

Search Committee frequently asked questions

General Questions about the Search Committee

1. Is search committee orientation required in order to serve on a search committee?

Search Committee Orientation must be completed before serving on an exempt staff or faculty search committee and highly recommended for non-exempt staff searches. Search Committee Orientation may also be completed even when someone is not planning or has not been selected to serve on a committee.

2. How frequently do search committee members have to complete search committee orientation?

Search Committee Orientation should be completed at least every 2 years unless otherwise indicated.

3. What is the purpose of the search committee?

The search committee serves a critical role in evaluating and vetting faculty and staff applicants and candidates for employment opportunities at the University. The search committee fulfills several key roles including recruiting applicants for a position; reviewing applications; conducting preliminary interviews and participating in campus visits; and providing credible feedback and making recommendations regarding candidates to the hiring manager who makes the final hiring decision.

4. Will the search committee receive support during the process?

The Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Office of Human Resources provide ongoing support to search committees throughout the process as needed. Additional resources are also available for search committee chairs and hiring managers. OEI also has a selection of rubric templates and sample questions available and can assist with developing and customizing search tools as needed.

5. Who should be on the search committee?

Committee members should be individuals who understand the requirements of the position and who are committed to the goals of the Department, School, College, and University. Ideally, the search committee should be composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds in order to provide a variety of perspectives. Consider including a mixture of tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, staff, and individuals from different areas, disciplines, and units, both within the hiring department and outside of the hiring department.

Please note that we recommend the courtesy of contacting the individual's immediate supervisor prior to extending an invitation to serve on your search committee.

6. Can I decline an invitation to serve on a search committee or recuse myself from a search committee in progress?

While serving on a search committee is highly regarded as a form of service to the University, it often requires a significant commitment of time and effort. If you are unable to serve due to these and other constraints that may hinder or negatively impact the search, it is advisable that you decline an invitation to serve on the committee.

If you are serving on a committee for a search that is already in progress, we strongly recommend discussing your desire to recuse yourself with the hiring manager. You may also contact OEI with specific questions or concerns that you may have.

Also see section on conflicts of interest for further information.

Questions about Recruitment, Applicant Reviews, and Interviewing

1. What is meant by recruitment?

Recruitment is the active process of finding people to apply for open positions. It involves advertising the position in multiple venues, recruiting at conferences, job fairs, and other similar events, reaching out to known and recommended individuals identified as potential recruits, contacting institutions, programs, and organizations that award degrees or credentials in the discipline or area you are searching, direct mailing, word of mouth advertising, and local and regional advertising when appropriate, among other activities.

2. Where can we advertise an open faculty position?

UTC has annual contracts with affinity sources including The Chronicle of Higher Education, HigherEdJobs, Diverse Issues, and Hispanic Outlook in order to target a wide and diverse audience of potential applicants. These venues allow for unlimited advertising throughout the year and the Office of Equity and Inclusion covers the cost of these subscriptions so no additional cost is incurred by the hiring department. In addition, positions should be advertised on websites, job boards, online forums, periodicals, and journals that are specific to the discipline. The hiring department is responsible for any costs incurred for these additional recruiting initiatives and OEI may also be able to assist by subsidizing the cost of applicable listing fees. based on available funding.

3. I am serving on my department's search committee and discovered that an applicant for a job is someone with whom I have co-authored a publication. Despite this, I am certain I can be objective in my evaluation and want to remain on the committee. If I know I can be objective, there isn't a conflict of interest, right?

There are many different factors to consider regarding conflicts of interest. Whether the committee member believes he/she can be objective is not the only point of consideration, as others may perceive the relationship as presenting an unfair advantage to the one application. This scenario would be classified as a conflict of interest and the recommendation would be for the committee member to recuse themselves from the search.

4. What is implicit bias? Why is it important in the search process?

Bias refers to assumptions that we make about other people based on our own life experiences and perspectives. It is important to note that these assumptions are often involuntary and subconscious, and everyone has the propensity to have them. In the search process, bias can sway us either for or against people, especially while reviewing application materials. Unchecked bias could result in individuals being overlooked or selected for positions when they otherwise may not have been. Search Committee

Orientation provides some tips on how to reduce the impact of bias in the search process and there are many online sources that can help as well.

5. What is meant by pool diversity? Does it mean that we have to have a certain “quota” of female or minority applicants?

There are many facets to diversity. While people often think of gender and racial diversity within the context of the search process, diversity may also refer to other protected identities such as persons with disabilities, veterans, age, and national origin, as well as people from different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. UTC does not require quotas with regards to applicant pool diversity; however, our goal is to attract a rich and diverse pool of qualified candidates from which we can select the best qualified individuals to join our workforce.

6. My colleagues and I are taking a candidate to dinner. Since we are off campus, is it okay for us to ask them questions about their personal life?

Whether on- or off- campus, you are functioning in a formal capacity as part of the search process and all activities involving candidates are considered as part of the interview. Furthermore, as an employee and representative of the University, you are responsible for abiding by the University’s Equal Employment Opportunity and non-discrimination policies. To avoid the perception of discriminatory or inequitable practices, you are strongly advised to refrain from questions or conversations about protected identities, which often involve an individual’s personal life. If a candidate poses questions regarding their protected identity, please offer to refer the candidate to OEI or HR for further information or guidance.