Process for Faculty Selection & Hiring

Faculty vacancies may occur because of retirement or resignation. Likewise, new faculty lines may be approved as the college grows existing programs and begins new programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. For all faculty vacancies, the College will carefully assess how each position aligns with the College mission and strategic priorities, while also keeping the financial implications in mind.

Demonstration of Need and Key Action Plan (KAP) Requests for New Faculty Positions

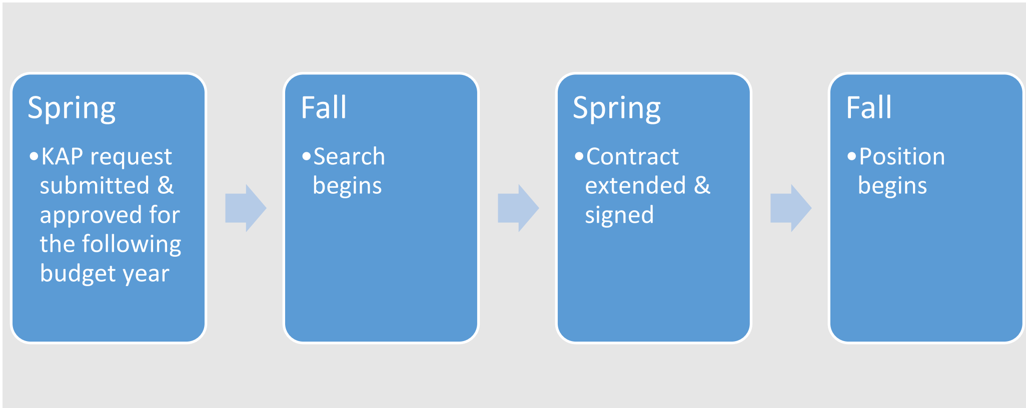
The KAP process is a mechanism for securing new resources in the budget. As part of the KAP requisition process, the dean of the school (or department chair if no school dean presides) presents a business case to the provost as a demonstration of the need for new faculty lines, including:

- Annual teaching load for the position (including course numbers, historical enrollments in those courses, and what academic areas are to be supported by these courses [major, core, honors, etc.])
- Impact of this position on workloads within the department
- Academic specialty that aligns with the strategic goals of the College
- Impact on student-faculty ratio (using data from the Academic Program Review or from OIRA)
- Enrollment trends within the school, department and College connected specifically to this position
- Financial pro forma for the program reflecting staffing projections (required for all new programs)
- Other variables, including compliance with accreditation standards, etc.

In all cases, new annual contract (AC) faculty lines must be requested through the annual budgeting process, which includes submission of a KAP request. Labor and Operational KAPS are typically due to the provost in January/February of the preceding budget year. For example, if an AC position is needed for FY 2022 (fall 2021 start), an operational/labor KAP request is due in January 2020. To clarify, the budget year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

For new faculty searches to commence according to the timeline noted below, the KAP request for the faculty position must be submitted and approved in the spring semester before the search begins the following fall. Assuming the search is successful, the position will begin in the fall, one year later.

General Timeline for New Faculty Searches



Specific Timeline for New Faculty Searches

Spring: KAP requests for faculty positions must be submitted to the provost by the published deadline for LABOR/OPERATIONAL KAPs (typically January/February). KAP must include Job Requisition and Job Description (see below), inclusive of benchmarked salary data which HR can provide. If approved, the Job Description will serve as the basis for the job posting.

Fall: Ideally, all faculty positions for the following year should be posted on the College website by August 1. Beyond the College's HR website, additional job postings may coincide with the timing of professional conferences and must be overseen by the school or department. Virtual interviews of top candidates should be completed in the fall or early spring. Also, on-campus interviews should be completed promptly after virtual interviews.

Spring: As necessary, all on-campus interviews for top candidates should be completed and finalists selected. Offers should be extended by the provost and contracts finalized by the end of March.

Fall: All new faculty contracts begin on August 1.

Job Requisition and Job Description

Submission and approval of the KAP request is the first step in securing a new faculty line. After the KAP has been approved, the school or department must formally submit their request for the approved AC faculty position (full-time tenure track and part-time) to the provost for consideration. A preliminary conversation with the provost is helpful and can often save time. Requests should be accompanied by:

- A completed **job requisition** (reflecting desired timeline of search and appointment, and benchmarked salary range)
- A **job description** that (from the faculty handbook):
    - Complies with the existing HR template for all job descriptions (available on the HR webpage).

