

PENNSSTATE



Affirmative Action Office

# Search Committee Briefing

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# Purpose

- Understand Penn State's commitment and obligations to aa/eeo
- Understand role of search committees in meeting this commitment and obligation
- Discuss consistent and equitable practices to ensure a diverse pool of applicants in every search

# Legal Framework and Definitions

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Executive Order 11246 of 1965

# Key Concepts

- **Equal Employment Opportunity:** The legally protected right of all people to be evaluated on ability and potential to perform a job
- **Affirmative Action:** Good faith efforts to eliminate barriers in recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining minorities, women, people with disabilities, and Vietnam-era veterans

# Roles and Responsibilities

- The Affirmative Action Office
- Dean/Department Head
- Search Committee Chair
- Search Committee Members

# The Affirmative Action Office

- Implements the University's legal duties as an aa/eeo employer
- Establishes a framework that provides all candidates fair and consistent treatment throughout the hiring process
- Offers advice on best practices for promoting diversity in the search process

# Dean/ Department Head

- Notifies the Affirmative Action Office when a search is authorized
- Appoints committees that reflect the diversity of the department
- Provides the search charge
- Emphasizes the value of diversity
- Defines the extent of the committee's authority and duties

# Search Committee Chair

- Ensures that all applicants are considered fairly throughout the process
- Understands and communicates departmental affirmative action goals
- Establishes consistent protocols and procedures
- Emphasizes the importance of confidentiality

# Search Committee Members

- Understand and keep in mind the department's affirmative action goals
- Identify and *actively* recruit highly qualified candidates from diverse populations
- Make personal contacts, and encourage candidates to apply
- Refer all external inquiries to the chair of the committee

# The Search Process

- Planning
- Advertising
- Recruiting
- Receipt of Application Materials & Initial Screening
- Reviewing Diversity of "Short List"
- Preparing for Campus Visits
- Interviewing Finalists
- Considerations for Determining "Best Qualified"
- Recommending the Top Candidate

# Planning and Advertising

- Discuss position in light of future direction of the department
- Develop consensus on screening criteria, including intellectual and cultural diversity
- Use flexible terms like “should” rather than “must”
- Use rolling rather than fixed deadlines
- Send copy of proposed announcement and recruitment strategy to AAO prior to posting

# Recruiting *Aggressively*

- NETWORK: internally and externally
- Make personal contacts at professional conferences
- Maintain ongoing list of recipients of post-docs, awards, fellowships
- Solicit nominees from departments at institutions that serve high proportions of traditionally underrepresented groups

# Receipt of Application Materials

- As a matter of professional courtesy and sound legal practice, acknowledge receipt of each application
- Include Search Number and link to Electronic Affirmative Action Data card in letters of acknowledgement
- Also include relevant information demonstrating department, college and university commitment to diversity

# Initial Screening

- Evaluate diversity in pool by consulting “Applicant Pools” on AAO home page at:  
  
<http://www.affirmativeaction.psu.edu>
- Reaffirm consensus on selection criteria
- Be sensitive to biases in evaluation that can inadvertently screen out otherwise competitive candidates:
  - non-traditional career paths
  - research journal/graduate school elitism
  - breaks in research record

# Reviewing Diversity of “Short List”

- If department is underrepresented for minorities and/or women, complete the Short List Approval Form and return to AAO prior to inviting candidates for interviews
- Short List (with affirmative action data) will be returned to chair with copies to department head and dean
- When department is underrepresented, affirmative action data may be used to break a tie between candidates that are ostensibly equally well qualified

# Preparing for Campus Visits

- When arranging interviews, explore the candidate's possible need for reasonable accommodation for a disability. Ask (only): "Will you need any special accommodations for your interview?"
- Whether or not the candidate requests an accommodation, ensure that interviews, presentations, lodging and dining arrangements are mobility accessible
- Maintain a physical environment that demonstrates that Penn State values diversity and inclusiveness

