

Faculty Hiring: Best Practices for Search Committees

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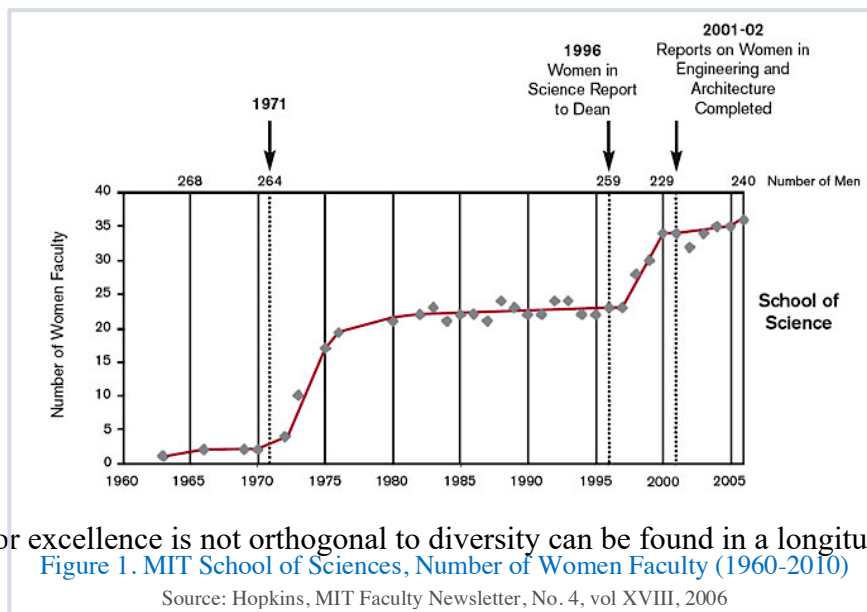
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1. Introduction

The UD ADVANCE Institute has as its broad goal diversifying and strengthening University of Delaware's (UD's) faculty. Originally funded by a National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Institutional Transformation award, the Institute's research-driven initiatives aim to increase the representation of under-represented faculty and to support a campus climate conducive to the retention and advancement of all faculty. Towards these ends, this manual is a resource for faculty search committees that outlines research-based best practices for hiring excellent and diverse faculty members.



Evidence

recruiting for excellence is not orthogonal to diversity can be found in a longitudinal case

Figure 1. MIT School of Sciences, Number of Women Faculty (1960-2010)

that

study on the representation of women STEM faculty at MIT. Figure 1 the number of women faculty in MIT's School of Sciences from 1960 to 2010. Notice that prior to 1972, there were only one or two women in the School of Science. That number rose from 1972-75 due to the passage of Title IX. However, the increases that occurred in association with Title IX eventually became the "new normal" and the number of women faculty reached a plateau. A second increase occurred from 1997- 2000, followed by another plateau. What caused this second increase and subsequent plateau? In 1996, a group of senior women faculty provided their Dean (Birgeneau) with evidence of gender-based inequities. After a detailed equity study confirmed their concerns, the Dean worked to improve equity and to recruit more women faculty in the School of Sciences. These increases came to an end when Dean Birgeneau left MIT in 2000. Below are some lessons learned from this study.

- *Leadership is critical.* When people want to make change occur, they can.
- *Efforts to diversify must be active and ongoing.* Intentional effort is required to avoid a loss of progress.
- *Excellence is not sacrifice for diversity.* A retrospective study showed that the women hired in the School of Sciences were at least as accomplished as their male colleagues.

The remainder of this manual is organized around the search committee process. Sections 2-4 focus on the early stages of the search. Sections 5-7 focus on the processes leading up to and including virtual and campus interviews. The final section gives suggestions on the offer and beyond. Appendices take a deeper look into certain steps in the process and provide specific tools and policies that will help search committees along the way.

2. Before the Search

Before the search begins, there are steps that a department can take to help support effective search processes. For example,

The department should have regular discussions about faculty hiring priorities.

