



# TEXAS TECH™

## Operating Policy and Procedure

### **OP 32.16: Faculty Recruitment Procedure**

**DATE:** June 30, 2025

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to standardize faculty recruitment processes and to comply with the requirements of state and federal law.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed every two years after publication by the Vice Provost for Faculty Success (VPFS) or VPFS designee and the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) with substantive revisions presented to the Provost and Senior Vice President (PSVP).

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

#### **1. Policy**

##### **a. Policy Statement**

Texas Tech University (TTU or Texas Tech) is committed to teaching and advancing knowledge. Texas Tech's mission is to provide the highest standards of excellence in higher education, foster intellectual and personal development, and stimulate meaningful research and service to humankind. To realize these goals, it is the policy of TTU to identify, recruit, and select highly qualified individuals to grow and retain a successful faculty body across the university with experience and expertise in a range of disciplines.

##### **b. Objective**

This operating policy aims to standardize faculty recruitment processes to grow and retain a successful and highly qualified faculty. To accomplish this objective, TTU shall conduct thorough searches that prioritize strategically increasing the breadth of disciplinary expertise among the TTU faculty body.

##### **c. Equal Employment Opportunity**

TTU, in compliance with state and federal law, does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any employee or applicant for employment because of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, class, or characteristic. See [Texas Tech University System Regulation 07.09](#) (Equal Employment Opportunity Policy) and [Texas Tech University System Regulation 07.10](#) (Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure).

In compliance with federal law, the university takes action to employ and advance in employment qualified protected veterans and individuals with disabilities, as required by [41 CFR Part 60-300](#), which sets forth the standards for compliance with the Vietnam Era

Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended (VEVRAA), and [41 CFR Part 60-741](#), which sets forth the standards for compliance with section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

d. Application of Policy

This policy applies to full-time positions for all ranks across the following faculty titles: professor, professor of practice, research professor, archivist, and librarian. Although the specific procedures set out below are not required for the full-time faculty titles of lecturer and visiting professor, these types of positions must nonetheless be posted, at a minimum, on the TTU website and be open to all applicants. Any unit may choose to follow the procedures set forth below when hiring lecturers or visiting professors. If a unit makes this choice, the unit must complete the process in its entirety.

This policy applies to targeted hires and partner accommodations only as provided by sections 5 and 6 of this OP.

Position descriptions for all full-time faculty positions, including lecturers and visiting professors, must use the required templates described in section 2.b.(1) below.

## 2. Search Committees and Position Descriptions

a. Search Committee Composition and Training

- (1) At the beginning of a dean-authorized faculty search, the department chair, school director, or area coordinator (henceforth, department chair) or their designee will appoint a search committee and name the search committee chair.

The search committee must comprise at least three faculty members representing a breadth of backgrounds, specializations, and/or position types, depending on the position being filled. Should that representation not be possible, a department chair, in consultation with the dean, may invite faculty from other related departments/colleges to participate as members of the committee.

- (2) Inclusion of student representation on search committees must follow department- and college-level policies, in addition to adhering to the guidance provided in Attachment A. While student members of search committees may be asked to provide feedback on applications, they cannot participate in the formal evaluation of applicants.
- (3) Except with written permission from the PSVP, individuals not employed at Texas Tech may not be appointed to full-time faculty search committees.
- (4) In general, faculty search committees will comprise full-time faculty members who do not hold administrative appointments at or above the level of department chair. Any request for an administrator at or above the department chair level to serve on a search committee should be submitted via email to the department chair's dean and should include a justification for the request. The dean will discuss the request with the Vice Provost for Faculty Success and will communicate the decision to the requestor.

- (5) During faculty searches, it is likely that some members of a search committee may be acquainted with one or more applicants for the position. Potential conflicts of interest should be managed as follows:
  - (a) Search committee members with familial or affectional relationships with one or more applicants must inform the search committee of those relationships and must recuse themselves from reviewing those applications.
  - (b) Search committee members who are professionally acquainted with one or more applicants must inform the search committee about the acquaintance. The search committee will determine whether the nature of the acquaintance is significant enough to warrant the search committee member's recusal from review of the relevant applications. If the search committee chair has a potential conflict of interest, they should notify the department chair and, as applicable, follow the guidance below.

Search committee chairs must report all conflicts of interest to the Office of Faculty Success, which will then instruct the relevant search committee member(s) on how to recuse themselves from evaluating the applicant(s) with whom they have a conflict of interest.

