

Guide for
**Staff Searches
and Hiring**



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I. INTRODUCTION

Hiring and retaining exceptional faculty members is one of the most important responsibilities at UHCL. This search manual describes the procedures and provides the necessary forms for conducting a fair and equitable search.

II. COMMITMENT TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The University of Houston-Clear Lake is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in all its educational programs and activities, and all terms and conditions of employment without regard to age, race, color, disability, religion, national origin, ethnicity, military status, genetic information, or sex (including gender and pregnancy), except where such a distinction is required by law. Additionally, UH System prohibits discrimination in all aspects of employment and educational programs on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

III. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is the foundation of a credible search committee and trustworthy search process. Searches and search committee meetings are confidential. If any inquiries are received, in-person or by email, regarding the position, the status of an application, the status of the search, or who is on the search committee, please forward them to the Employment Coordinator. Applicants should not be aware of who is on the search committee and should not be contacting any search committee members directly. The goal is to maintain confidentiality of who is on the search committee for as long as possible.

Internal Candidates: Searches with internal candidates can be difficult for all of those involved, and can result in feelings of resentment among colleagues or applicants. Some of this is inevitable, and the situation will be awkward. It is important to follow search procedures in an attempt to conduct a fair search. Internal candidates should undergo the same procedures as external candidates. We understand internal candidates are different but the principle of equal treatment should always be followed.

IV. INITIATING THE SEARCH PROCESS

If the vacancy is created by the termination/resignation of an employee, first decide if the position can be posted without changes or if it should be updated to meet the current needs of the department. Review the position description and make changes as appropriate to ensure UHCL is recruiting for the skills needed and to ensure the duties listed match the duties the employee is expected to perform. It is vital the Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ) entail the most current information, is clearly written, and provides as much detail as possible to assist in proper recruitment. If recruiting for a new position, a new JAQ must be created. Items to remember include:

- Changes to existing position descriptions must be approved by Compensation prior to posting.
- Newly created position descriptions must also be submitted to Compensation for review and approval. Compensation will determine the appropriate job title and pay grade.

V. SEARCH COMMITTEE

Establishing the Search Committee

All Director and above staff searches must be directed by a search committee. Establishing a strong and credible search committee is essential for a successful search process. The chair will be designated by the supervisor, hiring manager, or department head.

- The search committee should consist of a minimum of three members, unless a written exception is granted by the supervisor and Human Resources.
- Committee members should include members that are knowledgeable of the position duties and responsibilities, can represent the department's stake in the process or have affiliation with the position.
- Full-time, part-time, professional, and, support staff members are eligible for membership on the search committee. When appropriate, the supervisor may name one or two committee members from outside the department, individuals in the professional communities, as well as consider students for the committee.

Search Committee Responsibilities

Effective search committee members are well-connected, available to participate fully and consistently, and comfortable engaging in rigorous debate to ensure the best outcome. The search committee is responsible for conducting the initial search, screening of applicants, and presenting recommended candidates for further consideration.

All search members should be fully prepared to:

Attend all scheduled search meetings	Support recruitment efforts
Review all submitted application materials as required	Compare and rank applicants with regard to the stated position requirements
Set aside biases to fully consider all who may be qualified to assume University roles	Keep all interview notes and screening information to submit to HR
Participate in/assist with the interviewing process	Make appropriate applicant recommendations
Follow any designated deadlines/timeframes to complete task.	Maintain confidentiality with regard to search process.

First Search Committee Meeting

The first search meeting typically involves the chair and committee discussing the position description, planned recruiting activities (via Recruitment Plan), how the applications will be reviewed, timelines for completion, interviewing timelines, and what the potential hire date is. It is vital for the chair and committee to be consistent with regard to position information, position details and requirements, reviewing applications, desired candidate specifics and defined search timeline.

The Employment Coordinator, serves as ex-officio member of all search committees and is generally present at the first committee meeting. Questions related to policies and procedures may be addressed at this time, as well as throughout the search process.

All those responsible for reviewing applications are required to attend the Human Resources search processes training.

Preparation of Recruitment Plan for Search Committees

The recruitment plan includes the position data and the names of each committee member. It also indicates the search committee's plans for additional external advertising. The goal for external advertisement is to ensure the advertisement reaches the most qualified pool of applicants. It is critical for search committees to adopt a proactive approach to selecting non-traditional methods of advertising announcements to increase their ability to attract qualified candidates.

