

Faculty Search Guidelines

The University of Kentucky (UK) College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE) is committed to attracting, developing and retaining the best faculty. Once Faculty search committees play an essential role in the process of hiring hospitable, competent, diverse individuals and as a result have a direct impact on the future success of the college. While vetting candidates is the committee's primary charge, members of the committee are also selling the opportunity to work in your department and college, so creating an environment of respect and inclusion is imperative. The faculty search committee also has an obligation to be proactive in recruiting a diverse candidate pool. We appreciate your commitment to being focused, well-organized and collaborative and your time and efforts are greatly valued. The following document provides best practices to promote efficient and effective searches.

Position Announcements

All position announcements must be reviewed by college administration and approved in writing by the Dean before being advertised. The Department Chair should also identify search committee members when a position announcement is submitted to the Dean for approval. All announcements must include an [EEO statement](#). All full-time Faculty positions must be posted through the [Human Resources Integrated Employment System](#). This ensures that the search complies with university, state and federal regulations and allows committees to take advantage of HR's considerable resources.

Search Committee Members

Active involvement of every member of the search committee can help you reach a broad base of potential candidates. Make sure that each member of the committee feels involved, valued and motivated to play a significant role in the search. Search committees themselves should be appropriately diverse. Faculty from other departments or other UK colleges should be considered as one mechanism of achieving this diversity. Students and/or staff may be included as well. At a minimum, staff and students should be provided with opportunities to interact with faculty candidates during the interview process. Extension Title Series faculty committees should include county agents or other Extension personnel.

The First Committee Meeting and Timeline

The first meeting of the search committee should include a discussion with Mr. Tim West, Chief of Staff and Associate General Counsel for the college. He will discuss the legal aspects of conducting a faculty search, including a review of [Legal Considerations and Best Practices](#) and the [Faculty Search Evaluation Tool](#).

CAFE strives to meet established diversity standards for women or minorities in faculty

and staff positions. It is the responsibility of all involved in the hiring process, including search committees, to make every reasonable effort to recruit a diverse pool of applicants and to conduct a search in an equitable and inclusive manner.

Search committees are expected to actively recruit and encourage applications, not just passively receive them. The committee is expected, with the assistance of HR, to advertise in periodicals or on web sites that target candidates from underrepresented groups. The committee should also advertise via professional organizations, meetings and discipline-related listservs. Committees are expected to contact candidates from underrepresented groups already practicing at other institutions or elsewhere in the field and request that they self-identify or nominate potential candidates. The CAFE Office of Diversity may also be consulted regarding appropriate outlets in which the position should be posted. Search committee members are expected to keep records of such contacts and any other efforts to recruit a diverse pool of applicants and provide them to the committee chair.

The search committee should establish a timeline to ensure that guidelines are properly followed.

Reference Checks

Reference checks should be used to confirm and verify information and to gain insight on the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates. Committees should determine a set of reference questions ahead of time to ensure consistency for all candidates. The guidelines regarding illegal questions apply to conversations with references, just as they do with candidate interviews.

Candidate Interviews

To the greatest extent possible, the search process should be consistent for all candidates interviewed. Search committees may use an [evaluation tool worksheet](#) to assist in uniformity in evaluation. All participants in interviews, and especially the search committee and the Department Chair, should understand no questions should be posed that could even be perceived as discriminatory or exclusive by any candidate. Under federal and state law, it is illegal to ask candidates questions related to the following topics:

- Age
- Year of graduation from high school or college
- Country of origin
- Languages spoken (unless directly related to the requirements of the position)
- Years of residency in Kentucky or the United States
- Disabilities and/or health
- Marriage, sexual orientation, family and/or children
- Political affiliations, elections, elected and appointed public officials
- Race

- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Unions and unionization
- Physical characteristics
- Military service

Selecting Candidates to Interview

The Department Chair should request authorization from the Dean to interview applicants. This request should include career CVs of the finalists, as well as summary information about the entire pool of applicants, including the number of women and minority applicants. When a pool of applicants is not diverse, the search committee, through the Department Chair, must provide documentation of the actions taken to recruit a diverse pool. If a department's diversity status is deficient, and the diversity status of a candidate pool is also deficient, searches may be extended, delayed, or cancelled at the Dean's discretion. All candidates should be made aware that the department and the college are inclusive, welcoming and strongly supportive of the success of all faculty members. If there are candidates you are no longer considering, the search committee chairs should correspond directly with those candidates to let them know. Also, the HR Integrated Employment System (IES) will notify candidates when they are no longer under consideration.

Interviewing with the Associate Deans

Once the Dean has approved the list of candidates to interview, the search committee should use the following procedures for scheduling interviews with the Associate Deans.

1. Send the CVs of the candidates the committee wishes to interview to the Associate Dean for Faculty Resources, Planning and Assessment, with a cc: to Megan Lucy. The request to meet with the Associate Deans should include a proposed timeline for the interviews. Megan Lucy will work with the committee chair to coordinate the interview times with the Associate Deans.
2. Except in rare cases, the Dean will not interview faculty candidates. All four Associate Deans will meet with each faculty candidate as a group. The exception is interviews for lecturers. Lecturer candidates will only meet with Associate Dean for Instruction, unless the appointment includes a significant amount of extension/service or research.
3. Interviews with the Associate Deans will be scheduled for one hour. Megan Lucy provides the CVs to the Associate Deans.
4. After Megan Lucy has confirmed interview times with the Associate Deans, the committee chair should offer those times to the candidates, work within his/her department to make travel arrangements, and then let Megan Lucy know which candidate will be scheduled for which interview time.
5. After the interviews, the Dean will collect evaluations of the candidates from the Associate Deans.

Receiving Approval to Offer the Position

The Department Chair's recommendation to offer a position, and the offer itself, must be approved by the Dean. In those rare cases where differences between the department's and the college's choice cannot be resolved, the administration may meet with the search committee or even the faculty as a whole. Please refer to the college's resources on [writing offer letters](#).

Records Retention

All written records of faculty searches are subject to open records requests. To ensure compliance with the state's records retention schedule the search committee chair should create an email folder to serve as a repository for all email correspondence and electronic documents related to the search and keep this folder for five years. The search committee must collect all paper applications, notes, charts or any other written materials used by committee members related to the search and provide them to the Department Chair. The Department Chair must keep them for five years.

Questions

Questions regarding faculty searches and search committees may be directed to the Office of Faculty Resources, Planning and Assessment at 257-7249.