



FACULTY SEARCH & SCREEN MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

This manual of procedures is intended as a guide for members of search and screen committees seeking to fill faculty and librarian positions.

Search and screen committees are to be used to fill all permanent full-time faculty and librarian positions (regardless of rank or tenure-earning status). Interim appointments have no assurance of conversion to permanent or tenure-track lines. Advertising efforts to fill positions currently filled as "interim" on a permanent basis will be reviewed using the same standard for the sufficiency of the search effort as for any other vacancy; the existence of a potential internal applicant shall not result in a decreased search effort. Therefore, it is recommended that a search be conducted at the outset for any interim positions with potential for a future permanent appointment.

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE

As a state university, Florida International University (FIU) is committed to the principles of affirmative action and equal opportunity in education and employment. We take seriously our responsibility to provide leadership in ensuring equal employment opportunities. These procedures help to further the mission of the University and to ensure the University's compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended
- Executive Order 11246, as amended
- Equal Pay Act of 1963
- Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
- Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
- Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act
- Pregnant Workers Fairness Act 2023
- Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRA), as amended
- FIU 105 and 106 Nondiscrimination Policy & Discrimination Complaint Procedures
[http://regulations.fiu.edu/regulationReasonable Accommodations for Faculty, Staff, Employment Candidates, and Visitors](http://regulations.fiu.edu/regulationReasonable%20Accommodations%20for%20Faculty,%20Staff,%20Employment%20Candidates,%20and%20Visitors)

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SEARCH

A search is a process of filling a job or position vacancy through a public announcement and recruitment, followed by consideration of all qualified applicants. The search is conducted by a search and screen committee which is advisory to the hiring official.

HIRING OFFICIAL

The hiring official is the person responsible for the final selection of the candidate to be hired and for tendering the offer letter. This is the Dean or Business Unit Head of the respective College/unit or their designee (e.g., the department Chair or Director). **The hiring official may not serve on the search and screen committee.**

Depending on the College/unit, the hiring official may also do the following:

- Charge the committee by providing a description of the required and preferred job-related knowledge, experience, and skills, informing the committee about budget availability for the recruitment process, and inviting applicants for interview.
- Provide a timeline by which they would prefer the committee's recommendations.
- Clarify with the chair of the committee who will provide clerical support to the committee and related information.
- Clarify how the committee will make its recommendations (e.g., how many candidates they would prefer to have recommended, funding and research support, and other related issues).

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Appointing the Committee

The committee is appointed by the hiring official and/or their designee when it is determined that a position needs to be filled. Every member of the Search and Screen Committee should thoroughly understand the requirements of the position to be filled, the department's needs, University policies regarding equal employment opportunity, and the University's mission.

- The committee size may vary depending on the scope of the search, but generally, a search and screen committee should include five members, with three being the minimum.
- Members should be chosen who will be able to help with recruiting effectively.
- To allow all faculty the opportunity to participate in this important process, committee membership and the committee chair should change year-to-year and/or search-to-search.
- The committee will benefit from members with a variety of perspectives. Including those from underrepresented groups in the discipline is one way, but not the only way, to do this.
 - If appropriate, appoint members from outside the department, graduate students, or professionals. There is no University requirement for someone from outside the department, but it may be helpful to have that outside point of view.
 - Aim for demographic representation in gender and race/ethnicity.
 - Avoid overburdening the same faculty with multiple committees or in consecutive years. Check with them to see if they also serve on search committees outside your department.
 - Look for a balance of 'voices' on the committee: Everyone appointed should be comfortable speaking their opinion to the group. You want to avoid appointing anyone who will feel intimidated or who has a habit of intimidation.
- Hiring Officials (or their designee) are not allowed to serve on search committees: for faculty searches, this means that Department chairs, School and Center Directors, and Deans are not allowed to serve. Supervisors and hiring officials should not attempt to directly or indirectly influence the committee.

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- ***At no time*** should a committee member be a candidate for the position, be related to a candidate for the position, or have any other conflict of interest in the committee's work

Additional considerations for tenure-track/tenured positions

The majority of the committee should consist of tenured/tenure-track faculty. At least two members should have gone through the tenure process in the department, as they understand what is required. Exceptions can be made for unusual situations (such as building up the number of tenure-line faculty in a department with few current tenured faculty).

- Determine departmental needs of the position
- Charge Committee
- On campus visits
- Compensation
- Negotiations
 - Using the approved salary range from the ePRF
 - Negotiations must be pre-approved by OPPF

SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Search Committee Chair is appointed to manage the committee's tasks and make sure they are performed in accordance with the guidelines. These tasks may include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinating with the Office of the Provost Planning and Finance and the Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE)
- Posting meeting notices
- Complying with Sunshine Laws
- Ensuring that all records regarding the search are properly retained. (Records are retained for a period of seven (7) years).

