

Faculty Search Procedures and Guidelines

A-State Department of Music

Search committees are among the most important faculty service opportunities. While each search is unique, the general policies and procedures involved with searches are the same. The information offered in this document is a guide for conducting searches within our department.

Initial Steps to Officially Open a Faculty Search

- The need for a faculty search arises either for an existing position now vacant due to a retirement/faculty departure, or the creation of a new position. Please note that until a letter of retirement or resignation is received from the departing faculty member to the Department Chair and/or Dean, the search may not begin officially.
- The Department Chair will approach a member of the music faculty to serve as the Chair of the Search Committee. If possible, the Chair of the Search Committee should be a tenured faculty member who has served on previous search committees.
- The Chair of the Search Committee should create new and separate folders in their email account and computer desktop for all documents related to a specific search. Keep all correspondence related to the search in those folders. It is a time saver and keeps everything organized.
- Prior to advertising and forming a search committee, each search must be justified with materials such as the short table listed below. The Department Chair and/or the Chair of the Search Committee will write this justification. This table as well as any other requested supporting information should be sent to the Department Chair and Dean who in turn will submit these materials to the Office of the Provost for approval. Please see Appendix A for additional examples of justification materials.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Position #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Vacant Line</u>	<u>Current salary</u>	<u>Proposed Salary</u>	<u>Salary Savings</u>	<u>Justification</u>
Faculty	College of Liberal Arts and Communication – Department of Music	<i>This is the number of the position found in the university budget. For example, F00xxx</i>	Academic Rank such as: Instructor (9-month, non-tenure) ~OR~ Assistant Professor (9-month, pre-tenure)	<i>List the last name of the departing faculty member. If the position is already vacant, then list as vacant with the last name of the person who last had the position.</i>	This is the current salary allocated to this faculty line.	This is the proposed salary allocated to this faculty line.	This is the difference between the current and proposed salary.	<i>Here are an example of a tenure-track justification for a studio faculty member</i> Flute has been taught at A-State by a tenure-track faculty member for decades. This instrument plays a significant role in all of our instrumental ensembles. It is also a vital part of the curriculum required for our Bachelor of Music Education Instrumental Majors. The BME Instrumental Degree has been the most popular and steadfast program in the Department of Music. It is not possible for our department to function properly without this faculty line. Each and every BME Instrumental Major must become proficient in teaching flute through the Flute Techniques course. The absence of an Applied Flute tenure-track position would be a disservice to our students and a devastating blow to the caliber of faculty we attract.

- The Dean and/or Department Chair should contact the Office of the Provost to confirm approval for the search. The Chair of the Search Committee and/or Department Chair should contact Human Resources to confirm that they have received approval for the search from the Office of the Provost.
- The Department Chair and the Chair of the Search Committee will invite other faculty members to serve on the search committee. Most search committees require five faculty members. If the scope of the position warrants, A-State faculty and staff from outside the Department of Music may serve on a search committee. In extenuating circumstances, the size of the committee may increase to a larger, odd number of individuals.
- In consultation with the members of the search committee and the Department Chair, the Chair of the Search Committee will draft an advertisement for the search. Please see Appendix B for examples of advertisements. When considering the overall timeline for the search, please note that most faculty searches are required to remain open to applicants for 30 days. However, if circumstances dictate, this time may be reduced with additional and approved justifications.
- The advertisement must be approved by Human Resources before it is available to applicants. Human Resources will likely require some specific language which all searches at A-State must contain.
- Once the advertisement is approved, Human Resources will complete a template for the position which will then allow for the creation of the search requisition in the Taleo Hiring System.
- The Chair of the Search Committee should contact Human Resources for access privileges to the Taleo Hiring System. All search materials and applications are submitted and handled through this university software platform. Each member of the search committee will also need appropriate access to Taleo.
- A representative from Human Resources, the Department Chair, and/or the Chair of the Search Committee will create and submit a requisition in Taleo for the search from the recently created template. Appendix C offers instructions for how to create and submit a Taleo requisition. Once submitted, the requisition will require approvals at several levels of the university.
- It is imperative that the search requisition be accurate. When individuals attempt to apply for the position, the Taleo application will be their first introduction and interaction with A-State. It is very helpful to work with Human Resources personnel to see a Taleo application prior to the search officially opening. Frequently, the Chair of the Search Committee feels pressure to have a search opened as soon as possible. Take a little extra time to make sure everything in Taleo is listed accurately. In the end, it will save a great deal of time.
- Whatever the closing date of the search, consider making the Taleo system close the search one day later. Taleo will close the search at midnight instead of at 11:59 pm on a given date.

