Hiring Procedures and Guidelines
A Guide for Hiring

This document is provided to be a guide for the hiring process. The document, tools referenced, and forms can be found online at: http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx

All positions must be posted for ALL hires including faculty, staff, ad-interim, post docs, and adjunct faculty. All applicants interested in employment within The Texas A&M University System must apply online in Job PATH to be considered.

Emergency situations, where a hire is necessary due to increased enrollment or unexpected vacancy, approval from the appropriate Vice President must be obtained for the maximum period of a one-year appointment.

Support will be provided by Human Resources for training on the use of the PATH portal, legal and regulatory requirements, evaluation tools, and hiring procedures and guidelines.

All hiring supervisors and committee members will be required to take an online course developed by The Texas A&M University System by logging onto TrainTraq: 2111264 - Effective Hiring Practices as well as signing a confidentiality agreement for record in the Human Resources office.

Search Committee

- Faculty searches: A search committee will be used in the hiring process.
- Staff searches (Director-Level and above): A search committee will be used in the hiring process.
- Staff searches (below Director-level): Search committee may be used; the search will be conducted by the hiring supervisor.

The guidelines specified in this document must be followed whether or not there is a search committee. Human Resources must be notified of all individuals who request access to applicant information.

Appointing a committee:

- The committee requires a minimum of four (4) committee members with at least one (1) being from outside the department during the complete process. Committee members who are external to the university must be pre-approved by the appropriate VP and must sign a confidentiality agreement prior to serving on a committee. Human Resources must be notified of all individuals who will have access to applicant information.
- Bringing a wide spectrum of backgrounds to a search committee will serve to better identify the most qualified person for the position. The committee should be diverse in race and gender, and be broadly representative of the faculty and staff who will work with the individual.
- Administrative support from the department and/or college should be identified for the committee.
- Detailed communication is to be provided to the search committee by the hiring supervisor including expectations, outline of committee tasks and timeline. Committee members will be given access to applicant information, position description/requirements, evaluation tools, and be provided the legal and regulatory requirements by a Human Resources representative.

Confidentiality:

It is imperative that all committee members and anyone having knowledge keep the process focused and self-contained. Specifics of the hiring process should not be discussed with anyone outside the search committee or hiring supervisor. This is to respect and protect the privacy of applicants and to protect the committee and/or those involved in hiring. Those making the recommendation must be free to discuss the applicants in committee meetings without fear that their comments will be shared outside the deliberations. This information should be held confidential in perpetuity, not just until the search is over. Once finalists are announced, those involved in the hiring process should only speak about the applicants’ information that has been made public. A breach of confidentiality could result in a failed/cancelled search and possible disciplinary action.
**Requirements for Staff/Faculty with Administrative duties:**
At the beginning of the hiring process, the department head/hiring supervisor should review the current Position Description (PD) for staff or Position Requirements (PR) for faculty and revise if necessary. It is important to review the detailed requirements carefully since it will be used throughout the hiring process. It serves as the basis for preparing the posting, placing advertisements, conducting job interviews, and communicating job expectations to the new employee. When a position becomes vacant, it can be an opportunity to re-evaluate the associated job functions.

**Review Existing Position Description:**
Descriptions need to be accurate and “current” to ensure candidates understand the position and qualifications. Position descriptions directly impact postings, quality of the candidate pool, evaluation tools, interview questions, and candidate expectations of role if hired. Vacancies are also an excellent opportunity to re-evaluate descriptions to ensure they are in line with departmental and university goals and needs.

- **FACULTY Positions with administrative duties:** Review existing Position Description (copy can be obtained through HR)
- **STAFF Positions:** Review existing Position Description (copy can be obtained through HR)

**Complete Job Description Review Request form and/or Request to Fill form:**
If the position description has not been reviewed within one (1) year or needs revision, the hiring department must complete the Job Description Review Request Form. If the department determines revisions are not needed, they may proceed with only completing the Request to Fill Non-Instructional Positions form.

