

FACULTY RECRUITMENT AND HIRING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General

This process for screening and hiring faculty is adopted by the Western New Mexico University (WNMU) Administration pursuant to authority by the WNMU Board of Regents to the University President to develop a personnel system that addresses the recruitment and selection of personnel. The screening and hiring process at WNMU is intended to address three important goals. First, this process is designed to assist in hiring the best-qualified individuals for available faculty positions and to support WNMU's mission of excellence. Second, adherence to this process should ensure that sufficient effort has been made to include members from diverse, gender, cultural, racial and ethnic groups in the pool of applicants considered for interview for available positions. Third, a broad pool will allow the University to establish diversity within WNMU's faculty in accordance with the WNMU Affirmative Action Plan and furnish positive and successful role models for WNMU students.

This process is designed to encourage communication among the parties involved in hiring: Search Committee (SC), Department Chair (Chair), Dean, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs (Provost & VPAA), Human Resources (HR) and the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office (AA/EEO).

Objectives

The goal of the University's recruitment and hiring process is to achieve an excellent and balanced workforce with representation and participation from all of the diverse sectors of our society. The primary objectives of the process are:

- To attract and hire the best qualified candidates, matching the qualifications of the candidate to the needs and expectations of the faculty position and to support WNMU's mission of excellence.
- To assure the expeditious placement of qualified candidates into vacant positions.
- To increase participation of qualified candidates from underrepresented groups in applicant pools.
- To ensure fair and equitable treatment of all candidates in the recruitment and hiring process.

Confidentiality of Employment Applications

All persons involved in the personnel recruitment process at WNMU shall keep confidential the identity of candidates for employment and the deliberations of those responsible for screening candidates, except as provided in this policy. This policy applies not only to those with a designated role in the screening process but also to any other employee of the University who may become aware of the identity of a candidate or the details of the deliberations. For purposes of this policy "candidates" shall include either applicants or nominees for positions at WNMU.

The identity and resume/curriculum vita of a candidate shall be made public only in response to a request and only when interviews have been scheduled between that candidate and the Dean/Chair or between the candidate and the SC. For purposes of this policy the term “interviews” shall include meetings or discussions in which the Dean/Chair and the SC participate, either at the same time or in a series, and shall include discussions by telephone, in person, and/or email.

All candidates who are invited for interviews shall first be advised of the WNMU Faculty Recruitment and Hiring Policy and Procedures and shall be given the opportunity either to continue in the screening process or to withdraw. The names and curriculum vitae of candidates who withdraw shall be kept confidential. All requests for the names of candidates for University employment shall be referred to the President’s Office. Under all circumstances, letters of reference, the deliberations of the SC, and other similar evaluative materials shall be kept confidential with respect to all candidates.

Selection and Recruitment of SC Members

Faculty members are considered professionals and are, therefore, exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Exempt positions require an SC. All University employees are requested to participate as members of an SC from time to time. Participation on an SC is a vital component of duties and responsibilities for each University position and is considered to contribute to the good of the University community. The Dean/Chair will submit a memo listing the SC members which shall be approved by AA/EEO. The SC shall normally have three to five members including faculty members of the department filling the vacancy. Faculty members from other departments may be invited to serve on the committee. Community, staff, or student members may also be included on an SC as appropriate. An attempt will be made to include members of minority groups, women, or under-represented groups. Persons holding the following positions are exempt from participation on an SC: Director of Human Resources, Internal Auditor, and the AA/EEO Officer.

Hiring Process

- 1) To start the recruitment process, the Dean/Chair must obtain permission to hire from the Provost & VPAA then contact HR for an Employment Packet. The packet will contain the following forms where applicable: Employee Requisition Form* (ERF), Interview Request Form* (IRF), All in One Contract Request Form*, Hiring Process, Budget Revision Form, and any other applicable information. The Dean/Chair will submit an SC member list to AA/EEO for approval. Following approval of the SC member list, the SC will be trained by AA/EEO within 2 weeks. AA/EEO will be responsible for contacting the SC and the Dean/Chair to arrange a mutually convenient time for orientation. AA/EEO will address the SC and the Dean/Chair on Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action policies and laws. Any changes to the recommended SC member list will be communicated in writing to AA/EEO by the Dean/Chair. AA/EEO will copy HR on such SC changes for inclusion in the job file.

