



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	3
II.	"Best Practice" Recruitment Strategies for Increasing Diversity.....	3
III.	Recruiting for Various Types of Faculty Positions	4
	Vice Presidents and Vice Provosts.....	4
	Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents and Associate/Assistant Vice Provosts	5
	Deans	5
	Associate/Assistant Deans.....	5
	Department Heads/Chairs/Directors/Division Heads*	5
	Research Associates/Assistants.....	6
	Interim, Acting, or Temporary Appointments	6
IV.	Title Changes for Faculty	6
V.	Initiating a Faculty Search	6
	Developing a Position Description (PD) and Advertisement (Ad)	7
	Establishing a Diverse Search Committee	8
	Requesting Approval to Recruit for a Faculty Position.....	9
	Advertising of Positions	10
VI.	Roles and Responsibilities of the Hiring Authority, Search Committee Chair and Committee Members	10
	Role of the Hiring Authority (usually immediate supervisor).....	10
	Convening of the Search Committee.....	11
	Evaluating Candidates	13
	Conducting Screening Interviews (e.g. Telephonic or Video Interview, etc.)	13
	Interviewing Candidates on Campus	14
	Conducting Reference Checks	15
VII.	Concluding a Faculty Search.....	15
	Verification of Credentials	15
	Selection of Top Candidate and Approval of the Search Process.....	16
	Closing the Search Process	17
	Communicating to Applicants Once the Search is Closed	18
	Extending a Search	18



VCU

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

Reopening a Search	18
Retention of Records	19
VIII. Waiver of National Search Requests	19
IX. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers	20



I. Introduction

As expressed in Virginia Commonwealth University's [Quest for Distinction](#) (2010), Virginia Commonwealth University is committed to "recruit and retain faculty, staff and senior leadership with the skills and talents to increase quality teaching and learning, high impact research, and diversity at all levels." In addition, VCU is also deeply committed to non-discrimination practices and equal opportunity (see [President Michael Rao's Diversity Statement](#)). In an effort to support VCU's commitment to recruiting talent, increasing diversity among the faculty, and to ensure compliance with equal employment opportunity laws and practices, these guidelines are intended to provide guidance on conducting faculty searches in order to increase the workforce diversity of women, minorities (e.g. American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic [non-white]; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander), persons with disabilities and veterans where underrepresentation exists. Although these guidelines apply to the recruitment of all faculty eligible for full Commonwealth of Virginia benefits, principles of equal employment opportunity apply to all employees regardless of employment status. To aid you in the interpretation of these procedures, the [Terminology](#) document provides definitions of terms used in these guidelines.

The [Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention](#) (OFRR) has oversight for recruiting a talented and diverse faculty and for the implementation and interpretation of these faculty search process guidelines. In addition, the [Office of Equity and Access Services](#) provides leadership in the development and enforcement of policies to ensure equal opportunity and access to employment. Through the Office of Equity and Access Services, VCU is monitored for full compliance with its commitments to equal opportunity. Another resource essential to successful recruitment of a diverse faculty at VCU is found in the document, "[Strategies for Successfully Recruiting a Diverse Faculty](#)." Recruitment forms, instructions, and links to additional resources can also be found at the [Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention](#). For questions related to faculty recruitment or for additional information, please [contact OFRR](#).

II. "Best Practice" Recruitment Strategies for Increasing Diversity

In support of increasing representation of women and minorities, the following suggestions are offered:

- Utilize [Strategies for Successfully Recruiting a Diverse Faculty](#) to guide the search process. Contact the [Office of Equity and Access Services](#) or the [Division for Inclusive Excellence](#) for additional resources.
- Forward copies of vacancy announcements to other universities, including those with high minority and/or female enrollments.
- Contact professional organizations for women and minorities to request referral of potential candidates.



- Contact professional colleagues at VCU and other institutions, government agencies, private industry or foundations to solicit names of potential candidates.
- Invite women and minorities who have performed successfully as lecturers, adjunct or part-time instructors, or research associates in the department to apply.
- Attend conferences that attract large numbers of potential minority and female candidates. Post vacancy announcements at these locations.
- Provide information to the national professional organizations of current VCU faculty members.
- Obtain mailing lists of professional national organizations and forward announcements to each member, soliciting applications.