- When the search requisition has been fully approved by the different levels of the university within the Taleo system, the search is officially open and available to applicants.
- Once the search is officially open, the vacancy announcement will be submitted automatically at no cost to several collegiate and university job websites including *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *HigherEdJobs*. The *Music Vacancy List* within the College Music Society is a standard advertising location for music positions. However, this is not a free advertisement. The cost for placing one advertisement is \$250. Additionally, the Chair of the Search Committee should seek out appropriate professional organizations such as ACDA, CBDNA, NAFME, or various instrument and vocal organizations, and post the advertisements on those websites or list serves. Typically there is no cost to advertise on these professional forums.
- In most cases, each tenure track search at the university is allocated a budget of \$1,500 from the Office of the Provost. This is meant to pay for the cost of advertising and travel for candidates. Often this amount is not enough. Furthermore, searches which happen later in the academic year may have a smaller budget due to the depletion of allocated funds for searches. Searches for non-tenure track positions may also have a smaller, or in some instances, no budget from the university. Budget constraints are felt most keenly when arranging for finalists to visit campus.

Steps between the Search Officially Opening and the Review of Applicants

- Shortly after the search is officially open, the Chair of the Search Committee must arrange a search committee meeting to review applicant files and determine subsequent search events. The date of this meeting is usually a couple of days following the closing date of the search. This meeting often requires a minimum of one hour and sometimes longer.
- When applicants upload and submit their materials in Taleo, each member of the search committee should receive an email notification. For the first couple of applicants, it is wise for each committee member to log into Taleo and confirm access to all of the applicant's materials. Most search committee members will carefully review all of the applications near or shortly after the closing date for the position. Discovering that a search committee member does not have access to files after the closing date can delay the work of the entire committee.
- While the search is open, it is critical that the Chair of the Search Committee check files periodically to make sure applicants are submitting all of the information requested from the search committee. Depending on the search, it may be necessary for the Chair of the Search Committee to contact applicants and request missing items.
- It is not unusual to receive numerous applications near the closing date of the search. Further, there may be applicants who contact the Chair of the Search Committee requesting to submit materials once the search has closed. While this is usually discouraged, it is left to the discretion of the search committee whether to allow this.

- Prior to the search committee meeting, it is essential that each committee member determines which applicants they would like to advance to the next round of the search process. It is perfectly acceptable for each committee member to select a different number of applicants to advance. It is also necessary for committee members to have rationale for why they want to advance a particular candidate.

Search Committee Meeting to Review Applicants

- One of the most important parts of the search process is the search committee meeting to review applicants. Organizing the schedules of at least 5 different faculty members is a daunting task, so it is vital that the committee accomplishes numerous items during this meeting. These are the six items must be addressed:
 1. Thank each member of the search committee for their service. As stated previously, search committees are among the most important, and time consuming, service functions for faculty.
 2. Detail subsequent search procedures as well as reminders for decorum and professionalism related to the search.
 3. Review of applicants to determine which candidates to advance to the next round of the search, which is usually a Skype Interview.
 4. Review Skype Interview process and procedures.
 5. Discuss time frame and procedure for reference calls.
 6. Discuss time frame and procedure for on campus interviews of finalists.
- A very efficient way to review applicants during the meeting is for the Chair of the Search Committee to collect the names, either spoken or written, from each committee member of the individuals they would like to advance to the Skype Interview. The committee then calculates how many votes of support each applicant received. Applicants who receive no votes of support do not need to be discussed during the meeting. Applicants with unanimous support will most likely advance to the Skype Interview automatically and probably merit little discussion. Those applicants who received some support should be the focus of the committee's deliberations.
- As a committee discusses applicants, a natural cut-off usually appears regarding the number of individuals to invite for a Skype interview. On average the number of Skype interviews range from 6 to 12 depending on the applicant pool and nature of the search.
- For the Skype Interview, the committee must determine dates to conduct these interviews. While a single date is preferred, it is wise to schedule two dates in case an applicant is unavailable on one date. The committee must also determine the location for these interviews. The Humanities and Social Sciences building is excellent because there are several conference rooms equipped for Skype Interviews. The Chair of the Search Committee should contact an administrative assistant in the Dean's Office to reserve a room. Finally, the committee should determine the questions to ask each applicant during the Skype Interview. Appendix D contains some sample questions for Skype Interviews.