Upon receipt of an approved ERF, written job description, Faculty Salary Form completed by the Faculty Salary Advisor, and a budget revision, when applicable, HR will work with the Dean/Chair to prepare a draft copy of the advertisement and forward it with all support documentation to the Grant Accountant, when applicable, the Vice President for Business Affairs (VPBA), the President, and AA/EEO (effective July 1, 2001) for approval. The advertisement will identify the job, salary range, faculty classification (e.g. lecturer, instructor, professional rank, tenure track or non-tenure track, etc.), minimum educational and experience qualifications, application deadlines, and lists of required information to be included with the candidate's application, and how candidates may receive additional information related to the position. ***Positions will be posted for a minimum of six (6) working days, but faculty vacancies usually are posted for a minimum of 3 to 4 weeks to ensure an adequate applicant pool.*** Each advertisement will include a statement of the University's commitment to equal employment opportunity. Positions may be advertised as anticipated vacancies if there is uncertainty about funding. The Dean/Chair will review all recommended changes to the advertisement and forward to the Provost & VPAA for final approval. Advertisements containing extensive changes will be re-routed by email. HR, AA/EEO, Dean/Chair, and the Provost & VPAA shall determine the manner in which the position shall be advertised which may include advertising on a local, statewide and/or national basis. The manner of advertising should be sufficient to generate an adequate pool of qualified candidates and also to recruit members of minority groups, women, or under-represented groups for the department seeking to fill the vacancy. Internal and external advertising may occur simultaneously. Requests with sufficiently completed documents will be processed in the order received. HR will be responsible for maintaining the job file, monitoring the progress of the hiring process for timeliness, and reporting weekly to all of the Vice Presidents and the President on the status of each vacancy.

SC develops grid criteria based upon job advertisement and submits to AA/EEO for approval within 2 weeks following advertisement of the position. SC and Dean/Chair develop phone interview questions and reference questions and submit to AA/EEO for approval within 2 weeks following advertisement of the position. HR, SC, and Dean/Chair exchange e-mails during the entire hiring process to ensure open communication.

3. HR collects applications until position is filled. HR screens applicants, starting on the review, date based on minimum qualifications until the position is filled. HR submits applications to AA/EEO within 2 weeks of review date for pool approval. AA/EEO notifies HR of pool compliance status. If pool is disapproved, Dean/Chair will be notified by HR and instructed to send an electronic statement to AA/EEO justifying why he or she does or does not want to proceed with the hiring process. HR notifies the SC Chairperson that the applications are ready and are to be picked up within 5 working days.