- (6) Search committee chairs and all search committee members must be current on search committee trainings for their respective roles, as follows:
  - (a) Search committee chairs must complete training specific to management of the search process. This training, called the Search Committee Chair Briefing, focuses on preparing, distributing, and submitting required documents, using TTU's digital hiring platform, and reviewing the required information for the faculty search matrix. Individuals serving as search committee chairs must have completed search committee chair training within the past two years.
  - (b) Search committee members, including search committee chairs, must complete training, called the Faculty Search Committee Workshop, specific to search processes such as evaluating applications, identifying finalists, and conducting interviews. Individuals serving as search committee members must have completed search committee member training within the past five years.

(7) Use of External Search Firm

If requested by the department and college and with prior written approval from the PSVP, an external third-party professional search firm may be used to supplement the search procedure outlined in subsection 2.a.(6) above.

If an external third-party professional search firm is used, a representative of the firm must attend the Search Committee Chair Briefing and the Search Committee Workshop required by section 2.a.(6).

If an external third-party professional search firm is used, the search committee chair and a representative of the search firm must meet with the Office of Faculty Success prior to advertising the position.

The firm must comply with all requirements outlined in this OP.

b. Position Descriptions and Postings

- (1) The search committee shall develop the position description according to departmental and college procedures and using the institutional template (see Example Templates in Attachment B) appropriate to the position type. Units hiring for lecturers and visiting professors must use the templates for those position types (see Example Templates in Attachment B) regardless of whether the unit chooses to follow the search procedures outlined in this OP.

Pending completion of departmental procedures for position description review and approval, the search committee chair or designee will enter the position description to Kenexa BrassRing. The review and approval process for position descriptions is managed through Kenexa BrassRing. The following are required approvers for all faculty positions descriptions:

- The unit (if applicable) and college head;
- The Office of Faculty Success; and
- The Office of the Vice President for Research & Innovation (for strategic hires).

After the position description is fully approved, TTU Human Resources will post the position description in the following venues:

- (a) TTU Careers website;
- (b) At least one general interest national outlet (e.g., Chronicle of Higher Education); and
- (c) At least one non-discipline-specific outlet directed at protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.

The search committee chair or designee must post the position description in discipline-specific outlets with a goal of securing a robust applicant pool. Position descriptions must be posted for a minimum of four (4) weeks before the search can be closed.

Permission to deviate from these requirements must be secured in writing from the VPFS.

- (2) With approval of the VPFS, approved position descriptions may include more than one open faculty position. The position description and faculty requisition must clearly state the number of positions being filled. However, each faculty position must have a unique T number. Once a position description is fully approved and posted on the “Careers at Texas Tech” website, a search committee may not change the number of positions being filled by a single position description.

### 3. The Search Process

- a. Once the search has closed (meaning applications are no longer accepted), the hiring manager in the Office of Faculty Success will prepare a screening matrix (see example template in Attachment C) based on the responses to the *Faculty Hiring Search Committee Information Form*. The screening matrix compares each applicant’s qualifications with those stated in the position description. Search matrices follow a standard institutional template with the

opportunity for search committees to modify and weight required and preferred qualifications. Each required and preferred qualification in the position description must appear on the screening matrix.

- b. Search committee members may access applications in Kenexa BrassRing at any time during the search. However, members should not formally evaluate applications until they have received their customized screening matrix from the Office of Faculty Success.
- c. After each search committee member completes the customized screening matrix and returns it to the Office of Faculty Success, the hiring manager in that office will prepare a summary matrix. The summary matrix provides the search committee with a summary evaluation of all applicants based on the individual evaluations submitted by each committee member. The summary matrix should guide, but does not necessarily determine, the search committee's selection of (as applicable) semi-finalists and finalists.
- d. If appropriate for the size of the applicant pool, the search committee may, using the summary matrix to inform its decision, identify a group of semi-finalists to be interviewed via phone or virtual meeting. Search committees must use a common set of questions posed to each semi-finalist; all questions must relate to the required and preferred qualifications as stated in the position description. Search committee chairs may consult with the Office of Faculty Success on developing a list of questions. Semi-finalists' responses to these questions, in combination with their evaluations on the summary matrix, shall inform the search committee's selection of finalists from within the group of semi-finalists.
- e. The search committee shall identify finalists who will be invited to participate in an on-campus interview; for positions that are approved to be entirely virtual (i.e., remote work), the traditional on-campus interview may be replaced with a comprehensive virtual interview. In addition, an exception for a comprehensive virtual interview in lieu of an on-campus interview will be allowed in certain circumstances, including but not limited to a candidate's travel or medical situations. Requests for exceptions must be sent in writing to the Vice Provost for Faculty Success.
- f. The search committee must include reference checks as a standard component of the search. Search committees may determine at what point in the search to conduct reference checks, as long as this step is complete prior to the submission of the *Compliance Review Form*. Responses to reference checks must be considered by the search committee when deciding on its hiring recommendation.
- g. After potential finalists have been identified and before any finalists are contacted or invited for an interview, the search committee chair must complete and submit the *Compliance Review Form*. Compliance review is completed by the Office of Faculty Success and includes a review of search efforts to recruit a robust applicant pool and a review to confirm that the search committee has followed institutional faculty search procedures. To complete this step, the search committee chair must submit the online *Compliance Review Form*. The form asks for an explanation of which applicant(s) the committee would like to bring to campus for interviews and asks for confirmation that the search committee followed all processes outlined in this OP, with a request that the search committee chair explain any deviations. Typically, compliance review will be completed within five working days of the search committee's submission of the *Compliance Review Form*.

