

[Major revision–posted 9/6/23 (replaces 2/24/23 edition)]  
[Updated link to Attachment A–9/11/23; no additional change to OP]  
[Updated Attachment C–12/20/23; no additional change to OP]  
[Updated contact information in Attachment C–3/21/24; no additional change to OP]



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

## Operating Policy and Procedure

### **OP 32.16: Faculty Recruitment Procedure**

**DATE:** September 6, 2023

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to standardize faculty recruitment processes and to comply with the requirements of state and federal law.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in August of odd-numbered years by the Vice Provost for Faculty Success (VPFS) or VPFS designee and the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) with substantive revisions presented to the Provost and Senior Vice President (PSVP).

### **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

#### **1. Policy**

##### **a. Policy Statement**

Texas Tech University (TTU or Texas Tech) is committed to teaching and advancing knowledge. Texas Tech's mission is to provide the highest standards of excellence in higher education, foster intellectual and personal development, and stimulate meaningful research and service to humankind. To realize these goals, it is the policy of TTU to identify, recruit, and select highly qualified individuals to grow and retain a successful and diverse faculty.

##### **b. Objective**

This policy aims to standardize faculty recruitment processes to grow and retain a successful and diverse faculty. To accomplish this objective, TTU shall conduct thorough searches that, per federal law applicable to federal contractors, include the active recruitment of qualified women, minorities, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities and that prioritize strategically increasing the breadth of disciplinary expertise among the TTU faculty body.

##### **c. Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action**

In compliance with state and federal law, TTU will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of sex (including pregnancy), race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected category, class, or characteristic. See [Texas Tech University System Regulation 07.09](#) (Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and Affirmative Action Program) and [Texas Tech University System Regulation 07.10](#) (Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedure).

As a federal contractor, TTU has implemented and maintains an Affirmative Action Program (AAP) as required by Executive Order 11246. TTU takes affirmative action to hire and advance qualified females, minorities, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities, and makes reasonable efforts to increase the number of such individuals in its hiring pools. From that process, TTU will select the most qualified applicant for the academic position without regard to sex (including pregnancy), race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected category, class, or characteristic.

d. Use of Terms

(1) Diversity

The term “diversity” includes the traditional categories of legally protected classes or characteristics articulated in item 1.c. Departments may further interpret diversity to mean hiring individuals with different degrees, college affiliations, and/or disciplinary, experiential, educational, and workforce backgrounds and areas of expertise.

(2) Minorities

As identified by the Office of Federal Contractor Compliance Programs (OFCCP) and as used in connection with the TTU AAP, minorities include Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, and individuals who identify as two or more races.

e. Application of Policy

This policy applies to full-time positions for all ranks across the following faculty titles: professor, professor of practice, research professor, archivist, and librarian. Although the specific procedures set out below are not required for the faculty titles of lecturer and visiting professor, these types of positions must nonetheless be posted, at a minimum, on the TTU website and open to applicants.

This policy applies to strategic hires and partner accommodations only as provided by sections 5 and 6 of this OP.

## 2. Search Committees and Position Descriptions

a. Search Committee Composition and Training

- (1) At the beginning of a dean-authorized faculty search, the department’s chair or their designee will appoint a search committee and name the chairperson.

The search committee must comprise at least three faculty members representing a diversity of backgrounds or specializations. Should that representation not be possible, a department chair, in consultation with the dean, may invite faculty from other related departments/colleges to participate on the committee. Inclusion of student representation on search committees must follow unit- and college-level policies. While student members of search committees may be asked to provide feedback on applications, they cannot participate in the formal evaluation of applicants. Except with

written permission from the PSVP, individuals not employed at Texas Tech University may not be appointed to full-time faculty search committees.

Search committee trainings shall be conducted to ensure equal opportunity in the recruitment process. The search committee chairperson and all search committee members must be current on search committee trainings for their respective roles, as follows:

- (a) Search committee chairpersons must complete training specific to management of the search process. This training focuses on preparing, distributing, and submitting required documents, using the institution's digital hiring platform, and designing the faculty search matrix.
- (b) Search committee members, including chairpersons, must complete training specific to the application of search processes such as evaluating applications, identifying finalists, and conducting interviews.

Search committee chairpersons and members are required to complete training once every five years. Search committee chairpersons and members who are not current on trainings are required to complete their respective trainings before participating in search-related activities.

(2) Use of External Search Firm

With prior written approval from the PSVP, an external third-party professional search firm may be used to supplement the search procedure outlined in subsection 2.a.(1) above.

If an external third-party professional search firm is used, a representative of the firm must attend the Search Committee Training required by section 2.a.(1). Additionally, the firm must collect and report the demographic data on all candidates who have applied for the open faculty position. Finally, the firm must comply with all requirements outlined in this Operating Policy.

b. Position Descriptions and Postings

- (1) The search committee shall develop the position description according to departmental and college procedures and using the institutional template (see Example Templates in Attachment A) appropriate to the position type.