When recruiting applicants, the overall goal is to reach those looking for new opportunities in addition to capturing the attention of outstanding individuals who are not "on the market." Below are some techniques to consider:

Technique/Source
Ask current department members to identify potential candidates.
Network with people who "know people" in the field (who may be called upon to nominate individuals).
Identify journals read by people in the discipline/profession.
Identify Professional associations for people in the discipline/profession.
Identify websites that are visited by people in the discipline/profession.
Identify the names of people who are publishing interesting research, giving strong presentations nationally, etc.
Identify affinity groups and placement offices at other Universities and institutions and the best way to share the recruitment with them.
Identify ways to obtain nominations from alumni, and members of the University community.
Placement in local or national publications.
Placement on specific electronic resources (listservs, job banks, Web sites, etc.)

Indicate recruitment plans by checking the appropriate box(s). The immediate supervisor and Human Resources must approve the Recruitment Plan. Upon obtaining the supervisor's signature, forward to the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources.

VI. RECRUITING

Advertising

Positions posted through the applicant tracking system will be on the UHCL Jobs site and HigherEdJobs.com. eQuest, which is also a function of Taleo, posts positions to over 60 additional job websites. (See list of sites on pages 9-11.)

*Please make sure additional external advertising is done only after the position is posted by HR and open for applications. It is confusing for potential applicants if you advertise a position that has not yet been posted/opened for applications. *

VII. ACTIVITIES DURING THE SEARCH

Candidate Pool Screening and Rationale

Search Committees will review all applications and advance candidates based on job-related criteria without regard to subjective judgments or impressions.

We encourage you to review the applications on-line versus printing every application. Applications can be screened on-line 24/7 from any computer. Should you choose to print any of the applicants' documentation please remember the documents contain very personal information, should not leave your office or the campus, and should be destroyed when the search is complete.

These applications must receive full and consistent consideration by the Search Committee.

Step 1: Determine whether each candidate meets or exceeds the minimum requirements for the position. This is done by objectively comparing an applicant's resume information with the position description.

Step 2: Each committee member must analyze the skills and qualifications noting results individually on the Screening Matrix. Score all applicants using the scores established in the search committee meeting.

Documenting the Search

Human Resources provides the search committee with the necessary documents to use during the screening process including;

1. Matrix Summary: This excel spreadsheet includes the names of all committee members and is an accumulation of each committee members scores for each candidate. It also includes a column for Veterans Preference. Please indicate Yes or No in the appropriate column based on the applicant's answer to the question.

2. Screening Matrix: Lists the minimum and preferred requirements with suggested scoring. The committee is able to revise the matrix and submit to the Employment Coordinator for approval prior to reviewing applications.

Ensure documentation provides rationales for search committee decisions and recommendations. This can be documented in the Notes column (e.g., "Does not have required education"). Notes should indicate specific job-related reasons for selection or non-selection.

3. Employment Reference Check: At least 2 professional references are required for the finalist and 1 must be from a previous or current supervisor. All 10 questions must be asked. Additional job specific questions may be necessary. List any additional questions and answers.

This can be as extensive as notes to the candidate files, or as brief as a note on the matrix (e.g., "Does not have required education"). Notes should indicate specific job-related reasons for selection or non-selection.

** Ensure all applicants are evaluated on the basis of the pre-established criteria related to the position. Avoid comments either orally or in notes that are not job related.

Note: *All search documents are subject to the Texas Open Records Act and committee members may be held accountable for comments unrelated to the search.*

Veteran's Preference

Veterans who are disabled, who served in the active military in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods, who were discharged or released under honorable conditions, or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others in employment with or appointment to a state agency or institution of higher education as long as they

meet the minimum qualifications and any preferred qualifications for the position to which they apply.

The question, "do you qualify for Veteran's Preference?" is on all employment applications.

Interviews: An individual who qualifies for veteran's employment preference is entitled to a preference in the interview process over other applicants who do not have a greater qualification.

1. If there are 2 equal candidates and one qualifies for Veteran's Preference; the Veteran is entitled to an interview over the other candidate.
2. If the hiring department intends to interview five or fewer applicants, at least one must qualify for veteran's employment preference.
3. If the hiring department intends to interview six or greater applicants, at least 20% of the total

number interviewed must qualify for veteran's employment preference.

4. The interview process shall remain the same for all applicants including veterans. For example, if the hiring department is instructed by HR to interview applicant A, who is a veteran, they cannot be given a phone interview while the other applicants are interviewed in-person. Applicant A should be brought to campus and included in the same interview process.

Important Notes: Veteran's employment preference does not guarantee the veteran a job. Positions at UHCL must continue to be filled with the most qualified applicant.