III. Recruiting for Various Types of Faculty Positions

All full-time positions (at all ranks) in the teaching and research (T&R) and administrative and professional (A&P) faculty categories must be filled by conducting a national search as outlined in these guidelines, unless a “waiver request” has been granted as an exception (see section below on “Waiver of National Search Requests”). Prior to initiating a search for a faculty position, the hiring unit should contact the [Office of Equity and Access Services](#) in advance to determine if any underutilization of gender and/ or race exists in comparison to the associated discipline.

Internal searches are discouraged, but may be approved through a “waiver request.” If an internal search is approved, formal written announcements, in lieu of national advertisements, must be provided to all faculty members and administrators at the university or in the respective unit, as applicable. These positions should be an opportunity for current employees and must be posted on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website indicating an internal search is being conducted.

**Below are recruitment provisions for specific types of faculty appointments;
however, the faculty recruitment process outlined below must also be followed:**

Vice Presidents and Vice Provosts

The president, provost and vice president for academic affairs (provost), or vice president for health sciences, as applicable, appoints a search committee to fill a Vice President or Vice Provost position.

Upon completion of the search process, the president, provost, or vice president for health sciences, as applicable, shall consider recommendations of candidate(s) by the search committee and/or other individuals involved in the interview process.



Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents and Associate/Assistant Vice Provosts

The provost and vice president for academic affairs (provost), vice president for health sciences, or the respective vice president, must appoint a search committee to fill an Associate/Assistant Vice President or Associate/Assistant Vice Provost position.

Upon completion of the search process, the provost or vice president for health sciences, or the respective vice president, as applicable, shall consider recommendation of candidate(s) by the search committee and/or other individuals involved in the interview process. The recommendation(s) should be discussed with the president prior to a decision being made.

Deans

The provost or vice president for health sciences, as applicable, must appoint a search committee to fill a Dean position.

Upon completion of the search process, the president, provost, or vice president for health sciences, as applicable, shall consider recommendations of candidate(s) by the search committee and/or other individuals involved in the interview process. The recommendation(s) will be discussed with the president prior to a decision being made.

Associate/Assistant Deans

The respective dean must appoint a search committee to fill an Associate/Assistant Dean position.

Upon completion of the search process, the respective dean shall consider recommendations of candidate(s) by the search committee and/or other individuals involved in the interview process. The recommendation(s) should be discussed with the provost or vice president for health sciences, as applicable, prior to a decision being made.

Department Heads/Chairs/Directors/Division Heads*

The dean or respective administrator, as applicable, must appoint a search committee to fill a Department Head/Chair/Director/Division Head position.

Upon completion of the search process, the dean or respective administrator, as applicable, shall consider recommendations of candidate(s) by the search committee and/or other individuals involved in the interview process.

**School or departmental by-laws or governing documents may exist, which may influence the faculty search process for these positions. Please [contact OFRR](#) for further guidance.*

Research Associates/Assistants

Research associate and research assistant positions are to be filled by conducting a national search as outlined in these guidelines. However, there may be instances where specific requirements or duration of the position constitute a need to “waive” a national search (see section below on “Waiver of National Search Requests”).

Interim, Acting, or Temporary Appointments

All interim, acting, or temporary appointments normally do not extend beyond a one-year period. If the hiring authority would like to request that an existing/visiting faculty member be appointed to a temporary position, they may request to waive the national search (see section below on “Waiver of National Search Requests”). If there is a salary change (to base or to provide temporary pay) which is to be concurrent with the limited appointment for a current faculty member, an [Off-Cycle Salary Increase Form](#) must be submitted upon approval of the waiver.

IV. Title Changes for Faculty

Some faculty positions also have administrative/working titles (e.g. Associate Dean, Director, Coordinator, etc.) Titles for faculty positions are not permitted to be changed without going through a review/approval process to make sure the title change is not a substantive change, is appropriate for the position, is not a competitive opportunity, and is equitable among similar positions (if applicable) that requires a search for the position. Requests for title changes (permanent or temporary) should be sent to [the Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention](#) or the Office of the Vice President for Health Sciences, as applicable. Please [contact OFRR](#) for further guidance.

V. Initiating a Faculty Search

Schools/units are required to advertise in national recruitment sources, including **at least one targeted to women and minorities, for a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days**. In selecting advertising sources, please see [Recruitment Sources and Tips](#). In addition, the following recruitment sources should also be considered (online advertising is recommended):

- professional journals, especially those targeted to women and minorities
- newspapers that are circulated in regions having high minority populations
- colleges and universities with high minority and/or female enrollments
- comparable departments in other universities
- blogs, list servs, social media applications, or other recruiting websites



The steps outlined below are intended to provide a chronological summary of the steps in the faculty search process, including providing the guiding principles and some “best practices”:

Developing a Position Description (PD) and Advertisement (Ad)

As soon as a recruitment opportunity becomes available, the hiring authority (usually the immediate supervisor), which may be delegated to others or a search committee (see section on search committees), must develop a comprehensive position description (PD) and advertisement (Ad). Advertisements are usually developed from the PD to ensure consistency. The PD and Ad must both include the required qualifications as well as any preferred qualifications of the position including the level of education; level and years of teaching and/or administrative experience required; desired level of research and/or funded research, publications and/or exhibits; and other expectations essential to the position such as technical skills, oral and written communications skills, interpersonal skills, etc. If the qualifications for the position being recruited for are not specified in the Ad, they cannot be used to reject candidates. The position qualifications must also not be written so narrowly or vaguely as to give the perception of pre-selection. In addition, advertisements must not be written so broadly where it is difficult to select candidates that meet the desired qualifications for the position. When candidates are not selected, the reason for non-selection must be based on criteria specified in the Ad. Accordingly, advertisements must be thoughtfully developed to incorporate the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Additional Requirements for Both PDs and/or Ads

- The Ad(s) must include general information about VCU and the respective school/ unit (see sample ads at [Faculty Searches](#)).
 - Both the PD and Ad **must** incorporate language which demonstrates VCU’s commitment to fostering diversity (see sample PDs and Ads at [Faculty Searches](#)).
 - The following language* **must** also be in the qualifications section of the PD and Ad(s): *“Demonstrated experience working in and fostering a diverse faculty, staff, and student environment or commitment to do so as a faculty member at VCU.”*
- *Note: As a best practice, this language is most effective when incorporated within the body of the PD and Ad rather than as an isolated statement.
- For **Tenure Eligible** positions, there is specific language which must be included in the PD and Ad.
 - *For faculty positions at the Assistant Professor level, the PD and Ad must include language to the effect that the faculty member will*



FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

be required to have an established research agenda and a clear potential for external funding, and potential for scholarship or creative expression to complement and expand existing expertise in the department(s).

- For positions at the Associate/ Professor level, the PD and Ad must include language to the effect that the ***faculty member will be required to have a well-developed scholarly/research portfolio with evidence of multi-disciplinary applications and external funding appropriate to complement and expand existing expertise in the department(s).***
- All Ad(s) must also include the EEO statement below at the bottom of the ad as follows:
 - If Advertisement(s) does not link to the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website, use the following EEO statement:

“Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action university providing access to education and employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, political affiliation, veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability.”
 - Abbreviated Advertisements must link to the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website and must contain the following abbreviated EEO statement:

“Virginia Commonwealth University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. Women, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply”.

Establishing a Diverse Search Committee

The hiring authority must establish a diverse search committee. There must be a minimum of three (3) committee members including the search committee chair. In order to ensure the integrity of the search process including potential for undue influence, coercion and/or pre-selection, the hiring authority/direct supervisor **may not** serve as chair or as a member of the search committee.

- The search committee must be comprised of men, women and minorities* (e.g. American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic [non-white]; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander). As a best practice recommendation, singular minority and/or male or female search committee members should be at an equal position with other members of the committee.

*Note: As a best practice, consider selecting potential search committee members from outside of the department/unit to meet the requirements of



FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

gender and race. For assistance with selecting search committee members, please [contact OFRR](#).

- It is recommended that hiring managers involve the search committee as early in the process as possible, so that they may help develop position descriptions, advertisements, and ranking criteria.
- Search committee members can be comprised of VCU faculty, staff, alumni, students, and community partners, as appropriate for the position.
- A list of committee members must be prepared by the hiring authority noting the **chair of the search committee** and indicate the following about each search committee member:
 - Name
 - Rank and administrative title (if applicable)
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Any known disabilities

Requesting Approval to Recruit for a Faculty Position

Personnel Administrators (PAs) in the schools/units may be designated, on behalf of the hiring authority, to provide assistance in the completion of the recruitment forms and attachments. The recruitment of faculty positions has been transitioned to an electronic faculty recruitment system called eJobs. Instructions for completing faculty recruitment forms can be found at [Faculty Searches or in the eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs, as applicable](#).

- Prepare and submit (preferably electronically) a [Request to Recruit for a Faculty Position](#) form with a Search Committee List, a PD, and draft Ad(s) with the required levels of approval to either the OFRR or the Office of the VP for Health Sciences, as applicable. Note: For faculty recruitments in eJobs, follow applicable steps in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#) under the Request to Recruit section.
 - This form requires providing a detailed justification as to why the position is needed including a clear description of how it contributes to the organizational needs and aligns with *Quest for Distinction*. The justification must also include language which demonstrates VCU's commitment to fostering diversity as well as research expectations if the position is an Excellence Funded or Tenure Eligible recruitment.
- Upon approval of the search, the school/unit must submit the advertisement/posting electronically for posting on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website or in eJobs, as applicable, and notify the OFRR. Upon review, the OFRR will activate the posting and notify the school/unit.



Advertising of Positions

- See "[Strategies for Successfully Recruiting a Diverse Faculty.](#)"
- For suggestions on recruitment sources, please see: [Recruitment Sources and Tips](#) and [HERC Diversity Recruiting Sources](#).
- Schools/units are required to advertise in national recruitment sources, including **at least one targeted to women and minorities, for a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days.**
- All Ads are to be placed on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website. The hiring authority (designee, search committee, etc.) must determine where Ads are to be placed in addition to the website posting.
- Copies of all Ads placed must be obtained as soon as the advertisements appear, including a copy of the posting on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website, as these will be needed before the search can be finalized.
- To save on costs, it is suggested that a full ad be developed for posting to the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website. For other no cost or low cost recruitment sources, an abbreviated ad may be developed with an URL link to the full ad on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities of the Hiring Authority, Search Committee Chair and Committee Members

Role of the Hiring Authority (usually immediate supervisor)

The hiring authority is responsible for complying with the prescribed search procedures as provided in these guidelines to include the following:

- Initiating a search for a faculty position by overseeing the completion and submission of the recruitment forms
- Careful, deliberate selection of a search committee chair and search committee members
- Charging the members of the search committee to include providing an overview of the expectations of the position, their role in the search process, their role in recruiting for diversity, and their role in recommending candidates for the position
- Actively seeking out qualified candidates (including qualified women and minorities)
- Ensuring candidate pools are diverse and that search procedures have been followed prior to on-campus interviews beginning (please consult OFRR for any questions/concerns)
- Overseeing logistics/itineraries for on campus interviews
- Developing interview questions for finalists and maintaining notes of candidates they have contact with
- Developing reference check questions and conducting reference checks



FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

- Identifying the top candidate
- If the application is received through eJobs, confidentially review the candidate's response(s) in the Criminal History section of the application (see section below on Selection of Top Candidate)
- Negotiating the terms of the hire with the top candidate
- Informing candidate that as a condition of hire, they will be required to submit an official seal-bearing transcript or other documentation to certify their academic credentials for the faculty position (see additional information regarding transcript requirements in the Approval of the Search Process section)
- Recommending the hiring of the top candidate to the next level of authority by submission of the required search documents (i.e. "Request to Offer") which includes providing a justification for the selected candidate
- Ensuring all candidates not selected for the position have been notified accordingly
- Thanking search committee for their service and informing them of results of search (who was hired or not)
- Informing school/unit of new faculty hire and ensuring smooth "onboarding" process for new faculty member
- Retaining the search file for the required time period (see section below on "Retention of Records"). This file must include notes or summary appraisals of candidates

Convening of the Search Committee

All members in the search committee play a critical role in the faculty search process. They are responsible, in part, for actively seeking out qualified candidates (including qualified women and minorities), developing criteria for screening applications, developing interview questions, reviewing each application, determining which candidate(s) warrant an interview, interviewing candidates, making a recommendation of top candidate(s) to the hiring authority, and coordinating the administrative tasks associated with the search process. The hiring authority has the responsibility to recommend the hiring of the top candidate to the next level of authority in accordance with these guidelines (see section below on "Concluding a Faculty Search").

Upon approval of the search, specific duties of the **Chair** of the search committee include the following:

- Distribute the Faculty Search Process Guidelines and the [Strategies for Successfully Recruiting a Diverse Faculty](#) to all search committee members and request they review these documents to ensure that all search committee members are thoroughly familiar with the details of the faculty search process.
- Convene the committee to review the position description, advertisement, and their role in the faculty search process. It is recommended the hiring authority charge each search committee by providing the details of the position including recruitment strategies; expectations of the position; required and preferred knowledge, skills, and abilities; their role in the search process; and timeline for hire.



FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS GUIDELINES

- Provide the committee with the [Guidelines for Lawful Interviewing](#) to aid in preparing appropriate screening and interview questions.
- Inform members of the committee to keep the activities and discussions of the search confidential and to not discuss candidates of the position or the committee proceedings with anyone outside of the committee.
- As a best practice consideration, it is recommended that the Chair of the Search Committee conduct “Calls for Conflicts” with the members of the committee at the onset of the search and during the application review process. The Chair must ask each committee member if they believe a conflict is present, for any reason, in evaluating any and all candidates for the position. A conflict might be if a committee member is related to a candidate for the position, serves as a reference for a candidate, or has a bias that would unfairly influence their decision making in evaluating candidates for the position. Should a conflict be revealed/identified, the applicable committee member(s) would be recused from the committee or from reviewing the individual who presents the conflict (i.e. not participate in interviews, deliberations of the candidate, etc.). For questions or concerns regarding conflicts, please contact [OFRR](#) and/or refer to VCU’s [Code of Conduct](#).
- Ensure when applications are received, an acknowledgement is sent to all applicants and each candidate is provided with a link to a voluntary Affirmative Action (AA) demographic survey (NOTE: If the position is posted in eJobs, the system automatically acknowledges receipt of complete applications). The university is required to solicit demographic information of all applicants. When providing the link, the position number, position title, and department name must be included. The survey is available online at redcap.vcu.edu/rc/surveys/?s=iGSkqx. The requested data will be returned by the applicant and shared with the [Office of Equity and Access Services](#) as this is confidential information. At no time will the AA data responses become part of the applicant files. (NOTE: If the position is posted in eJobs, the demographic data is requested of each applicant as part of the eJobs application process.)
- Complete a [Summary of Faculty Candidate Evaluations and Non-selection Codes](#) form indicating the date each application is received, when an acknowledgement is sent to each applicant, and which candidates were interviewed on campus. Search committee chairs may elect to notify candidates who do not meet minimum qualifications immediately after the initial screening process that further consideration will not be given to them. At the end of the search process the chair of the search committee will also be required to provide a non-selection code as to why candidates were not selected (see section below on “Approval of the Search Process”). (NOTE: For eJobs users, search committee chairs will be able to move applicants through the workflow and assign the applicable non-selection codes (see the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#) for more detailed information)).
- Discuss the process to be used for a confidential review of applications and how applications will be screened to determine which candidates should be interviewed (see section below on “Conducting Screening Interviews”). Consistency in the utilization of an objective evaluative process in the review of all candidates for the



position cannot be emphasized enough. A best practice method would be to develop an evaluation tool which is based on the key knowledge, skills, and abilities as outlined in the position description.

- Determine and discuss an appropriate screening approach with committee members, in the event there is a decision to conduct screening interviews (e.g. telephonic, video meeting, etc.) in order to further assess those candidates selected for an on-campus interview.
- Ensure all search committee members are available to attend all campus interviews. While not optimal, campus interviews with search committees could be conducted if not all members are present; however, there must be a minimum of at least one male, one female, and one minority who are at equal positions with other members of the search committee.
- All search documentation (i.e., application materials, screening matrices, search committee notes, summaries of telephone interviews, interview questions and responses, candidate itineraries, evaluation forms, reference checks, etc.) must be collected by the Search Committee Chair from the Search Committee members and returned to the hiring department. All recruitment documents must be maintained for a minimum of three (3) years from the effective date of appointment or when the search was closed, if not filled (see section below on “Retention of Records”). (NOTE: For searches in eJobs, it is recommended that search documents be uploaded and maintained in the eJobs system.)
- As a best practice consideration, convene search committee at conclusion of search to provide an opportunity to debrief on the process.

Evaluating Candidates

All members of the search committee must thoroughly review each application to assess the candidate's qualifications in relation to the advertised requirements. It is recommended that internal screening evaluation forms be developed by the search committee to assist in the applicant screening process used by search committee members. The screening form must be based on the advertised duties and qualifications of the position. A sample screening form is available at: [Candidate screening form](#). These forms must be maintained as part of the search documentation. (NOTE: For eJobs users, search committees may use the “ranking” criteria feature - see eJobs guides for additional information on this feature).

Conducting Screening Interviews (e.g. Telephonic or Video Interview, etc.)