- h. Should the addition of finalists be necessary due to identified finalists declining the on-campus interview, the search committee chair, after consulting with the search committee, must contact the Office of Faculty Success to complete the *Alternative Finalists Form* about the additional finalists. The review and approval process may take up to five business days to complete.
- i. Should the department chair or dean wish to recommend removing an applicant from the list of finalists selected by the search committee, a written justification for the modification must be shared with the search committee and written approval for the removal must be obtained from the PSVP and the OEO.
- j. The Office of Faculty Success will notify search committee chairs once compliance review is complete. At that point, search committees may begin contacting finalists.
- k. All finalists must be provided with itineraries that are as uniform as possible. While dates, times, and spaces may change, to the extent possible, the itineraries should include the same content. Content refers to presentations, teaching demonstrations, meetings, activities, and social events or meals. Normally, finalist interviews for positions at the rank of professor will include a 30-minute meeting with a representative of the PSVP (usually the Vice Provost for Faculty Success or the Vice Provost for Administrative Affairs).
- l. After all finalist interviews have concluded, the search committee must:
  - (1) Follow unit- or college-level procedures concerning acquisition of feedback about finalists from relevant faculty, staff, and/or students;
  - (2) Discuss the feedback provided and render a recommendation for hire. The search committee chair must submit the recommendation for hire using the *Recommendations for Hire Form*, which requires that the committee provide brief narratives summarizing the strengths of each finalist the committee considers acceptable for hire. Finalists that the committee does not consider acceptable for hire should not be included on this form.
  - (3) Search committees may elect to indicate preference in the *Recommendations for Hire Form* using language similar to this: "Candidate 4 is the preferred candidate because XYZ. Candidate 16 is an acceptable candidate because of ABC."
  - (4) The Office of Faculty Success will generate a PDF version of the responses entered into the *Recommendations for Hire Form* and share it with the search committee. The search committee chair must, following applicable unit- or college-level procedures, share the generated document with the department chair and the dean or dean's representative for review.
  - (5) Following college-level procedures, the dean or dean's representative, department chair, and/or search committee chair will discuss the selection of a finalist to whom a Provisional Employment Proposal (PEP) will be extended.
    - (a) If the department chair selects a finalist other than the committee's preferred finalist to whom a PEP will be extended, the department chair must provide an explanation to the search committee chair. If the search committee chair and members object to the department chair's decision, the search committee chair

and members should refer the matter to the dean. If the dean selects a finalist other than the committee's preferred finalist to whom a PEP will be extended, the dean must provide an explanation to the search committee chair. If the search committee chair and members object to the dean's decision, the search committee chair and members should refer the matter to the Provost.

- (b) If the dean or department chair disagrees with all of the finalists the search committee recommends for hire, the dean or the department chair and the search committee members must present the case to the Provost. If a resolution agreed upon by all parties is not identified, the search will be failed.
- (6) The department chair will extend the PEP on behalf of the dean.
- (7) If the finalist to whom a PEP is extended declines, the department chair may extend the PEP to another finalist recommended for hire.
- (8) Colleges and/or their component academic units may choose to use a different process than what is described above for identifying a single finalist to whom a PEP will be extended or multiple preferred finalists to whom PEPs will be extended. An alternative process must:
  - (a) Describe the role of the search committee, faculty, department chair, and dean in the identification of the finalist to whom a PEP will be extended or multiple preferred finalists to whom PEPs will be extended;
  - (b) Be reviewed and approved in writing by the PSVP; and
  - (c) Be published in college and unit policies and procedures concerning faculty hiring and be accessible to all faculty.
- m. If a search does not result in a finalist accepting an offer, the committee must complete the *Failed Faculty Search Form* within ten (10) business days of the search failure. This form will be retained by the Office of Faculty Success and must be added to the requisition in Kenexa BrassRing by the search committee chairperson.

