November 20, 2014

Search Committee Guide for Faculty Hiring

Division of Academic Affairs
Rhode Island College

November 20, 2014

Table of Contents

Target Dates for Faculty Searches

Year Prior to Search	
June	Chairs communicate to deans their faculty position needs.
July	Deans submit position requests to VPAA with priority rating.
August	VPAA makes recommendations to President, who allocates new/replacement positions to departments. Deans and department chairs prepare electronic position requests in PeopleAdmin for BOG approval.
Year of Search	
September	Department reviews and updates its faculty profiles on the RIC website.
October/November	Position description is finalized, and ads are placed in general and discipline-specific outlets.
	Department chair and search committee meets with school dean to discuss recruitment and hiring procedures.
November/December	Search committee reviews applications.
January/February	Search committee selects finalists, conducts campus interviews, and makes recommendations on hiring to school dean.
March/April	Offer-appointment form is completed; salary offer approved by President.
	Offer communicated to candidate.
	If offer is verbally accepted, offer-appointment form is completed; Part II of Affirmative Action report completed; appointment letter is sent to candidate by VPAA.

Back to Table of Contents

Charge to Search Committees

Higher education is an enterprise that builds human capital, a mission that, in itself, requires human capital of the highest qualification. Faculty are the most valuable resource of any educational institution, and the development of an outstanding faculty is therefore one of the most important and attention-demanding efforts we engage in. It is our collective responsibility to put in the classroom and departments the very best faculty we can find, faculty who believe in our teaching mission and who sign on to the notion of education as a mechanism of social change.

Search committees do most of the hard work of building our full-time faculty resources at Rhode Island College. The role of a search committee is to attract and identify a strong, diverse pool of highly qualified candidates who have the potential to bring to RIC a set of skills, life experiences, and perspectives that will add to the quality and richness of our academic community. Specifically, search committees should strive to:

- Hire a highly qualified person who fits the requirements for the position;
- Increase diversity among the faculty;
- Follow all legal guidelines; and
- Ensure a fair and collegial process.

While the goal of the search is to hire outstanding faculty, the search process itself creates strong impressions of the college among all applicants. Through our courtesy, timeliness, and professionalism, the manner in which searches are conducted leaves an imprint on the minds of the candidates about our institutional nature and culture.

Hiring faculty can be among the most rewarding service experiences faculty undertake, and, because of its importance, it is recognized as a contribution to the college through the service criterion in faculty evaluation. The RIC administration understands and appreciates your efforts as faculty in the process of hiring new faculty.

Back to Table of Contents

Formation of the Search Committee

- ❑ Once the President and Office of Postsecondary Commissioner (formerly the Office of Higher Ed) authorize the search, the department chair selects a search committee of three to five faculty members, including a chair of the committee. The department chair informs the dean of the names of the committee members; on rare occasions, the dean may feel that a somewhat different composition is needed. Once the position is posted, the HR Hiring Manager provides a username and password in PeopleAdmin to the committee members.

- ❑ To the maximum extent possible, search committees should be chosen to obtain a broad representation of perspectives, including a mix of people by sub-discipline, gender, experience at the college, race/ethnicity, and other factors. Potential conflicts of interest, such as a candidate who is a family member of a current faculty member, should be identified as early as possible in the process. Changes in committee membership can only be made by the department chair with approval by the dean. In most cases, search committees are not chaired by the department chair, except when no other faculty member is available or appropriate to do so.

- ❑ If a relative or partner of a current department member is or becomes an applicant for a position, that department member must recuse himself or herself from <u>any</u> involvement in the search.

- ❑ In joint appointments, both the budget-line and joint departments must be involved in the search, with at least two faculty from the joint department on the search committee.

- ❑ For positions in interdisciplinary programs such as Gender and Women's Studies, Africana Studies, Health Care Administration, and so on, the chair and DAC for the department in which the faculty position is housed will be in charge of the search. The search chair should contact the program director and include representation of faculty from other departments involved in the program.