Screening interviews are another way to assess applicants and determine which candidates warrant an on-campus interview. Prior to any screening interview, a review of the position duties and required qualifications must be made to determine key areas of questioning. Information and questions are to be given in a consistent and standardized manner to all candidates. The salary range, if known, should be provided to each candidate. Refer to the [Guidelines for Lawful Interviewing](#) to aid in preparing appropriate

interview questions. Documentation of all screening interviews must be maintained in the search records.

Interviewing Candidates on Campus

Prior to bringing candidates to campus, it is recommended the search committee chair meet with the hiring manager to brief him/her on the candidates selected by the search committee for on-campus interviews. This is recommended so the hiring manager has an opportunity to vet the slate of candidates before resources are committed to bring candidates on campus. After meeting with the hiring manager, the top candidates who have been identified, must then be contacted to determine his/her continuing interest in the position and to schedule an on-campus interview. It is recommended, if possible, that at least three candidates be invited for an on-campus interview. The search committee chair, or designee, must contact each individual, review the expectations of the position, respond to questions from the applicant and discuss salary range (if applicable). Once the candidate(s) have accepted an invitation to interview on campus, written itineraries should be developed by the hiring authority in conjunction with the candidate. As a best practice consideration, keep in mind the campus visit is usually the first impression the candidate has of VCU. Ensure the experience is a welcoming and a manageable one for the candidate. Consider including information about Richmond, the community, as well as including campus tours. Information about Richmond can be found at the [OFRR](#) website.

For positions at the level of department head and above, it is a best practice recommendation that on-campus interviews include an open forum session with broad announcements to staff, students, and faculty who may wish to participate in the interview and selection process. Evaluation forms (which can be electronic) must be solicited from attendees. These assessments will be helpful in making the final employment decision. When providing the itinerary to applicants, it is important to include the following statement in the correspondence:

If special accommodations are needed, please contact (name) _____ at (804) _____ (phone no.).

This statement will ensure the university's compliance with the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and alert the department to any adjustments to be made in the interview location, schedule, etc.

Consult the [Guidelines for Lawful Interviewing](#) to ensure discriminatory questions are not asked during the interview process. All contact with applicants must be documented and maintained in the search files and must include summaries of telephone conversations, salary discussions, interview questions and responses, evaluation forms, etc.

Reminder: Interview questions and itineraries must be developed and applied in a consistent and standardized manner to all applicants (whether candidates are internal or



external to VCU). Interview questions must address qualifications identified in the position description, including experience or potential for working in a culturally diverse community. As noted above, summaries of telephone interviews, interview questions and responses, candidate itineraries, etc. must be collected by the Search Committee Chair from the Search Committee members and returned to the hiring department.

When the campus interviews are concluded, the search committee chair must provide the hiring authority with the committee's assessment of the top candidate(s) (e.g., strengths and weaknesses), in accordance with the instructions provided by the hiring authority. In accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 1 (2006), preference in hiring should be given to veterans in accordance with VCU's [Veteran's Preference Guidelines](#) for faculty.

The hiring authority is also required to conduct interviews with the top candidate(s), as deemed appropriate, and they may add others to the interview process, as applicable. The hiring authority must prepare interview questions in advance and maintain notes of the candidate(s) responses as part of the search file.

Conducting Reference Checks

Reference checks are required for the top candidate for the position; however, reference checks may be conducted on all top candidates, and preferably before campus interviews. Reference checks must be conducted by the hiring authority or designee. Reference check questions must be developed to verify information on the resume and/or application materials, assess the candidate's knowledge, skills, abilities, performance, and to verify previous work history. The same questions must be used for each reference checked for that position. As a "best practice" recommendation, it is suggested that references on the candidate's previous and current employer(s) be contacted, however, this can only be done with permission from the candidate. References may be obtained by letter, e-mail, telephone, or fax. All reference information obtained must be kept confidential at all times. Reference check documentation must be maintained with the search file (see section below on "Retention of Records").

VII. Concluding a Faculty Search

Verification of Credentials

The dean or administrative head of each unit (or designee) is responsible for verification of the successful candidate's credentials, institution accreditation, and other evidence of appropriate academic preparation. Search committee chairs must obtain permission from the top candidate to verify receipt of degree(s). A copy of the [Verification of Credentials](#) must be included in the documentation submitted for approval of the search process prior to a job offer being made. (Note: For faculty recruitments in eJobs, follow applicable steps in the eGuide under the Request to Offer section).



