

CAS OP 1.5: External Searches for Department Chair**DATE:** August 20, 2025

PURPOSE: The purpose of this College Operating Policy/Procedure (COP) is to standardize the process through which departments and academic units (hereafter “departments”) in the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) conduct an external search for the position of Department Chair (DC).

“External search” in this context refers to a search in which the position is advertised nationally and/or internationally to potential candidates external to Texas Tech University.

For information relevant to an internal search for DC, see COP 1.4: Internal Searches for Department Chair. Because an external search for DC is concurrently, by definition, also an external faculty search, CAS defers to all rules and regulations outlined Texas Tech University Operating Policy 32.16: Faculty Recruitment Procedure (hereafter “OP 32.16”). Supplemental regulations may also be found in COP 5.1: Faculty Recruitment Procedure.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:**I. Search Committee Formation:**

- a. The Dean of CAS begins the process of conducting an external search for DC by appointing an individual (internal to CAS, but external to the department conducting the search) to serve as the Search Committee Chair (SCC).
- b. The SCC will then work directly with the department to form a Search Committee.
 - i. Departments should follow their own internal procedures for electing/appointing committee members, in accordance with their own bylaws, and must avoid any conflicts of interest.
 - ii. The Search Committee must consist of at least three full-time faculty members. Additional individuals may be added as members of the Search Committee, including faculty, staff, and students.
 - iii. The current DC, as well as individuals who intend to pursue the position, are ineligible to serve on the Search Committee.

II. Review of Applicants:

- a. Departments should follow their own internal procedures for conducting a faculty search. This includes coordination with the SCC in following the department’s internal process for approving and posting a faculty job advertisement, granting Search Committee members access to digital application files, proper review of all applications, convening Search Committee meetings to discuss the search and all applicants, and any other logistical issues associated with human resources or anything else required in compliance with OP 32.16 and all other directives from the Office of Faculty Success, as well as COP 5.1.
- b. Once the Search Committee has reviewed all applications, it will, in accordance with TTU OP 32.16 and in consultation with the Office of Faculty Success, as well as COP 5.1, solicit interviews with a smaller number of candidates (now deemed “semi-finalists”), typically but not always between 8 and 12, depending on the size of the applicant pool. These interviews are typically conducted by phone or via an online videoconferencing platform.
- c. Upon completion of all semi-finalist interviews, the Search Committee will identify a slate of finalists – typically three, though no precise number is required – to be invited for on-campus interviews.
- d. The SCC will then notify the Dean of CAS for confirmation and approval, as well as the Office of Faculty Success, from which it will also receive authorization to proceed.



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III. Finalist Interviews:

- a. Once a slate of finalists has been confirmed and approved, the Search Committee will coordinate and administer a schedule of interviews for each finalist that includes:
 - i. a formal presentation to the department.
 - ii. question/answer opportunities with the faculty.
 - iii. question/answer opportunities with the staff.
 - iv. an interview with the Search Committee.
 - v. a one-to-one interview with the Dean of CAS.
- b. On-campus interviews may also include additional events and/or meetings, as determined by the hiring department's own written policies, procedures, and common practices. CAS reserves the right to incorporate additional meetings or events as deemed necessary.
- c. All effort should be made to complete this interview process in a timely manner.

IV. Decision-Making Process:

- a. Upon completion of all finalist interviews, the Dean of CAS (or a representative of the Dean), in coordination with the SCC, in full and transparent cooperation with the Search Committee, will distribute a survey to all department faculty and staff to collect feedback on each finalist, including the opportunity to submit an advisory vote by secret ballot.
 - i. This survey will remain open for a period of 10 business days.
 - ii. The information collected in this survey will remain anonymous and confidential and will only be made available to the Dean of CAS.
- b. The Search Committee will then meet to discuss the overall search and each finalist. At this time, the Search Committee will also produce a written report that summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of each finalist. This report should also report on whether the Search Committee finds each candidate to be an acceptable or unacceptable choice for the position.
- c. The Dean, having interviewed each finalist, and after meeting with the Search Committee and reviewing all information collected during the search, and following discussion with and receiving formal approval from the Provost, will make the final appointment of DC.

V. Exceptions:

- a. Departments may petition the Dean of CAS for allowable exceptions to these guidelines, provided they do not violate or contradict another COP or any University Operating Policies.