Pending completion of departmental procedures for position description review and approval, the search committee chairperson will submit the position description for review and approval according to the following routing process:

- 1. The college dean;
- 2. The Office of Faculty Success;
- 3. The Office of the Vice President for Research & Innovation (for certain position types); and,
- 4. TTU Human Resources.

After the position description is fully approved, the search committee chairperson will post the position according to the following procedures and in support of ensuring a

diverse pool of applicants. Except as otherwise articulated in section 1.e, positions must be posted as follows for a minimum of four (4) weeks:

- (a) Post on the TTU Careers website;
- (b) Post in at least one national outlet;
- (c) Post in at least one discipline-specific outlet; and,
- (d) Post in at least one outlet directed at women, minorities, protected veterans, and/or individuals with disabilities.

Permission to deviate from these requirements must be secured in writing from the VPFS.

- (2) With approval of the VPFS, approved job advertisements may include more than one open faculty position; however, only identical faculty positions may share the same identification number. Different open faculty positions within the same job announcement must each have a unique identification number.

### **3. The Search Process**

- a. The search committee chairperson will prepare a screening matrix, which compares each candidate's qualifications with those stated in the position description (see Example Template in Attachment B). Search matrices follow a standard, institutional template with the opportunity for search committees to modify required and preferred qualifications. Search committees may request review of the proposed matrix from the office of the VPFS prior to reviewing applications for the position.
- b. Each required and preferred qualification in the position description must appear on the matrix. Search committee members must use qualitative assessments to evaluate each candidate's qualifications against those listed in the position description. The matrix will include drop-down menus so that committee members may select from a range of qualitative assessments to evaluate each application.
- c. The search committee may, using the completed matrices to inform its decision, identify a group of semi-finalists to be interviewed via phone or virtual meeting. Search committees must use a common set of questions posed to each semi-finalist; all questions must relate to the required and preferred qualifications as stated in the position description. Semi-finalists' responses to these questions, in combination with their evaluations on the matrix, shall inform the selection of a group of finalists from within the group of semi-finalists.
- d. The search committee shall identify finalists who will be invited to participate in a full on-campus interview; for positions that are approved to be entirely virtual (i.e., remote work), the traditional on-campus interview may be replaced with a comprehensive virtual interview. In addition, an exception for a full virtual interview in lieu of an on-campus interview will be allowed in certain circumstances, including but not limited to a candidate's travel or medical situations. After potential finalists have been identified and before any finalists are contacted or invited for an interview, the search committee chairperson must submit the search materials to the Office of Faculty Success for administrative certification.

Administrative certification is a review of search efforts to recruit qualified women, minorities, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities to apply for the open position. The certification process is as follows:

- (1) To certify the search, the search committee chairperson must first upload a copy of the search committee matrix—including the first and last names of each candidate and a designation of which candidate(s) the search committee would like to bring to campus for interviews—to the applicant tracking system. The search committee chairperson must also fully complete the online Faculty Addendum Form, including (a) the length of time the faculty job was advertised in each publication or website and (b) a comprehensive list of resources directed at women, minorities, veterans, and individuals with disabilities used to advertise the open faculty position. The VPFS or the VPFS designee and the OEO will then review the search effort and the applicant pool.
  - (2) Initial administrative certification review will be completed within five (5) working days of receiving the search committee's request to interview selected candidates.
  - (3) The search will not be certified unless the committee demonstrates that it has assembled a diverse pool of applicants or has made a good-faith effort to assemble a diverse pool of applicants before any candidate is invited to campus for interviews.
- e. After certification, the search committee chairperson will submit a list of the selected finalists (identified by Candidate Number) to the department chairperson, if any, and the dean or dean's representative for review. The list must be unranked and include brief summaries of each candidate's strengths and any areas needing improvement. Should the chairperson, if any, or dean wish to recommend removing an individual from the list of finalists selected by the search committee, an explanation must be provided to the committee chairperson and prior written approval must be obtained from the PSVP and the OEO and a written justification for the modification must be shared with the search committee chairperson.
- f. All finalists must be provided with itineraries that are as uniform as possible. While dates, times, and spaces may change, to the extent possible, the itineraries should include the same content. Content refers to presentations, teaching demonstrations, meetings, activities, and social events or meals. Normally, interviews for finalists for positions at the rank of professor will include a 30-minute meeting with a representative of the PSVP (usually the Vice Provost for Faculty Success or the Vice Provost for Administrative Affairs).
- g. After all interviews have concluded, the search committee will, in most cases, follow the procedures below to identify a single candidate from the group of finalists to whom an initial offer will be extended:
- (1) Search committees will solicit feedback on all finalists from departmental faculty and will, using obtained feedback, prepare a summary of the committee's findings, including finalists' strengths and areas in need of improvement.
  - (2) Committees may elect to indicate preference in the summary using language similar to this: "Candidate 4 is the preferred candidate because XYZ. Candidate 16 is an acceptable candidate should the preferred candidate decline an offer. Candidate 26 is not an acceptable candidate because XYZ."