Selection of Top Candidate and Approval of the Search Process

Personnel Administrators (PAs) in the schools/units may be designated to provide assistance in the completion of the recruitment forms and attachments. Instructions for completing faculty recruitment forms can also be found at [Faculty Searches](#) or in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#), as applicable.

When interviews have been completed and a decision is made to offer a position to the top candidate, the hiring manager or designee (i.e. PA) is required to confidentially review the candidate's response(s) in the Criminal History section of the application in eJobs (the paper process does not include this question). If the candidate has indicated he/she has a conviction(s) that may be job related, the hiring manager (or designee) should contact HR Compliance at 828-1588 for confidential guidance to assess job relatedness in accordance with VCU's [Criminal Conviction Investigations](#) policy.

As a reminder to hiring managers, all offers of employment are conditional upon job-related background checks and their consent to a criminal history records check. The criminal history check must be initiated no more than 30 days before the date of hire, however, the employee must have consented to the background check either on or before the first day of work (see [Criminal Conviction Investigations](#) policy).

After this Criminal History review has been completed and it is determined there are not job related convictions, the hiring authority may then negotiate the terms of the hire with the top candidate(s), however the candidate must be informed that an offer (in the form of a contract) will not be made until the search packet has been reviewed and approved by the required university officials.

To recommend a candidate be hired, the hiring authority (or designee) must prepare and submit (preferably electronically) the following documents to either the OFRR or the office of the vice president for health sciences, as applicable (Note: For positions posted in eJobs, follow the procedures for Request to Offer in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#)):

1. A completed and approved [Request to Offer a Faculty Position](#) form.
2. Copies of curriculum vitae (CV) or resumes of all candidates interviewed on campus (does not include screening interviews or other off campus interviews).
3. A completed [Verification of Credentials](#) form for the selected candidate.
4. A completed [Summary of Faculty Candidate Evaluations and Non-selection Codes](#) form indicating a justification for the selected candidate and non-selection codes for those candidates not selected.
5. Copies of all electronic or print advertisements including those in publications, on websites, on listservs, on the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website, etc.
6. If applicable, an approved [Request to Waive a National Search](#) form (see section on waivers).



In reviewing the hiring proposal, consideration will include ensuring all search documents are accurate and complete, are in compliance with these guidelines, and efforts were made to recruit for talented and diverse faculty. If it is determined the hiring unit failed to follow established policies and procedures under these guidelines, the hiring unit will be required to submit another request to recruit for the position.

Once the search process has been approved, the OFRR or the office of the vice president for health sciences, as applicable, will notify the respective unit accordingly so a formal offer (i.e. contract) can be extended to the successful candidate.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING OBTAINING TRANSCRIPTS:

It is a condition of employment that within thirty (30) days of hire, all new faculty are required to submit documentation to the hiring authority that they have the academic qualifications for the faculty position in which they are hired. Failure to comply with this documentation requirement may result in termination of their faculty appointment with VCU. In most instances, this documentation will be an original, official seal-bearing transcript from the institution in which they were awarded their highest degree. If the faculty member's duties include teaching and the content area is different from the discipline or field in which their highest degree was earned, then they may be required to provide additional documentation upon hire or as assignments change to confirm their academic qualifications for the respective instructional duties. Having academic degree transcripts/documentation on file with the university is VCU policy. It is also in support of the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), VCU's accrediting body.

Closing the Search Process

An offer (e.g. contract issue) may only be extended to the successful candidate after the [Request to Offer a Faculty Position](#) form (or the eJobs version) and all other search documentation has been approved and signed by the appropriate officials. If the job offer is accepted, the department must contact the OFRR to conclude the search process.

NOTE: "Intent to Offer" templates are provided by the OFRR and the office of the vice president for health sciences. These "Intent to Offer" memos may be provided to top candidates as part of the negotiations, especially where there are specific terms that require detailed documentation (e.g. laboratory space, sign-on bonus, reimbursement for moving and relocation, etc.); however, these "Intent to Offer" documents are not binding offers, nor are they enforceable employment contracts.

In order to close a position and remove the posting from the [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website (or the eJobs website, as applicable), please submit an email request to the OFRR. It is recommended the position not be removed until the employment contract has been signed and returned by the prospective faculty member. At this time, notification should be given to all candidates that the search process has been completed and they were not selected for the position (see section above on "Roles and Responsibilities of the Search Committee and Chair").



