

Guidelines for conducting a tenure-track search

Color coded tasks: **Red: Search Committee Chair; Purple: Diversity Point Person; Green: Search Committee**

Following Presidential Approval of the Search:

- **Chair:** Search committees typically consist of about five individuals, a mix of members of the hiring department or program and external colleagues. Designate one member of the committee to serve as the diversity point person (DPP) for the search. As you construct the committee, feel free to consult with the Provost and/or the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion about potential DPP candidates. There is no requirement that the DPP be a member of the hiring department or program. **The chair of the search committee may not serve as the DPP.**
- **Chair:** As soon as possible tell the Provost and the VP for Diversity and Inclusion the name of the individual who will serve as the DPP.
- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** Meet with the Provost to discuss plans for conducting the search.
- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** Meet with the VP for Diversity and Inclusion to review this document and discuss how to enhance diversity at every step of the search process.

Writing the Job Ad:

The ideal job ad outlines the requirements of the position in as expansive and inclusive a manner as possible. Such an approach increases the likelihood of yielding a richly diverse applicant pool.

Avoid using language that may unhelpfully discourage applicants and thus restrict the diversity of your pool. For example, “experience with liberal arts colleges preferred” may have this discouraging effect. While we do want to hire individuals who demonstrate interest in working at a liberal arts college, *experience* with liberal arts colleges is not necessary for a faculty member to be successful at Lawrence.

Do include encouraging language about diversity in the ad. **All ads must include the following language:** “We welcome applications from individuals who will help us create a more inclusive Lawrence by: (1) further diversifying the faculty; and/or (2) demonstrating experience with successful diversity-related initiatives, creative activity or research; and (3) demonstrating interest in developing inclusive pedagogy to address the needs of a diverse student body, particularly as these pedagogies relate to antiracism and decolonizing the curriculum.”

The university further requires that application materials include “a statement on your experience related to addressing issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism in an academic setting and ways that you would contribute to these efforts at Lawrence.” This language should appear in the section of the ad that lists required application materials

(such as letter of interest, *curriculum vitae*, statement of teaching philosophy, etc.).

Once the ad is drafted, the chair must submit it to the VP for Diversity and Inclusion for review and feedback. Once the chair and the VP have agreed on the text, the ad must then be submitted to the Provost for approval. **All ads for faculty searches require the Provost's approval before being posted in any venue.**

Building a Diverse Applicant Pool:

- **Chair, in consultation with Diversity Point Person:** Send the approved job ad to Human Resources for posting on the University's PeopleAdmin website and in professional journals. Many disciplines have professional organization newsletters that emphasize diversity, excellent outlets for advertising the position. Other venues, including social media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook), may be fruitful sites for getting word about the search out to diverse populations.

Consult with the Provost if you need additional funding to support advertising costs.

- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** Meet with the VP for Diversity and Inclusion to discuss strategies for attracting a diverse applicant pool. The University is a member of several consortia and databases focused on this aim (see below). **It is expected that search committees will fully engage with these services, and that the DPP's search report will describe those engagements in detail.**
- **Diversity Point Person:** As soon as possible, draft a plan for increasing the diversity of the applicant pool (using suggestions below or other ideas). Send the draft to the VP for Diversity and Inclusion for review and feedback. The final plan should be sent to the Provost and the VP for Diversity and Inclusion.
- **Search Committee:** It is expected that all search committee members will engage in proactive outreach to colleagues for nominations of potential candidates who can diversify the applicant pool. Tell the people you contact that Lawrence is committed to diversifying its faculty, and ask them if they know of promising candidates of color, as well as candidates who will bring diversity to our faculty in additional ways. Ask the people you contact for permission to identify them as the nominator when you reach out to potential candidates. Ask them, as well, if they know of anyone else in the field who would be able to nominate potential candidates who will diversify the applicant pool, and ask again if you can use their name as the referral when you make those contacts. Continue following up with individuals who may know names of potential candidates until you've generated a number of names.

The idea is to create a chain of contacts that will generate many potential applicant names. Feel free to contact colleagues whose areas of expertise are not in the targeted search area but who may know of graduate students in that field currently on the market or who may know others more closely connected to the search discipline able to offer applicant names. Consider, for example:

- People with whom you went to graduate school who are now working with graduate students. Even if they are not working in the specialty relevant to the search, they will likely know colleagues who are and to whom they can direct you.