# Interviewing Finalists

- Be careful not to ask inappropriate questions regarding marital status, age, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, *etc.*
- Be prepared to respond to inquiries regarding delicate issues. For example:
  - Do not ask questions regarding a disability, but be willing to respond to accommodation inquiries by informing candidates that Penn State is committed to compliance with the ADA
- Afford underrepresented candidates the opportunity to meet privately with others who can provide relevant information and personal experience

# Determining “Best Qualified”

- Federal regulations governing equal opportunity and affirmative action stipulate that an employer should hire the “best qualified” candidate
- Legally, the “best qualified” candidate must:
  - Meet minimum qualifications
  - Fit the substantive parameters of the position announcement, including rank, area of teaching and research concentration
- Beyond minimum requirements, “best qualified” is an open textured concept affording professionals significant latitude
- Excellence in teaching, research and service are the University’s top priorities: “excellence” must be understood in the context of an array of core values that define Penn State

# Documenting the Search

- Keep a record of the various iterations of the position advertisement and the rationale behind the final version
- Maintain files for all individuals who indicated an interest (even candidates with incomplete files are legally considered “applicants”)
- Document the criteria used to screen applicants beyond minimum qualifications
- Document any additional criteria used to select the short list and the list of finalists

# Documenting the Search

- Maintain the list of core questions utilized during the interview
- Provide a brief explanation for elimination of individual candidates selected for the short list but not offered interviews
- Offer specific reasons for selection of the successful candidate and others interviewed but not selected
- Maintain records for at least three years

# The Administrative Process

- Notify the Affirmative Action Office – [Form A](#)
- AAO provides availability estimates – [Form B](#)
- Chair provides recruitment plan and proposed advertisement – [Form B](#)
- Receipt of application materials
- Refer applicants to website to submit [AA Data Card](#)
- Review the composition of the [Short List](#)
- Document the search – [Form C](#)





**Penn State University  
Affirmative Action Office  
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form A  
Dean's Level**

\*To be completed by the Dean's office when initiating a search for tenure track positions and forwarded to the Affirmative Action Office, at 328 Boucke Building, University Park, or via email to searches@psu.edu.

**COLLEGE** \_\_\_\_\_ **Dean** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

1.

Title of Position	Location (if not University Park)	
Department/Division	Dept/Division Head/DAA (E-mail)	
Search Committee Chair (E-mail)	New Search	Re-opened Search
Dept. Contact (E-mail)		

2.

Title of Position	Location (if not University Park)	
Department/Division	Dept/Division Head/DAA (E-mail)	
Search Committee Chair (E-mail)	New Search	Re-opened Search
Dept. Contact (E-mail)		

3.

Title of Position	Location (if not University Park)	
Department/Division	Dept/Division Head/DAA (E-mail)	
Search Committee Chair (E-mail)	New Search	Re-opened Search
Dept. Contact (E-mail)		



**Penn State University  
Affirmative Action Recruitment Report  
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form B  
Department Level**

**Section I**

The information in Section I is provided by the Affirmative Action Office for review by the department conducting a search. Sections II and III must be completed by the department and returned to the Affirmative Action Office prior to posting the position announcement. Please return to the Affirmative Action Office at 328 Boucke Building, University Park, or via email to searches@psu.edu.

Title of Position	College	
Department/Division	Dept/Division Head/DAA (E-mail)	
Search Committee Chair (E-mail)	New Search	Re-opened Search
Department Contact	Dept. Contact E-mail	

**Representation and Availability Estimates**

Tenure/Tenure Track	Minority		Women	
	#	%	#	%
Representation in Department				
Availability in Discipline				

Total Tenured and Tenure Track in Dept./Div. \_\_\_\_\_

**Section II**

**Composition of Search Committee, Total \_\_\_\_\_**

Men	Women	Am Ind/Alaska Nat	Asian/Pac Isl	Black	Hispanic

Department/Search Committee Chair: Please indicate the search and recruitment strategies to ensure a diverse and competitive pool.

**Search/Recruitment Plan:** (Please list specific publication/organizations of national distribution in which announcement appears.)

