**FACULTY HIRING AND SEARCH COMMITTEES:**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Why has everything been changed right when our searches are starting?**

Senate Bill 17, which impacted revisions to OP 32.16, was signed into law in June. While the legislation’s effective date is January 1, 2024, the Office of the Provost, in consult with the Faculty Senate, determined that making substantial changes to faculty hiring policies in the middle of an academic year would be significantly more problematic than implementing those changes at the start of this academic year. The Office of Faculty Success has been leading the revisions process and is happy to hear any concerns or recommendations concerning the revised OP and associated procedures. We respectfully request that Chairs, Directors, and Area Coordinators offering concerns or recommendations bring those forward once they are fully familiar with the comprehensive updates. Please see the information in item 1, above, for links to the revised OP and updated procedures, and please notify Associate Vice Provost Raegan Higgins if you have questions and concerns that remain after you’ve reviewed the revised OP and associated information.

**Why can’t administrators serve on search committees?**

The potential for the perception of conflict of interest resulting from an administrator’s participation in or leadership of a faculty search should be avoided. Any request for an administrator at or above the department chair level to serve on a search committee should be submitted, via email and including a justification for such service, to the department chair’s, school director’s, or area coordinator’s dean, who will discuss the request with the Provost. While administrators who are currently serving on search committees during FY 24 are not required to step down (given the potential for such action to delay a search), they are asked to speak with their deans to discuss possible alternatives to their participation. Should none be available, they may continue in their service to search committees this academic year.

**Why have some processes, like the new matrix, been centralized? Will this delay searches?**

Some processes have been centralized to increase protection of Search Committee members’ and applicants’ identities and to reduce the burden on Search Committee Chairs to populate and tabulate results on individual committee members’ matrices.

The Office of Faculty Success does not anticipate that searches will be delayed by the implementation of new processes. While Search Committee Chairs are now asked to submit information through online forms, the forms have been consolidated to reduce the number of different PDF forms that Search Committee Chairs had previously been required to submit.

Search committees that perceive that the new search processes are resulting in delays to their anticipated timelines are encouraged to contact Associate Vice Provost Raegan Higgins.

**When does the committee have access to the matrix? Won’t delaying access to the matrix delay the search committee’s ability to review applications?**

The matrix can only be populated and finalized once the search is closed. However, search committee members, particularly those with a significant number of applications to review, can begin reviewing application materials prior to receiving the de-identified, official matrix. Search committees are encouraged to talk about this “informal” evaluation as soon as possible in the search process to ensure that all committee members understand the goals of such evaluation. Search committee members do not have to wait until the official matrix is populated and available to begin reading applications and engaging in informal review.

**How come searches must now have closing dates?**

The Office of Equal Opportunity at TTU reminds us that we must provide consistent and uniform review of all applications for a particular position. Maintaining consistency and uniformity during the review process is substantially enhanced when all applications are reviewed during a single time period. However, entering a closing date for a search does not mean that the date cannot be modified! Here are the current procedures:

* 1. The Hiring Manager (usually the Search Committee Chairperson) enters the closing date in Kenexa when setting up the search.
	2. One week prior to the entered closing date, the Office of Faculty Success Hiring Specialist will contact the Search Committee Chairperson to ask whether the date is still accurate.
	3. The Search Committee may elect to modify the closing date at that time. The Search Committee can move the date out as far as might be necessary to generate a robust and diverse applicant pool per TTU’s Affirmative Action Plan. To modify a closing date, the Search Committee Chair should send an email with the requisition ID and preferred closing date to hrs.recruiting@ttu.edu and tyra.bradford@ttu.edu.
	4. The Office of Faculty Success Hiring Specialist will populate the matrix within three business days of the updated closing date for the search.

**What if a search committee member has a conflict of interest with an applicant?**

Search committee members **should** recuse themselves from discussing or formally evaluating applicants with whom they have a familial or affectional relationship. Search committee members **may request** to recuse themselves from discussing or formally evaluating applicants with whom they have other relationships that could be perceived to create a conflict of interest. Examples of the latter include: applicant is a recent graduate whose major professor or committee chair is a search committee member; applicant is a long-time professional collaborator of a search committee member; etc. It would be best to address this issue at the beginning of the search committee process so that all committee members are aware of their obligations with respect to conflicts of interest. At a minimum, a faculty search committee member who knows any of the applicants should divulge that information to the rest of the search committee.

**What are the training requirements for search committee chairs and members?**

Effective 9/1/2023 and regardless of date of prior training, all faculty members serving as Search Committee Chairs are required to attend a Faculty Search Committee Chair Briefing. This is a ONE HOUR, VIRTUAL meeting that provides Search Committee Chairs with important information specific to their roles. Remaining Search Committee Chair Briefing dates and information about registering for the Briefings is available on the [Faculty Searches and Search Committee Information webpage](https://www.depts.ttu.edu/provost/faculty-success/faculty-searches.php). Note that additional dates for more Briefings this fall term are being added and will be published as soon as possible.

All Search Committee Members (including Chairs) are required to complete the Faculty Search Committee Workshop (a 2.5 hour, in-person training) once every five years (next available Workshop is 11/6). Because this Workshop focuses on best practices for effective searches rather than specific, institutional processes, Search Committee Members (including Chairs) who are assigned to search committees this academic year and who have been trained in the last five years are in compliance with this requirement. Search Committee Members who are not sure whether they’ve been trained within the last five years should contact Director Paul Ruiz.