- Keep priorities broad to allow for more flexibility at other stages in the process.
Example: If the department has needs in more than one area, consider phrasing a hiring request in terms of a need in "area A or area B." It may be the case that the department later decides to focus on one of these areas, but this can be adjusted when writing the job ad.
- Think of hiring as an opportunity to build the department in a desired direction. Avoid thinking in terms of replacing a specific departed faculty member.

Cultivate a pipeline of potential candidates, even in years when you are not hiring.

- Establish a tradition of faculty attending disciplinary meetings and reporting back on attendees who may be good potential hires.

- Be sure to make note of academically talented scholars who are under-represented in the field.
- Invite potential candidates to give a talk in your department, even if they're not yet looking for jobs.

Attend a UD ADVANCE Faculty Recruitment Workshop

3. The Initial Committee Meeting

Schedule the first committee meeting as early in the process as possible. This will leave time to actively recruit strong candidates and allow plenty of time for fair and thorough evaluation. It may also increase your chances of making an early and successful offer. Below is a list of topics to be covered at the first meeting.

Clarify the charge of the committee. For example,

- Is it to provide a ranked list of finalists for a departmental vote?
- Is it to identify which candidates to bring to campus?

Establish a broad timeline.

- Application deadline
- Deciding on the semi-finalist list
- Conducting virtual interviews
- Creating the finalist list
- Campus visits
- Department meeting. Selecting a finalist

Box 1. Search Committee Best Practices

- Ensure the committee represents a diversity of faculty (e.g., rank, race, gender, subfield).
- Plan meeting times so all members can attend.
- Create an agenda for each meeting.
- Take steps to ensure that everyone gets a say.
- If needed, have time limits for agenda items. But don't use time limits to quash important discussion.
- Record decisions in meeting minutes.

Discuss specific roles and duties played by individual committee members. For example,

- The role of the search committee chair
- The role(s) played by members acting as representatives of specific programs
- The role of any committee members from outside the department

Establish ground rules. For example,

- Will decisions be made by consensus or by majority vote?
- Will absentee voting be allowed?
- Establish ground rules surrounding confidentiality.
- Be clear on who may or may not contact candidates and under what conditions.

*Discuss **active recruitment** and plan steps to deepen the pool. You will need to submit information on this step as part of the search process.*

- *See Appendix A: Active Recruitment of Faculty Candidates*

Create an **evaluation tool** based on agreed upon criteria for creating the semi-finalist list. You will need to submit information on this step before the finalist pool is approved.

- Search committees often start by writing and disseminating the job ad and only later discuss the criteria that will be used to evaluate the candidates. We suggest reversing the order: Ideally a committee should first develop one's criteria for a successful candidate so that these can be reflected in the ad.
- [See Appendix C: Tips for Creating Evaluation Tools for Faculty Searches](#)

4. Writing the Job Advertisement

The language of the job ad can make a difference to who does and does not apply. Studies show, for example, that women are less likely than men to apply for positions in which they do not see themselves as an excellent fit.¹ Special attention should be given to creating a description that is likely to yield an inclusive pool of candidates.

Develop a broad definition of the position and desired experience

- Early in the search process, committee members should discuss and agree on 5-6 criteria for evaluating candidates.
[See Appendix C. Tips for Creating Evaluation Tools for Faculty Searches](#)
- Be clear about what is required and what is preferred and use this language when describing qualifications for the position.

Double check that the job ad reflects your evaluation criteria.

- For example, if contribution to a specific program (or to DEI) is important, include this in the ad.

Incorporate diversity and inclusion language in the job advertisement.

- Find out if your unit has required or recommended language and act accordingly.
- You may also want to include more specific language to convey departmental priorities around diversity, such as:

[“The department is interested in candidates who can teach or mentor a diverse student population.”](#)

[“The department seeks candidates who can address diversity and equity in research and teaching.”](#)

- If the search committee plans to require that applicants submit a diversity statement, specific diversity goals should be highlighted in the job ad.