- Your former professors from graduate school.
- Colleagues from other universities whom you've met at conferences or through other professional channels.
- Lawrence alumnae/i who are currently in graduate school or who hold faculty appointments. If there's a member of your department who knows an alum best, ask that Lawrence faculty member to make the contact.
- **Diversity Point Person:** Make sure to share this document with all of the search committee members and draw their attention to the process of creating the chain of contacts. Then, a few weeks later, follow up with each member of the committee to ask how their efforts are progressing. Follow-up is critical: faculty are busy and this work may drop to the bottom of individual "to-do" lists. Friendly reminders and follow-up emails from the diversity point people are helpful.
- **Search Committee, Chair, and Diversity Point Person:** Send emails directly to potential candidates identified through the methods described above, share the job ad with them, and encourage them to apply. In your communications, remember to mention the individuals who nominated them, if your contacts have given you permission to use their names.
- **Search Committee:** When attending conferences and other professional events, aim to connect with potential candidates who can diversify the applicant pool and encourage them to apply. Follow up with them by email or phone.
- **Diversity Point Person:** Contact officers of professional subgroups that emphasize diversity and ask them to suggest candidates and share the position description with potential candidates.
- **Diversity Point Person:** Call or write to Directors of Graduate Studies at graduate programs known for their successes in mentoring diverse graduate students and request that they encourage candidates who will contribute to diversity to apply. (This outreach may be distributed among all of the members of the search committee.) Reach out to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with graduate programs in the search field to encourage applications.
- **Diversity Point Person:** Consult the following databases to identify candidates to contact.
 - The Consortium for Faculty Diversity (CFD) is a national consortium of liberal arts colleges with a focus on pre-doctoral and post-doctoral diversity fellowships. Lawrence is a member of this consortium and has access to the Interfolio database. The Provost and/or the VP for Diversity and Inclusion will provide login information. **Because Lawrence is a consortium member, it is expected that all search committees will engage with the CFD database. The DPP report should describe the results of this engagement.**
 - The Big Ten Alliance has a database of graduate students from Big Ten universities who are on the job market. Some students choose to disclose information about their identities and diversity engagements. Lawrence has access to this database thanks to a Mellon grant supporting the ACM-Big Ten

Alliance. Contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion for information on how to access this database.

- [Mellon-Mays fellowships](#) are one of the Mellon Foundation's initiatives to increase diversity in higher education. The fellowships support emerging diverse faculty in the humanities and related fields.
- The Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute of the University of Wisconsin-Madison ([WISELI](#)) provides a list of databases of candidates from underrepresented populations in a number of disciplines. **The databases are not limited to women candidates;** the advice and the directories are wide-ranging.

Preparing to evaluate candidates:

- **Search Committee:** Before reading *any* applications, the entire search committee must meet to establish the criteria that will be used to evaluate candidates. While the requirements listed in the job ad will serve as an important foundation for evaluation, almost every committee will develop criteria that will be more detailed than the general, expansive language used in the ad. **An ability to contribute to diversity at Lawrence is an expectation of every faculty member and thus a necessary evaluative criteria in all searches.** As the required ad language makes clear, such contributions may take many forms: They may be connected to a candidate's identity and personal history; their past experiences making material contributions to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracist initiatives; their experience with/plans for engaging and supporting a diverse student body through inclusive pedagogy. Other criteria (range of sub-specializations within the targeted field, record of scholarly or creative accomplishment, familiarity with particular pedagogical approaches) may also emerge as important considerations. Identifying an agreed-to set of evaluative criteria before reading applications is crucial to minimizing bias in the search process. The criteria should be written down for easy reference through the evaluation process.

Assessing/Certifying the Applicant Pool:

- **Diversity Point Person:** About two weeks before the application deadline, the DPP should contact Human Resources to get a snapshot of the demographics of the candidate pool. Human Resources cannot divulge the racial/ethnic identity or gender of individual candidates but they are able to report on the overall demographics of the pool. This information must be shared with the search chair, the Provost, and the VP for Diversity and Inclusion.
- **Diversity Point Person and Chair:** Consult with the Provost and VP for Diversity and Inclusion about possible additional ways to diversify the applicant pool further if the pool is insufficiently diverse. Consider extending the deadline to accommodate intensification of efforts to diversify the candidate pool.

- **Chair:** Check to make certain that applicants have submitted all required materials. Contact the candidates who have missing material to make certain they were able to navigate the application portal and request that they complete their application. (Sometimes the administrative assistant in your building might be able to make these contacts.)

Once the pool is judged sufficiently diverse by the VP for Diversity and Inclusion and the Provost, with all or nearly all applications complete, the committee may move forward to candidate evaluation.