SEARCH AND SCREEN COMMITTEE

The Search and Screen Committee is advisory to the hiring official. It is appointed to assist the Hiring Official with the search process by conducting the initial review of the applicant pool to identify and recruit candidates, screening the applicant pool, and recommending a short list of potential candidates for hire. The committee plays a critical role in identifying



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candidates who can embrace the mission and values of FIU. We desire faculty who will have a positive impact on our students, who can support our quest for excellence in teaching and research and will contribute to an inclusive work environment that provides support for our faculty, students, and staff to succeed.

- All members must have completed FIU's **University Search and Screen Training** (asynchronous, virtual) and the **Best Practices in Hiring Training** (in-person) before the committee begins meeting. To complete these courses, faculty must also take a short quiz and complete an attestation in **develop.fiu.edu**. Once these courses are completed, committee members will not have to retake these courses for three (3) years but will be required at the beginning of each recruiting period (usually September of each year) to complete a new attestation. Whether the first time taking the course or any subsequent year, faculty will not be allowed to serve on the committee without completing an attestation during the current recruiting period.

Committee Responsibilities

The committee's responsibility is to establish specific criteria and guidelines for conducting the search. Additional responsibilities of the search and screen committee may include the following:

- Develop a recruitment strategy that includes efforts above and beyond traditional advertising.
- Develop or review draft language for the position advertisements.
- Select specific newspapers, journals, and other media to place the advertisement(s).
- Develop a timeline that will include the date(s) of advertisements, meeting dates when the committee will review and select the long list
- Seek and locate qualified individuals who are interested in applying for the position under consideration, utilizing the University and other sources
- Seek and locate qualified individuals who are interested in applying for the position under consideration, utilizing the University and other sources
- Receive, review, and evaluate applications from candidates for the advertised position under consideration.
- Develop a list of core interview questions to ask candidates that are specifically related to the essential duties of the position.



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- Initial interview with qualified individuals who applied for the position under consideration.
- Recommend short-listed candidate(s) to the hiring official.

Conflict of Interest (COI)

Given the diverse circumstances that lead to questions of perceived Conflict of Interest (COI) pertaining to a candidate in a search, recommendations of individual actions in each and all possible circumstances are not feasible. Instead, if there is the perception of a COI, committees and committee members should be guided to action by the following questions:

- Is the candidate a relative or family? If yes, the committee member with this relation should recuse themselves immediately. (Please see the University's nepotism policy.)
- How recent or strong is your connection to the candidate?
- Can you remain objective and unbiased in evaluating this candidate and others?

If uncertainty persists, the committee member who is aware of the conflict (self or other) should consult with the committee chair, who may in turn seek guidance from FLS or ACE. Similar to determining guiding rubrics prior to reviewing candidates, the committee must also determine and agree on how COIs will be handled. This agreement must be applied to every applicant and candidate. Spouses may not serve on the same search and screen committee.

SEARCH ADVISOR

As part of the University's good faith efforts towards federal and state laws, one member of each faculty search committee is required to serve as a Search Advisor (SA) and be asked to attend an advanced workshop. The Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE) appoints the SA from among the current members of a committee and is charged with helping to ensure adherence to fairness and impartiality. To qualify to be an SA, a committee member must have completed the Search Advisors Workshop (available in-person only). This role can also be assigned to the committee chair. SA responsibilities includes:

- Guiding the committee to make certain that the search process:
 - Ensures candidates are evaluated fairly and in accordance with FIU practice.
 - Provide equal opportunity for each candidate and follow interview procedures that treat all applicants consistently.
- Help with extra recruitment efforts aimed at direct and personal contact.
- Encourage the committee to utilize the best practices in evaluating applicant pools.



This is a one-time appointment for this search only. Search Advisors are not expected to serve on all search committees within the department thereafter. Rather, the SA is selected from among members of a normally appointed search committee to ensure that the responsibility for inclusive practices is shared among and across faculty members. **For tenure-track searches, the SA needs to be a tenured member of the department.**

Search Administrator

The Search Administrator is often a member of the department staff. This role assists the committee chair by providing administrative support to the search and screen committee. Some tasks which the Search Administrator can assist with are:

- Scheduling committee meetings
- Scheduling interviews
- Posting public notices
- Gathering materials for the committee's review (e.g., CV's, cover letters, etc.)
- Requesting references
- Flagging the shortlisted candidates in the HR system
- Communicate with rejected candidates

The Office of the Provost Planning and Finance

The Office of the Provost Planning and Finance (OPPF) oversees all personnel processes related to faculty, budget and finances for all academic units. OPPF will guide and support the search committee, review and approve the request to post, review and approve the ad, create the job posting, and manage the onboarding and hiring of the finalist(s). These are some items they may assist with:

- Advertising
- Faculty Posting Change Requests
- Ensuring that all committee members have access to the applicant pool
- Managing the applicant pool via PantherSoft (e.g., logging interviews, shortlisting candidates, sending reference letter requests)

THE OFFICE OF FACULTY LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESS

The Office of Faculty Leadership and Success, in collaboration with the Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE), offers workshops for faculty search and screen committee members.