[See Appendix B: The Use of Diversity Statements in Faculty Hiring.](#)

Consider mentioning UD's family-friendly policies. For example:

¹ Mohr, T. 2014. “Why Women Don't Apply for Jobs Unless They're 100% Qualified,” *Harvard Business Review*, August 25.

“A recipient of a NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation award, UD has a service to assist dual-career couples and supports work-life balance through family-friendly policies.”

To reach a diversity of applicants, be sure to distribute the ad widely.

5. Fair Evaluation of Candidates

Cognitive shortcuts are mechanisms that our brains use to help people filter, sort, and analyze information. These mechanisms are useful for understanding and interpreting the world around us. However, cognitive shortcuts can sometimes cause us to make incorrect decisions and can lead to biased outcomes— as, for example, when they are based on stereotypes.

Bias in evaluation and selection processes is well documented in the literature. Below are some examples:

- Researchers in Sweden conducted a systematic review of actual applications for a prestigious postdoctoral fellowship after noticing that women tended to receive a significantly small proportion of the awards compared to men. After controlling for research accomplishment, the study found that the review panel scores for women applicants were far lower than those of male applicants. Indeed, women applicants had to be 2.5 times as productive to have received the same rating as men applicants from the fellowship review board.²
- A study asked 127 STEM faculty to evaluate an application material for an undergraduate lab manager position. A single application was used, but half of the time it contained a typical male name and half of the time it contained a typical female name. The faculty (both men and women) rated applicants with a male name as more competent and more hireable than applicants with a female name. Moreover, the faculty would offer the male candidate more mentoring and more salary than the female candidate.³
- A follow-up study asked 251 physics and biology faculty from 8 large public research universities to evaluate an application for a postdoctoral research position in their field. The same CV was used, but the name varied to by gender and by race-ethnicity. Findings indicate that physics faculty show a preference for male candidates over female and for Caucasian and Asian candidates over Black and Latinx ones. Biology faculty showed preference for Asian candidates over Black and Latinx candidates.⁴

² Wennerås, C., and A. Wold. 1997. “Nepotism and Sexism in Peer Review,” *Nature* 387: 341-43.

³ Moss-Racusin, C. 2012. “Science Faculty’s Subtle Gender Biases Favor Male Students,” *PNAS* 109 (41): 16474-16579.

⁴ Eaton, A.A., et al. 2019. “How Gender and Race Stereotypes Impact the Advancement of Scholars in STEM,” *Sex Roles*, published online June 03.

Box 2. Optimize Conditions for Evaluation

- *Minimize distractions such as exhaustion, hunger, and competing activities.*
Distractions increase the probability of evaluation error.
- *Mix up the order in which committee members review applications.*
For example, one committee member can evaluate applicants from A-Z while another does the reverse. This helps to offset evaluation shifts that come with time consuming evaluation of large numbers of candidates.
- *Take notes to help you stay focused and to use in group discussions of candidates.*

Members of search committees are tasked with processing a lot of information in a short amount of time. This is exactly the type of setting in which decision making can go awry. That said, there are steps that one can take to minimize the impact of cognitive shortcuts and the potential for bias in evaluation. After publication of the Swedish postdoc study described above, the sponsoring agency strategically overhauled its postdoctoral fellowship review process in accordance with a variety of best practices (many of which can be found below). Follow up research indicates progress towards gender parity in awarding fellowships.⁵

- Evaluate all applicants based upon the criteria reflected in your evaluation tool.
- Create an evaluation tool for each committee member to use to record ratings and comments about the candidates.

See Appendix C: Tips for Creating Evaluation Tools for Faculty Searches

- Each committee member should review applications independently.
To avoid influencing one another, avoid conversations about candidates before the committee meeting for creating the semi-finalist list.
- In some cases, committee chairs may request evaluation summaries on each candidate be submitted before the semi-finalist list meeting.
- Bring your completed evaluation tool to the committee meeting when you discuss candidates. Reference it in the discussion, to keep people focused on common standards of evaluation.

6. Creating a Semi-Finalist List & Virtual Interviews

Once each committee member has had time to review each candidate, the search committee will meet to create a semifinalist pool of candidates (~ 8-12). (Note: This pool must be approved as part of the search process.).

Below are some tips on how to create a semi-finalist pool of candidates.

- Follow the “search committee general practices” listed in Box 1 (above).

⁵ Alqvhist, A., et al. 2015. “A Gender-Neutral Process?” *Report of the Swedish Research Council.*

- Start by discussing the clear-cut cases – e.g., the candidates that everyone agrees are excellent or unacceptable
- Keep or eliminate those candidates in which there is consensus. In absence of consensus, err on the side of keeping a candidate.
- Carefully discuss the remaining candidates with reference to the evaluation criteria reflected in your evaluation tool.
- Loop back to see if you missed anyone, especially if your semi-finalist list is not diverse.
- If the semi-finalist list is too long, carefully discuss which candidates should be kept and why. Again, keep the conversation focused on the committee’s agreed-upon criteria.

6,7,8,9

Box 3. Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Applicants

- *The pandemic has affected academic professional lives in different ways, depending on circumstance.* Research indicates that women and people of color have experienced larger professional setbacks than other groups, since the start of the pandemic.
- *We will soon see the effects of pandemic working conditions in applications for faculty positions.* Expect to see wide ranges in productivity (potentially higher highs and lower lows).
- Develop a plan for how to take pandemic considerations into account in your evaluation of candidates.

Virtual Interviews

Once the committee has settled on a semi-finalist list, committees often rely on virtual interviews to evaluate these candidates. To help ensure fair evaluation at this step of the process, consider the following practices.

- Use your agreed-upon selection criteria to help you structure a core set of interview questions.
- Use the same core questions for all candidates. Bias can be reduced with structured interviews and common questions.
- Use best practices in conducting virtual interviews.

See Appendix D: Conducting A Good Virtual Interview

⁶ Bell M.L. & K.C. Fong. 2021. "Gender Differences in First and Corresponding Authorship in Public Health Research Submissions During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Am J. Public Health* 111, 159-163.

⁷ Deryugina, et al. 2021. "COVID19 Disruptions Disproportionately Affect Female Academics." *NBER Working Paper* No. 28360.

⁸ Krukowski, R. A., et al. 2021. "Academic Productivity Differences by Gender and Child Age in STEMM Faculty During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *J. Women's Health* 30, 341–47.

⁹ Staniscuaski, F. et al. 2021. Race, and Parenthood Impact Academic Productivity During the COVID-19 Pandemic. From Survey to Action," *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, 1-14.

Box 4. Avoid the Slippery Slope

“The standard practice of open discussion gives too much weight to the opinions of those who speak early and assertively, causing others to line up behind them.”
 - Kahneman



- It is not uncommon for evaluation criteria to shift in the process of the search.
- Sometimes this occurs to accommodate a preferred candidate but can occur for other reasons as well.
- To avoid this, refer to your criteria throughout the discussion of candidates.
- Share the committee’s criteria with those who will be involved in the final hiring decision.
- Sometimes discussion reveals a need to adjust evaluation criteria. This is fine, as long as the adjustments fit with agreed upon hiring priorities and are not an ad hoc means of accommodating a preferred candidate.

7. Creating a Finalist Pool & Campus Visits

The finalist pool is the set of candidates (typically 3-4) to be invited for campus interviews. The finalist pool must be reviewed and approved by the administration prior to the start of campus visits. Do not contact any candidates before the finalist pool has been approved. In addition, the committee will likely want to create a new set of evaluation criteria at this stage. These criteria should be consistent with the job description and should be based on the expectations related to research, teaching, and service. It is also important for the committee to agree on the relative importance of the different criteria.

