Tenured Faculty Search Guidelines

Audience: ⭕ Faculty  ☐ Staff  ☐ Students

Contact person:

RATIONALE:

These guidelines, and the attached documents they refer to, are intended to guide a College of Education departmental faculty search committee through the process of recruiting and hiring new tenured and/or tenure track faculty.

Sam Houston State University, as part of its Affirmative Action Plan, is committed to a vigorous recruitment and selection system to ensure the consideration of typically underrepresented candidates for each vacant faculty position. It is expected that the recruitment and selection system will be rigorously followed at all levels of employment. (*SHSU Academic Policy Statement 80014*)

The College of Education’s Mission Statement on Diversity, states: The College of Education is committed to the understanding and valuing of diversity. Our students should be prepared to live and work in a closely interactive, interdependent global society, and therefore, should be taught by faculty with multiple perspectives and multicultural preparation. To this end, the college promotes diversity within its academic programs, faculty, and students. Diversity in background and experiences, and theoretical and ideological orientations should be sought through the search process.

GUIDELINES:

Prior to Search (As outlined in Academic Policy 80014)

I. Justify Position

The search process to select faculty or professional staff begins with a strategic needs analysis or a work force analysis and budgetary support to fill a position. Recommendations are made to the dean who then recommends as part of the strategic plan to the Provost. The specific steps are outlined in SHSU Academic Policy Statement 80014 (*SHSU AP 80014*).

II. Form Search Committee

The department chair appoints a search committee and designates a search committee chair. In appointing a faculty search committee chair and members, the department chair should consider diversity issues. For example, where possible, diverse educational backgrounds should be represented on the committee. Search committee members should be ready to commit to the process. They should attend all meetings, evaluate all candidates, and participate in the selection of finalists and in decisions about the interview process. The Search Committee should include a voting faculty member from outside the hiring department. The committee should be comprised
of an odd number of voting members. A nonvoting student representative, a graduate student or a junior/senior majoring in the area of the position vacancy, may be included.

The search committee members should be informed of appointments in writing and are given:

- The title of the position to be filled.
- The names of other committee members.
- The name of the search committee chair.
- A list of institutional policies and procedures.

The search committee meetings may include activities such as:

- Creating calendar listing of anticipated meetings.
- Reviewing the SHSU Faculty Handbook section on posting position, SHSU AP 800114.
- Reviewing the departmental mission statement.
- Reviewing the sources of degrees and range of experiences of current program faculty.
- Reviewing the open meeting and open records laws.
- Reviewing the availability of qualified candidates.
- Requesting department chair input before candidates are selected for interviews.
- Developing an agenda of interview events, such as the candidates’ meetings with students, other faculty members, touring the campus, or teaching a class section.

III. Develop Position Announcement

The department chair should share with the search committee all available resources, including any data listed on the initial strategic request for personnel. The search committee should develop position announcements with objective criteria that directly relate to job duties to be performed. It is important that all employment criteria be clearly defined in the position announcement. These should be carefully examined to prevent subjective or exclusionary criteria.

Required criteria for position announcement include:

- Degree(s).
- Relevant experience in the field of the position.
- Physical requirements for essential duties, such as those necessary to perform field based and/or off-campus instruction.
- Rank of position, including assistant, associate, and/or ABD.
- Teaching and/or licensure credentials.
- Research/scholarship expectations.
- Service activities.
- Demonstrated excellence in teaching/writing/presentations.
- Willingness to assist with student advising/mentoring.
- Willingness to work with diverse populations. (Diversity includes attributes such as gender, age, disability, educational setting, geographic location, ethnicity, religion, and language.)

It is important that the criteria be objective and directly related to the job to be performed and to essential duties related to the position. Criteria should be reviewed carefully in light of the Americans and Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
According to policy a statement on position announcements encouraging diverse and underrepresented groups to apply or be nominated sets a positive tone in encouraging a diverse applicant pool.

An application acceptance closing date, or a statement that screening will continue until the position is filled, should be included.

The position announcement may contain other information such as a starting date, salary (may say “commensurate with qualifications and experience”), and description of the employing institution, duties, and responsibilities.

Position announcements will state that requests for applicants to upload unofficial transcripts, curriculum vita, statement of teaching philosophy, statement of research and goals and three letters of recommendation, on their PeopleAdmin application.

The department chair or designee, works with Human Resources (HR) to post position in PeopleAdmin. The Human Resources department has implemented this system to automate many of the paper-driven aspects of the position description and employment application processes. The department chair or designee indicates on the PeopleAdmin job posting the chair of the search committee and the members. (Once Human Resources is notified they will send out an email similar to the one in Appendix A, as well as an evaluation form to be filled out at the conclusion of the search.)

The search committee will use this system to:

- View applicants to your postings
- View vita, transcripts and letters of recommendation
- Notify HR of decisions regarding the status of selected applicants

IV. Disseminate Position Announcement

The personnel representative will work with Human Resources in order to ensure that the faculty job vacancy is posted and publicized in accordance with University policy. All postings must be approved by, Department Chair, Dean, Academic Affairs and Human Resources. Human Resources will then email the search committee and Department Chair the position has been posted with the link to the posting. The email will include the requisition number, hiring checklist, and AAP goals.