Back to Table of Contents

Preparation of the Search Committee

❑ Attend meeting/workshop on recruitment and search conducted by the dean.

❑ Review Faculty Hiring Manual, including procedures, policies, and legal issues.

❑ Identify specific tasks to be completed by the search committee, and develop a schedule and timetable for the search.

❑ Identify individual(s) to handle or oversee the following tasks:

- ❑ Communication/correspondence: ________________________________
- ❑ Recruitment efforts by the committee: ____________________________
- ❑ Travel arrangements for candidates: ______________________________
- ❑ Interview arrangements and hosting: _______________________________

❑ Determine where search records such as forms and notes not in PeopleAdmin will be kept, how they will be maintained, and who will have access to them.

Back to Table of Contents

Department Chair: Prepare and Post the Job Description

Work with your dean and the HR office to develop a job description that:

- ❑ Outlines the teaching, advising, service, and scholarly duties of the position.

- ❑ Identifies the minimum qualifications that correspond to defined responsibilities and that can be structured into specific search criteria.

- ❑ Uses descriptors that will be clear about the expectations for the position but embraces diversity of faculty interests, backgrounds, and perspectives.

- ❑ Attracts a broad pool of applicants; is non-discriminatory in scope and intent; and does not eliminate candidates the search committee wishes to consider. Remember that "required" qualifications will automatically remove from consideration any applicant without those qualifications.

Once the job description is prepared, submit it to HR for approval through PeopleAdmin. Provide HR with recommendations for advertising the position as broadly as possible within reasonable budget constraints.

- ❑ Whenever appropriate, identify at least one discipline-specific national, regional, or local outlet where the position should be advertised, and provide information on posting the position in that outlet to HR.

- ❑ After the position description is approved, HR will post it in relevant outlets. For any posting the committee itself places, say at a national meeting, use the exact language of the official job description.

- ❑ In addition to discipline-specific outlets, the HR Office can advertise in:
    - Chronicle.com
    - HigherEdJobs.com
    - InsideHigherEd.com
    - Diverse Issues in Higher Education
    - Hispanic Outlook
    - Projo.com → yahoo.com
    - Bostonworks.com → monster.com

Back to Table of Contents

Human Resources Considerations

Committees must ensure that all portions of the application and interview process are accessible for candidates with disabilities and should be prepared to address the issue of disability accommodations, should that be necessary.

Applications are submitted through PeopleAdmin and must include:

- Cover letter expressing interest and describing qualifications.
- Resumé or curriculum vitae.
- Three letters of reference (submitted electronically by the reference).
- Transcript for terminal degree (an unofficial transcript can be submitted through PeopleAdmin; an official transcript will be required for the person being hired).

All applications must be submitted electronically through PeopleAdmin. HR is available to assist applicants with this process. If anyone receives a CV or an expression of interest, the interested person must apply through PeopleAdmin to be considered.

An H-1B Visa allows a faculty member, or other professional employee in a "specialty occupation," to be employed on a temporary basis in the United States for up to six years. If you believe that an applicant is a foreign national, it must be determined whether the person is eligible to work in this country. By law, you are allowed ask each candidate if (s)he is eligible to work in the United States and whether the eligibility is general or limited to a specific institution.

H-1B Visas are only valid for specific employers. If the applicant is currently under an H-1B Visa, a new application must be completed by the HR Office. This process requires at least four months. Once an applicant has accepted the offer of employment, the search committee and/or department chair should contact the HR Office immediately regarding procedures necessary to obtain an H-1B Visa. New employees who are foreign nationals (not resident aliens) cannot be employed or placed on a college payroll until this process is completed.

Back to Table of Contents

Strengthening the Candidate Pool

Search committees have a role in creating a broad and diverse pool of candidates. The search committee, department, and college should work together to publicize positions in ways that raise awareness of and interest in the position and that bring the position to the attention of all potential candidates, including protected or underrepresented groups. Search committees should actively identify and recruit qualified candidates.