After a search has failed and the *Failed Faculty Search Form* has been submitted, the search committee may, in consultation with the dean and department chair, elect to start a new search using the same position description, the same T number, and the same committee members. In compliance with this policy, this new search must follow all steps required for faculty hires. A new faculty requisition must be submitted via Kenexa BrassRing.

#### **4. The Hiring Process**

- a. After the search, the department chair or dean of the college will send the selected candidate a Provisional Employment Proposal (PEP) and proposed startup packet, if applicable, using the guidance and templates available through the Office of Faculty Success.
- b. Once the PEP is approved internally, the department chair or dean will send the PEP to the chosen finalist.

- c. When the dean or department chair receives the signed PEP, the department chair or designee is responsible for obtaining official transcripts for all relevant graduate degrees earned and current curriculum vitae and for notifying the finalist about the required *Prospective Faculty Disclosure Form*. The department must submit all documents to the college dean's office to request an offer letter from the PSVP.
- d. The dean or dean's appointee must submit a *Request for Offer Letter* (see Attachment D) to the PSVP, together with all requested documents.
- e. When the dean and department chair receive a signed offer letter from the PSVP, the department chair's designee must submit an *electronic Personnel Action Form* (ePAF) and ensure that approval routing includes the department chair, dean, and the PSVP.
- f. By the time of appointment, TTU Human Resources must have received an electronic copy of the appointee's official transcripts, curriculum vitae, approved background check, and proof of authorization to work in the United States, along with the ePAF. Original, official, relevant graduate school transcripts for all faculty hires must be filed with the PSVP.
- g. Departments must retain all records of faculty recruitment activities that were not submitted to the Office of Faculty Success for three (3) years from the time of appointment. These recruitment records generally include questions asked of semi-finalists, finalist itineraries, and any written feedback submitted as part of the finalist review process.
- h. If no qualified applicant is identified through the recruitment process or if a selected candidate(s) turns down an offer and no other qualified candidates are identified, the search shall be considered a failed search. The search committee chair must attach the *Failed Faculty Search Form* to the requisition and promptly notify the TTU Human Resources Office so that the requisition may be closed.
- i. Applicants who are not selected for an open faculty position and who were not previously dispositioned during the search process must be notified by the search committee chair by email or telephone within 14 working days of the decision not to hire them.
- j. It is the practice of Texas Tech University not to provide comment on applications or applicants for faculty positions. Exceptions to this policy must be submitted in writing by the requestor to the dean of the college in which the search was conducted. Requests for exceptions to this policy must be reviewed and approved by both the college dean and the PSVP.

## **5. Exception to the Search Process for Targeted Hires**

On limited occasions, with the authorization of the PSVP and dean of the college involved, an opportunity may arise to hire an extraordinarily talented faculty member (typically widely recognized in their field), therefore presenting a need to truncate the search process. The opportunity may be evident during a routine faculty search, through professional channels, or from the individual expressing an interest. In such cases, the department wishing to hire the faculty member must request an exception to established search procedures to move forward. The request will need to be substantiated by providing convincing evidence of the faculty member's qualifications and accomplishments and how the faculty member's hire will advance a strategic interest or goal of Texas Tech University. The written request for a truncated search and



supporting documentation are to be routed to the dean and the PSVP using the online form linked in Attachment E.

## **6. Exception to the Search Process for Partner Accommodations**

On limited occasions, with the authorization of the PSVP and the chief administrators or deans of the departments or colleges involved, an opportunity may arise to hire an exceedingly qualified faculty member (henceforth, primary hire) whose partner is also a qualified prospective faculty member. In such situations, and with the written approval of the PSVP, no competitive search will be required if the primary hire's employment or retention agreement includes a confirmation that TTU will hire their partner (see Attachment F).

[Attachment A: Student Participation in Search Committees Guidance](#)

[Attachment B: Position Description Templates](#)

[Attachment C: Example of Matrix](#) *(Example only. The Office of Faculty Success will create matrices according to Search Committee requests and will provide ready-to-use matrices directly to Search Committee members.)*

[Attachment D: Form to Request Offer Letter](#)

[Attachment E: Link to Form to Request Targeted Hire](#)

[Attachment F: Link to Form to Request Partner Accommodation](#)