LSU Agricultural Center

Selection Procedure and Guidelines for Filling Professional, Faculty, Executive Level and Department Head Positions

Through an equitable process of rigorous inquiry and discovery, search committees are tasked with identifying exceptional talent that will shape the future of our institution. The guidelines herein have been developed as a tool and resource for search committee chairs and members. It is important that the AgCenter communicates clear expectations to search committees and that those committees utilize consistent procedures when recommending applicants to fill professional, faculty, department head and/or school director positions. The guidelines should be reviewed in their entirety by each committee member prior to beginning the search.

Questions related to the process should be directed to HRM, whereas questions related to the credentials or needs of the department should be discussed with the department head and/or appropriate Directors/EAD. Communication at all levels is essential throughout this process and necessary to ensure a timely, successful search.

Position Vacancy Announcement (PVA)

Once the Directors/EAD or the department head receives notice from HRM of approval to fill the vacancy, the department head will work with their faculty to develop a draft of a position vacancy announcement for review and approval by the appropriate Directors/EAD. The PVA should follow the template established by the Office of Human Resource Management and must contain the AgCenter's EEO statement.

The chair should ensure that committee members receive the PVA with the link to the job posting in advance so they can review and provide feedback. The advertisement should include an approximate interview timeframe.

The Application Process is generally outlined in the job posting announcement and includes at least the submission of a CV, letter of interest, statement of administrative philosophy, and professional reference contact information. All application materials must be submitted through the online portal in Workday. Original transcripts are required once an offer of employment is made.

Formation of the Search Committee

Depending on the position being filled, a Search Committee usually consists of 5-10 people. Executive level and department head positions usually require a larger committee. The search committee chair is generally recommended by the Directors/EAD and approved by the VP of Agriculture. Usually, it is a faculty member from a related discipline or the current head of a different department or school. The chair should ensure that the committee is representative of department faculty and staff and includes an Inclusion Advocate. Search committees must be inclusive, with the expectation that every effort is made to include faculty members of different genders, races, ethnicities, and backgrounds. The following are some criteria to consider when selecting committee members:

- Composition of the committee membership
- Availability of members to attend all committee meetings
- Level of experience and knowledge of the member relevant to the vacant position
- Representation of appropriate constituencies from the following areas, as relevant:

- Other departments
- Students
- Staff
- Stakeholders

The search committee chair and all committee members must complete search committee training prior to the start of the search or at the time of joining the search committee. Committee members should have attended training within the last 2 calendar years to be considered current.

Appointment to the committee is usually by email from the appropriate department head, Directors/EAD, or VP of Ag. A sample is attached in the appendix.

Directors/EAD and the VP will communicate the charge to the chair, who will share it with committee members. Past committee charges have been to provide strengths, weaknesses, and assessments of each applicant, including whether acceptable or unacceptable, but not a numerical ranking of the candidates.

Search Committee Chair

Chairperson responsibilities:

- Develops a search plan.
  - A search plan should be a basic outline of all the steps the committee will take to execute the search. The initial plan will likely be modified over time, but it's wise to have a place to begin.
  - To ensure the largest, most inclusive pool of candidates, the initial search plan should sketch some outreach activities, including lists of:
    - nominators and nominees (potential candidates) to be notified.
    - listservs, blogs, and other online venues where the position can be posted.
    - conferences where candidates can be scouted, and screening interviews might be conducted.
    - award lists that can be searched for nominees and
    - venues for advertisements.
  - Develop a realistic timeline for recruiting and interviewing, working backward from a target hire date, recognizing that some fields may have specific limitations. Be sure to account for holidays, grading periods, or other times that will be difficult to meet.
  - A copy of the plan should be shared with the Department Head and HRM.
- Identifies the member of the Search Committee who will serve as the Comprehensive Recruitment Coordinator.
- Reviews committee charge with the full search committee.
- Reviews proposed job posting language with committee members and makes recommended updates. Communicates recommendations to the department head, Directors/EAD and HRM.
- Recommend additional websites to HRM for job posting to be published to produce an adequate applicant pool.
- Performs outreach within professional networks to ensure wide distribution of job posting information.
- In concert with committee members, determines the criteria to be followed to screen applicants and documents the screening criteria utilized.
- Consults with HRM to review the search process as needed.
- Schedules and directs all search committee meetings.

- Serves as the contact person on PVA and job postings.
- Notifies HRM of search committee members.
- Schedules applicant interviews.
- Conducts or assists with reference checks.
- Serves as liaison between search committee members and applicants.
- Arranges travel accommodation for interviewees, if requested.
- Assesses and discusses with the department head/administrator any conflicts of interest. For example, applicants may consider it an unfair process if a search committee member appears to be in a personal or business relationship with one of the applicants.
- Sends follow-up communication to the applicants.
- Submits a list of finalists to be interviewed to the Directors/EAD and department head.
- Advises the Directors/EAD and department head of 'finalists' strengths and weaknesses.
- Maintains a record of all search committee meetings.
- Sends a notification to finalists after the offer is accepted, if requested.
- Collects all records from committee members and forwards these records to the hiring department head, who retains them for a minimum of two years.