University Search and Screen Training

Designed to help committee members understand your role, the applicable federal and state laws that impact the hiring process at FIU, and best practices for searching, including interviews Do's and Don'ts. This training is a pre-requisite for the *Best Practices for Hiring Faculty Training*. This course is available virtually and asynchronously through develop.fiu.edu.

Best Practices in Hiring Faculty Training

Designed to provide background information and concrete advice about effective practices and procedures to make searches more successful. Attendance is required once every three years for faculty serving on search committees. Search committee members do NOT have to come as a group; feel free to sign up for a workshop at a convenient time. **All committee members must complete this training before the committee's work begins.** This training is available in-person only. To register, please visit go.fiu.edu/flsworkshop.

Search Advisors Workshop

This workshop aims to help participants understand legal mandates and best practices for excellent and inclusive hiring at FIU. Through case studies and practical insights, participants will learn strategies for careful and fair consideration of candidates in hiring and for ensuring compliance with federal guidelines. The workshop will also explore the overall



role of search advisors in guiding the committee. This training is available in person only. To register, please visit go.fiu.edu/flsworkshop.

The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO)

The Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE) is a strategic campus partner supporting the University's mission of continuing to build an inclusive community. Within ACE, the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) ensures equitable treatment of applicants, employees, and students. During the search and screen process, OEO is responsible for advancing, upholding, reaffirming, and monitoring policies and procedures that ensure the University complies with all applicable federal and state laws and internal University policies and guidelines. Additional responsibilities OEO include the following:

- Approving the composition of the Search and Screen Committee.
- Appointment of a Search Advisor for each committee
- Review and certify all search committees for demographic representation.
- Review and certify all applicant pools.
- Ensures all committee members have completed applicable training
- Review the type of assistance the office can provide to the committee, i.e., help identify recruitment sources to increase the possibility of identifying minority and/or female job applicants and/or providing reasonable accommodations to applicants.
- Provide support for the Hiring Officials or their designees and the search and screen committee if issues or concerns arise regarding providing equal opportunities.

The Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility

The Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility (CRCA) within the Department of ACE is the University unit tasked with preventing and addressing all forms of harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, across the FIU community. CRCA houses the University's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VII, Title VI, and Title IX functions. CRCA oversees the University's compliance with these laws and implementing regulations while overseeing University Regulations [FIU-105: Sexual](#)



[Harassment \(Title IX\) & Sexual Misconduct](#), [FIU-106: Nondiscrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation \(Title VII\)](#), and the University policy on [Reasonable Accommodations for Faculty, Staff, Employment Candidates, and Visitors](#).

If any student, employee, or applicant has a good faith belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, gender, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex or any other protected category, CRCA encourages them to [report the incident \(report.fiu.edu\)](#).

FIU is committed to ensuring equal access to educational and employment opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as other applicable state and local laws and university policy. Under the ADA, qualified individuals with disabilities are protected from discrimination and may be entitled to reasonable accommodation and/or equal access to programs and services. FIU's policy on [Reasonable Accommodations for Faculty, Staff, Employment Candidates, and Visitors](#) can be found in the [University's policy library](#).



CONDUCTING THE SEARCH

THE SUNSHINE LAW

Search Committees are subject to The Sunshine Law because such committees eliminate applicants from consideration and make recommendations to Hiring Officials. Consequently, committee meetings are considered public meetings under Florida law and must adhere to the following requirements. The Director for Equal Opportunity Programs should be contacted if any questions arise during meetings regarding the Sunshine Law's requirements. Questions will be forwarded to the University General Counsel as necessary.

1. **Open to the Public.** Members of the public may attend any meeting when two or more committee members are present to address the business of the Search Committee. Because the meetings are open to the public, the meeting location must be accessible and accommodate the anticipated interest. While members of the public are allowed to attend, they are not required to participate.
2. **Reasonable Notice.** Posting meetings on the departmental or Division of Human Resources website and in a public location will meet the notice requirement. Additionally, the notice should allow the public a reasonable amount of advance time (at least seven (7) days in advance) to attend. If the meeting is being held virtually, the link to attend the meeting must be listed in the public notice. The Search Committee Chair must maintain documentation of all notices.
3. **Reasonable Accommodation.** Under the ADA, qualified individuals with disabilities may be entitled to reasonable accommodations in the application and employment process. The applicant or employee must request accommodation; a search committee should not assume that an applicant who appears to have a disability will require accommodation if it is not requested.
4. **Votes may not be taken by secret ballot.** Occasionally, because of conflicting schedules, committee members cannot attend search and screen meetings. In these instances, they may vote leveraging virtual means. However, votes may not be taken by secret ballot.
5. **Minutes.** Minutes must be taken at public meetings. These minutes do not have to be extensive but must at least include the names of the Search Committee members present, visitors present, and any actions taken by the committee. The names of applicants moving forward to the next stage must also be recorded in the minutes. The minutes should be included in the retained records regarding the search and screen.