- Is formulated in consultation with the appropriate faculty and departments; the provost must approve the final job description.
- Outlines the curricular needs to be met by the new faculty member.
- Identifies any areas of specialization being sought.
- Identifies any general curricular and instructional needs to be met by the position.
- Specifies the academic degree required and/or desired and the experience required for the position.
- Identifies competencies needed, including a growth mindset, approachability, and a commitment to student success
- Specifies any other administrative responsibilities of the position.

Per current Faculty Code guidelines, AC faculty (except those completing a terminal degree) are expected to hold an earned doctorate, an approved terminal degree, or equivalent professional experience in an appropriate area of specialization. In those instances when the terminal degree is not an earned doctorate, the academic department (as part of its request for a new position) must provide documentation that the terminal degree is in accordance with nationally recognized standards for hiring, tenure, and promotion in the discipline. The provost, in consultation with the department, must approve all exceptions to the earned doctorate.

The job requisition should come with a proposed search committee (subject to provost approval). Based upon careful review of these materials, the provost may opt to advance the job requisition to Senior Team for review. The provost may also opt to deny or delay the requisition.

If the job requisition is advanced, the senior team will review the request and all supporting materials. If approved by senior team, the job requisition must then be approved by the president and advanced to Human Resources for action and posting on the HR website. Senior team meetings typically occur each week on Thursday morning. Approved job requisitions are posted the following Friday or soon thereafter. All positions should ideally be posted by August 1.

Searches for AC faculty must commence as early as possible in the fall semester and ideally conclude by the end of the fall semester, but no later than February of the subsequent spring semester. Depending on the professional calendar in specific disciplines, some departments may find it beneficial to modify this timeline to maximize opportunities for recruitment of top candidates at professional conferences. Exceptions to the timeline must be approved by the provost before the search begins.

Positions will be posted through Human Resources once the job requisition approved by senior team and the president has been received; the posting must clarify the application deadline and contract start date. All AC faculty positions require a national search. As such, position announcements are automatically posted on the following websites. The school or department is responsible for funding and posting to any additional discipline-specific external sites, except for diversity sites specific to a discipline, e.g., National Association of Black Counselors or Latinos for Education. Human Resources will pay for additional DEI advertising.

- Hood's Job Board
- Chronicle.com
- HigherEdJobs.com
- Diversity Resources via HigherEdJobs.com
- LinkedIn.com
- Indeed.com

Process to Request Replacement of an Existing Faculty Position

A faculty position that is currently in the budget and vacant due to someone leaving (e.g. retirement, resignation, termination, etc.) must go through a similar vetting process. All vacant positions at the College are reviewed to ensure ongoing alignment with the institution's strategic priorities and needs. Budget and other considerations must also be carefully weighed. Vacant positions may be either refilled, reallocated, modified, delayed, or discontinued.

Similar to the process for new faculty lines, to petition for replacement of an existing faculty position, the dean of the school (or department chair if no school dean presides) must present a business case to the provost as a demonstration of the need to replace the faculty member, including:

- Annual teaching load for the position (including course numbers, historical enrollments in those courses, and what academic areas are to be supported by these courses [major, core, honors, etc.])
- Impact of this position on workloads within the department
- Academic specialty that aligns with the strategic goals of the College
- Impact on student-faculty ratio
- Enrollment trends within the school, department and College connected specifically to this position
- Financial pro forma for the program reflecting staffing projections (required for all new programs)
- Other variables, including compliance with accreditation standards, etc.

Also similar to the process described above for new faculty requests, requests to replace a faculty member must be accompanied by an updated job description and job requisition (see previous section on Job Requisition and Job Description).

All this information must be submitted to the provost for consideration. The timing for submission should align with the need to secure an appointment in time for either a fall or spring start following the departure. If approved by the provost, the requisition will be advanced to senior team for review and decision. If senior team and the president approve, the position will be advanced to HR for posting.

The search timeline for existing faculty vacancies is similar to the timeline described above for new faculty positions. The position announcement should be posted by August 1, with virtual and on-campus interviews completed by the end of the fall semester. Offers should be extended, and contracts finalized no later than March, with the replacement faculty member contract beginning on August 1.

