

## Roles, Responsibilities, and the Relationship Between Search Committee and Hiring Unit Head

A few faculty hiring details are documented on a University website but it does not address who attends search committee meetings:

(<https://www.memphis.edu/aa/resources/adminres/facultyhiring/index.php>).

There appears to be no documented U of M policies that distinguish the responsibilities of a faculty search committee and a Unit head (chair or dean) during the selection process, who can attend search committee meetings, etc. The excerpts below are from the applicable policy AA3013. Very little is specified for Unit head responsibilities. Those relevant to the unit head are indicated in blue, and those relevant to the committee are red.

### **AA3013 - Recruitment, Application, and Selection of Faculty POLICIES Issued: February 15, 2017**

(<https://memphis.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=523&public=true>)

Search Committee - the search committee **acts in an advisory capacity to the appropriate administrative official**. When a search committee is used, **the committee will be selected to screen applications and make recommendations to the appropriate administrative official. The unit head may select the chair of the search committee or ask the search committee to select a committee member to serve as the chair**. The search committee should include representatives of the department, with representation of women and minorities. The search committee's duties and responsibilities will include the following:

- assist search committee chair with writing the specific job description and qualifications;
- select where and when job vacancy announcements will be placed;
- make telephone calls and/or any other recruitment activities to generate an acceptable pool;
- review all materials submitted by applicants;
- evaluate candidates in terms of specified criteria and procedures only;
- attend all committee meetings;
- participate in final evaluation of candidates and **recommend a pool of applicants to the unit head**.

The **unit head should appoint a person to serve in an administrative capacity for the duration of the search to assist with logistical and committee support issues that may arise**.

The committee reviewed policies at other universities and found an example which clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of the search committee, the unit head, and the relationship between them. (<https://humanresources.umn.edu/post-and-recruit/searchcommittees#anchor-relationship>). Excerpts are presented below

### **Relationship Between the Responsible Administrator and the Search Committee**

The responsible administrator selects people to serve on search committees.

These committees are created to provide a broad perspective and insight to the responsible administrator.

Responsible administrators do not participate in the activities and deliberations of the committee in order to allow for advice independent of influence or control.

The search chair is expected to keep the responsible administrator continually informed of the search status.

The responsible administrator retains responsibility to make the final hiring decision.

The responsible administrator has access to all applicant files and may choose to select additional applicants from the pool for further consideration.

The responsible administrator may nominate individuals as candidates.

### **Recommendations**

The Administrative Policies Committee recommends revising AA3013 to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the unit head and the search committee. Further, the relationship between the responsible unit head and the search committee should be clearly articulated to align with best practices.

Specific Points that should be addressed and clarified in the revision of policy AA3013:

- The unit head responsible for the hire cannot serve as a member of the search committee
- The unit head responsible for the hire selects the chair of the search committee and may delegate the selection of the search committee members to the search committee chair or select the other search committee members
- The unit head responsible for the hire does not participate in the meetings and deliberations of the search committee
- The unit head has the responsibility to make the final hiring decision
- The unit head may suggest additional candidates in consultation with the committee
- The unit head should only communicate with the search committee chair regarding details of the search process. The unit head should not communicate with members of the search committee about the search once the search has started.