Search Committee Members

Committee Members' Responsibilities:

- Complete the search committee training. This is required for both internal and external search committee members.
- Attend all meetings scheduled by the chairperson.
- Maintain confidentiality internally and externally. Minimize casual conversations regarding the progress of the search.
- Review draft of job posting prior to publishing and provide feedback to the chair.
- Performs outreach within professional networks to ensure wide distribution of job posting information.
- Assist in establishing a timetable.
- Review all materials submitted by applicants.
- Screen applicants according to education, experience, and other relevant criteria.
- Contact references/former employers when assigned, and report findings to the committee.
- Assist the chairperson with travel accommodation and interviewing schedules, as requested.
- The committee member who serves as the Inclusion Advocate ensures all committee members take an active role in promoting inclusion, recognizing, and intervening to address bias throughout the search process. Inclusion Advocates will complete the required training in addition to search committee training.
- Participate actively in all search phases, receptions, etc., as requested.
- Recommend finalists to the VP.
- Forward all records to the chairperson after the search.

Interview Process

The committee should establish a set of standard interview questions and evaluative criteria to be used with all candidates who are interviewed in round one. Committee members must ensure that all questions are job related, compliant with AgCenter policy as well as state and federal laws, and follow appropriate interview etiquette and protocols. HRM is available to assist with the drafting of the questions.

Candidates who do not meet the required criteria as stated in the job description may be eliminated from the pool without discussion. All candidates who meet the required criteria should be discussed as first-round interview possibilities. Often a two-step interview process is used if the applicant pool is large. Step one generally includes 6-12 applicants and consists of an in-person or virtual interview with the committee. The second step would be to invite the top 2-3 applicants from round one for an in-person interview. For tenure track faculty and administrator positions, the in-person experience would usually include a full day as per the sample below.

Sample final in-person interview components for tenure track or administrative/executive positions:

- Search Committee Initial Meeting – 45 min
- Unit Heads – 45 min
- Seminar – 1 hour
- Industry representatives – can be part of the seminar or have a separate session. The chair should work with the Director or EAD for the appropriate discipline and the VP to compile a list of invitees.
- Departmental Faculty – 30 minutes minimum
- Directors/EAD – 1 hour
- Other Administrative Staff – 30 min
- Vice President – 45 min (if appropriate)
- Search Committee closing – 30 min

Sample applicant schedule for tenure track or administrative/executive positions:

8:00-8:45	Search Committee
8:45-9:30	Unit Heads
9:30-10:00	Break and prepare for seminar
10:00-10:45	Seminar
10:45-11:30	Department faculty
11:30-Noon	Industry representatives
Noon-1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:00	Directors and EAD
2:00-2:30	Other Administrative Staff
2:30-2:45	Break
2:45-3:30	Vice President (if appropriate)
3:30-4:00	Exit meeting with Search Committee
4:00-4:30	Search Committee discusses assessment

All applicable policies and procedures for travel and meal reimbursement must be followed.

Timeline

- Announce position for <u>at least</u> one month (usually 90 days for academic positions)
- The committee should first consider all applications received by the closing date. Applications submitted after the closing date cannot be considered unless the original pool of applicants is deemed unacceptable. A candidate pool of 2 or less qualified applicants is generally too small so it is considered

unacceptable which would allow for review of “late” applications. It is important that all late applications be reviewed and not just a select few.

- Schedule interviews in a timely manner to not lose applicants to other opportunities. Check VP's schedule to ensure he is available for round two.
- Committee should provide its feedback to the department head, Directors/EAD and/or VP within 1-2 weeks of the final interview.
- Close online application portal no earlier than after selection of finalists and no later than selected applicant’s start date.

<u>Selection</u>

Following the in-person interviews, faculty and staff should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the in-person interview candidates. This can be accomplished through department meetings, yay or nay votes, or electronic surveys, and the method should be determined in advance. The faculty response should be provided to the committee for consideration.

Committee feedback should be submitted to the committee chair. Then, the chair will share it with the Department Head, Directors, EAD, and HR Director, who will review it asap.

For department head and executive level positions, the Directors/EAD will provide the VP with the committee feedback and Directors/EAD’s feedback at the same time.

After considering all input, the department head makes the final selection with Directors/EAD approval for faculty positions. The VP makes the final selection after considering all feedback for department head and executive level positions.

Use the HRM template for the appropriate offer letter format. HRM works with the department head and Directors/EAD to finalize the salary offer.

The search committee chair will ensure the applicants who are not selected are notified appropriately before any announcement is made.

Communications can help with announcing the new appointment. HRM coordinates with the applicant in case they need to alert certain people in advance of the announcement.

HRM completes the Workday transactions, and other items as needed.

<u>RESOURCES:</u>

www.lsuagcenter.com/hrm
LSU AgCenter AgEd
Hiring Manager Toolkit (lsuagcenter.com)

APPENDIX

SAMPLE COMMITTEE INVITATION EMAIL:

From: VP or Designee
Sent: Date
To: Committee member email addresses

Subject: Search Committee – JOB TITLE

TO: Name, Job Title, Department
Name, Job Title, Department
Name, Job Title, Department

The AgCenter is ready to begin the search process for the JOB TITLE position. On behalf of the VP for Agriculture, I would like to invite you to serve as a member of the search committee. NAME has agreed to serve as chair. He will communicate with you regarding the applicant review and interview processes, and scheduling. If there is any reason you do not wish to serve, please let me know. Otherwise, please reply to this email with a copy to the search committee chair to confirm that you'll be able to participate in this process.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Signature
Name