  
  
  

Date Review of Applications to Commence:

**Section III**

Please provide the proposed position announcement as you intend it to appear in print. (Note: All ads must include "Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its workforce.")

**Proposed Posting (Advertisement):**

  
  
  
  
  
  
  

Date Returned to AAO \_\_\_\_\_

Search No. \_\_\_\_\_



**Penn State University  
Affirmative Action Office**

**SHORT LIST APPROVAL FORM**

College \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Position \_\_\_\_\_

Search Committee Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the names of the individuals on the short list and return this form to the Affirmative Action Office (searches@psu.edu or 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802) prior to proceeding with interviews:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by AAO \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

cc: Dean  
Department Head

**Penn State University  
Affirmative Action Recruitment Report  
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form C  
Department Level**



\*To be completed by the department and returned to Affirmative Action Office, at 328 Boucke Building, UP, or via email to searches@psu.edu.

Title of Position	College
Department/Division	Dept/Division Head/DAA
Search Committee Chair	

This information can be found on the Affirmative Action Office website: [http://www.affirmativeaction.psu.edu/pdf/app\\_pools.pdf](http://www.affirmativeaction.psu.edu/pdf/app_pools.pdf)

COMPOSITION OF THE APPLICANT POOL (based on AA Data Cards returned)												
Total number of Cards returned			Total of Minority and Other Applicants									
Total Male & Female	Total Male	Total Female	Male				Female				Vietnam Era Veteran	Disabled
			Black	Asian Amer.	Amer Ind/ Al. Nat.	Hisp.	Black	Asian Amer.	Amer Ind/ Al. Nat.	Hisp.		

1. How many applications (vitae) were received? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Provide the following information about the candidate(s) selected for the position:

Name of Applicant(s) Selected	Gender	PSU ID#	Appointment Date	Race/Ethnic Category

3. Provide the following information for each candidate interviewed but not selected:

Name of Applicant(s) Interviewed	Gender	Race/Ethnic Category	Rejection Criteria Code

Code	Criteria Code List	Code	Criteria Code List
01	Insufficient teaching experience	07	No clear commitment to University values/goals including enhancing climate for diversity
02	Weak research and publication record or potential	08	Withdrew following interview
03	Insufficient administrative experience	09	Other - please specify in comments field
04	Did not meet the programmatic needs of the position	10	Position offered and declined. *Please indicate reason in the "Comments" box below.
05	Not a broad enough background in required area		
06	Less relevant qualifications than candidate hired		

Comments:

4. Review

Department Head \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Dean \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ AAO \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# After the Search: Retention Strategies

- Provide assistance to secure a smooth transition in the new position
  - Campus Tour
  - Community Resources
- Promote collegiality by developing activities which facilitate interaction
  - Between group collaboration/networking
  - “Within” group collaboration/networking

# After the Search: Retention Strategies

- Plan for change in the department's culture and practices:
  - Recognize different styles of working and interacting
  - Address collegial issues when they arise:
    - Clear strategies/guidelines for dealing with conflict
  - Address the "color" or "gender" blind notion

# After the Search: Retention Strategies

- Recognize issues that are unique to minority faculty members:
  - Representing the “group”
  - “Shelving” themselves
  - Balancing internal/external community service
    - Guarding against excessive community service

# Mentoring: A Key Strategy

- A Reciprocal Process: Impacts Recruitment **and** Retention
- Reduces the isolation and alienation of being “the first” or “one of a few” within a department
- Sends a strong message of departmental commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion

# Effective Mentoring

- Mutual Respect & Trust
- Commitment to overall goals
- Willingness to learn about self and others:
  - Strengths
  - Challenges
- Willingness to share power and privilege

# Effective Mentoring

- Do not assume that mentoring is more beneficial when mentor and protégé are of the same gender, race/ethnicity, discipline, or share similar professional interests:
  - Acknowledge the differences/similarities
  - Become comfortable asking questions
  - Create safe spaces for learning to occur

# A Final Word

The process of recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty population requires that we be open to and prepared for the challenges that come with accomplishing our goals.