Campus Interviews

When it comes to campus interviews, keep in mind that the candidates are evaluating your department and UD as much as you are evaluating them. *Below are some planning steps to take prior to help ensure a smooth campus visit.*

- Find out if the candidate needs special accommodations.
- Ask whether the candidate would like to meet with people in other departments or programs.
- When creating the candidate’s schedule, avoid over or under-scheduling.
- Create a welcome packet with the following types of information:
 - Departmental graduate and undergraduate programs.
 - Departmental policies related to mentoring, etc.
 - UD ADVANCE Resources: Family Friendly & Dual Career Brochures (visit the UD ADVANCE website or contact ADVANCE for copies).

Once the candidates are on campus ...

- Keep in mind that some questions are not appropriate during an interview. A good rule of thumb is to stick to professional content in one's discussions with the candidate. And, in general, questions that touch upon age, race, ethnicity, national origin, disabilities, gender, religion, children, marital status or sexual orientation should be avoided.
- Reduce the influence of unconscious bias by keeping the interviews structured and similar. Consider, for example, using common questions for each candidate. This does not preclude unstructured discussion or individualized questions.
- All committee members, and ideally all faculty, should meet with each candidate and should attend each candidate's job talk. Consider videotaping the job talk for those faculty members who are unable to attend.
- Create a questionnaire for each faculty member to fill out, standardized evaluative feedback to be sent to the committee immediately after each visit.
- When the campus visits are over and it is time to vote on and discuss candidates, be sure to avoid the slippery slope (as referenced Box 4 above).

8. Closing the Deal & Beyond

The work of the search committee does not end when you turn over the department recommendation to the dean. Now that your department has selected their preferred candidate, take steps to make sure that they accept the offer. Keep updated on the progress of the offer. Is it moving along in a timely manner? Is the candidate receiving needed information for successful negotiation? Dual career? Start-up? Etc.

When the candidate accepts the offer, welcome your new colleague to UD. If s/he is an assistant professor, consider checking with the department chair to make sure a formal mentor is assigned before the semester begins. It is never too early to start mentoring a new colleague to success!

Appendix A. Active Recruitment of Faculty Candidates

Recruiting a strong and diverse pool of candidates is critical to hiring for excellence. Nothing you do later in the search process can make up for a shortage of excellent candidates. Growing the pool requires a conscious effort—placing an ad and waiting for applications is not sufficient. Some excellent candidates may not see themselves in your advertised position without some encouragement. Think broadly and creatively about recruiting candidates, and do so continuously, not just when the search process gets under way. This is a responsibility not just for members of the search committee, but for all faculty interested in maintaining and improving the level of scholarship in the department.

Tips for Building a Large and Diverse Pool of Candidates

- When writing the ad, develop a broad definition of the position and the desired scholarship, experience, and disciplinary background. Be clear about what is really required and what is preferred. If appropriate, use “preferred” instead of “required,” “should” instead of “must,” etc., when describing qualifications and developing criteria.
- Consider including “experience working with/teaching diverse groups/diverse students” as one of your preferred criteria in the job ad.
- Contact colleagues at a wide range of institutions and ask them to suggest potential candidates. Faculty not on the search committee can do this as well. Be sure to ask specifically for the names of women and underrepresented minority candidates.
- Follow up by calling potential women and underrepresented minority candidates and encouraging them to apply. Cite their work and tell them why they are a good candidate for your position. Meet with prospective candidates at conferences or during seminar visits to their home departments.
- Make lists of professional meetings, societies, members of these societies, etc., and use them to recruit candidates. Many professional societies include faculty search events in their programs.
- Consider recruiting established faculty at other smaller institutions. If they already have a record of accomplishment, it is easier to evaluate their likelihood of doing well in your open position.
- Think long term and cultivate your pipeline of potential candidates even in years when you are not hiring. Establish a tradition in your department of faculty attending meetings and reporting back in the fall on attendees who may be good potential hires.
- Invite potential candidates to give seminars in your department, even if they’re not yet looking for jobs. If they have a good experience, they may be more encouraged to apply for positions at UD in future years. It also gives them the opportunity to add to their CV and practice their talk.