- The search committee must discuss reference calls during the initial applicant review meeting. As with Skype Interviews, the committee should determine in advance the questions to ask each reference. Appendix E contains some sample questions for reference calls. Reference calls occur after the Skype Interviews for those applicants who are being considered as finalists for an on campus interview, but prior to inviting individuals to campus.
- On campus interview procedures must be discussed during the initial applicant review meeting. The committee must determine possible dates for the on campus interviews as well as the questions to ask during the search committee meeting with the finalists, and the events and activities scheduled during the on campus interviews. Appendix F contains some sample questions as well as possible events, activities and meetings to consider for finalists.

Preparing for and Conducting the Skype Interview

- Immediately after the meeting to review applicants, the Chair of the Search Committee should email Human Resources as well as the Department Chair and Dean to let them know which candidates the committee would like to invite for a Skype Interview. Either a member of Human Resources or the Chair of the Search Committee will log into Taleo and indicate which candidates should be selected for an interview. Appendix G contains the procedure for making these requests in Taleo.
- Selected applicants will be reviewed by Human Resources and the Diversity Office. During this review the Chair of the Search Committee may be asked to provide information as to why a particular candidate was not selected to advance. Additionally, Human Resources and/or the Diversity Office may insist that a particular candidate not selected by the search committee be invited for a Skype Interview.
- The Chair of the Search Committee will receive an email from Taleo for each applicant to be interviewed once they are approved by Human Resources and the Diversity Office. Please note it is not necessary to request permission to interview a second time before inviting applicants to campus as finalists.
- At this point the Chair of the Search Committee should email each of the applicants selected for a Skype Interview. Each applicant should be thanked for their application and interest in A-State. Then invite them to interview with the committee via Skype. Offer the option of a telephone interview if for some reason Skype is not available. When giving applicants the day and time for interviews, make sure to indicate that we are in the Central Time Zone. There will likely be applicants in other time zones, so make sure everyone understands the exact time in question. Encourage them to respond as soon as it is convenient. Finally, request the applicant's Skype name and cell phone number in case there are issues with the technology.
- The Chair of the Search Committee will collect all of the available times from the applicants and then set the schedule for the Skype Interviews. Depending on the search it is wise to plan for each Skype Interview to last between 20-30 minutes. Once the schedule is determined each applicant will need to be contacted a second time to confirm the date and time of the Skype Interview. The Chair of the Search Committee should share their cell

number with the applicants as well in case of issues with the technology. The search committee will also need to be advised of the Skype Interview schedule.

- On the day(s) of the Skype Interviews, it is best for the Chair of the Search Committee to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the meeting. The main purpose for this is to ensure that all of the necessary technology is working for the Skype Interview. If the interview occurs in the Humanities and Social Sciences Building extra time will need to be allotted to check out a room key from the Dean's Office. It is prudent to ask the technology specialist within the College if they are available to attend the beginning of the Skype Interview, again, just to make sure all of the technology is functioning.
- Once the committee has arrived, please make sure everyone has a copy of the questions to be asked during the Skype Interview. For the sake of consistency, each candidate must be asked the same questions during the Skype Interview. Moreover, it is best if each member of the search committee asks the same question to each applicant, again for the sake of consistency. There are times when additional and follow-up questions may be appropriate.
- After each Skype Interview is finished, make sure the Skype Call is completely disconnected before any discussion by the committee. After the last interview is complete, the committee must begin to determine which applicants will advance to the on campus interview as finalists.
- Similar to the initial review of candidates, applicants who do not have committee support do not need to be discussed further. Applicants with unanimous support will likely be invited to campus. Applicants with some support should be the focus of the discussion.
- A natural cut-off will likely appear. On average, the number of candidates invited to campus is 3. Budget and time of year may dictate that only 1 or 2 finalists are invited to campus. It would be very unusual if more than 3 candidates were invited to campus. Usually when this happens is it due to previous finalists not being acceptable or a finalist not accepting the position. If for some reason the committee cannot reach consensus on 3 candidates, reference calls can be a very helpful way to narrow this field.