6. **Public Records.** All documents related to the Search are considered public records. All minutes, agendas, sign-in sheets, and/or all other related documents must be submitted to the Dean at the conclusion of the Search. These records will be maintained for seven (7) years. The records retention policy can be found [here \(recordsmanagement.fiu.edu\)](https://recordsmanagement.fiu.edu).

Note: When two or more committee members discuss the search via phone, virtually, email, or in person, it is considered an official meeting. All search committee-related discussions must be conducted within a publicly-noticed meeting.

Section 286.11, Florida Statutes

All meetings of any board or commission of any state agency or authority at which official acts are to be taken are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times, and no formal action shall be considered binding except as taken or made at such meeting.

Florida law holds that a search and screen committee at a state university is a "public meeting" and that the committee can meet and vote by phone as long as phone lines are provided for the public to call-in. Notice of the committee's search and screen meetings should be given seven (7) days in advance and the public should be invited to attend and observe. Notice may consist of posting the committee meeting notice in appropriate places in the University. The statute does not turn a meeting into a "hearing," and persons in attendance do not have the right to comment unless the committee deems it in the best interest of the process. An official record of the meeting must be kept. This may be done by tape recording. Minutes must be written based upon the tapes, or upon notes from the meeting, and should list any decisions made by the committee.

DEVELOPING AN OUTREACH PLAN

Define and develop a plan for outreach and advertising to recruit applicants. The search and screen committee **must** document any outreach efforts. A list of recruiting resources, including those that reach diverse populations, is available at ace.fiu.edu/resources under Hiring Resources.

Consider the following:

1. Adopt a documented advertising strategy that includes announcements to a broad audience, as well as postings targeted to women and minority groups by utilizing the following resources:



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- National journals
 - Departments at other universities
 - Academic and professional associations (including committees within these associations)
 - Listservs
 - Websites
 - Social Media
2. Consult with colleagues and make personal contact to ask them to identify potential applicants, including those from diverse backgrounds. Consider reaching out to:
 - Faculty and academic administrators at other universities
 - Faculty and academic administrators at minority-serving institutions
 - Former students and alumni
 3. Create opportunities to recruit applicants, including women and minorities, at conferences you attend. Cultivate excellent future candidates, both for current and future searches.
 4. Identify individuals who have achieved excellence outside academia and contact them or send the position announcement to them.
 5. Market the department and the campus — showcase FIU as an "employer of choice," offering academic excellence and diversity.
 6. Ensure that all candidates and those invited for interviews are treated equitably and respectfully. Remember, how candidates are treated at FIU is important in attracting future applicants.
 7. Evaluate the effectiveness of the committee's outreach and search efforts. Sharing the evaluation with your department and other search committees will help them do a better job.

POSTING PUBLIC NOTICES

Public notices must be posted in an appropriate place in the University, at least seven (7) days in advance, such as in [Search and Screen Public Notices](#). To post a public notice on that webpage, you may submit an [HRIS Service Request](http://hr.fiu.edu/prospective-) (hr.fiu.edu/prospective-



employees) via AskIT.fiu.edu, select “Public Notice” under Support Category and attach the notice in pdf format.

ADVERTISING

Once the advertisement is posted on careers.fiu.edu, a copy will be emailed to the committee for distribution and use with external sources. This is the final approved version of the ad; no prior versions should be shared. The Office of the Provost Planning and Finance assists with placing ads in external sources. Requests may be made via email to facultycareers@fiu.edu.

- Ads placed in professional journals where there are typically no introductory comments on the University or use of logos can provide just the position description and EEO statement.
- Ads placed in the Chronicle of Higher Education or other venues in which a description of the University is often provided must include the logo and About FIU section.

All FIU faculty job advertisements must include the following EEO statement:

FIU is a member of the State University System of Florida and an equal opportunity, equal access, affirmative action employer. FIU does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, pregnancy, religion, age, disability, national origin, marital status, and veteran status in its programs and activities- all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries per requirement regarding the University’s non-discrimination policies:

Jacqueline Moise Gibbs

Title IX Coordinator

Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility (CRCA)

Telephone: (305) 348-2785

Email: ocrca@fiu.edu

Address: 11200 SW 8th Street, Primera Casa 220

Miami, FL 33199

COMMUNICATION WITH APPLICANTS

Communication with applicants is a critical part of the recruitment process. Timely communication with applicants to inform them of their search status results in positive



experiences for our applicants, even when they may not be interviewed or selected for a position. It demonstrates that FIU cares that these applicants have taken the time to apply for our positions. The chair can contact applicants by phone, send email communications through the PantherSoft HR system, or ask the search administrator to use the email notification options in the online system to notify applicants.