If advertising a position on an external website or publication, send a copy of the ad to Human Resources prior to submitting the information to the Procurement and Business Services Department or the publication. The HR staffing Specialist will review and edit the ad as necessary to accommodate HR policy and legal requirements. All advertisements must include the EEO/AAP statement.

All full-time and part-time faculty vacancies will be posted for at least 10 working days prior to filling a faculty vacancy.

All of the University faculty positions are posted on the Sam Houston State University homepage, accessible at www.shsu.edu, through the Human Resources Department. A more detailed job description may be posted on the departmental home page. Faculty positions can be posted at www.higheredjobs.com by indicating this on the PeopleAdmin job posting.
The position announcement may also be sent to:

- Job employment centers at state and national level conferences.
- Other subject relevant national publications.
- Discipline related professional association publications.
- Publications targeted to reach underrepresented groups.
- An appropriate vita bank/registry.
- Presidents, provosts, and/or deans of targeted universities and/or associations.
- Newspapers in the local area.
- Online job banks.
- Student organizations.
- Websites.

The university shall, in all solicitations for advertisements for employees placed by them or on their behalf, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, color, sex, disability, or national origin.

**During the Search (The chair of the search committee and the search members)**

I. Review online applications on PeopleAdmin.

All application requests should be referred to the chair of the search committee, who then directs the individual to the Human Resources web page. An individual is considered to be an “official applicant” only when the applicant has completed the official online application. *(SHSU AP 800114)*

II. Application Screening Process

All search committee members should be involved in screening the applicants using predetermined criteria. (See Appendix B for examples).

Criteria for selection from among the applicants include competitive quality of academic transcripts; recommendation from prior employees; the caliber of previous academic and nonacademic work experience; established record of or potential for research publications or creative activity; and the alignment of the expertise possessed by the applicant with that required of the position.

A screening matrix should be used to assist the search committee in determining the format for applicant evaluation. This matrix may be shared with the chair and the dean as part of the decision making process. (Samples in Appendix B)

Each application file should be examined to ensure that the applicant meets minimum criteria. Those applicants who do not meet the minimum criteria should be informed that they do not qualify for the position.
Human Resources is notified as soon as it is determined that a sufficient number of applicants have been received. The position is placed in a “closed” status and advertising discontinues. Additional applicants are not considered unless the job is reopened with administrative approval.

It is the responsibility of the administrator of the hiring unit to recommend through channels the priority list of the candidates deemed to be best qualified. It is expected that every possible consideration be given to attracting and selecting qualified candidates from traditionally underrepresented groups. *(SHSU AP 800114)*

### III. The Interview Process

The members of the search committee should be available throughout the interview process. If a member is not able to attend most of the sessions, a new member should be chosen. Consider conference calls, video conferencing, and off-campus interviewing at professional meetings/conferences to initially screen applicants *(Rubrics and questions Appendix B)*. Phone interviews may be recorded, if permission is granted by the applicant. There should be a structured format of questions that are used with all applicants. Questions and answers are to be recorded and maintained. *(SHSU AP 80014)*. Overt comments which are culturally, racially, ethnically, or gender “charged” are inappropriate. *(The USGS has a document outlining appropriate questions, Appendix C)*.

In order to ensure a nonsexist and nonracist interview remember to:
- Ask the same general questions and require the same standards of all applicants.
- Treat all applicants with fairness, equality, and consistency.
- Follow a structured interview plan that will help achieve fairness in interviewing.

Some of the questions that may be asked to include:
- Why do you want to teach here?
- What can you bring to the department that is uniquely yours?
- What type of grading criteria do you use?
- How do you keep current in your field?
- In the last year, what have you done to develop professionally?
- What is your view of the relationship between faculty and administration?

A search committee cannot inquire about:
- An applicant’s age unless it is relevant to the job
- Financial condition
- Prior wage garnishments
- Credit rating and bank accounts
- Home ownership
- Disabilities
- Marital status
- Where his/her spouse works or resides
- Pregnancy or medical history concerning pregnancy
• Ages of children
• Military experience or discharge
• Religious observance
• Lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, place of birth, original language, or the national origin of an applicant’s parents or spouse.
• How the applicant learned to read, write, or speak a foreign language.
• Membership in clubs, such as country clubs, social clubs, religious clubs, or fraternal orders that would indicate an applicant’s race, color, sex, religion, etc.
• Names and addresses of relatives other than those working for SHSU
• How long the applicant intends to work. (Others for consideration Appendix C).

The search committee chair informs the final candidates that the listed references will be contacted. After speaking to each reference, the chair shares the references’ comments with the other search committee members. You may consider calling off the reference list. You may also consider having the final candidates request their official transcripts either a hard copy or electronic version be submitted to the department chair. (Just a suggestion as the department would already have their transcripts should the final candidate be selected).