Above all, remember that at this point your goal is to expand your pool of potential candidates. Sifting and winnowing will occur later in the process.

Appendix B. The Use of Diversity Statements in Faculty Hiring

Institutions are increasingly requiring diversity statements as part of the academic hiring process, with the broad aim of enhancing diversity and inclusiveness on university campuses. It is important to note, however, there are a variety of more specific goals that might be achieved with the use of diversity statements as well as a variety of ways to use them in the search process. Therefore, search committees should give careful attention to a number of factors when deciding whether and how to use diversity statements. Below are some questions for discussion to help committees make these decisions.

What is a diversity statement?

Diversity statements often include a description of a candidate's contributions to diversity in their professional lives as well as plans for the future.

What is the committee trying to achieve by requiring diversity statements?

The use of diversity statements might serve a number of valuable purposes, such as...

- To send a message that the department or the institution values diversity.
- To attract a diverse pool of applicants.
- To identify faculty who have demonstrated skills or interest in supporting diversity and inclusion efforts within the department or on campus.
- To give search committees a tangible way to make diversity a part of the search process.

There are also some perceived drawbacks associated with the use of diversity statements, such as...

- Some are concerned that requiring diversity statements will discourage some candidates from applying.
- For international candidates, it can be difficult to understand diversity and inclusion in the U.S. context.
- Search committees may not know how to effectively use and evaluate diversity statements.

It is also important to be aware that requests for diversity statements in faculty hiring is a relatively new phenomenon. Consequently, there is very little research on their effectiveness for achieving these or related goals. Additionally, some have argued that there are potential drawbacks associated with the use of diversity statements.

What type of equity and inclusion projects or goals do you hope to achieve with this hire?

There are a number of ways in which an individual can contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The committee should discuss departmental or institutional priorities as well as the type of contribution(s) that they expect of their future colleague. For example, is the committee seeking...

- a candidate who can teach and/or mentor an increasingly diverse student population?
- a candidate who can support K-12 outreach and/or pipeline building?
- a candidate who addresses diversity and equity in one's research or teaching?
- a candidate who can support diversity related initiatives on campus or in the community.

How should the request for a diversity statement be framed in the job advertisement?

Because of the variety of ways in which an individual can contribute to equity and inclusion in one's professional life, the job advertisement should be as specific as possible about the type of contribution(s) expected of a successful candidate. Ideally, these should be linked to departmental and institutional priorities as discussed above. Below are examples of requests for diversity statements from a variety of job ads. It is up to the committee to determine the type of description that best fits their departmental culture and needs.

Emory University is committed to student and faculty diversity, equity, and inclusion. In the diversity statement, applicants should reflect upon their experience and vision regarding the teaching and mentorship of students from diverse backgrounds. (Emory Univ., Faculty Position, July 10, 2019, [chroniclevitea.com](#))

To be in a better position to serve a fast growing and highly diverse student body, and to fulfill the University's commitment to promoting diversity, inclusiveness, and excellence on our campus, we actively seek candidates with demonstrated experience working with, teaching or mentoring students from underrepresented communities. (San Diego State Univ., Faculty Position, July 17, 2019, [chroniclevitea.com](#))

The required [Diversity Statement] should be no longer than 2 pages and should discuss how the candidate would help achieve Angelo State University's goal to attract and graduate more women, Hispanic, and students from other under-represented groups. (Angelo State, Faculty Position, Engineering)¹⁰

In addition to the materials noted above, applicants should also submit a one-page diversity statement that discusses past or future contributions to inclusive excellence in the areas of research, teaching and/or outreach. (U. Mass. Amherst, Faculty Position, July 22, 2019, [chroniclevitea.com](#)).

How will you assess the diversity statement?