In addition to advertising, informal "word-of mouth" recruitment can be a helpful part of the search process. Use your contacts to raise awareness of the position in departments, administrative units, and professional organizations and among colleagues who may know people who could be interested in the position.

The following activities are strategies search committees and departments may consider for expanding their qualified applicant pool, including protected group members.

In Your Department

1. Update your department's website, which is a primary source of information for prospective faculty. Provide information for each department faculty member on the Details pages. An outdated website suggests stagnation; a fresh one signifies vitality.

2. Invite potential faculty to participate in college or department symposia, seminars, and workshops.

With Other Departments at RIC

1. Solicit assistance in disseminating the position announcement from other departments at the college with a similar focus.

Professional Associations and Conferences

1. Encourage faculty or administrators who are attending relevant professional conferences or visiting other colleges to make a recruitment effort for the present position or future such positions. Interviews conducted at conferences are **not for screening candidates**, but they can be effective in generating interest and helping build the applicant pool.

2. Contact and actively participate in professional associations, including minority caucuses in those organizations. Ask for names of potential candidates to whom the position announcement can be sent.

Publication and Search Assistance

1. Use job referral services in relevant professional organizations.

2. Use outlets for advertising that have wide readership of potential applicants.

Other Institutions

1. Contact colleagues or departments at other colleges and universities about new professionals who will be entering the workforce.

2. Contact alumni offices at institutions where potential candidates are represented, and share announcements of available positions.

Personal Contacts

1. Contact potential candidates with whom you have had contact and who appear to be qualified for the position.

2. Keep a record of potential candidates from outside contacts and current and previous searches, and contact qualified candidates when a new search is initiated.

3. Contact people in the field when a position becomes available.

Back to Table of Contents

Maintaining Confidentiality and Documenting the Process

- [ ] Create a file for each search that includes:
  - Campus interview rating forms;
  - Any correspondence outside of those through PeopleAdmin;
  - Materials submitted outside of those through PeopleAdmin, if any;
  - Other documentation that pertains to any candidate.
- [ ] Ensure that, for each decision and recommendation, the search committee provides a rationale that reflects the candidate's ability to meet the stated qualifications. Reasons for non-selection are entered in PeopleAdmin through a drop-down box and can be found on p. 12.
- [ ] Organize search materials so that, if necessary, details of the process and documentation of the decisions can be retrieved easily both during the search and after the search has ended
- [ ] Do not share any information about candidates or their status with anyone outside of the department or the search process.
- [ ] Do not share any information about candidates or the status of the search with internal candidates, except for information that is available to all candidates.

Back to Table of Contents

Selecting Finalists for Campus Interviews

- ❑ Prior to setting up the list of finalists for campus interviews, it is good practice to spot-check their qualifications. For publications, check at least one table of contents online.

- ❑ Identify 2-4 qualified candidates, and change the status of these candidates to "Interview Pending" on PeopleAdmin for your dean's approval. Provide your dean with a rationale for each candidate recommended for a campus interview.

- ❑ Record the names of candidates considered not to meet minimum qualifications. This information will be needed for the Affirmative Action report.

- ❑ In PeopleAdmin, for the candidates who **you are certain** will no longer be considered, change the status to "Not Hired" and provide a reason (see following section). Once the search is closed, these candidates will receive an e-mail notifying them that they are no longer under consideration.

Back to Table of Contents

Reasons for Non-Selection

The following selections are available through a drop-down box in PeopleAdmin under the "Change Applicant Status" page. You may choose only one, so choose the one that is most fitting. Again, the names of candidates considered not to meet minimum qualifications will be needed for the Affirmative Action report.