4. Using the grid criteria (check marks only) the SC reviews the qualified applicants, chooses the top 3-5 applicants, and completes reference checks with documentation of responses in written format. SC electronically submits results to Dean/Chair. SC notifies HR and Dean/Chair when phone interviews will be conducted by submitting a Phone Interview Request Form. Approved phone interview questions will be used and answers documented. SC and Dean/Chair selects the top candidate to invite for an on-site interview.
5. SC emails the completed Interview Request Form* (IRF), including specific dates available for Provost & VPAA, Dean/Chair, and SC, with the interview packet (completed grid, summary of reference question responses, and phone interview results). SC also submits applications to the Dean/Chair and Provost & VPAA requesting approval and/or comments. HR requires a minimum of two weeks notice (preferably three weeks) to invite the top candidate for an on-site interview. An additional candidate may be invited only with approval from Provost & VPAA and HR.
7. HR contacts applicant with an offer to interview. Once the candidate accepts the interview, HR makes the necessary travel arrangements (airline, rental car, and hotel).
8. HR organizes the interview day using the dates and times listed on the approved IRF*. SC Chairperson schedules appropriate facilities and notifies HR of venues. HR notifies candidate as well as all participants in the interview process (includes confirmation from the candidate and interview itinerary). Lunch is provided for the candidate and Dean/Chair or designee only (per purchase authorization provided by HR). The on-site interview process may include additional steps such as an interview with Provost & VPAA or designee, or University President, a teaching demonstration, a campus tour, an open forum in which interested faculty, students, staff or community members may meet the candidate, or other activities requested by the Dean/Chair, or Provost & VPAA. An exit interview will be conducted with the interviewee by AA/EEO. When AA/EEO is not available, an exit interview will take place with AA/EEO's designee.
9. After the interview is completed, SC collects and collates the feedback and constructs a consolidated strengths and weaknesses memo (comments must be job-related and specific to the qualifications of the candidate compared to those required for the position). SC emails copies of the strengths and weaknesses memo to the Dean/Chair, Provost & VPAA, HR, and AA/EEO. All documents including applications, notes, reference checks and responses, and any other written and/or audio/video materials are returned to HR within two weeks of completion of the interview. The strengths and weaknesses memo should also contain whether or not the Dean/Chair is recommending the candidate for hire. The SC's involvement is complete at this point unless additional applications are to be reviewed.

10. Dean/Chair discusses strengths, weaknesses, and terms of verbal offer with the Provost & VPAA.

The Job Offer

Dean/Chair sends an email to HR requesting approval prior to making a verbal offer to the selected candidate. Offer should include salary (within advertised range), rank, requested start date, and years towards tenure with justification. Candidate must be authorized to work in the United States (I-9 Form*). Once approved by HR, the verbal offer shall be made by the Provost & VPAA or his or her designee. The Dean/Chair may be authorized to make the verbal offer after conferring with the Provost & VPAA. Notification of the job offer shall be submitted to HR. The official written offer will be sent from the Department of Academic Affairs. After an offer has been extended and accepted, HR is responsible for contacting in writing all unsuccessful candidates for the position.

If the Provost & VPAA disagrees with the Dean/Chair's recommendation, he or she shall meet with the Dean/Chair to discuss the decision. The final authority for making hiring decisions shall at all times reside with the Provost & VPAA or his or her designee. If the candidate does not accept the position or if the candidate withdraws after acceptance, the Dean/Chair may request approval to invite another candidate from the existing pool for an on-site interview.

Contract Request

Upon acceptance of the verbal offer, Dean/Chair submits for approval an All in One Contract Request Form* with an attached Required Employee Information Form* (completed by the candidate) to the Provost & VPAA or his or her designee. Once the Provost & VPAA has approved the contract request, the contract request is sent to HR. HR will approve the contract request if sufficient funds are available and route for final approval by the Grant Accountant, when applicable, the VPBA, and the President. Once HR receives the contract request with final approvals, a written contract of employment will be issued to the candidate. No employee is to work without a signed contract. Verification of employability in the United States will be handled by Payroll (PR) with completion of the I-9 Form. Employees not able to supply the proper documentation within three (3) working days will not be permitted to work. PR will immediately notify HR if the employee fails to meet I-9 compliance. HR will contact the Provost & VPAA if the employee fails to supply the necessary documents.

Benefits Consultation

Within three days of employment, new faculty should report to PR for a Benefits Consultation. This visit will include processing of new hire paperwork (must bring I-9 approved identification), a review of available benefits, and a mandatory web-based harassment/discrimination training. Within 30 days of hire, the new faculty must complete the benefits enrollment form with the Payroll & Benefits Specialist.

New Faculty Orientation

New Faculty will be notified of the date in writing by the Provost & VPAA and Dean/Chair of the New Faculty Orientation (usually held prior to the beginning of the fall semester).