

# Search Committee Guide for Faculty Hiring

Office of the Provost  
Rhode Island College

Adapted with Permission from the Bridgewater State University Faculty Hiring Manual. All statements and content are the sole responsibility of Rhode Island College. Revised September 2014. Revised January 2017. Revised September 2017. Revised December 2017.

## **Overall Process and Timeline**

The search process normally begins in the late Spring of the prior year to the search, with the Department Chairs and Deans identifying potential searches for the coming year. The Dean will compile this list and forward to the Provost for consideration, normally in June or July. The Provost will work with the Deans, President's Office and others to finalize this list, to be completed usually by August or early September of the new academic year. Once the President has authorized a search, the Provost will notify the Dean, the Dean will notify the Department Chair, and the formal search process will begin.

The Department Chair will appoint a search committee. The Department Chair will work with the Departmental Advisory Committee (DAC) and Human Resources (HR) to formulate and post the offering, normally in September or early October. The committee will review applications and select a short list of candidates, normally between November and January. In some cases, the committee may elect to conduct telephone interviews with a semi-short list of candidates before deciding on a final short list for on-site interviews.

On-site interviews with the list of finalists will normally occur between December and March depending on progress in prior steps. The Department Chair and the DAC, or the Department as the whole (dependent on Department By-Laws) conducts the on-site campus interviews.

The Department Chair and the DAC meet to discuss the candidates and the search in detail, and seek to build consensus from all the information on the ranking of the candidates and who, if anyone, will be considered for a formal offer. The Department Chair will make the initial recommendation for hire after consultation with the DAC (or the whole department, By-Law dependent). The Department Chair will then forward that recommendation to the Dean.

The final decision on appointment of any new faculty member shall be made by the President upon the recommendation of the Provost/VPAA after reviewing the recommendation of the appropriate dean and the department chairperson. The department chairperson shall be notified within two (2) weeks of the President's action on the recommendation. If the President, after consultation with the appropriate administrative officers, finds reason to reject a recommendation for appointment, then he/she shall transmit the reasons in writing to the department chairperson concerned.

Offers will be made to the preferred candidate by April or May, with a goal to complete the process by the end of the semester in order to have a faculty member join the College for the Fall Semester. In some cases, candidates may defer to a January start with prior approvals by the Dean and Provost. Should the primary candidate decline or be unavailable, the Department Chair will confer with the DAC about making an offer to another candidate within the final pool.

If the search is unsuccessful, the Department Chair will discuss with the Dean and Provost the options of another search, typically for the subsequent academic year.

## **Formation of the Search Committee**

The Dean, following consultation with each department, will petition through the Provost/VPAA for faculty searches in their school each year. The Provost will then make recommendations to the President for authorizing searches across the College each year. Once the Provost and President authorize a search, the Department Chair selects a search committee of three to five faculty members, including a chair of the committee. The Department Chair informs the Dean of the names of the committee members, on rare occasions the Dean may feel that a somewhat different composition is needed. Once the position is posted, the HR Hiring Manager provides access to PeopleAdmin for the committee members.

To the maximum extent possible, search committees should be chosen to obtain a broad representation of perspectives, including a mix of people by sub-discipline, gender, experience at the college, race/ethnicity, and other factors. Potential conflicts of interest, such as a candidate who is a family member of a current faculty member, should be identified as early as possible in the process. Changes in committee membership can only be made by the Department Chair with approval by the Dean. In most cases, search committees are not chaired by the Department Chair, except when no other faculty member is available or appropriate to do so.

In smaller departments, the entire faculty of appropriate rank may serve as the committee if they meet the objectives above. In larger departments, the Chair may elect to have a sub-set of faculty serve on the committee, particularly if there are multiple searches over a short period of time or in the same academic year. For joint appointments, both the budget-line and joint departments must be involved in the search, with at least two faculty from the joint department on the search committee.

If a relative or partner of a current department member is or becomes an applicant for a position, that department member must recuse himself or herself from any involvement in the search.

For positions in interdisciplinary programs such as Gender and Women's Studies, Africana Studies, Health Care Administration, and so on, either an inter-disciplinary committee from the program plus others may be formed (e.g., for Women's Studies with no formal department home) or the Chair of the department and DAC in which the faculty position is going to be housed will be in charge of organizing the search which will include both program and department members on the committee. In each case the search Chair should consult with the program director and include representation of faculty from other departments involved in the program.

## **Charge to Search Committee**

Higher education is an enterprise that builds human capital, a mission that, in itself, requires human capital of the highest qualification. Faculty are the most valuable resource of any educational institution, and the development of an outstanding faculty is therefore one of the most important and attention-demanding efforts we engage in. It is our collective responsibility to put in the classroom and departments the very best faculty we can find, faculty who believe in our teaching mission and who sign on to the notion of education as a mechanism of social change.

Search committees do most of the hard work of building our full-time faculty resources at Rhode Island College. The role of a search committee is to attract and identify a strong, diverse pool of highly qualified candidates who have the potential to bring to RIC a set of skills, life experiences, and perspectives that will add to the quality and richness of our academic community. Specifically, search committees should strive to:

- Hire a highly qualified person who fits the requirements for the position
- Increase diversity among the faculty
- Follow all legal guidelines
- Ensure a fair, objective and collegial process

An important consideration in any search process is to maximize objectivity and minimize implicit bias or other subjective considerations that might hamper opportunities for highly qualified and well-matched candidates to be selected for the short list or be selected as a top candidate following on-site interviewing. It is imperative that the search committee follows appropriate guidelines for what can and cannot be considered in the review and interview process, and also that they recognize both their own potential biases and those of the committee and department.

The committee, and the department as a whole, are urged to network extensively with colleagues elsewhere, via telephone, email, postings at regional and national meetings, listserves and other posting opportunities through professional societies, and other means of seeking out a highly qualified and highly diverse pool of candidates. This is perhaps the most important step in any search process, and selection of strong candidates from this pool will be significantly easier and higher quality if the work is done up-front on the larger pool.

It is also important to recognize that while the goal of the search is to hire outstanding faculty, the search process itself creates strong impressions of the college among all applicants. Through our courtesy, timeliness, and professionalism, the manner in which searches are conducted leaves an imprint on the minds of the candidates about our institutional nature and culture.

Hiring faculty can be among the most rewarding service experiences faculty undertake, and, because of its importance, it is recognized as a contribution to the college through the service criterion in faculty evaluation. The RIC administration understands and appreciates your efforts as faculty in the process of hiring new faculty.

## **Preparation of the Search Committee**

- Attend a meeting/workshop on recruitment and the search process conducted by the Dean.
- Review the Faculty Hiring Manual, and all related information including RIC procedures and policies, and related ethical and legal issues.
- Discuss the challenge of implicit bias and the goal of performing a fair, equitable, objective and transparent search process that considers each candidate on merit.
- Review and sign the Confidentiality Form.
- Identify specific tasks to be completed by the search committee, and develop a schedule and timetable for the search.
- The Chair of the committee will normally be the point of contact and liaison on behalf of the committee for communication with the Department Chair (if not serving on the committee), the Dean and the Provost. For other tasks, identify individual(s) to handle or oversee the following:
  - Communication/correspondence.
  - Recruitment and networking efforts by the committee and department.
  - Travel arrangements for candidates.
  - Interview arrangements and hosting.
- Determine where search records such as forms and notes not in PeopleAdmin will be kept, how they will be maintained, and who will have access to them.

## **Department Chair: Prepare and Post the Job Description**

Work with your Dean, Department Chair and the HR office to develop a job description:

- Outline the teaching, advising, service, and scholarly duties of the position.
- Identify the minimum required qualifications and additional preferred qualifications that correspond to defined responsibilities and that can be structured into specific search criteria. Keep in mind that by definition you cannot forward any candidate who does not meet the minimum required qualifications. You also cannot list minimum required qualifications that cannot be objectively evaluated from the written materials that are submitted. For example, you cannot require “strong oral communications skills” because that cannot be evaluated until someone comes to campus for the on-site interview process. Qualifications such as this should be listed as additional preferred qualifications with the understanding that some of these will be identified through the interview process.
- Use descriptors that will be clear about the expectations for the position but embraces diversity of faculty interests, backgrounds, and perspectives.
- Use language that will attract a broad pool of applicants; is non-discriminatory in scope and intent; and does not eliminate candidates the search committee wishes to consider.

Once the job description is prepared, submit it to HR for approval through PeopleAdmin. Provide HR with recommendations for advertising the position as broadly as possible within reasonable budget constraints, keeping in mind that charging your committee and department colleagues with networking beyond the ads is a critical aspect of developing a strong and diverse pool of candidates.

Whenever appropriate, identify at least one discipline-specific national, regional, or local outlet where the position should be advertised, and provide information on posting the position in that outlet to HR.

After the position description is approved, HR will post it in relevant outlets. For any posting the committee itself places, the committee must use the exact language or abbreviated version of the official job description.

In addition to discipline-specific outlets, the HR Office can advertise in:

- Chronicle.com
- HigherEdJobs.com
- InsideHigherEd.com
- Diverse Issues in Higher Education
- Hispanic Outlook
- Projo.com → yahoo.com
- Bostonworks.com → monster.com

All new and vacant faculty positions shall be posted on the bulletin board of the academic department in which the vacancy exists for five (5) working days, or shared electronically with all faculty members, including part-time and temporary faculty.

## **Human Resources Considerations**

Committees must ensure that all portions of the application and interview process are accessible for candidates with disabilities and should be prepared to address the issue of disability accommodations, should that be necessary.

Applications are submitted through PeopleAdmin and must include:

- Cover letter expressing interest and describing qualifications
- Resumé or curriculum vitae
- Three letters of reference (submitted electronically by the reference)
- Transcript for terminal degree (an unofficial transcript can be submitted through PeopleAdmin; an official transcript will be required for the person being hired)

All applications must be submitted electronically through PeopleAdmin. HR is available to assist applicants with this process. If anyone receives a CV or an expression of interest, the interested person must apply through PeopleAdmin to be considered. All department employees, part-time or temporary, applying for a continuing position, shall make a request to the appropriate department chairperson by the deadline set for the receipt of any applications.

Two Affirmative Action forms must be submitted to HR. Part 1 describes the search process and is completed early in the process. Part 2 is completed after the interviews have been conducted and a candidate is selected by the Department Chair with consultation by the Departmental Advisory Committee. No offers can be made until Part 2 is completed.

An H-1B Visa allows a faculty member, or other professional employee in a “specialty occupation,” to be employed on a temporary basis in the United States for up to six years. If you believe that an applicant is a foreign national, it must be determined whether the person is eligible to work in this country. Within the PeopleAdmin process, candidates are asked if (s)he is eligible to work in the United States and whether the eligibility is general or limited to a specific institution.

H-1B Visas are only valid for specific employers. If the applicant is currently under an H-1B Visa, a new application must be completed by the HR Office. This process requires at least four months. Once an applicant has accepted the offer of employment, the search committee and/or Department Chair should contact the HR Office immediately regarding procedures necessary to obtain an H-1B Visa. New employees who are foreign nationals (not resident aliens) cannot be employed or placed on a college payroll until this process is completed.



## **Strengthening the Candidate Pool**

Search committees have a critical role in creating a broad and diverse pool of candidates. The search committee, department, school and college should work together to publicize positions in ways that raise awareness of and interest in the position and that bring the position to the attention of all potential candidates, including protected or underrepresented groups. Search committees should actively identify and recruit qualified candidates through direct networking.

In addition to advertising, informal “word-of mouth” recruitment is normally an important part of a successful search process. Use your contacts to raise awareness of the position in departments, administrative units, and professional organizations and among colleagues who may know people who could be interested in the position. Broad emails to colleagues to post or distribute the ad posting are not very effective. The most effective strategy is to talk directly to colleagues and ask them if they know of specific individuals who might be good candidates and a good fit for the department and Rhode Island College. Networking is typically the single best strategy for developing a strong, deep and diverse pool of initial candidates. It is also the best way to recruit applicants who are the best fit for Rhode Island College, by providing an opportunity to talk about the College in more depth than the advertisements or job posting can provide. The following activities are strategies search committees and departments may consider for expanding their qualified applicant pool, including protected group members.

### ***In Your Department***

Update your department’s website, which is a primary source of information for prospective faculty. Provide information for each department faculty member on the Details pages. An outdated website suggests stagnation; a fresh one signifies vitality.

Invite potential faculty to participate in college or department symposia, seminars, and workshops, or to attend regional or national meetings where they might meet with a current faculty member.

### ***With Other Departments at RIC***

Solicit assistance in disseminating the position announcement from other departments at the college with a similar focus, particularly through individual networking.

### ***Professional Associations and Conferences***

Encourage faculty or administrators who are attending relevant professional conferences or visiting other colleges to make a recruitment effort for the present position or future such positions. Interviews conducted at conferences are **not for screening candidates**, but they can be effective in generating interest and helping build the applicant pool.

Contact and actively participate in professional associations, including minority caucuses in those organizations. Ask for names of potential candidates to whom the position announcement can be sent.

***Publication and Search Assistance***

Use job referral services in relevant professional organizations and outlets for advertising that have wide readership of potential applicants.

***Other Institutions***

Contact colleagues or departments at other colleges and universities about new professionals who will be entering the workforce. Contact alumni offices at institutions where potential candidates are represented, and share announcements of available positions.

***Personal Contacts***

Contact potential candidates with whom you have had contact and who appear to be qualified for the position.

Keep a record of potential candidates from outside contacts and current and previous searches, and contact qualified candidates when a new search is initiated.

Contact people in the field when a position becomes available.

## **Maintaining Confidentiality and Documenting the Process**

Create a file for each search that includes:

- Campus interview rating forms
- Any correspondence outside of those through PeopleAdmin
- Materials submitted outside of those through PeopleAdmin, if any
- Other documentation that pertains to any candidate

Ensure that, for each decision and recommendation, the search committee provides a rationale that reflects the candidate's ability to meet the stated qualifications. Reasons for non-selection are entered in PeopleAdmin through a drop-down box and are described in more detail below.

Organize search materials so that, if necessary, details of the process and documentation of the decisions can be retrieved easily both during the search and after the search has ended.

As per the confidentiality agreement, do not share any information about candidates or their status with anyone outside of the department or the search process.

Do not share any information about candidates or the status of the search with internal candidates, except for information that is available to all candidates.

## **Selecting Finalists for Campus Interviews**

The committee members should each carefully and individually review each applicant's file both for qualifications and to identify those top candidates they believe should be further discussed. The committee should then meet to discuss the candidate pool, and to seek consensus on a short list of top candidates for more detailed consideration.

Carefully consider each candidate, particularly those who may fulfill one or more of the diversity goals of the department. Through this process, the committee should identify 3-4 of the top qualified candidates to forward to the Department Chair for consideration, and then to the Dean. Provide the Dean with a rationale for each candidate recommended for a campus interview. This should be forwarded along with an unranked list of the candidates.

Following approval of the short list, the committee should then change the status of these candidates to "Interview Pending" on PeopleAdmin. Record the names of any candidates who were considered to not meet the minimum required qualifications. This information will be needed for the Affirmative Action report.

Prior to setting up the list of finalists for campus interviews, it is good practice to spot-check their qualifications. For publications, check at least one table of contents online.

In PeopleAdmin, for the candidates who you are certain will no longer be considered, change the status to "Not Hired" and provide a reason (see following section). Once the search is closed, these candidates will receive an e-mail notifying them that they are no longer under consideration.

## **Reasons for Non-Selection**

The following selections are available through a drop-down box in PeopleAdmin under the “Change Applicant Status” page. You may choose only one, so choose the one that is most fitting. The names of candidates considered not to meet minimum required qualifications will be needed for the Affirmative Action report.

- Does not meet minimum qualifications
- Refused offer
- Not enough experience
- Lacks supervisory experience
- Experience not appropriate for position
- Lacks required educational background
- Lacks required certification(s)/license(s)
- No interest
- Inadequate references
- Not available for required hours
- Cannot meet applicant salary requirements
- Did not meet pre-employment requirements
- Requires relocation package
- Not willing to commit to contracted time
- Conflict of interest
- Candidate withdrew
- Another candidate is a better fit
- Did not complete transcript requirement
- Did not complete other document requirement
- Meets min. quals. – background not a good fit

## Preparing for the Campus Interview

To ensure an equitable basis for evaluation, plan the interview process and schedules to be similar in duration and format for each candidate. Identify who will coordinate the interview.

Faculty representatives in the department in which a candidate for a full-time teaching position is being interviewed shall be invited to participate in the campus interview process. The department chairperson shall provide such representatives with the date and time at which a candidate for a position will be on campus and be available to meet with them. The interviewing process shall include an opportunity for a candidate to talk with department faculty who have no administrative functions.

Decide whether candidates will teach a class or make a presentation. Inform candidates in advance of this requirement, including topic, purpose, and expected audience. Remember to ask candidates if they need multimedia equipment for their presentation.

Identify all persons and groups to be involved in the interview process. Each interview schedule should include the following:

- Search committee members
- Department members (both departments in joint appointments, or multiple departments for interdisciplinary programs)
- Department Chair (or Chairs)
- Graduate students, when appropriate and possible
- Other constituencies whose responsibilities relate to the position (e.g. department or institute staff)
- School Dean (or both Deans in joint appointments)
- Provost/VPAA

Each interview schedule should include the following:

- Develop interview format to include:
  - Welcome and overview of search process
  - Questions, based on the responsibilities and qualifications, to be asked of the candidate
  - Questions from the candidate
  - Opportunities for candidate to meet with particular individuals or groups that are an expressed interest to her/him (e.g. HR, Cooperative Preschool)
  - Closing, including a summary of the rest of the search process
  - For reimbursements, collection of receipts and completion by candidates of the W9 form
- Arrange local transportation and accommodations
- Schedule and reserve appropriate spaces for interviews
- Communicate arrangements to department faculty and other interviewers
- Use or adapt the Sample Campus Interview Feedback Form, and distribute to all interviewers

- Provide or make available to all interviewers:
  - Job Description
  - Candidate's CV and letter of application
  - Campus Interview Feedback Forms and deadline for their return
  - Confidentiality expectations
  - Guidelines for Asking Questions During Search Processes
- Communicate to interviewees, in writing, the interview schedule and expectations. Include information about the itinerary, interviewers involved, the search process, and terms and conditions of reimbursement.
- For all candidates, try to equalize the time for the interview and the interview structure for each candidate (e.g., a candidate arriving early or staying late should spend the same amount of time with department members as other candidates).
- Refer all benefits questions to HR, or provide the summary of benefits provided by the HR Office; see <http://www.ric.edu/humanresources/benefits.php>. Do not try to provide or explain specific benefits information to candidates.

### **Guidelines for Asking Questions During the Search Process**

Asking questions is what interviews are all about. However, *questions that are not job-related are inappropriate and may be illegal during all phases of the search process*, including the formal interview, informal interactions with the candidates, and reference checks.

### **Interview Finances**

#### ***Transportation***

Candidates make their own travel arrangements and are reimbursed by the college. Original receipts are required for reimbursement.

If a candidate is flying, monitor the cost of the flight with the candidate. Consult with the dean if flight charge is well over \$500.

Airfare costs are considerably less with at least a 14-day advance notice. Give candidates ample time to make arrangements, and encourage them to make their reservations as early as possible.

Candidates who wish to drive from a great distance will be reimbursed only up to the cost of nominal airfare. Clear such arrangements with the dean.

#### ***Meals***

Meal expenses per candidate (including tips) are normally limited to \$25 for breakfast and \$150 for dinner. Itemized meal receipts and the names of people attending are required for reimbursement. The college cannot reimburse alcohol expenses.

For lunch in Donovan Dining Center, meal tickets can be obtained from the dean's office.

***Hotel Accommodations***

Work with the dean's office to arrange hotel accommodations. The college has agreements with several local hotels.

Unless otherwise approved by the dean, an interview is normally limited to one night's stay.

***Candidate Reimbursement***

Submit, on the candidate's behalf, a completed RIC Travel Report and original receipts to the dean's office for signature.

The candidate is considered a "vendor." Thus, a vendor code is needed for each candidate, and a W-9 must be obtained before reimbursement can be processed. Candidates should complete the W-9 when interviewing on campus.



## How the Offer Is Made

The DAC collects and synthesizes feedback on each candidate from all interviewers. The DAC meets to evaluate candidates for their full range of strengths and contributions. They identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of each candidate as they relate to the position and the criteria used to evaluate and select the finalists. Consensus is not always possible, so make sure the full range of committee views is transmitted to the department chair and Dean.

The Department Chair and the DAC meets to discuss the candidates and the search in detail, and seek to build consensus from all the information on the ranking of the candidates and who, if anyone, will be considered for a formal offer. The Department Chair will make the initial recommendation for hire after consultation with the DAC (or the whole department, Bylaw dependent). The Department Chair will then forward the recommendation to the dean.

The final decision on appointment of any new faculty member shall be made by the President upon the recommendation of the Provost/VPAA after reviewing the recommendation of the appropriate dean and the department chairperson. The department chairperson shall be notified within two (2) weeks of the President's action on the recommendation.

If the President, after consultation with the appropriate administrative officers, finds reason to reject a recommendation for appointment, then he/she shall transmit the reasons in writing to the department chairperson concerned.

If approved, the committee makes a change in status within PeopleAdmin. Normally, the dean then telephones the candidate to informally offer the position. The dean will then work with the candidate and Department Chair on finalizing an offer, which will include the effective date of appointment, rank, salary, and tenure credit for previous experience, and specific degree expectations for promotion and/or tenure, if applicable. The official offer letter is then sent via email to the candidate from the President or the President's designee. If negotiation of terms is required, approval will be needed from the Provost and President. The committee and others should not contact or negotiate with the candidate during this process except at the request of or with permission by the Dean, normally to provide specific information requested by the candidate (e.g., curriculum, other departmental details).

The committee, Department Chair and Dean may wish to retain other short-list candidates as part of the active search, should the offer to the first candidate not be successful. However, the committee should release any other remaining applicants once it is determined that they will not be considered further for an on-site interview or offer, and should change their status in PeopleAdmin so that an automatic message can be sent that notifies them of their status.

Once the selected candidate verbally accepts the offer, the dean notifies the Department Chair and Provost. ***At that point, Part II of the Affirmative Action report must be completed by the search committee; an appointment letter cannot be issued until Part II is completed.*** After that, an appointment letter to be signed by the candidate is sent via e-mail from the Provost's

office. Once the signed letter is returned, HR will close the search. Upon appointment, a copy of the offer letter will be provided to the RIC/AFT. All appointees shall receive a copy of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement prior to the effective day of appointment.

## **Completing the Search Process**

The search committee chair should organize and secure search files and any related materials so that information can be easily retrieved if concerns are raised in the future. Search materials are to remain in department office for at least two years. PeopleAdmin will store search data.

Change the status of all applicants in the PeopleAdmin system, showing who was not interviewed, who was interviewed but not hired, and who was recommended for hire.

Once a signed appointment letter has been received, the search Chair should notify candidates who were interviewed on campus but not selected. Personal contact to the candidates who were interviewed through phone or e-mail is customary and is usually appreciated by the unsuccessful candidates. However, if an applicant asks for a reason for non-selection, you are not obligated to answer; such reasons can be easily misconstrued, and it is better just to say that a different candidate was selected. PeopleAdmin will send an e-mail notification to all candidates not selected for an interview, and as noted above applicants who are not going to be considered further should be notified as soon as practical that they are not under further consideration.

## **Legal Issues and the Search Process**

Adapted from US Department of Labor Affirmative Action Guidelines Hiring (<http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/hiring/affirmativeact.htm>) and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (<http://www.eeoc.gov/employees/>).

### ***Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination***

Be informed about affirmative action requirements associated with minorities, women, Vietnam era veterans, special disabled veterans, and persons with disabilities.

You may not ask about anything not job related such as age, marital status, sexual orientation, religious, political or social affiliation, ethnicity, whether they have children (or plan to have children), or any other personal information. Be careful of well-intended comments that could imply bias or favoritism (e.g. “we’re looking for young blood”).

Ensure that all portions of the application and interview process are accessible for candidates with disabilities, if any, and that the committee is prepared to address the issue of accommodations, should that be necessary.

### ***Confidentiality and Record Keeping***

Record job-related reasons to advance candidates through the search process and to provide rationale in the event of a charge of discrimination.

As a public institution, documents generated by the screening and search committees may be considered public records subject to disclosure. Likewise, if a discrimination action is filed, investigating agencies will have access to search and screening committee records.

### ***Communication***

Contacts with candidates or any other individuals concerning any aspect of the search should be made by the appropriate administrative official or search committee Chair.

Telephone contacts with candidates should be limited to standard questions agreed upon in advance. Notes of responses should be made for subsequent committee use.

### ***Equity and Objectivity***

Job-related criteria for the advertised position should be developed at the outset of the search and approved by administrative officials.

All persons on the search committees should exercise their judgment to avoid having a single member of the committee overly influence the inclusion or exclusion of a candidate.

Only candidates meeting minimum advertised required qualifications should be interviewed.

Interview questions designed to provide fair and objective evaluation of each candidate should be developed in advance of committee interviews with candidates. The same set of questions should be asked of all candidates.

Relative weights of criteria, if used, should be developed and assigned prior to the review of any application. Variations in the application of weighted criteria among different candidates are illegal and may lead to allegations of manipulation to select a particular candidate.

Only job-related reasons can be used to advance candidates or exclude candidates from advancement in the search process. Objective criteria are less susceptible to legal challenge. Any subjective criteria must be related to the position in question (e.g., leadership ability for program coordinators).