- Does not meet minimum qualifications.
- Refused offer.
- Not enough experience.
- Lacks supervisory experience.
- Experience not appropriate for position.
- Lacks required educational background.
- Lacks required certification(s)/license(s).
- No interest.
- Inadequate references.
- Not available for required hours.
- Cannot meet applicant salary requirements.
- Did not meet pre-employment requirements.
- Requires relocation package.
- Not willing to commit to contracted time.
- Conflict of interest.
- Candidate withdrew.
- Another candidate is a better fit.
- Did not complete transcript requirement.
- Did not complete other document requirement.
- Meets min. quals. – background not a good fit.

Back to Table of Contents

Preparing for the Campus Interview

- ❑ To ensure an equitable basis for evaluation, plan the interview process and schedules to be similar in duration and format for each candidate.

- ❑ Identify who will coordinate the interview.

- ❑ Decide whether candidates will teach a class or make a presentation. Inform candidates in advance of this requirement, including topic, purpose, and expected audience. Remember to ask candidates if they need multimedia equipment for their presentation.

- ❑ Identify all persons and groups to be involved in the interview process. Each interview schedule should include the following:

  - Search committee members
  - Department members (both departments in joint appointments, or multiple departments for interdisciplinary programs)
  - Department chair (both chairs in joint appointments)
  - Undergraduate students, when possible
  - Graduate students, when appropriate
  - Other constituencies whose responsibilities relate to the position (e.g. center or institute staff)
  - Dean (both deans in joint appointments)
  - VPAA

- ❑ Develop interview format to include:

  - Welcome and overview of search process.
  - Questions, based on the responsibilities and qualifications, to be asked of the candidate (see Guidelines for Asking Questions During Search Processes, p. 15).
  - Questions from the candidate.
  - Opportunities for candidate to meet with particular individuals or groups that are an expressed interest to her/him (e.g. HR, Cooperative Preschool).
  - Closing, including a summary of the rest of the search process.
  - For reimbursements, collection of receipts and completion by candidates of the W-9 form.

- ❑ Arrange local transportation and accommodations.

- ❑ Schedule and reserve appropriate spaces for interviews.

- ❑ Communicate arrangements to department faculty and other interviewers.

❑ Use or adapt the Sample Campus Interview Feedback Form, and distribute to all interviewers.

❑ Provide or make available to all interviewers:

- Job description.
- Candidate's CV and letter of application.
- Campus Interview Feedback Forms and deadline for their return.
- Confidentiality expectations.
- Guidelines for Asking Questions During Search Processes, p. 15.

❑ Communicate to interviewees, in writing, the interview schedule and expectations. Include information about the itinerary, interviewers involved, the search process, and terms and conditions of reimbursement.

❑ For all candidates, try toequalize the time for the interview and the interview structure for each candidates (e.g., a candidate arriving early or staying late should spend the same amount of time with department members as other candidates).

❑ Refer all benefits questions to HR, or provide the summary of benefits provided by the HR Office; see http://www.ric.edu/humanresources/benefits.php. Do not try to provide or explain specific benefits information to candidates.

Back to Table of Contents

Guidelines for Asking Questions During the Search Process

Asking questions is what interviews are all about. However, questions that are not job related are inappropriate and may be illegal during all phases of the search process, including the formal interview, informal interactions with the candidates, and reference checks.

Category	May Ask	May Not Ask
Family Arrangements and Gender	- If applicant has relatives already employed by the organization	- Gender of applicant - Marital status - Partner's occupation - Existence or number of children - Child care arrangements - Health care coverage through spouse
Race		- Applicant's race or color of skin - Photo to be affixed to application form
National origin or ancestry	- Whether applicant has a legal right to be employed in the U.S. - Ability to speak/write English fluently - Other languages spoken (if job related)	- Ethnic association of surname - Birthplace of applicant or applicant's parents - Nationality, lineage, national origin - Nationality of applicant's partner - Whether applicant is citizen of another country - Applicant's native tongue - Maiden name
Religion		- Religious affiliation - Availability for weekend work, unless necessary for job - Religious holidays observed
Age	- If applicant is over age 18 - If applicant is over age 21, if job related	- Date of birth - Date of high school graduation - Age
Disability	- Whether applicant can perform the essential job-related functions either with or without reasonable accommodations	- If applicant has a disability -Nature or severity of a disability, even if applicant has disclosed its existence - Whether applicant has ever filed a worker's compensation claim