Reference Calls

- Once the search committee has narrowed the candidate pool to those being considered for an on campus interview, reference calls need to be conducted as soon as possible using the previously described procedure. It is most efficient if each member of the committee is designated to make reference calls for a single candidate. This avoids references being called by more than one person on the search committee.
- Each member of the search committee should share a brief report of their reference calls with all members of the search committee. Once calls are completed, the Chair of the Search Committee will assemble the results as needed and the search committee will recommend a list of finalists to be invited to campus.

Preparing for and Conducting the On Campus Interviews

- Prior to contacting candidates, the Chair of the Search Committee will inform the Department Chair and Dean of the committee's recommendation. If these individuals approve of the committee's recommendation and there is funding available, the Chair of the Search Committee may then contact the finalists to begin scheduling on campus interviews.
- As you begin working to complete on campus interview dates and schedules, it is important to be mindful of individuals who are not on the committee but may be involved with the search such as piano faculty as accompanist, large or small ensembles, students, and administrators. For example, if you want to finalists to conduct a large ensemble, the candidate itinerary will have to be built around the schedule of the required ensemble.
- The Chair of the Search Committee should contact each of the finalists selected for an on campus interview. Again, thank them for their continuing interest in the position. Then invite them to interview on campus. Provide the general time line agreed on by the search committee. Some additional language such as the following can also be helpful, "If you accept the invitation, and we hope you do, I will begin working with you to determine the actual dates you will be visiting the A-State Campus. We anticipate an arrival later in the day, an overnight stay, interviewing throughout the day, and departing later that afternoon/early evening." As with Skype, make sure to indicate that we are in the Central Time Zone. Encourage them to respond as soon as it is convenient.
- As each of the candidates responds, the Chair of the Search Committee will begin scheduling meetings and events. It is important to confirm with the candidate exactly when and what they are expected to do while on campus. Remember, in many cases the candidates are interviewing us as much as we are interviewing them so everything needs to be organized and professional with no surprises.
- If the finalists are ensemble faculty, let them know what piece(s) and ensemble(s) they will rehearse and conduct as soon as possible. If they are studio faculty, they will need to send any piano accompaniments for their recital as soon as possible. If they are academic faculty, they will need to know the classes which they will be guest teaching as well as the subject of the lecture.
- Travel arrangements for candidates can be complex. Beth Robison our administrative assistant is extremely helpful in working through these details. Candidates will make their own flight arrangements and then be reimbursed by the university. Candidates who drive to campus will also be reimbursed for mileage. Beth will make the hotel arrangements for the candidates. Beth will also help with any Travel Authorizations and Expense Reports for faculty who are shuttling candidates from the Memphis Airport. Check with Beth regarding meal reimbursement for the candidate and members of the search committee. While each candidate is on campus, they will need to sign some paperwork so they can be reimbursed, which Beth will provide.