Communicating with Candidates

The names and information of the search committee are confidential and should remain so for as long as possible. However, many times applicants will reach out to the hiring department and members of the search committee asking questions about the status of the search and their application. If this happens you should respond with the following;

- Thank the candidate for their continued interest in the position.
- Inform the candidate that you cannot comment on an ongoing search and let them know you will be forwarding their inquiry to Human Resources.
- Forward the email to the Employment Coordinator in Human Resources and he/she will respond on the department's behalf.

Selection of Interviewees

Determine person(s) to be interviewed utilizing scores given, discussion among the committee, and reviewing the needs of the department.

- Determine whether telephone interviews are necessary and proceed as appropriate. (Must have interview questions approved by HR prior to conducting interviews).
- Develop, design a plan, and schedule for the interview process and campus visits.
- Schedule all persons, groups, locations to be involved in the interview process.
- Develop uniform job-related questions to ask each candidate. Phone interview questions should be more technical and knowledge based. Avoid questions that address interpersonal skills, as it is difficult to assess these skills over the phone.
- All candidates should be asked the same questions, allowing for individualized follow-up questions as needed.
- Phone and on-campus interview questions must be approved by HR prior to conducting any interviews.

****Please note if you elect to do phone/virtual interviews, all candidates must have a phone/virtual interview. We do not phone/virtual interview some of the interviewees and not all. Each candidate should experience the same process.**

VIII. CAMPUS VISITS

Planning an Effective Interview

With careful planning, a campus visit can create a positive impression on the candidate while also gathering specific information on which the University can make an informed decision about which candidate(s) to nominate.

- Identify all people and groups to be involved in the interview process and provide them with relevant information about the position: job description, essential functions of the position, necessary areas of inquiry, and standard interview questions.
- Schedule and reserve appropriate spaces for interviews and communicate those times and places to interviewers as far in advance as possible and send reminders a few days before the event.
- Review the structure of the visit and the interview process with all interviewers, especially those who may be conducting individual interviews rather than meeting with the committee.
- Provide information about the candidate and his or her experience to all participating in the interview process and encourage them to read it. Those who are prepared ask better questions and make a better impression on the candidate.
- Ask faculty/staff to provide feedback about specific facets of the candidate's potential, rather than just requesting generic feedback.
- Provide a rating sheet or other systematic feedback mechanisms, and detail how feedback should be given to the committee or chair.
- Encourage note taking during the interview that focuses on required skills and relevant applicant responses.
- Notes can be helpful when reflecting on individual applicants or when discussing them with others who interviewed the same persons for other positions.

Making a Good Impression

Remind participants that the campus visit is an important opportunity for the department to communicate that we are seriously interested in the candidate's credentials, experience, and the value they can add to UHCL and that UHCL's faculty and staff are dedicated to framing the future of our university.

Additionally, first impressions are important:

- ✓ Consider appointing a host for the visit who takes responsibility for all aspects of the visit including escorting the candidate to and from interviews.
- ✓ Do not schedule the candidate's interview day so tightly that there is no time for breaks. Candidates should be given windows between appointments to take care of personal and professional business and to gather their thoughts.
- ✓ Be sure departmental staff know candidates will be visiting so they can greet visitors appropriately.
- ✓ Plan schedules that are similar in format to ensure an equitable basis for evaluation. Internal and external candidates should be given equal opportunity to interact with campus colleagues.

Conducting the Interview

Before meeting with selected applicants, you will establish the list of interview questions to be asked of each candidate, which must be approved by the Employment Coordinator. In doing so, obtaining question input and feedback from committee members is helpful. Questions can be informational, situational or behavioral in nature. Below is a list of standard guidelines to prepare you for this stage:

1. Standardize your process. Make sure you are consistent, equal and fair to each candidate, and that they each are exposed to the same interview format, plan, and questions.
2. Ask only job-related questions that are consistent with the job advertisement.
3. Inquire into the candidate's education, work history/experience, job-related educational experiences, and technical skills/knowledge. Constantly assess candidate to assure the best fit.
4. Ask about problems and challenges the candidate experienced in previous jobs; what he/she liked or disliked.
5. Assess the candidate's stability, job accomplishments, progression, job interests, research, goals, and reasons for leaving current position. Be cautious of potential age biases here and remember to be consistent with each candidate.
6. Ask if you can contact listed references. Make sure names and contact information are correct as information may have changed.

Interview Questions to Avoid

You absolutely cannot ask any question during an interview that relates to an applicant's race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. The following are merely a few of the questions prohibited.

Are you a U.S. citizen?	What is your spouse's name?
Where were you born?	What is your maiden name?
What is your birth date?	Do you have any children?
How old are you?	Do you have childcare arrangements?
Do you have a disability?	What is your race or ethnic origin?
Are you married?	What is your religion? What church do you attend?