Reading Files and Evaluating Candidates

- **Search Committee (especially Diversity Point Person):** Review applications using the committee's established evaluative criteria, paying particular attention to candidate responses to the request to demonstrate a commitment to advancing the work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism. As noted, these contributions can come in various forms, such as identity and personal history; focus of research and subject matter of teaching; past experiences with diversity initiatives and diverse groups; and experience with inclusive pedagogy. While it is not always possible to determine a candidate's membership in an underrepresented demographic group, evidence in the application—such as attendance at an HBCU or a fellowship for LGBTQ+ scholars—can offer insight. Be flexible in assessing candidates' educational paths: wealthy, elite undergraduate and graduate institutions are not the sole guardians of talent. When considering which applicants present the best qualifications, keep in mind that experience with diversity and inclusion efforts and a commitment to supporting a diverse student body are part of what makes a candidate highly qualified for a faculty appointment at Lawrence. **Any notes you make on applicants should be kept until the final DPP report is complete.**

Moving to first round interviews:

- **Diversity Point Person:** As the committee discusses applications, be sure to draw colleagues' attention to candidates whose materials demonstrate the strongest potential to substantially forward diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism at Lawrence. Throughout discussions, keep this consideration at the forefront of the committee members' minds.
- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** Once the committee has made its tentative selection of first round interview candidates, the DPP will send that list of names to Human Resources for a demographic breakdown (again, HR will not supply individually identifying information; rather, they will indicate percentages by which EEOC categories are represented in the first round interview list). The DPP will then send that demographic information, along with the demographic breakdown information of the entire pool, to the VP for Diversity and Inclusion and the Provost for review.

The aim is to produce a first round interview list that is *at least as diverse* as the

initial pool of candidates. Should the first round interview group prove to be significantly less diverse than the initial pool, the VP and the Provost will discuss the situation with the search committee chair and the DPP to determine next steps. These may include adding or subtracting applicants to the first round interview list.

Interviews:

- **Chair:** In advance of first round interviews, distribute to all committee members “Guidelines for Interviewing Legally.” These guidelines are available from the Director of Human Resources.
- **Chair:** Designate a committee member as an interview note-taker. The note-taker should share all the notes with each member of the search committee after the interviews are complete.
- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** Be sure the interview includes questions about how the candidates will contribute to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism at Lawrence. You might ask candidates how they would support a diverse student body, including through the use of inclusive pedagogy. You might ask them for examples of ways that they’ve worked on diversity and inclusion efforts at other campuses or in other communities. Since you’ve asked candidates to include in their application materials a statement on the ways that they can contribute to diversity, you can use the interview as an opportunity to follow up on these statements, inviting a deeper discussion.

To ensure equity during the interview process, the committee should determine in advance a set of questions that will be asked of all candidates. Ideally, these questions will be posed in the same order, as well.

Selection of finalists:

- **Chair and Diversity Point Person:** The demographic tracking practiced in the move from full applicant pool to first round interviews is maintained in the move from first round interviews to finalists. In submitting the names of the proposed finalists to the VP for Diversity and Inclusion and the Provost, the search committee chair and the DPP will describe how the demographic distribution of the finalists compares to the demographic distribution of the first round candidates. Should the chosen finalists be significantly less diverse than previous two cohorts (entire pool, first round interviews), the VP and the Provost will discuss next steps with the search committee chair and the DPP.

Campus visits:

- **Chair:** If candidates have not already explored the resources highlighted on HR’s [PeopleAdmin webpage](#) (“About Lawrence University,” “Virtual Campus Tour,” “Diversity & Inclusion,” and “Community”), the chair should direct them to that site and invite them to make use of contacts to find out about diversity in the Fox Cities and/or Lawrence (this may give them an opportunity to research issues they prefer not to discuss with the committee at this stage of the search process).

- **Chair:** Be sure to ask finalists if they need any accommodations during their visit; some candidates may need extra time getting from one location to another on campus because of mobility issues. Inquire, as well, about dietary needs and restrictions.
- **Chair:** Every finalist candidate should have a 45 minute meeting with the VP for Diversity and Inclusion. This meeting provides a chance for the candidate to ask questions about diversity at Lawrence and in the Fox Cities. It's also an opportunity for the VP to explore how the candidate envisions contributing to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism at Lawrence.
- **Chair:** Build into the schedule time for the candidate to meet with contacts in the Fox Cities, if they wish.
- **Search Committee:** Include as part of the campus interview discussion of ways that the candidates see themselves contributing to diversity and inclusion at Lawrence.

Selecting the first choice candidate; ranking all finalists:

- **Search Committee:** In assessing candidates' final interviews, the committee should refer to the original evaluative criteria they drew up at the start of the search process. Ideally, the committee will agree not only on its first choice candidate, but also on the ranked order of the remaining candidates. The Provost is available for assistance in cases where coming to agreement proves complicated.
- **Chair:** The chair contacts the Provost, the VP for Diversity and Inclusion, and the President to inform them of the committee's choice and describe how it arrived at the decision. An analysis of the candidates' abilities to contribute to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism must be included in this description.

Accountability and assessment:

- **Diversity Point Person:** Write a report summarizing the search committee's work and how that work forwarded university efforts to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism. The report should reflect on the original hiring plan and the extent to which it was followed or revised. Note those efforts that seemed especially fruitful in attracting a diverse applicant pool and identifying promising finalists; note, also, those that seemed less productive. The report must include demographic data at every stage of the search, from initial applicant pool to first round interviews to finalists, and should be submitted to the Provost and the VP for Diversity and Inclusion.

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