- As noted in Appendix F, each candidate will have numerous meetings and events depending on the nature of the search, all of which should be similar among the finalists in terms of personnel involved and time allotted.
- If possible each candidate should receive a **detailed** itinerary of their visit at least one week prior to their interview. Examples of detailed itineraries can be found in Appendix H. The Chair of the Search Committee should share this itinerary as well as the candidate's cover letter and curriculum vitae with all individuals with whom the candidate will be meeting and interacting. This includes all music faculty and those students directly affected by the search.
- If the candidate will be met at the Memphis Airport, let them know who will be meeting them as well as a contact phone number for the person who is transporting them to Jonesboro.
- When meeting the candidate at the airport, it is a nice gesture to have a chilled bottle of water for them during the car ride to Jonesboro.
- The search committee member who takes the candidate to check into the hotel should walk inside with the candidate to make sure everything is correct with their reservation. For candidates who choose to drive to Jonesboro, it may not be possible to be with them at check-in. Simply request the candidate text or call the Chair of the Search Committee to confirm arrival and check in at the hotel.
- Plan in advance where meals are going to occur and know which members of the search committee will attend.
- While candidates are on campus, members of the search committee should refrain from dressing in "casual" attire.
- It is the job of the Chair of the Search Committee to make sure the candidate is always accompanied by a member of the search committee as they go through the day. There may be times when the candidate is alone to warm-up or prepare for class, but they should not travel from event to event unattended.
- It is especially important to make each candidate feel welcome on our campus, especially if there are indications that the candidate may not be an acceptable candidate. We want everyone to have a very positive experience while they are our guests on campus.
- After the last finalist has interviewed, the search committee will need to meet to determine which candidates are acceptable and which is the preferred candidate. Acceptable candidates mean that the search committee is comfortable with an offer being extended to the candidate(s). Preferred candidate means that is the candidate the search committee recommends offering the position to first. Remember, search committees only make recommendations; administrators are the individuals responsible for hiring faculty.

- In the event that the search committee recommends that none of the candidates are acceptable, the Chair of the Search Committee will consult with the Department Chair and Dean to determine whether additional candidates from the pool will be interviewed or if the search will terminate resulting in a failed search.

Post Interview Steps, Hiring Steps, and Finishing the Search

- If there are acceptable and preferred candidates, the Chair of the Search Committee will write a two-page report detailing the activities and procedures of the search along with recommendations of acceptable and preferred candidates. An example of this report can be found in Appendix I. The Chair of the Search Committee should share this report with the search committee and get their approval before sending it to the Department Chair and Dean for their approval.
- Unless there is an issue that requires further explanation or materials, the Department Chair and Dean will review the Summary Report of the Search Committee. If they are in agreement, the Department Chair will then contact Human Resources to begin the hiring process in Taleo.
- With the permission of Human Resources, the Department Chair will contact the preferred candidate and extend a verbal offer. If the preferred candidate declines, then the process will continue with other acceptable candidates and the Department Chair will inform all parties of the preferred candidate's decision. If the preferred candidate accepts the verbal offer, the Department Chair will inform Human Resources to continue to the hiring process in Taleo and inform all parties of the candidate's decision.
- Any and all negotiating involving the candidate regarding items such as salary, academic rank, moving expenses, years to tenure and other negotiable items will be handled by the Department Chair and/or Dean; the search committee will not be involved in these negotiations.
- If the verbal offer is accepted, Human Resources will also contact the candidate and extend another verbal offer. Assuming that is also accepted, Human Resources will send the candidate the background check request.
- If the background check is satisfactory for the candidate, Human Resources will then send an official offer letter. The members of the search committee will receive an email notification of this offer letter from Taleo.
- Once the official offer from Human Resources is accepted by the candidate, the search committee will receive another email saying that the offer was accepted. After receiving this email, the search process is complete and the hiring is now official.
- At this point, it is a professional courtesy to inform the candidates who were interviewed on campus and via Skype that the position has been filled. They will receive an automated email from Taleo saying the position has been filled, but it is nice to send a brief note thanking

them for their interest. This can be especially helpful to those applicants who are involved in other searches.

- Either the Department Chair or the Chair of the Search Committee should send an email to the faculty announcing the hiring of a new colleague. The email should include the person's email and an invitation to welcome this person to our faculty. Also, you should publicly thank all of the members of the search committee for their service on this important committee.
- Finally, the Chair of the Search Committee may receive several questions from your new colleague following the official hire and transition period. Feel free to answer those items in which you are 100% confident of the answer. If you are not sure of the answers, then defer to the Department Chair or Beth Robison.

Epilogue

As stated previously, search committees are among the most important faculty service opportunities. In some ways, searches are a way that we recruit individuals to join our faculty. Therefore it is imperative that they be conducted with great thought and care. Searches which are organized, methodical, professional, and involve clear, honest, and timely communication from all parties involved are very likely going to be successful, even if the search is terminated without a hire. It is hoped that the information within this document will help you conduct a successful search for the next addition to our faculty.