Bias in the Hiring Process & Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Training

Hood College supports employment practices of equal opportunity in all personnel policies. The goal for any search committee should be to eliminate bias from the hiring process. Bias, albeit unintentional, is common. In fact, research highlights that bias is present during a search committee's evaluation of a candidate's application, during the candidate's interviews, and when making a final hiring decision (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Moss-Racusin, et al., 2012).

When biases are left unchecked or go unnoticed, they can blur our ability to make sound and equitable decisions. Search committee members should be aware of potential biases that can produce additional exclusions during the selection and hiring process. False narratives about a candidate are not just formed in the first few seconds of reviewing an application but can be formed before the position is ever posted, and those narratives can influence the overall equity of the hiring process. More information about bias is available in Appendix A.

Members of the faculty search committee, as well as the Provost and the President, are required to complete Implicit Bias training with the Division of Community & Inclusivity's Director of Inclusive Excellence before starting a search process and annually thereafter. The dean of the school (or department chair if no school dean presides) is responsible for scheduling this session and ensuring that search committee members attend. Additional online training resources are available via the HR website, including Conducting Job Interviews, and Diversity in the Workplace. However, these are not a substitute for the in-person requirement mentioned above.

Search Committee

A search committee should be established and include some or all faculty in the school or department. It is also beneficial to include faculty, staff, or students from outside the department or school to provide diversity of thought on the search committee. Also, search committee membership should reflect racial/ethnic and gender diversity. The committee carries out the preliminary stages of the screening process. They recommend the acceptable candidates from among those interviewed to the provost. Additional information about search committees is available in The Faculty Handbook.

For positions that focus primarily on graduate programs, the dean of the graduate school or their delegate must be included on the search committee.

In any search, the search committee advises the hiring manager. For searches to fill faculty positions, the hiring manager is ultimately the president, whose authority is delegated to the provost. As such, the Search Committee provides the provost with a summary report noting each finalist's overall strengths and weaknesses relative to the position description and job requirements, as well as any relevant quantitative metrics gathered through the interview process (e.g., rubric scores, presentation evaluation scores, etc.).

Search Process

Per Faculty Code, the dean of the school (or department chair if no dean presides), in collaboration with both the departmental faculty and the provost, has initial responsibility for securing candidates to fill positions approved by senior team and the president.

The search committee is given access to the applicant pool for review of CVs, cover letters, and other materials submitted to HR. Candidates deemed to be qualified at this point should advance to an initial interview process. An Evaluation of Candidates form is available to assess each applicant's materials and determine who will advance to the initial round of interviews.

To prepare for initial and in-person interviews, the dean of the school, department chair and/or committee establishes a standard set of interview questions directly correlated to specific role criteria and competencies. The committee should divide up the questions and determine the order of asking questions. All interviewed candidates should be asked the same primary questions. It is appropriate to ask probing or follow-up questions which will vary based on a candidate's responses. It is also acceptable to query candidates about certain items on a candidate's resume or vitae or in their letters of application or reference. Guidance about standardized questions is available via the Conducting Job Interviews training on the HR website or you can consult with the Director of Human Resources. The website also has a link to illegal questions to avoid during interviews. Time should be allotted at the end of an interview for the candidate to ask questions of the search committee.

Search committees should conduct the initial round of virtual interviews in early fall, and on-campus interviews for 2-4 finalists should be completed before the end of the fall semester.

Search committees should consider these additional best practices before starting the interview process:

- Establish an interview format (i.e., structured, conversational, individual or group).
- Carefully schedule interviews and consider adding 25% more time to the anticipated time it will take.

- Familiarize yourself with applicant's materials.
- Provide a comfortable environment.
- Relax, listen, and take notes. Let the candidate know your format and inform them you will be taking notes.

The department's faculty services administrator invites and schedules candidates for preliminary and on-campus interviews and oversees travel expense report processing. They or the provost's office can provide details on what an on-campus interview schedule includes such as who candidates meet, and how to get student and other stakeholder input. Finalists scheduled for on-campus interviews should be sent a packet of College information before coming to campus, including Catalog, Viewbook, benefit information, and other items if requested). These documents can be shared in links via email.

On-campus interviews often include members of the committee taking a candidate out to dinner and showing off the Frederick area. A candidate's dietary needs/restrictions should be considered when selecting a local restaurant. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited at these meals. See On-Campus Interviews and Expenses in the Faculty Handbook for additional information.

Documentation & References

Review of applications is commonly a rolling process, with preliminary interviews of earlier applicants taking place while initial applications are being received from later ones. It is, therefore, important to keep careful records of actions at the various stages.