Communicating With Applicants that WILL Be Invited to Interview

The search committee chair or search administrator should contact the applicants to be interviewed by telephone or email to schedule interviews. When applicants are contacted by telephone, they should be allowed to speak directly to the FIU representative, inviting them for an interview. If search committee chairs or administrators are unsuccessful in reaching applicants by phone or email, the applicants should be notified via email through the PantherSoft HR system, and a minimum of three calendar days should be allowed to respond to the invitation to interview.

Invitations to interviews must include the date the applicants must respond. The invitation must also state that failure to respond by the deadline will result in the removal of the applicant's name from the list of qualified applicants. Records indicating each applicant's response to an invitation to an interview must be maintained as part of the search file.

Use of Auto-Generated Emails in the PantherSoft HR system

Applicants not selected for the first round of interviews should be informed of their status before proceeding with interviews. The Search Admin can assist the search committee chair in sending this correspondence via the PantherSoft HR system. System-generated emails are impersonal, and it is NOT recommended that these emails be used unless the candidates were not on the long list of candidates the committee interviewed.

Sending Notification to Applicants Interviewed and Not Selected

Before a new appointment is announced, the other applicants who were interviewed but not selected should be notified in writing or by phone. The chair can contact applicants by phone, send them written letters, or ask the search administrator to use the email notification options in the online system to notify applicants.

MAKING CHANGES TO THE JOB POSTING

Any changes to the posting or the committee must be requested through a Faculty Posting Change Request, which may be submitted by the HR Liaison. Changes include:

- Permanently close the posting



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- Change ad verbiage (ad changes cannot modify any of the position attributes or qualifications)
- Add positions to the posting (positions must be the same tenure status and rank as originally advertised)
- Add or remove committee members, or grant access to administrative personnel

POSTING WAIVERS

Positions that do not require a faculty search:

- Academic rank promotions.
- Faculty receiving administrative appointments.
- The reassignment or demotion of an employee to a different position.
- A change of funding to/from a contract, grant, auxiliary, or local fund from/to a general revenue-funded position with no change in duties, responsibilities, or classification if the incumbent was hired according to the university vacancy announcement procedures.
- Part-time positions of up to .50 FTE. A part-time position may not be changed from .50 FTE or less to greater than .50 FTE without conducting a search.
- Positions to be filled as interim appointments provided the appointment does not extend beyond one year for faculty positions; visiting appointments may or be for up to a 4-year term, with a 1-year extension if approved by the Provost.
- Postdoctoral Fellow appointments for no more than 3 years.
- Research Associate for no more than 1 year.
- Appointment to a faculty rank, regardless of the length of term, without compensation or with pay that is nominal compared to the regular compensation of a similar position,
e.g., courtesy faculty, emeritus faculty, or those given honorific titles. **Appointments or Positions exempt from posting**

Employment actions that do not require searches. Below is a list of examples when a search is not required to affect an employment action:

- Centrally approved unit reorganizations or restructuring
- Positions funded from contracts or grants: These are when the principal investigator and other key personnel are specifically identified by name in the contract or grant.



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- Positions to be filled by people who have been laid off and who have recall
 - rights as specified under the collective bargaining agreements and in the University's
 - policies.
- Positions to be filled in settlement of litigation, grievance, or arbitration.
- Unique qualifications that make a search counterproductive. Documentation of the
 - qualifications must be provided in the additional documentation section of the posting exemption form. Endorsement by the Provost and President is required after Human Resources approval.
- Additional hires negotiated as part of a faculty hire, e.g., cluster hires, trailing spouse hires, etc.

Posting Exemptions

A posting exemption is an authorization to fill a vacant position outside the normal search process. A posting exemption may be requested due to unanticipated and/or compelling circumstances to contribute to achieving unmet institutional employment benchmarks or to hire someone into a difficult-to-recruit position. The Hiring Official or their designated proxy requests the posting exemption. Developing a recruitment plan is not required to fill a vacant position approved through the posting exemption.

Note: Exemptions are granted on a case-by-case basis with signatory approval by the Dean/Director, Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE), the Vice President of Human Resources, the Provost, and the University President.

The Posting Exemption Form is to be submitted to the Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity (ACE) and accompanied by the following documentation:

1. The original, completed Faculty Posting Exemption Form;
2. A memo that details specific circumstances and rationale for the request and any other pertinent information that should be considered (e.g., other eligible, qualified candidates that were considered for the position; the proposed candidate has unique skills, abilities, and/or experiences that support the University's affirmative action);
3. The resume/curriculum vitae of the candidate; and,
4. Grant documentation that shows the position and person being hired in the memorandum of understanding (if applicable);

CHARGE MEETING

A publicly noticed preliminary (charge) meeting of the Search and Screen Committee shall be scheduled to accomplish the following:

1. Introduce the Search Committee Chair and Committee members. Ensure all committee members have completed the required Search and Screen Training provided by ACE.



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2. The Hiring Official or their designee will present the charge to the Search Committee, where they will outline the expectations regarding the position, which may be taken from the approved Recruitment Plan, posting details, position description, and other information as applicable.
3. Review and establish the job announcement to ensure the committee is aware of courses and course levels to be taught and other anticipated responsibilities such as program development, publishing, and/or advising. The job announcement is central to this process, where faculty positions do not have job descriptions.
4. Discuss the announced selection criteria and the method to be utilized to review qualified applicants for the position.

CERTIFICATION OF THE APPLICANT POOL

The purpose of certifying the applicant pool is to identify whether the applicants reflect the representation of minorities and women at a level equal to or exceeding the availability data in the University Affirmative Action Plan. The most recent Affirmative Action plan information can be found [here \(ace.fiu.edu/equal-opportunity/ace-publications/\)](http://ace.fiu.edu/equal-opportunity/ace-publications/). The Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity will certify a pool using the following guidelines:

- 1) Applicant pools that include diverse representation shall routinely be certified. For positions for which the applicant pool does not reflect the representation of minorities and women equal to the available data in the Plan, the recruitment effort shall be carefully reviewed.
- 2) If there is no evidence of active recruitment efforts beyond the placement of advertisements, it is recommended that the search period be extended to allow for additional recruitment.
- 3) The Office of Equal Opportunity will certify the applicant pool upon determining that it is diverse or that reasonable good faith efforts were made to ensure efforts towards our Affirmative Action goals. At this point, the committee may begin the screening process.
- 4) The applicant pool must be certified before the committee invites candidates for interviews.



MANAGING THE APPLICANT POOL

The applicant pool is accessed through [PantherSoft HR](#) within the job posting. Requesting references, logging interviews, and shortlisting candidates should all be done in the posting.

- **Requesting References.** The posting should require a minimum of three references from each applicant. The applicant will provide the name and email address for each reference in their application. Once the search and screen committee is ready, the committee chair or Interview Administrator may request references by selecting the applicant's reference status from within the pool.
- **Managing initial interviews towards preparing the short-list.** The committee must also keep track of the time, date, and attendees of each **initial interview** (typically virtual interviews) conducted during the search and screen process as the search progresses. This information should be sent to the HR Liaison to input it into the job posting. The hiring official must keep track of the **on-campus interviews** conducted after the shortlist and document them in the PantherSoft HR system.
- **Shortlisting candidates.** The shortlist is the list of semi-finalists presented to the hiring official. Once the shortlist is determined it should be logged in the posting by checking off the appropriate applicants in the shortlist column. This can be done by the committee chair or Search Administrator.

EVALUATING CANDIDATES

When evaluating applications from candidates, it is important to compare the candidate's qualifications to the search criteria. A review of the best practices is provided here.

- Decide on written evaluation criteria before reviewing files. These should include any qualifications or requirements stated in the job ad.
 - Look for/rely on evidence of job-relevant qualifications
 - Create and use an evaluation tool/rubric.
- Decide the review process to be used before review
 - Discuss the relative importance of each evaluation criterion so everyone is using the same standard
 - Determine the order of reviewing materials. Advice is to look at items written by the candidate first, so a suggested reviewing order is:
 - Research, teaching, or other statements
 - Cover letter
 - CV
 - Recommendation letters

Recommendation Letters

A recommendation letter is a formal letter that details a person's qualifications, skills, and suitability for a position of employment or at an academic program. Typically these letters will come from advisors, colleagues, mentors, previous employers, or clients and is submitted by the candidate. Committee members should leverage recommendation letters accompanying candidate application submission as they work towards selecting the short-list of candidates. If recommendation letters are not already accompanying the submitted application, candidates must be given an opportunity to submit their recommendation letters by a specified deadline.

Reference Checks

A reference check is a process where a potential faculty hire's previous employers, colleagues, or supervisors are contacted to verify their academic qualifications, teaching abilities, research productivity, and overall professional performance, providing insights into their suitability for the faculty position beyond what is presented among their application materials. The inclusion of recommendation letters among candidate supporting documents does not preclude the hiring official or designee from conducting reference checks for short-listed candidates. The hiring official or their designee must ensure that reference checks are completed and documented for all short-listed candidates.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

The criteria used to make this decision should reflect the criteria used throughout the search and screen process.

Interviews conducted by the committee

As with all business conducted by the committee as a body, interviews must be posted publicly seven (7) days in advance. There must be consistency during all phases of the interview process, including participation by the Search and Screen Committee members. All candidates should be treated similarly throughout the interview process. For example, if one candidate is interviewed remotely, then all candidates should be, even if they are local.

Candidates should be informed of who (by name and position) will interview them and whether a presentation is expected. As much information as possible should be provided so the candidates can prepare adequately for the interview, i.e., courses and course levels to be taught and other anticipated responsibilities (program development, advising, etc.). Before holding the interview, the committee must develop a standard list of specific core job-related questions that will be asked by all interviewees.

This list of questions should be kept with the other committee records.



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- The questions should be asked in the same order.
- Note that follow-up questions can deviate from the list.

Interviewers should aim to evaluate qualifications that are relevant to a faculty position.

- Questions about matters that are not job-relevant (e.g., family status, sexual orientation) must not be asked by the search committee (or anyone).
- Non-job-relevant questions are also often illegal. A chart of appropriate and inappropriate questions is available in an appendix in the Faculty Search and Screen Manual.
- Exploring non-job-relevant criteria will confound your evaluation and likely drive the candidate away.

The committee should discuss each candidate relative to the search criteria immediately following the interview's conclusion while the information is fresh in their minds. If these interviews were on the long list, another meeting should be held at which the committee decides on the shortlist to recommend to the Hiring Official.

Shortlist Interviews

Once the search and screen committee has chosen the shortlist (usually 2-4 candidates), they present this shortlist to the Hiring Official for approval to bring the shortlisted candidates in for final interviews. The committee may first present the shortlist to the department and/or department chair for approval to send to the Hiring Official.

If the faculty are involved in approval,

- The shortlisted candidates' C.V.s should be made available to them at this time; it is optional to also provide any statements (research, teaching, service, etc.) to the full faculty as well.
- Approval should be made by a simple yes/no vote on each suggested shortlisted candidate.
- In accordance with FIU standard hiring practice, the search committee is responsible for providing the shortlist or semi-finalists. After they have decided on the shortlist, it may not be modified or added to. Please note that all evaluative decisions must be made according to the Sunshine Laws.
- Faculty not on the search committee are not allowed access to application files other than the materials provided by the search committee for the shortlisted candidates.

Once the committee has communicated the short-list to the hiring official, the work of the committee is done, and the hiring official may discharge the committee. If the committee is discharged, the former committee members may now participate in the shortlisted candidate



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interviews as regular faculty members, and the Sunshine Law requirement for public notice of committee meetings no longer applies.

Some units may choose to continue the search and screen committee responsibilities after the recommendation of the shortlist to the department and/or Hiring Official. In this case, any time two or more committee members discuss or meet with the candidates, it is considered an official meeting and must be conducted as a publicly noticed meeting.

Once the shortlist is approved, an appropriate faculty host should be identified as the person of contact for the candidates. This may be the former search chair, the department chair, or another faculty member. The faculty host is responsible for communicating with the semi-finalists regarding the interview schedule and expectations during the interview. The faculty host and/or the department chair should work with the Hiring Official or proxy to determine who will meet with the candidates during their full interviews.

Inviting Semi-Finalists to Interview

In order to ensure that your chosen candidates are well prepared to be interviewed, which will make evaluating them more effective, invitation emails and information packets should be prepared in advance so they can be sent promptly.

As appropriate, the following information should be provided to the semi-finalists prior to their interviews:

- Travel Itinerary
- Detailed interview schedule including names and titles of interviewers, as well as locations
- Contact information in case of travel delays, logistical questions
- Background information on FIU and the department
- Contact the candidate if they need to request accommodations for a disability (also see Reasonable Accommodations below)
- Information on the locations and accessibility of campus locations involved in the visit
- Information on family-friendly policies, benefits, and dual career services.

During and After the Interviews

The people meeting with the shortlisted semifinalists should be provided with relevant information about them, including their CVs and application statements. This will help them ask better questions and make a better impression on the candidate.

All persons interviewing with or meeting with the semi-finalists during the full interviews need to refrain from asking non-job-relevant questions, especially from asking illegal ones. Provide them with this portion of the manual to help them.

Because the successful candidate will be joining the department faculty, it is advisable for the faculty to have input in the hiring decision. After each semi-finalist interview, ask the faculty who met with the candidate for feedback on specific aspects of their potential to contribute to the department. We recommend using a standard evaluation form or rubric, which could also be administered online. Written responses, whether in the form of notes, Qualtrics survey, or questionnaires, should be gathered before final consideration by the Chair on the finalist.

Some departments may wish to hold a meeting to reach a consensus decision on each interviewed semi-finalist. A simple yes/no vote on whether each candidate is acceptable should be taken. Ranking the semi-finalists should be avoided, as that does not follow standard FIU hiring practices. A short statement about each semi-finalist's strengths and weaknesses should be prepared and provided to the Hiring Official.

After the semi-finalists' full interviews are complete and the feedback is assessed, the results are passed along to the Hiring Official.

Committee Reformation

If the Hiring Official determines that the shortlist is inadequate or is unable to select a finalist, the committee may be asked to reform and select a new shortlist or add to the existing list. This may require an advertisement of the posting.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Under the Title I (employment) regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the University cannot refuse to hire qualified persons with a disability simply on the basis of the disability. Under the law, an individual with a disability is a person who has:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- A record of such an impairment; and/or



- Regarded as having such an impairment

An applicant or employee who meets this definition of disability must be provided with reasonable accommodation throughout the application process, and the applicant or employee must request accommodation.

If an applicant requests accommodation in the application process, the committee chair should contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance and Accessibility. The applicant should have input into the type of reasonable accommodation provided, but the University has the ultimate decision in the specifics of how the applicant will be accommodated. The request forms for the university's Reasonable Accommodations for Faculty, Staff, Employment Candidates, and Visitors can be found [here](#).

Note: A search committee should not assume that an applicant who appears to have a disability will require accommodation if it is not requested. Even though an applicant discloses the need for an accommodation before an offer of employment, an employer still may not inquire as to:

- ***The nature of a disability;***
- ***The severity of a disability;***
- ***The condition causing the disability;***
- ***Any prognosis or expectation regarding the condition or disability; or***
- ***Whether the individual will need treatment or leave because of the disability***

GLOSSARY

Applicant Pool. Grouping of all candidates who have submitted an application for an advertised job opening.

Search Committee Chair. A committee member appointed to manage the committee's tasks and make sure they are performed in accordance with the guidelines.

Conflict of Interest. A situation in which regard for a private interest tends to lead to disregard of a University duty or interest.

Finalist. Candidate who has emerged as the person to whom an offer will be extended.

Hiring Official. The person responsible for the final selection of the candidate to be hired and for tendering the offer letter.

Posting waiver. An exception to the normal recruitment process that allows a hiring unit to select a candidate without posting the position.

Recommendation Letters. A formal letter that details a person's qualifications, skills, and suitability for a position of employment or at an academic program. Typically, these letters will come from advisors, colleagues, mentors, previous employers, or clients and is submitted by the candidate.

Reference Checks. A reference check is a process where a potential faculty hire's previous employers, colleagues, or supervisors are contacted to verify their academic qualifications, teaching abilities, research productivity, and overall professional performance, providing insights into their suitability for the faculty position beyond what is presented among their application materials.

Reasonable Accommodation. Any change, modification, or adjustment which enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal employment opportunity during the recruiting process.

Search Administrator. Usually, a member of the department staff whose role it is to assist the committee chair with administrative support in carrying out the duties of search and screen committee.

Search Advisor. A member of the committee appointed by the Department of Access, Compliance, and Equal Opportunity, with added responsibilities to ensure that candidates are evaluated fairly and in accordance with FIU practice.

Short-List (semi-finalists): From among all the candidates in an applicant pool, the short-list represents a list of (normally) 2-4 candidates that the committee recommends moving forward for on-campus interviews and further consideration.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

Below is a guide for best practices for interview questions:

Don't Ask...

It is not permissible to ask questions directly or indirectly alluding to:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender, Gender Identity, & Gender Expression
- Genetic Information
- Marital Status
- Military Status
- National Origin
- Pay or Salary History
- Political Beliefs
- Pregnancy
- Race & Color
- Religion
- Sex & Sexual Orientation
- Veteran Status

See below for additional guidelines on appropriate interview questioning:

	<u>APPROPRIATE</u>	<u>INAPPROPRIATE</u>
Address	How long have you lived “in this area?”	List of previous addresses, how long have you lived at specific address
Age	None	Questions about age or questions that would reveal age, requests for birth certificate
Birthplace	None	Birthplace of applicant or applicant’s parent’s, spouse or other close relatives
Citizenship	May ask questions about legal authorization to work in the specific position, <u>if all applicants are asked</u>	May not ask if person is a U.S. citizen
Convictions	May ask if any record of criminal convictions and/or offenses exists, <u>if all applicants are asked</u>	Questions about convictions unless the information bears on job performance. Questions that would reveal arrests without convictions
Disability	May ask about applicant’s ability to do job-related functions, <u>if all applicants are asked</u>	Questions (or series of questions) that is likely to solicit information about a disability

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Education	Inquiries about degree or equivalent experience	Questions about education that are not related to job performance
Family	None	Number and ages of children, childbearing/rearing queries
Marital or Family Status	Whether applicant can meet work schedule or job requirements (should be asked of both sexes)	Any inquiry about marital status, children, pregnancy, or child-care plans
Military	You may ask if a candidate has served in the Armed Forces of the United States or in a State Militia	You may not ask about military service in the armed forces of any country except the U.S., nor may you inquire into one's type of discharge
National Origin	May ask all applicants if legally authorized to work in this specific position	May not ask if person is a U.S. citizen
Organization	Inquiries about professional organizations related to the position	Inquiries about professional organizations suggesting race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation
Personal Finances	None	Inquiries regarding credit record, owning a home, or garnishment record
Political Affiliation	None	Inquiries about membership with a political party
Race, Color, or Sexual Orientation	None	Comments about complexion, color of skin, height, weight, or sexual orientation
Religion	Describe the work schedule and ask whether applicant can work that schedule. Also, suggest that accommodations to schedule are possible	Inquiries about religious preferences, affiliation, or denominations or religious holidays observed
Work Experience	Applicant's previous employment experience	Stereotypical inquiries regarding protected group members