

## **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCHES**

This document is meant to serve as a guideline for deans, department chairs, and search committees involved in filling vacant or new faculty and administrative positions within the Academic Affairs Division and the Colleges of Allied Health and Nursing. A separate policy governs searches for endowed chairs. In the following step-by-step procedures, items marked with an (\*) are those actions required by the University, and/or by Federal, State, and Immigration laws. All correspondence, including advertisements, brochures, and flyers must include the Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer statement.

All efforts to fill academic positions will be directed toward choosing the most qualified individual based on professional qualifications, personal integrity, and Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer considerations. These procedures are designed to assist academic personnel in completing the search process in an efficient and effective manner.

While the above referenced requirements have been incorporated into the following procedures, this does NOT replace the need for all persons concerned to be familiar with the Strategic Diversity Plan, as well as state and federal laws. Deans, department chairs, and their representatives are responsible for implementation of the Strategic Diversity Plan and compliance with federal and state laws.

### **Special Considerations**

University policy and accreditation require that:

- each faculty member be proficient in spoken and written English. The Chairperson and Dean must provide certification of proficiency prior to the appointment.
- each full- or part-time faculty member hold AT LEAST a master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline), or justify, in exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience.

All faculty search committees are asked to ensure compliance with these minimum requirements during the applicant screening process **BEFORE** interviews are requested. Official transcripts must be a part of the completed file which is forwarded to the President when the candidate is recommended for appointment, so requiring them early saves time in the final appointing process and enables the committee to ensure compliance with minimum requirements. Also, spoken and written English proficiency should be critically evaluated through written evaluation materials and through telephone interviews prior to scheduling on-campus interviews. No full- or part-time faculty will be appointed who do not meet these criteria.

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## SEARCHES FOR TENURE-TRACK FACULTY POSITIONS

### Responsibilities of Department Chair

- When a vacancy occurs, or a new position is approved, departmental needs must be analyzed (with input from faculty) to determine the type of individual needed.
- Complete a “Request Authority to Fill Vacancy” form (Academic Affairs Form #1\* - <http://www.southalabama.edu/academicaffairs/forms/AAForm1.pdf>) and forward through the approval process, i.e., chair to dean, dean to Vice President.

**NOTE:** Academic Affairs Form #1 includes the recommendation for search committee composition. **\*All search committees must have at least 25% female representation. If it is not possible to meet the 25% female requirement within a department, faculty members from another department should be included.**

### Responsibilities of Department Chair and Search Committee

- Determine and specify in writing the minimal qualifications, as well as any specific requirements, for an acceptable applicant. Qualifications will usually be those that would suggest a reasonable expectation that the applicant could achieve tenure in his/her discipline. Specify essential functions and responsibilities for the applicant to qualify for the position.
- Set up a tentative schedule for the screening process.
- Prepare an announcement/advertisement\* for the position to include:
  - Position, rank, discipline
  - Starting date
  - Minimal credentials required
  - Application materials required (letter of interest, vita, transcripts, etc.)
  - Closing date of applications
  - \*Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer statement

**NOTE:** \*All announcements/advertisements must be approved by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Health Sciences.

**NOTE:** \*All tenure-track positions **must** be advertised in a minimum of two national sources (on-line and/or print) appropriate to the discipline and to enhance potential for a diverse pool of applicants.

**NOTE:** All external searches for chairs and academic administrator positions **must** be advertised in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and/or other national sources (on-line

and/or print) appropriate to the discipline and to enhance potential for a diverse pool of applicants.

- Forward Direct Pay/LPO for each advertising source, with attached advertisement, through the approval process.
- Notify other universities/agencies of the vacancy.
- Post position announcement on Department web-site. (Academic Affairs will place on University website)

At this point, the search committee will begin preparing for the arrival of applications.