The search committee should create evaluation criteria for assessing a candidate's potential for contributing to equity and inclusion projects and goals as expressed in his or her diversity statement. Include specific diversity metrics in the assessment rubric used to generate the long short list. The committee members should discuss how much weight they want to assign to a candidate's potential for contributing to diversity and inclusion projects and priorities. More suggestions for assessing diversity statements can be found here: [U of Washington Tips for Assessing Diversity Statements](#)

What are some other ways to include diversity and inclusion in the search process?

If the committee is not sure it wants to use a diversity statement, but still has an interest in making diversity an explicit part of the search process, consider one or more of the following options.

- Follow best practices for writing a job ad to communicate the value of diversity and to deepen the pool. For suggestions see [Stewart & Valian, 2018. Recruiting Excellent and Diverse Faculty, Inside Higher Ed.](#)
- Active and ongoing recruitment is an important part of the search process. Think broadly and creatively about recruiting candidates. Contact colleagues and ask them for names of potential candidates. Call candidates and invite them to apply. When you call, focus on their qualifications and experiences that make them a good candidate for the job. More suggestions for deepening the candidate pool can be found here: [UD-ADVANCE, Active Recruitment of Faculty Candidates](#)
- Ask a question during the skype interview stage about the candidates' experience and ideas for contributing to equity and inclusion projects and priorities.

¹⁰ This example is from Beck (2018). Developing and writing a diversity statement. Vanderbilt Univ. Center for Teaching.

Appendix C. Tips for Creating Evaluation Tools for Faculty Searches

Successful search processes begin with fair evaluation of candidates based on their qualifications for the position, rather than falling back on personal preferences or biases. This document provides tips for creating evaluation tools to support fair and consistent evaluations of all applicants.

The committee will need to submit information on this step in Talent Link as part of the hiring process.

An evaluation tool lists *no more than six* agreed upon qualifications for the position.

- Related in part to different hiring priorities, evaluation tools will differ greatly from search to search.
- The committee may want different evaluations tools for different stages of the search process (creation of the semi-finalist pool, finalist pool, etc.)

Here are some steps for committees to follow in the creation of such tools:

1. Start by specifying ‘required’ qualifications. A candidate lacking such qualifications will receive no further consideration. Some examples...
 - Degree and area of specialization requirements.
 - Post-doc experience, rank, etc.
2. Create a list of ~ five *desired* qualifications and methods of measurement. The examples below can be used to get the conversation started. Committees should make adjustments to fit their hiring needs.
 - Past research productivity. Measured in terms of...
 - Number of publications. Possibly also expectations surrounding co-authorship.
 - Journal quality.
 - One’s evaluation of the published research itself.
 - Research potential. Broadly measured in terms of quality and creativity of research program.
 - Has the candidate clearly communicated a coherent and feasible vision for future research?
 - Is the proposed research creative, innovative, or novel?
 - Is it appropriate in scope – i.e., not too broad with potential to grow over time?
 - Ability to secure grant funding.
 - Does the candidate have past success or experience writing grants?
 - Does the proposed research align priorities of relevant funding agencies?
 - Ability to contribute to graduate and/or undergraduate programs.
 - Alignment between research area and/or past teaching experience with departmental teaching priorities. Be specific and discuss the relative importance of different priorities.
 - Amount of past teaching experience and/or experiences related to teaching.
 - Clear and careful communication of teaching goals, approaches to meeting those goals, and interest in teaching and mentoring.

- Ability to collaborate with relevant units across campus. Measured in terms of...
 - Alignment between research area and the unit(s) in question.
 - Past collaborations or plans for future collaborations with scholars in relevant area(s).
 - Ability to contribute to departmental priorities surrounding diversity or departmental climate.
 - How this criterion is measured will depend on the specific priorities.
3. Discuss the relative weight or importance of various evaluation criteria.
 4. Establish a common numerical or descriptive (e.g., exceeds expectations, meets expectations, not acceptable) evaluation scale.
 - If numerical, committees should avoid the temptation to simply add up the numbers and, thus, rank candidates in terms of an overall numerical score. *The purpose of the evaluation tool is not to rank candidates in numerical order but to keep committee members focused on agreed upon evaluation criteria, rather than falling back on personal preferences or biases.*
 5. Create a common evaluation tool. It is up to the committee to determine the exact format (rubric, spreadsheet, something else).
 6. If the search is open rank, search committees may require different evaluation criteria for each rank.
 7. Each committee member should use this tool to evaluate each and every candidate.
 - Don't simply record your numerical or descriptive rating.
 - Keep careful notes to explain or justify the rating you have given.
Careful notes support not only fair and consistent evaluation, but also help expedite committee decision and required justification of the committee's decisions in Talent Link.
 8. To avoid "group think" and the possibility of overlooking an excellent but unique candidate, search committee members should not share their impressions with others until each has evaluated all candidates.