After the Interview

It is helpful to discuss the candidate with the committee immediately following the interview. The focus of the evaluation could cover everything from candidate knowledge/skills/abilities, professional character, work ethic, communication/interpersonal skills, match with current organization and position, and candidate reservations (if any). Notes should be made on screening matrix forms, templates, checklists, or via other screening methods. It is important to remember any notes documented during the search process will remain part of the search file in HR. Please use good judgement when documenting comments.

- Review the candidates interviewed with the Search Committee.
- Document all decisions, comparing credentials and qualifications of the semi-finalists, evaluate candidates on their qualifications and the full range of strengths, contributions and ability to work well within the department.
- Consider only the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the job and avoid making assumptions based on perceived race, ethnic background, religion, marital or familial status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or military status.

- Ensure the final discussion of the candidates' remains focused on the search criteria and evidence about the qualifications of the candidates for the position. Do not engage in or permit others to engage in discussion of personal characteristics that are not job-relevant, or global evaluations unsupported by specific evidence.

It is common to administer candidate reference checks after interviews have been conducted and final candidates are under consideration. It is important to verify the accuracy of a candidate's background that was presented during the search/interview process. We require at least 2 professional references for the finalist.

IX. FINAL STAGES OF SEARCH PROCESS

The recommendations for finalists should be submitted to the hiring authority. In some cases, the hiring authority will also be the search chair. They may require additional documentation, such as the search committee's assessment of each finalist or any related input from faculty/staff groupings. It is best practice to have two top candidates in case the first choice does not accept the offer of employment. Please communicate the selected finalist to the Employment Coordinator along with the start date.

All search paperwork should be submitted to the Employment Coordinator. Required search paperwork includes: matrix summary, screening matrix from each member of the search committee, notes from phone and on-campus interviews, candidate evaluation forms from each committee member, and at least 2 professional reference checks. All paperwork must be submitted to the Employment Coordinator before a verbal offer of employment will be extended to the finalist.

Offer of Employment

Relocation allowances for the Division of Student Affairs is below. All other moving and relocation allowances will follow the policy.

- Coordinator/Manager: not to exceed \$2,000
- Assistant/Assoc Director: not to exceed \$3,500
- Director/Executive Director: not to exceed \$5,000
- AVP and above: not to exceed 10% of salary, per policy

Upon receipt of the finalist information the Employment Coordinator will obtain criminal history record check clearance and job offer approval from the hiring manager, the College/Dept. Business Administrator and Compensation. In some cases, Compensation will recommend a higher or lower salary amount. The hiring department and Human Resources must agree before a verbal offer will be extended to the finalist. Once all required paperwork is collected and the job offer has been approved, the Employment Coordinator is responsible for extending a verbal offer to the finalist. If there is a negotiation, the Employment Coordinator serves as the liaison between the candidate and the hiring department. Once an agreement is reached

regarding the salary and start date, the eOffer is created and will be sent electronically to the candidate from the online application system. Upon acceptance of the electronic offer the candidate will complete the onboarding process.

The Employment Coordinator will bring closure to the search by emailing the remaining active candidates regarding the status of the search and the search will be considered closed and filled. In the event an agreement could not be met or a finalist was not selected, the search will be considered failed. The Employment Coordinator will email the remaining candidates regarding the status of the search. All search paperwork is still required.

eQuest posts positions to the following sites:

Job Board	Affiliated Sites
Hire a Hero	Hire a Hero, Military1
Job Opportunities for Disabled Veterans	Glass Door, Juju, JobInventory.com, CareerAlerts.com Employment Crossings Jobs, Trovit, EARN, Facebook, Veterans Families United, Illinois Job Link, USAA/RecruitMilitary, Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA,) Job Accommodation Network (JAN), bestJOBSusa.
US Diversity	African American Careers/Jobs, Asian Careers/Workforce /Jobs, Disability Jobs/Careers, USD Veterans, Veteran Careers/Jobs, USD Disabled Vets, Hispanic Careers, USD Hispanic Workforce/Jobs, Native American Careers, American Indian Jobs, Senior Careers/Jobs, USD Working Women, Women's Careers/Jobs
RecruitABILITY	LinkedIn, Kimble Group, David Careers, Jobcase, Jobble MASSHIRE, JobQuest, CareerOneStop, ZipRecruiter, Jobtome , EmployGeorgia, New York State JobZone, IHire.com, Kentucky, Career Center EARN, Petersons.com, Greater St. Cloud JobSpot, IllinoisJobLink.com, Job Center of Wisconsin, Source America, Texas Workforce Commission, Simply Hired.