If the selected candidate (as noted on the approved *Request to Offer a Faculty Position* form) has declined the offer and the respective unit would like to select another candidate out of the same applicant pool, a new *Request to Offer a Faculty Position* form must be completed and approved. (Note: For positions in eJobs, follow the procedures for Request to Offer in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#) for offering an additional position(s) from the same applicant pool)

If there is no other qualified candidate in the applicant pool, the search process and position announcement must be closed. The respective unit may submit a request to re-open the search (see section below on “Reopening a Search”).

Communicating to Applicants Once the Search is Closed

Once the search has been closed and an offer accepted for the position, it is the responsibility of the hiring manager (but may be delegated) that all unsuccessful candidates be notified in writing the position has been filled. Sample notification letters are provided at: [Non-Selection Letters \(samples\)](#). (Note: If the position is in eJobs, email notifications can be sent manually to candidates not selected for the position) It is not necessary, or required, to provide reasons for non-selection to the candidates. Applicants who inquire as to the reason for non-selection must be referred to the hiring unit. The hiring unit should contact the OFRR or the office of the senior vice president for health sciences, as applicable, to consult about the request prior to responding to the applicant(s).

Extending a Search

A search may be extended for the purpose of increasing the number of qualified women and minorities in the applicant pool and in cases where a suitable candidate has not been identified. The revised deadline date and proposed hire date must be forwarded to the OFRR or the office of the vice president for health sciences, as applicable. Advertisements must be placed indicating the new deadline date if the search is extended for more than 30 days. In instances where the search process indicates that a revised job description and/or qualifications are required, the search must be closed and a new search initiated.

Reopening a Search

In most cases, searches that have been ongoing for a period of one year or more must be closed and permission must be sought for a new search to be initiated. Departments with positions in specialized disciplines, where there is difficulty identifying qualified applicants, may request to extend the search beyond one year (see section above on “Extending a Search”). When a decision is made to revise the PD and qualifications for the position, the current search must be terminated and a new request to recruit is required to be initiated.



In both instances, the initial search must be properly noted and forwarded to the OFRR to remove the position from the active [VCU Faculty Vacancies](#) website. Applicants must be notified that an administrative decision has been made not to fill the position at this time. It is suggested that a statement be included in the letter which indicates where future vacancies will be advertised. Even though a successful candidate was not identified, search documentation must be maintained for a minimum of three years from the date of the search closure. After closing the unsuccessful search, a new *Request to Recruit for a Faculty Position* form and proposed advertisements to begin the new search may then be submitted. (Note: For faculty recruitments in eJobs, follow applicable steps in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#) under the Request to Recruit section).

Retention of Records

To comply with federal requirements, all records pertaining to the recruitment process (i.e., application materials, search committee notes, summaries of telephone interviews, interview questions and responses, candidate itineraries, evaluation forms, reference checks, etc.) must be collected by the Search Committee Chair from the Search Committee members and returned to the hiring department. All recruitment documents must be maintained by the hiring department for a minimum of three (3) years from the effective date of appointment or when the search was closed, if not filled. During this period, such documentation is subject to review and audit by university, federal and state officials. (NOTE: For searches in eJobs, it is recommended that search documents be uploaded and maintained in the eJobs system.)

VIII. Waiver of National Search Requests

The University is committed to increasing the workforce diversity of women, underrepresented minorities, persons with disabilities, and veterans where disparities may exist. Accordingly, national searches are required to be conducted for all faculty positions in accordance with VCU's faculty search process. A "waiver" of this search process must, therefore, be a true exception.

A "waiver" form must be completed and forwarded to the OFRR or the office of the vice president for health sciences, as applicable, with the required signatures as indicated on the form. These requests require a **detailed** justification including explaining why a national search is not being conducted and how this request will not adversely impact the recruitment efforts for increasing workforce diversity. Reasons for waiving a national search may include a limited search type (i.e. internal, local, or regional), a waiver extension, or direct appointments (i.e. selecting an additional applicant from the same pool, an interim, acting, or temporary appointment, or an individual has been selected as a principal investigator for a project). For more information on waivers, please see the [Request to Waive a National Search](#) form. (Note: For eJobs users, follow the instructions in the [eGuide to Faculty Recruitment in eJobs](#) on how to request a waiver).

IX. Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Full instructions and detailed information about the Faculty Search Process are available online at the [Office of Faculty Recruitment and Retention website](#). In addition, a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) document has been developed as an additional resource.

Any questions concerning any aspect of these procedures must be addressed directly to the OFRR or the SCP for Health Sciences, as applicable.

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