Appendix D. Conducting a Good Virtual Interview

Faculty recruitment is an integral part of achieving excellence as a university. Interviews by Skype (or some other video-conferencing service) are often used for the first meeting of our applicants. In addition to the University and College policies and procedures for search committees,^{11,12} the following are recommendations for an effective virtual interview.^{13,14,15}

1. The Search Committee Chair has responsibility for ensuring a smooth and effective interview.
2. When scheduling the interview, be aware of time zones and allow enough time between each interview.
3. Once the interview has been confirmed, send **interviewee and interviewers** the relevant information – names of interviewers, Skype contact details, duration of call, etc.
4. Find out whether the candidate needs any special accommodation for the interview. This becomes important for persons with disabilities.
5. Have reliable internet access (use ethernet rather than Wifi) **and a platform with which you are familiar**. Make sure that the interviewee has received relevant information about the internet access and has adequate time to become comfortable with it. **Offer the candidate a chance to do a test run with a member of your IT staff.**
6. Try to anticipate technical problems and have back-up options at the ready and someone on hand to facilitate.
7. Ensure consistent treatment of all candidates, including internal candidates.
8. Develop a set of core questions for each candidate. Be aware that certain questions are not allowed. (See below.)
9. Be as prepared for this interview as if the candidate were sitting in front of you, and conduct the interview with the same level of professionalism and importance.
10. Your set-up is, for the candidate, a photographic representation of the institution and its culture so be carefully aware of how that is portrayed. Use a quiet space that will not be interrupted and that shows your department in a positive and professional light.
11. Establish eye contact with the interviewee: look into the camera, not at the image of the person on the screen.
12. Be kind/humane to the interviewee:
 - Individually introduce committee members.
 - Sit at a reasonable distance from the camera such that panel members can be clearly seen, even if it means having only 2 or 3 persons visible at a time.
 - Check for appropriate lighting, camera angle, non-distracting background.

¹¹ Interview Guide, Search Committee Training, UD Human Resources, August 2015.

¹² Faculty Recruitment, A Guide for Search Committee Members, UD ADVANCE, March 2015.

¹³ Kelsky, K., Making the Most of a Skype Interview, ChronicleVitae, August 9, 2016.

¹⁴ OneWire Resources, Tips on How to Conduct the Perfect Skype Interview, August 12, 2013.

¹⁵ Leitch, C., How to Conduct a Skype Interview, Recruitment, Oct. 26, 2017.

- Committee members should be physically present (whenever possible), stay for the duration of the interview, and be fully engaged with interview while there.
 - Have a pre-arranged order of questioners to minimize long silent periods. Recognize that the candidate will be disadvantaged and demoralized by lost time
 - Allow all interviewees similar time for interview. Have extra questions at the ready to minimize lags in the conversation. At the end, let the candidate know the next steps.
13. Use a distinct, dedicated line for each candidate and hang up, making sure the line is clear, before starting discussion.

Sample Interview Questions for Faculty. A useful list of sample questions grouped under the headings Experience and Qualifications, Diversity Experience, Teaching and Student Engagement, Research and Professional Development, Project Management and Problem Solving, Technology and Professional Relationships, is available at <https://agriflifeas.tamu.edu/documents/faculty-interview-questions.pdf/>.