- (3) Search committees will share the summary with the department chairperson and the dean or dean's representative.
- (4) The dean or dean's representative, department chairperson, and search committee chairperson will discuss the selection of a candidate to whom an initial offer letter will be extended. If the dean or chairperson select a candidate other than the committee's preferred candidate to whom an initial offer will be extended, the department chairperson will provide an explanation to the search committee chair.
- (5) The department chairperson will extend the initial offer on behalf of the dean.
- (6) If the candidate to whom an initial offer is extended declines the offer, the department chairperson may make the offer to the candidate indicated by the search committee as the next preferred candidate.

Colleges and/or their component academic units may choose to use a different process than what is described above for identifying a single finalist to whom an initial offer will be extended or multiple preferred finalists to whom offers will be extended in descending order. An alternative process must:

- (a) Describe the role of the search committee, faculty, department chairperson, and dean in identification of the candidate to whom an offer will be extended or multiple preferred finalists to whom offers will be extended in descending order;
- (b) Be reviewed and approved by the PSVP;
- (c) Be published in college and unit policies and procedures concerning faculty hiring and accessible to all faculty.

#### 4. The Hiring Process

- a. After the search, the department chair or dean of the college will send an initial offer letter and proposed startup packet, if applicable, using the [guidance and templates available through the Office of Faculty Success](#).
- b. Once the initial offer letter is approved, the department chair or dean will send the initial offer letter to the chosen candidate.
- c. When the dean or department chairperson receives the signed initial offer letter, the department chairperson, appointee, or area coordinator will be responsible for obtaining official transcripts for all relevant graduate degrees earned, current curriculum vitae, and an approved background check. The department will submit all documents to the college dean's office to request an official offer letter from the PSVP.
- d. The dean or dean's appointee will submit a *Request for Official Offer Letter* (see Attachment C) to the PSVP, together with all requested documents.
- e. When the dean and department chairperson receive a signed official offer letter from the PSVP, the department chairperson's designee will submit an *electronic Personnel Action Form* (ePAF) and ensure that approval routing includes the department chair, dean, and the PSVP.

- f. The search committee chairperson shall complete and maintain a copy of the *Faculty Recruitment Procedure Checklist* (see Attachment D) for every open position. The search committee chairperson shall submit this document to the VPFS or the VPFS designee, retaining one copy of this document in the department.
- g. By the time of appointment, TTU Human Resources must have received an electronic copy of the appointee's official transcripts, curriculum vitae, approved background check, and proof of authorization to work in the United States, along with the ePAF. Original, official relevant graduate school transcripts for all faculty hires must be filed with the PSVP.
- h. Departments must retain all records of faculty recruitment activities for three (3) years from the time of appointment. These recruitment records will include the position requirements; applicants' qualifications; voting results, if any; and reasons for the ranking or rejecting of potential candidates.
- i. A memo (see Attachment E) should be completed and forwarded to the OEO if a woman, minority, veteran, or a candidate with disabilities rejects an offer of employment and the reason(s) for that decision is known.
- j. If no qualified candidate is identified through the recruitment process or if a selected candidate(s) turns down an offer and no other qualified candidates are identified, the search shall be considered a failed search, and the search committee chairperson shall promptly notify the TTU Human Resources Office so that the search may be closed. Commencement of a new search shall be required to fill the vacant faculty position.
- k. Candidates who are not selected for an open faculty position and who were not previously dispositioned during the search process must be notified by the search committee chairperson by email or telephone call within 14 working days of the decision not to hire them.

## **5. Exception to the Search Process for Strategic Hires**

On limited occasions, with the authorization of the PSVP and dean of the college involved, an opportunity may arise to hire an extraordinarily talented faculty member (typically widely recognized in their field), therefore presenting a need to truncate the search process. The opportunity may be evident during a routine faculty search, through professional channels, or from the individual expressing an interest. In such cases, the department wishing to hire the faculty member must request an exception to established search procedures to move forward. The request will need to be substantiated by providing convincing evidence of the candidate's qualifications and accomplishments and how the candidate's hire will advance a strategic interest or goal of the university. The written request for a truncated search and supporting documentation are to be routed to the dean, the PSVP, and ultimately, to the President for approval (see Attachment F).

## **6. Exception to the Search Process for Partner Accommodations**

On limited occasions, with the authorization of the PSVP and the chief administrators or deans of the departments or colleges involved, an opportunity may arise to hire an exceedingly qualified faculty member (henceforth, primary hire) whose partner is also a qualified faculty candidate. In such situations, and with the written approval of the PSVP, no competitive search will be required if the primary hire's employment or retention agreement includes a confirmation that TTU will hire their partner (see Attachment G).

[Attachment A: Position Description Templates](#)

[Attachment B: Example of Matrix](#) (Example only. The Office of Faculty Success will create matrices according to Search Committee requests and will provide ready-to-use matrices directly to Search Committee members.)

[Attachment C: Form to Request Official Offer Letter](#)

Attachment D: *Faculty Recruitment Procedure Checklist (currently undergoing revisions)*

[Attachment E: Memo to PSVP re: Affirmative Action Information](#)

[Attachment F: Link to Form to Request Targeted Hire](#)

[Attachment G: Link to Form to Request Partner Accommodation](#)