Invitations for on-campus interviews should be issued to the final candidates. Prior to issuing that invitation, the search committee chair should gather dates and times of availability from the department chair, dean and search committee members. As a courtesy, the search committee chair should inform all other applicants that finalists have been chosen.

When the invitation has been accepted, the search committee chair should send the candidate(s), committee members, department and college members (where appropriate) an interview visit agenda. This agenda should include information about:

• Arrival and departure dates and times;
• Transportation from the airport, if the candidate is flying in;
• Hotel arrangements (Note: Candidates will only be reimbursed at the state rate);
• Daily schedule of meetings and events;
• Description of the class to be taught during interview, if applicable; and
• Expectations and/or guidelines for presentations (including an appropriate number of handouts to prepare if appropriate).

An agenda should also be shared or made available to members of the department and/or other members of the college as appropriate. When other department members attend presentations or teaching sessions, their evaluation of the candidates should be solicited and presented to the search committee.

The search committee and the department chair should have a clear understanding of the practicalities involved in an on-campus interview: lodging, transportation (airport, etc.), meals, and reimbursement of expenses. **Candidates follow the same travel reimbursement policies as SHSU employees/faculty.**
Key factors in setting up and conducting an effective and efficient on-campus interview include:

- The development of a standardized list of objective and job-related questions to be asked of all candidates for consistency and comparable assessment.
- A careful determination of individuals or groups invited to participate in the interview process.
- A plan for feedback from various constituencies to the committee assessing candidates.
- Logistical considerations to move candidates through the process in a professional manner.
- The length and the elaborateness of the interview process.

During the campus interview the candidates may meet with the departmental chair and faculty, make a professional presentation and/or teach a lesson to an existing class, and be evaluated with respect to the posted job requirements.

**After the Search**

I. The Selection

Once a selection has been made, the chair of the search committee presents a written recommendation to the department chair for the employment of the preferred candidate along with the proposed rank, and recommendation for years transferred for tenure purposes.

The department chair or chair of the search committee will advise Human Resources of the selection and they will conduct a background check.

The department chair contacts the candidate and negotiates a salary that is within the salary range of the vacant position with the understanding that a background check is in progress. Prior approval from the Dean is necessary if the requested salary exceeds the salary range. As part of the negotiation, the department chair can specify an amount to reimburse the candidate for moving expenses out of department funds. The official job offer comes from the Dean.

When Human Resources responds that the candidate is employable, the chair of the department will send a memo to the dean recommending the candidate for employment. The memo is based on the recommendation from the search committee and includes the specific attributes or qualifications that led to the selection of the candidate. The memo should include the starting salary, year(s) toward tenure if applicable and the job requisition number. Also to be included in the memo is the curriculum vita and the employable email from Human Resources.

The Dean will send out the initial offer which is subject to the approval of the President of Sam Houston State University and the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System. The candidate will need to respond in writing to the job offer. Once a candidate has accepted the position, the search committee chair should inform the other finalists that a candidate has been chosen.

The official hiring process begins when the potential faculty member responds to the dean’s offer. An electronic payroll action form (EPAF) and the required documents on the Human Resources checklist are submitted to the dean’s office.

http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/2f0dbd2e-5538-4bf9-8f02-012ef207f5d6.pdf
Once the EPAF and the documentation have been approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, a position offer letter and a nine month contract will be issued to the successful candidate by the President with appropriate notification to the administrators involved.

Appointments to the faculty must be approved by the Board of Regents, The Texas State University System.

The Human Resources Department maintains the official application for three years. The search committee chair needs to maintain the committee documentation, copies of letters sent, etc., for three years. Please note: All committee documentation is subject to the Texas Open Records Act. Contact Human Resources Department if you receive an open records request.

Each office within the recruiting/hiring function is expected to be prepared to offer cogent reasons with appropriate documentation for the endorsement or non-endorsement of preferred candidates.

Upon request, all applications for a faculty position may be examined by the appropriate academic dean, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, or the President.

It is the prerogative of the academic dean, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, or the President to request a reconsideration of the recommendation for employment if it is judged that a well-qualified minority candidate may have been omitted. (SHSU AP 800114)

II. Timeline Considerations:

If you desire a September 1 start date, the following must be considered:

- By mid-July, but no later than August 1 the EPAF and all official transcripts and documentation must be submitted.
- May to July- the hiring process must be initiated
- By the end of February all applicants should be reviewed and search committees should be ready to contact finalists.
- February to April – interviewing process must be initiated (as a reminder, be sure to determine the availability of the Dean and Department Chair prior to scheduling with the candidates).

*WHEN HIRING AN INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATE, THERE ARE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED, THUS THE TIMELINE SHOULD BE ADJUSTED TO ALLOW FOR THIS DIFFERENCE.

No one wants a new hire to miss out on their first paycheck.

Approved by:
Date:

Reviewed by:
Date: