Faculty Search Committee Guidance

- [Faculty hiring guidelines](#) are posted on the Office for Academic Personnel ([oap.unm.edu](#)) website.
- Additional templates are available on the [ADVANCE Faculty Search Support page](#)

Search Committee Composition
[OAP Faculty Hiring Procedures](#)

Search Committee must be made up of at least three (3) individuals. Search Committee should also reflect an adequate representation of interests, such as Department faculty, staff, and students (or, in special cases, community members). If this process cannot reasonably be met without overburdening some faculty members with service, the Department could consider either: a) reduce those faculty members' other service/teaching burdens to compensate for the search contribution; or b) propose an *alternative plan* to ensure a search that maximizes likelihood of a broad search process, best practices for assuring a broad and robust pool, and an equitable search process that recruits excellent and highly qualified candidates. This plan must be approved by Academic Affairs as part of the hiring approval process; the first step is submission to OAP via [faculty@unm.edu](#).

Build an Effective Search Committee
Expect a high level of commitment; acknowledge the time required.
Provide effective administrative support.
Search committee chair should be aware of best practices and have thought about how to have inclusive meetings
- Develop ground rules for committee participation and discussions (doing the work, listening respectively, paying attention in meetings)
- Agree to keep discussions focused on preferred qualifications and to speak up when discussions drift away from this focus

Chairs and Directors should remember to take account of this service when making other assignments.
The search committee should be actively engaged in developing the job description and approach to candidate screening

Conflict-of-Interest on the Search Committee
- COI can't always be avoided – it needs to be disclosed and managed
- *When in doubt, disclose upfront* – perceptions matter
- Not disclosing and managing can result in search cancellation

- Committee member who writes a letter for a candidate should not rank or discuss that candidate
- Committee members who are the least familiar with applicants (internal or external) should be the first to discuss applications

Strategies to Minimize Group Dynamics and Promote Constructive Discussions
Not all of these strategies are required. Search committee chairs should adopt those that work best for the committee.
In all cases:
- Committee members should be reminded at the start of each meeting that applicants and discussions are confidential until on-campus interviews
- Have the preferred qualifications visible during file evaluation

Consider:
- Develop and distribute an agenda before the committee meets
- Establish and follow the ground rules for committee participation and discussion
- Allocate time to each committee member.
- Randomize order of committee members to start speaking.
- Start each meeting by outlining goals.
- End each meeting by summarizing the discussion.
- Designate one or two committee members to present a minority opinion.
- Large committees may consider using clickers to record votes anonymously.

Search Committee Considerations
1) Small department with multiple searches
   - Use one committee and one ad to advertise multiple positions
     - Account for the extra service required for the committee to do the work (consistent with workload policies)
   - Ask a faculty member from another (collaborating) unit to participate
   - Invite community members to serve on the committee
     - Be clear about their role, the need for confidentiality, and the department's expectations
     - Community members cannot be required to complete workshops or training
     - It is the department's responsibility to ensure the community member is aware of the best practices and adheres to the university's policies and procedures. Failure to do so places the search at risk.

2) If a committee member drops off the committee
   - The committee can continue without the committee member if the criteria are met and there are at least 3 committee members
   - Another faculty member can join the committee at a transition point in the search (e.g. in-between rounds of application review, before Zoom interviews, or before on-campus interviews begin)