstances - There may be other special circumstances that justify abridging the standard hiring procedures when a full search is not in the best interests of the University i.e., an opportunity to utilize the Diversity Hiring Program).

9.1 Appointment to an Interim or Acting Position

An appointment to an interim or acting position is considered to be a temporary appointment for which only full-time, regular employees can be considered. Consideration is based on job-related qualifications as determined in the applicable job description and position announcement. Generally, in order for the Department Approver to appoint an employee to an interim or acting position without posting the vacancy internally, the Department Approver must demonstrate the intent to fill the vacancy on a permanent basis by immediately beginning the formal search process. If the Department Approver does not intend to immediately begin the formal search process to fill the vacancy on a permanent basis, the vacancy for an interim or acting position must be posted internally and filled through University search processes. In cases of emergency or compelling business necessity when it may not feasible to begin a search process immediately, the Department Approver must seek approval for an exception in advance by the appropriate Executive Approver, the Director of Human Resources, and the Equal Opportunity Officer.

9.2 Extending Temporary/Time-Limited Appointments

Temporary and time-limited appointments cannot be extended beyond the stated ending date without a written request to and approval from the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance. The request should state the reason(s) for the extension and the new ending date. A maximum of two extensions will be considered for approval.

10.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

10.1 Hiring Foreign Nationals

Foreign nationals who apply for and are offered University employment are required to have or be eligible for the work visa appropriate for the position. Inquiries regarding the national origin of an applicant are illegal; however, it is legal and appropriate to verify that applicants are eligible to accept employment in the United States. Information about hiring foreign national employees and immigration services for University employees is available online in the Immigration Toolkit maintained by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance.

10.2 Granting Tenure as a Condition of Hire

When a Department Approver seeks to hire an academic administrator with tenure and rank, the department or school to which the faculty member would be initially assigned must be asked to conduct a tenure vote based on departmental guidelines, and a statement of the departmental faculty vote must be submitted to the Office of the Provost.

10.3 Nepotism

The University's policy regarding the employment of relatives is set forth in the nepotism provision of the Conflict of Interest Policy.

10.4 Decision Authority

If there are instances in which the search process and/or selection decision does not receive concurrence by the Office for Institutional Equity and Compliance, the President may make a decision as to whether the search process can continue and/or whether an offer of employment can be extended.   No employment offer is official until approved by the Missouri State Board of Governors.

Line of Authority

Responsible administrator and office: Director, Office of Institutional Equity & Compliance

Contact person in that office: Director

Effective date:

Approved by President: _____