- Complete and Route **Job Description Review Request Form** to make updates [http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx](http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx)
- Complete and Route **Request to Fill Non-Instructional Positions form** to request posting approval [http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx](http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx)

**Creating posting - Faculty:**
The Position Requirements (PR) are submitted by the department head/hiring supervisor to the designated administrative support for the department. The administrative support will obtain approval from the budget officer and input the position posting into PATH. The PATH posting document mirrors the PR with respect to title, salary, job duties, minimum and preferred qualifications. Qualifying questions, based on the listed minimum education and experience, should be added to the posting to help further identify applicant qualifications. Such supplemental questions can generate more specific information about past work experience and assist in the evaluation of applicants. Applicants will be referred/not referred to the committee or hiring supervisor, as appropriate, based on the responses to these questions.
Once all information is input into the posting it will then be routed to all approvers. Human Resources will review prior to posting.

**Creating posting - Staff:**
The departmental administrative support will create the posting by using the Position Description once a fully executed Request to Fill Non-Instructional Positions form is obtained. Qualifying questions, based on the listed minimum education and experience, should be added to the posting to help further identify applicant qualifications. Such supplemental questions can generate more specific information about past work experience and assist in the evaluation of applicants. Applicants will be referred/not referred to the committee or hiring supervisor, as appropriate, based on the responses to these questions.
Once all information is input into the posting it will then be routed to all approvers. Human Resources will review prior to posting.
Steps to be completed and documented:

1. Assist with networking the available position.

2. Assess the applications/resumes/cover letters for job qualifications and experience via a matrix that is pre-approved by Human Resources and completed by the Search Committee and/or Hiring Supervisor.

3. Ensure that the Veteran Mandate is followed when selecting the applicants to be considered for interviews.

4. Telephone Interviews
   a. Develop telephone interview questions and submit to Human Resources for approval.
   b. Conduct and evaluate telephone interviews.

5. Develop reference check questions and submit to Human Resources for approval.
   a. Conduct reference checks and record the responses.

6. On Campus Interviews
   a. Develop on campus interview questions and submit to Human Resources for approval.
   b. Conduct and evaluate on-campus interviews.

7. Provide a narrative of each applicant interviewed along with strengths and weaknesses to the hiring supervisor.

8. Hiring Supervisor is to determine and select the individual that best meets the identified job criteria using all data and hiring preference information available.
   Note: Salary approval must be obtained from Human Resources for Staff positions prior to verbal offer.

9. Complete upload of documentation for hiring process.

Step 1: Broad-scale advertising and building a diverse pool of applicants

All positions must be posted on the university website for a minimum of five (5) calendar days. Human Resources recommends a minimum of thirty-five (35) calendar days for faculty positions. Hiring departments may decide to place advertisements in venues such as discipline specific periodicals and academic journals. We encourage using professional associations and networks which will help to reach a broader audience and enrich the diversity of the pool. Hiring departments are responsible for funds needed for additional advertisements. These advertisements should mirror the PATH posting requirements, salary and job description. All applicants must be directed to the online application process at: https://jobpath.tamu.edu/ (If you place an advertisement for a specific position you will need to refer applicants to the QuickLink listed on the PATH posting that will direct them to that individual position.)

Keep copies of all advertisements both printed and online and provide with the Final Hiring Approval Checklist.

Note: All positions are automatically posted on the following:
- Job Path
- Texas Work Force (WorkInTexas)
- GettingHired.com
- RecruitMilitary.com
- HigherEdJobs.com
- InsideHigherEd.com.

NOTE: For international applicant advertising requirements please see “Position Advertisement Essentials.” http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/documents/employment/PositionAdvertisementEssentials.pdf
Step 2: Evaluate the applications/resumes/cover letters
Any evaluation tool including the recommended Hiring Matrix located at http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx must be pre-approved by Human Resources. When developing the matrix, determine what job-related factors you will consider. These job-related factors must be noted on the PATH posting and may be in the description of the job, the requirements, or any preferred qualifications noted on the posting. Develop a numerical method of evaluating the application materials and determine the weight you want to assign to each factor. Each committee member, when a search committee is used, must complete an individual matrix to be compiled by the committee chair once all have been completed. This tool is used to determine the applicants that will proceed to the next step in the process.

Step 3: Veteran Mandate
When making this determination the following Federal Mandate must be considered and followed.

Effective 9/1/15, Veteran’s preference affects the interview process. If six or fewer applicants are chosen for an interview, a qualified veteran’s preference applicant from the pool must be interviewed. If more than six are interviewed, 20% of the number interviewed that are qualified veteran’s preference applicants must be interviewed. If there are no veteran’s preference applicants in the qualified applicant pool, this guideline does not apply.

Use this chart as a reference for applying this standard to your applicant pool if it has applicants who self-identify as eligible for Veteran’s Preference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Individuals selected for interview</th>
<th>Minimum # of individuals to interview with Veteran’s Preference (required)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1 (20% of 7 = 1.4, round down to 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2 (20% of 8 = 1.6, round up to 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 4: Telephone Interviews
Telephone interviews are recommended and are conducted to narrow the field of applicants to be considered for the on-campus interviews. The entire committee should be present during each interview to ensure consistent treatment of all applicants and consistent interpretation of the information obtained during the interview.

All interview questions must be pre-approved by Human Resources.

Some guidelines to remember for composing interview questions:
- Questions must be job-related, not personal.
- All questions must be legal and non-discriminatory.
- Ask the same questions of all interviewed applicants. (Follow up questions are allowed within the same context).
- Document all interviewed applicant responses.

Step 5: Reference Checks
You must complete reference checks on any applicant before an invitation is extended to them for an on campus interview. Sample questions to use when conducting reference checks are available online. http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx

At least two reference checks must be documented for the applicants selected.
• The applicant’s electronic signature at the end of the Texas A&M University Application for Employment gives consent for reference checks with previous employers. It is recommended that we do not contact current employers as we do not want to put anyone’s current job in jeopardy.

• Hiring department heads/hiring supervisors and search committee members should not raise any questions that fall under the EEO discriminatory practice areas, such as questions regarding sex, race, color, national origin, age, disability, or religion. The same questions should be asked of all references. Questions and answers should be documented.

• He/she may also use the employer(s) for whom the applicant has worked the longest in a related position. If an unsatisfactory reference is received, he or she should contact another reference.

• Hiring department heads/hiring supervisors and search committee members should not tell the applicant or the reference source(s) that he/she is conducting reference checks because the applicant has “been selected” for the position. He/she should only indicate that the applicant is “being considered.”

• Committees should avoid seeking or using information from social media websites or general internet searches of applicants. Such sources may disclose information that is not true, inappropriate or illegal for consideration. Caution must be used when information cannot be verified.

• Previous employers may only provide the position title, dates of employment, salary and/or eligibility for rehire due to company policy and this should not be assumed as a negative reference for the applicant as this is a common practice and all information should be documented.

Step 6: Conducting on campus interviews

Setting up the interview
Please be aware of any internal interview requirements within your division / department / college when setting up the interviews. Such as:

• Applicants for faculty positions are required to be interviewed by the College Dean and Provost or approved designee.

For faculty or director level and above the assigned administrative support will obtain budget approval from Human Resources for applicant travel.

A minimum of two (2) applicants are required for on campus interviews unless there are extenuating circumstances and prior approval is given by Human Resources.

The Interview
Interviews must be structured and conducted in a manner to ensure equal treatment of all applicants. Interviews should be confined to the applicant’s responses to job-related questions or by the performance of job-related practical exercises that can be quantifiably measured. Such questions or exercises and measured responses should focus exclusively on the applicant’s professional and technical ability or knowledge to perform the job as set out in the job description.

The committee or interviewer should do the following:
1. Arrange for an appropriate environment for the interview that is comfortable and free from interruptions.
2. In house applicants are to be interviewed first.
3. Explain the purpose of the interview to the applicant and set the agenda. This step will help relax applicants by letting them know what to expect. It also enables the interviewer to control the interview by providing a “road map.”
4. Control the interview: The key to controlling the interview is careful listening combined with good questions. Interviewers need to encourage and guide the applicant’s sharing of facts. A common error of ineffective interviewers is to concentrate exclusively on the questions they intended to ask and not hear what the applicant is saying. Interviewers ideally should not talk more than 25% of the time. Their job is to listen and evaluate.

5. Each committee member is to document the interview of applicants.

6. Give applicants a chance to ask questions about the job and performance expectations.

7. Be prepared to provide a position description to the applicant.

8. Close the interview.

9. Inform applicants as to the next step of the interview process.

10. Audio and video recordings of the applicants are not allowed.

11. Assessment testing such as cognitive or personality is not allowed.

At the close of the interview, the supervisor or committee chair should relay to the applicant the place where the interview falls in the hiring process, when a decision will be made, and how they will be notified.

**Step 7: Summarizing the interview:**
Search committee members should:
- Provide a summary/narrative of each of the interviewed applicants strengths and weaknesses to the hiring supervisor.

**Step 8: Hiring Decision**
The department heads/hiring supervisors should:
- Use the weighted job-related criteria on the matrices.
- Judge the applicants’ specific knowledge, skills, and abilities in context to the job requirements, using the application, resume, and interview information.
- Form the basis for the final decision after careful consideration of all information, including interview evaluations, reference checks, and committee narratives and all other correspondence.
- Select the individual that best meets the identified job criteria.

**Special note regarding mandatory hiring preferences:** After all scoring is complete if two applicants are finalist for the position, and equal in all respects the position would be offered to the applicant with the hiring preference. Hiring preferences may include:
- Veterans - see application to determine if applicable.
- Former Foster Child - see application to determine if applicable.
- Reduction in Force (RIF) from The Texas A&M University System members – see attachments to application to determine if applicable and for further detail regarding preference

Specific information regarding the preferences above is explained in the Hiring Matrix. If preference(s) are applicable and used in the hiring decision, the applicant must provide proof of eligibility to claim such preference(s).
Making the Verbal Offer
Following a hiring decision, the department heads/hiring supervisors should:

- Staff positions: Contact Human Resources for salary approval before notifying the selected applicant to make a verbal offer.
- Faculty positions: Notify the selected applicant to make a verbal offer.

Staff offer letters are produced by Human Resources, faculty appointment letters are produced by the Provost.

Foreign Nationals
All job offers must be made conditional upon proof of authorization to work in the U.S. If a foreign national who has a temporary work permit is selected to fill a vacant position, he/she must be notified that his/her employment may end at the expiration of the temporary work permit.

Step 9: Complete hiring process
A Final Hiring Approval Checklist Form must be submitted and fully executed for all faculty and budgeted staff positions at Texas A&M University-Commerce prior to any official confirmation. The Final Hiring Approval Checklist Form and other needed documents may be found at the following link: http://www.tamuc.edu/facultyStaffServices/humanResources/forms/default.aspx

The departmental administrative support is tasked with gathering documentation, routing to appropriate contact for processing and/or signatures and uploading all documents as listed below:

Search Committee or Hiring supervisor to provide to Administrative support:
- Hiring Matrix or Numerical Ranking System (All individual matrices including compiled matrix)
- Interview Documentation (Notes taken by each committee members and/or Hiring supervisor of all interviews)
- References (Reference Verifications / Reference contact forms with responses for all reference checks)
- Notes/Emails
- Narratives (from committee or hiring supervisor)

Selected applicant is to complete and provide the following documents:
- Criminal History Form submission (An email will be sent from HR to the selected applicant with specific instructions)
- Credentials/Licensure Form (if applicable) – Administrative support will email completed form to hr.hiring@tamuc.edu for processing
- Official Transcript (if applicable) (All transcripts, originals must be on file in the Provost office for faculty / HR for staff)
- Primary Language Form (required for faculty appointments)
- FERPA Form
- Graduate Faculty Membership Application form with Department Head and Dean signatures (if applicable to position) which may be found at: http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/documents/faculty/GraduateFacultyMembershipApplication.pdf

Department Head is to complete the following:
- Faculty Credential Forms with Department Head and Dean signatures (if applicable to position)

Misc:
- Outside Ads (Copy of any ads placed by department)
- Other Documents (Any other correspondence or other information pertinent to the hiring process)

Once uploads of all required documents have been completed; the Final Hiring Compliance Checklist is to be finalized and signed by the Department Head and Dean OR Director and then routed to Human Resources who will approve and route to the appropriate VP for final approval.
Changes to the status for all applicants all required documents must be completed before final approvals may be obtained.

Records Retention
The department conducting the hiring process will upload all documentation for retention after completing the process. Documentation should include information on both hired and non-hired applicants. Departments should not keep copies of other applications/resumes/cover letters since these are maintained electronically and will be purged according to retention schedules.