Each committee member must evaluate a candidate using a rubric or evaluation form using guidance available on the HR website to ensure fair and equitable decision making. Administrators or other community members who interact with candidates brought to campus for interviews should be asked to complete an evaluation form too. Allow time to discuss ratings and debrief immediately following the interview. Discuss any differences in ratings and be sure to consider all perspectives. More information about best practices for search committees is available in Appendix A.

It is strongly encouraged that the dean of the school, department chair or search committee hold telephone conversations with references for the final candidates. These references can be the same individuals who submit written references or additional references. The candidate must agree that references may be telephoned. A reference check form is available on the HR website.

SHRM (Society of Human Resource Management) advises that "federal laws addressing the retention of...hiring records, include Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)." Therefore, search committees must retain hiring records for each position for at least one year from the date the position is filled. Hiring records include applications and resumes considered for the position, evaluation forms and rubrics, and reference checks. The department chair is responsible for saving hiring records on a department shared drive or OneDrive account that is easily accessible regardless of who chairs the department in the future.

AC Faculty Appointments

Per the Faculty Handbook, a hiring report must be submitted to the Office of the Provost with the committee's assessment of the finalists interviewed. The hiring report should contain the following information:

- Job title
- Salary and benefits
- Qualifications required (education, experience, etc.)
- A copy of the job description
- A copy of the advertisement(s)
- A listing of where advertisements were placed
- A summary of reference contacts made for each finalist, and copies of letters of recommendation submitted by the candidate(s)
- A summary of other efforts made to broaden the applicant pool
- The total number of applicants, number of applicants interviewed at each stage, including information about:
    - the number of underrepresented candidates, with specific classifications if possible
    - numbers of candidates per gender identity
    - number meeting job requirements (degree, etc.)
- Format of interviews
- A statement explaining why the successful finalists were chosen
- Search conclusions containing information on the attempt to recruit a diverse pool of applicants

At a minimum, the search committee must present two qualified finalists to the Office of the Provost, or the process will be deemed a failed search.

Per the Faculty Code, all faculty appointments are made by the President, in consultation with the provost, and upon recommendation made by the dean of the school (or chairperson of the department if no dean presides). The President reports the appointments to the Board as a matter of information.

The provost is responsible for negotiating a contract with the candidate selected for a position.

Regarding the process for faculty appointments, further details may be found in the Faculty Handbook, Section 3.1. D, Hiring Procedures.

APPENDIX A

The Case for Bias in Search Committees

Biases are a salient to who we are as humans. To make sense and process complexities of our day to day lives, we unconsciously create mental schemas. Schemas are templates of knowledge that sort specific examples into broader categories. In these schemas, generally, we form bias -- generalizations, stereotypes, attitudes, and associations-- based on individual experiences. These biases incorporate our beliefs, values and experiences, and often impact our social and professional circles.

Bias, albeit unintentional, is common during a hiring process. In fact, research highlights that bias is present during a search committees' evaluation of a candidate's application, during the candidate's interviews, and when making a final hiring decision (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Moss-Racusin, et al., 2012).

When biases are left unchecked or go unnoticed, they can blur our ability to make sound and equitable decisions (Posselt et al., 2020). Recruiters, hiring managers, and others who participate in the hiring process should be aware of potential biases that can produce additional exclusions during the hiring and selection process. False narratives about a candidate are not just formed in the first few seconds of reviewing an application but can be formed before the position is ever posted, and those narratives can influence the overall equity of the hiring process.

Types of Bias

Explicit Bias

Explicit bias incorporates the attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that we are aware of and acknowledge (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Explicit biases are intentional and typically derive from our personal beliefs and values, life experiences, and the desire to belong or be surrounded by people similar to ourselves. **When reviewing a resume, explicit bias may be expressed in intentionally only interviewing candidates who graduated from a certain school or the deliberate dismissal of qualified candidates who have not earned a degree.**

Institutional Bias

Institutional norms, practices, procedures, and policies that create a culture of belonging for the dominant social groups in the workforce, while creating a disparate impact and culture of isolation for those who may be underrepresented in the workforce (Oxford Reference, 2024). **When developing evaluation criteria or job postings, institutional bias may be expressed in unnecessarily adding an advanced degree as a "desired qualification" or seeking applicants with knowledge of UW systems.**