		- Recent or past surgeries and dates - Current or previous medical problems
Other	- Felony convictions - Academic, vocational, or professional education - Training received in the military - Membership in any trade or professional association - Job references - Verification of claims made in application materials	- Existence, number, or kinds of arrests - Height or weight - Veteran status, discharge status, branch of service - Contact in case of emergency (at application or interview stage)

Back to Table of Contents

Interview Finances

Transportation

- Candidates make their own travel arrangements and are reimbursed by the college. Original receipts are required for reimbursement.
- If candidate is flying, monitor cost of the flight with the candidate. Consult with the dean if flight charge is well over $500.
- Airfare costs are considerably less with at least a 14-day advance notice. Give candidates ample time to make arrangements, and encourage them to make their reservations as early as possible.
- Candidates who wish to drive from a great distance will be reimbursed only up to the cost of nominal airfare. Clear such arrangements with the dean.

Meals

- Meal expenses per candidate (including tips) are normally limited to $25 for breakfast and $150 for dinner. Itemized meal receipts and the names of people attending are required for reimbursement. The college cannot reimburse alcohol expenses.
- For lunch in Donovan Dining Center, meal tickets can be obtained from the dean's office.

Hotel Accommodations

- Work with the dean's office to arrange hotel accommodations. The college has agreements with several local hotels.
- Unless otherwise approved by the dean, an interview is normally limited to one night's stay.

Candidate Reimbursement

- Submit, on the candidate's behalf, a completed RIC Travel Report and original receipts to the dean's office for signature.
- The candidate is considered a "vendor." Thus, a vendor code is needed for each candidate, and a W-9 must be obtained before reimbursement can be processed. Candidates should complete the W-9 when interviewing on campus.

Back to Table of Contents

Recommendation for Hiring

- ❑ Collect and synthesize feedback on each candidate from all interviewers.

- ❑ Meet as a full search committee to evaluate candidates for their full range of strengths and contributions. Identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of each candidate as they relate to the position and the criteria used to evaluate and select the finalists. Consensus is not always possible, so make sure that the full range of committee views is transmitted to the department chair and dean.

- ❑ Recommend finalist(s) to be hired. Using the PeopleAdmin system, the search chair changes the status of all candidates who visited campus. The search chair may forward to the department chair additional recommendations as deemed appropriate, along with a summary of strengths and weaknesses for each finalist.

Back to Table of Contents

How the Offer Is Made

The department chair transmits the search committee's recommendations, with her/his own recommendation, to the dean. If the dean is in concurrence, the dean completes and submits the Offer-Appointment Form, recommending the person and salary offer to the VPAA and President, who authorize the dean to offer the position and the salary. The process is now handled through PeopleAdmin, which was upgraded on July 1, 2014.

Normally, the dean telephones the candidate to offer the position. Department chairs, search chairs, and other faculty may also contact the candidate to offer their encouragement. The dean normally transmits the official offer. If negotiation of terms is required, approval will be needed from the VPAA and President.

Once the selected candidate verbally accepts the offer, the dean notifies the department chair and VPAA. The VPAA will complete the Offer-Appointment Form. *At that point, Part II of the Affirmative Action report must be completed by the search committee; an appointment letter cannot be issued until Part II is completed*. After that, an appointment letter to be signed by the candidate is sent via e-mail from the VPAA's office. Once the signed letter is returned, HR will close the search.

Back to Table of Contents

Completing the Search Process

- ❑ Organize and secure search files and any related materials so that information can be easily retrieved if concerns are raised in the future. Search materials are to remain in departments for at least two years. PeopleAdmin will store search data.