- \*Start a list of all applicants/nominees received with name, address, email, and telephone number. (This list is required documentation for the Affirmative Action Report at the conclusion of the search; it is easier to do the list as applications are received rather than at the end of the process.)
- \*Create a file immediately upon receipt of an application/nomination—one file for each application. (These files must be retained for three years.)
- \*Send an acknowledgment letter citing the requirements for a completed file, i.e.,
  - ✓ Biographical Data Form (**include weblink in letter**) (<http://www.southalabama.edu/academicaffairs/forms/BiographicalDataForm.pdf>),
  - ✓ USA Faculty Consent Form (**include weblink in letter**) (<http://www.southalabama.edu/academicaffairs/forms/facultyconsentform.pdf>),
  - ✓ three signed original professional letters of reference,
  - ✓ curriculum vitae, and
  - ✓ official transcripts from all institutions of higher learning from which a degree was received,

with an Affirmative Action Card enclosed. The letter should also include the statement, “Proof of U. S. citizenship or other authorization to work in the United States will be required within three (3) days after employment.”

**NOTE:** A USA Faculty Consent Form must be completed by applicants invited for interview.

- Normally references are contacted by telephone (in addition to the requested written reference), but special care must be taken to keep all information confidential, using it only for administrative purposes.
- After the screening and evaluation process is completed, the committee will normally select two (2) or three (3) candidates to recommend to the dean for campus interview.

- Upon approval by the dean, contact the selected candidates, invite him/her to campus, make arrangements (lodging, interview schedule, meals, escorts, etc.) and publish schedule and brief resume for all interested parties.

**NOTE:** Interviews should be scheduled with the following individuals:

Search/Screening Committee  
 Department Faculty  
 Department Chair  
 College Dean  
 Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs or Vice President for Health Sciences (for  
 Department Chair and others) as deemed appropriate  
 President (as deemed appropriate)

- Schedule a scholarly presentation and teaching demonstration to be made by the candidate where appropriate.
- Conduct interviews. (A specific interview process must be determined prior to the actual visit. A paper trail is always advisable.)
- Solicit reactions from those people who meet with the candidate(s) during the interview process.
- Evaluate candidates, including the solicited responses.
- Prepare a report (from the committee) to submit to the department chair listing the strengths and weakness of each interviewed candidate.

The search committee chair completes the Affirmative Action Report and forwards it along with Candidate's completed file to the department chair who will forward through channels to the Office of the appropriate Vice President. Supporting documentation must be attached to the report: the list of names, addresses, emails and telephone numbers of all applicants, advertisement copy, recommendations and evaluations. Any other pertinent information relating to the search/screening may also be included.

**NOTE:** The dean will recommend the candidate(s) for appointment to the appropriate Vice President. This recommendation should include:

- The completed file of interviewed candidate;
- Perceived strengths and weaknesses of each candidate – stating whether or not the candidate is acceptable with justification for the preferred candidate; and
- The completed Affirmative Action Report along with the chair's recommendation for appointment to the dean of the college.

**An appointment letter will not be issued until the following is received and verified in the appropriate Vice-President's office:**

- Completed Affirmative Action Report with supporting documentation.
- Completed File with required documentation: Biographical Data Form, USA Faculty Consent form, three signed original professional letters of recommendation, curriculum vitae, memo with recommendation from the department chair, memo with recommendation and terms from the Dean, and official transcripts from all institutions of higher learning from which a degree was received.
- Satisfactory results of the degree verification and background checks.

When/if a candidate is recommended for an appointment, and after the appointment letter has been issued and the appointment accepted by the candidate, the committee should notify all other applicants that the search has been successfully completed.

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## **SEARCHES FOR NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY**

Procedures for filling non-tenure track faculty positions or for filling temporary positions (full-time appointments for terms less than a full academic year) are the same as above, except advertising may be done on a local or regional basis rather than on a national basis and scholarly presentation may not be necessary. If the search is confined to the local/regional area, advertisement **must** be done in the *Mobile Register*. (If the search for a non-tenure track position is advertised nationally, then it **must** be advertised in appropriate national sources pertinent to the discipline). Non-tenure track positions at the rank of Assistant Professor or higher may be advertised in appropriate national sources pertinent to the discipline. See Chapter 3 Section 3.18.2 (full-time) and Chapter 3, Section 3.8.2 (part-time) in the *Faculty Handbook* for more detail.