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias incorporates attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that we are not aware of and do not control (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Consider the expression of “running on autopilot.” Many of our day-to-day actions are performed subconsciously or without much thought. Likewise, our implicit biases may go unnoticed in our daily lives and can show up in ways that conflict with our stated beliefs and values. **Even if you are working to create a fair and equitable hiring process, undetected biases can have a negative impact on your screening and selection decisions.**

Key Characteristics of Implicit Bias

- Inherent in our make-up as human beings (intuitive vs analytical)
- Often based on stereotypes, exposure, lived experience, and dominant culture
- May not align with our declared or perceived values
- May not be mutually exclusive of our explicit biases
- Impact is often explicit and may show up as discrimination, racism, homophobia, etc.
- Hinders the ability to assess and evaluate equitably
- Impacts our decisions, perceptions, and positionality

Ways to Mitigate Bias on Search Committees

Become aware of your internal biases and how they may affect others involved in the search process (Hode, 2022). You can bring awareness to your internal biases by asking the following questions when evaluating applicant’s interview materials:

- Does this applicant remind me of myself or someone I know?
- Are there elements of this resume such as format or style that positively or negatively influence my overall impression?
- What elements of this resume am I considering that are not relevant to the job? Are they connected to the pre-determined competencies in the rubric?
- Am I evaluating the skills and experience listed on the resume or my interpretations and assumptions of the candidate’s?
- What ways have I already excluded or endorsed this candidate? Why?

Ask yourself and the search committee:

- Why do we see this applicant this way?
- Could our “norms” or assumptions be factors?
- Do we have the information we need to make this conclusion?
- Is this conclusion evidence-based?
- Have we considered all perspectives?
- Look for ways to say yes:
    - Don’t overlook or undervalue the unfamiliar or unexpected.
    - Compare candidates to criteria.

- More experience doesn't always mean most experienced.
- Recognize the ways institutional bias may influence how you define merit and excellence.
- Consider culture adds, which are the various forms of diversity that add value to your team and department.

Best Practices for Search Committees

- Criteria should be based on the candidate evaluation form developed by the hiring team and search committee.
- **Questions Matter:** Interview (phone and in-person) questions should directly correlate to specific criteria and competencies being rated on the form.
- **All members on the search committee** should help **define and confirm expectations** and components of a "quality answer" prior to starting the candidate evaluation process.
- **Hold each member accountable** to be consistent in rating. Discuss with the committee what defines each rating, e.g., what is the difference between a 2 and 3?
- **Discuss** multiple ways candidates can meet or demonstrate the criteria prior to screening but be consistent and equitable.
- Include brief descriptors or indicators for each criterion being evaluated (can pull directly from candidate evaluation form).
- **Check-In.** Briefly review criteria and expectations prior to all interviews to ensure consistency.
- **Assume Bias. Audit your Bias.** Ask yourself and committee:
  - What ways have we already excluded or endorsed this candidate? Why?
  - Could our "assumptions, or biases be affecting our rating?
  - Do we have the information we need to make this conclusion?
  - Are there attributes about this person such as style or appearance that positively or negatively influence my overall impression?
- **Identify top competencies** and high priority requirements (not all criteria will be weighted the same).
- Prior to rating, **create three groups** in which to rank candidates. Consider using minimally qualified, qualified, or highly qualified.
- Ratings should be used for **consistency and documentation** purposes only. Total scores should not be used as the sole deciding factor.
- Allow time to discuss rating and **debrief immediately** following the interview. Discuss any differences in ratings and be sure to consider all perspectives.
- **Discuss strengths first.** Discuss strengths and any potential skills gaps and challenges for each candidate. Reference the predetermined criteria when discussing ratings and candidates.

- **Don't hold candidates to individual "scores."** Use ratings to help assess each candidate's qualification to the criteria and scores to help group candidates into minimally qualified, qualified, or highly qualified.
- Consider using a **group range vs individual ranking system** when grouping candidates, e.g., all candidates with scores totaling 15 to 20 will be considered top-tier or highly qualified. After groups are identified, audit the diversity of your "highly qualified" pool.
- **Select** the candidate that is most qualified for the role. Most qualified does not automatically mean the candidate who is most formally educated or with the most years of experience. It also does not mean the candidate with the overall highest score. The most qualified candidate is the candidate who can demonstrate they meet or exceed the criteria for the role and may also bring a different cultural perspective or unique expertise to the position and department.

Resources

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