- ❑ Change the status of all applicants in the PeopleAdmin system, showing who was not interviewed, who was interviewed but not hired, and who was recommended for hire.

- ❑ Once a signed appointment letter has been received, the search chair should notify candidates who were interviewed on campus but not selected. Personal contact to the candidates who were interviewed through phone or e-mail is customary and is usually appreciated by the unsuccessful candidates. However, if an applicant asks for a reason for non-selection, you are not obligated to answer; such reasons can be easily misconstrued, and it is better just to say that a different candidate was selected. PeopleAdmin will send an e-mail notification to all candidates not selected for an interview.

Back to Table of Contents

Hiring Steps Chart

Hiring Step	PeopleAdmin Action	Other Required Action
Determining Applicant Status Identify applicants not meeting minimum qualifications.	• Select appropriate "Change Status." • Provide reason for non-selection using template reason provided on p. 12.	• Email HR once you have coded applicants determined to be no longer considered. • HR will generate a report and send e-mails only to applicants that are no longer considered. • All remaining applicants will not receive an e-mail until the search is complete and an applicant has accepted the position.
Campus Interviews Identify 2-3 qualified candidates and potential "back-up" candidates to be interviewed in person.	• Select "Change Status." • Select "Interview Pending."	
Selection of Candidate(s) to Recommend Rank 1-3 finalists.	• Change status of finalist(s) to “Recommended for Hire.” • Code all other applicants as “Interviewed – Not Hired.” Longer Considered.” Use template reason provided on p. 12.	• Provide the dean additional recommendations as deemed appropriate, along with a summary of strengths and weaknesses for each finalist.
Dean's Offer (p. 19).	• The dean completes the Offer-Appointment Form for appropriate approvals or finalizes the selection through PeopleAdmin.	• HR notifies all remaining candidates after the offer letter has been returned by the recommended candidate.

Back to Table of Contents

Legal Issues and the Search Process

Adapted from U.S. Department of Labor Affirmative Action Guidelines in Hiring
(http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/hiring/affirmativeact.htm)
and
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
(http://www.eeoc.gov/employees/)

Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination

1. Be informed about affirmative action requirements associated with minorities, women, Vietnam-era veterans, special disabled veterans, and persons with disabilities.

2. Be careful of well-intended comments that could imply bias or favoritism (e.g. "we're looking for young blood").

3. Ensure that all portions of the application and interview process are accessible for candidates with disabilities, if any, and that the committee is prepared to address the issue of accommodations, should that be necessary.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

1. Record job-related reasons to advance candidates through the search process and to provide rationale in the event of a charge of discrimination.

2. As a public institution, documents generated by the screening and search committees may be considered public records subject to disclosure. Likewise, if a discrimination action is filed, investigating agencies will have access to search and screening committee records.

Communication

1. Contacts with candidates or any other individuals concerning any aspect of the search should be made by the appropriate administrative official or search committee chair.

2. Telephone contacts with candidates should be limited to standard questions agreed upon in advance. Notes of responses should be made for subsequent committee use.

Equity and Objectivity

1. Job-related criteria for the advertised position should be developed at the outset of the search and approved by administrative officials.

2. All persons on the search committees should exercise their judgment to avoid having a single member of the committee overly influence the inclusion or exclusion of a candidate.

3. Only candidates meeting minimum advertised qualifications should be interviewed.

4. Interview questions designed to provide fair and objective evaluation of each candidate should be developed in advance of committee interviews with candidates. The same set of questions should be asked of all candidates.

5. Relative weights of criteria, if used, should be developed and assigned prior to the review of any application. Variations in the application of weighted criteria among different candidates are illegal and may lead to allegations of manipulation to select a particular candidate.

6. Only job-related reasons can be used to advance candidates or exclude candidates from advancement in the search process. Objective criteria are less susceptible to legal challenge. Any subjective criteria must be related to the position in question (e.g., leadership ability for program coordinators).

Back to Table of Contents

Thank you for your work.

Good luck with the search!