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## **SEARCHES FOR PART-TIME FACULTY**

Part-time faculty are temporary employees who are appointed "as needed" on a semester-by-semester basis. National searches are not conducted for part-time faculty. Although search committees are not normally used for part-time faculty, the chair will appropriately consult with departmental faculty in their selection and appointment. Advertisements in local newspapers will be done only when deemed necessary by the dean and the chair. In those cases where local advertisements are necessary, the

*Mobile Register* will be used. Required documentation for a part-time faculty appointment is identical to that of a full-time faculty appointment, except for the Affirmative Action Report. It should consist of a Biographical Data Form, USA Faculty Consent Form, official transcripts, curriculum vitae, and three signed original letters of recommendation submitted to the dean, who upon approval will forward to the appropriate Vice President. Once approved for addition to the Part-Time Faculty Roster, the individual is eligible to teach on an “as needed” semester-by-semester basis.

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## **UNSOLICITED APPLICATIONS FOR FACULTY POSITIONS**

Each department/academic unit should have established a policy for dealing with unsolicited applications and faculty position inquiries. Several possible options are suggested below:

- If an unsolicited application is received and no suitable position exists, the inquiry should be acknowledged by the department accordingly.
  - All unsolicited applications should be kept on file for 90 days. Applicants should be informed that materials are retained for a 90 day period and after 90 days, a new application is required if the applicant wishes to be considered for future vacancies.
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## **SEARCHES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS**

Searches for department chairs should follow the same procedures as specified for tenure-track faculty positions with the following exceptions:

- The dean will submit the initial request for a search (Academic Affairs Form #1) and will recommend names for the search committee on that form. The committee should include a chair from another department as a member of the committee. As with all search committees, the composition must be at least 25% female.
  - Interviews with other department chairs in the college and with the deans (or their representative) from other colleges served by the department concerned should be included.
  - The recommendation for appointment should include the recommendation for faculty rank as well as the recommendation for appointment to chair.
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## ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCHES

Searches for administrators should follow the same procedures for tenure-track faculty and chair searches with the following exceptions:

- The President will appoint the search committee for vice presidents, deans, and directors. The appropriate dean/director will appoint for assistant/associate deans/directors.
- Membership of the committee should include a dean/associate dean from another college and a representative from the Faculty Senate. Normally, a dean or associate dean will chair the committee.
- The interview process should include the opportunity for the following individuals to meet with the candidate(s):

Search Committee  
Faculty of appropriate academic unit(s)  
Faculty Senate  
Deans and Associate Deans  
Graduate Dean  
Vice Presidents  
President

- Candidates will normally be asked to give a presentation (scholarly/philosophical) which should be open to all interested persons, especially the faculty members of the candidate's discipline.
- The department in which the candidate would hold faculty rank will be asked to submit a written recommendation to the search committee concerning the tenurability of the candidate.
- The search committee will make recommendation to the appointing authority.
- The finalist (for positions of vice president, dean, director) may be invited to visit the campus a second time. The candidate's spouse may be included in the second visit with prior approval.

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## INTERNAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEPARTMENT CHAIR SEARCHES

Normally, all faculty and academic administrative positions are filled following both a nationally and internally advertised search process. In certain instances, however, the University may elect to limit the search process for a dean, assistant/associate dean, department chair, or director to internal applicants. An internal search could be justified in any of the following circumstances:

- when there is consensus that a qualified individual is already with the University's employ and there is urgency to fill the position in order to prevent prolonged disruption of University services;
- when there is evidence that an internal search would provide an opportunity to comply with the University Affirmative Action Plan by appointing a qualified minority and/or female who is already within the University's employ; or
- when there are fiscal constraints.

In such cases, the appropriate vice president, in consultation with the dean or other appropriate administrative head, may declare an internal search to fill a vacancy. Internal searches should be conducted in the same manner as externally advertised searches with the exceptions of (1) limiting the position announcement to the University community, and (2) the search committee for internal department chair searches will be chaired by a department chair from another department.

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- ❖ **Final reporting must be made on ALL search activities using the Affirmative Action Report Form.** This includes searches that are successfully filled, closed, or canceled.
  - ❖ **Relevant forms for Faculty/Administrative searches are located on the Academic Affairs webpage, <http://www.southalabama.edu/academicaffairs/forms/facultyconsentform.pdf>.**
  - ❖ **Affirmative Action Cards may be obtained from the appropriate Vice President's Office.**