

Search Process for Faculty and Administrative Positions

Hiring new faculty is one of the most important responsibilities of an academic program. These decisions can affect a department for years to come. At VSU, the hiring process should begin with a discussion within an academic program about positions needed for the future growth and development of that program, not just about replacing a person with someone in the same field. When an academic program wishes to search for a position, it should take all steps to ensure that the search is carried out by a fair and equitable process that will attract a strong and diverse pool of candidates to VSU. Below are the general steps in the hiring process:

Steps to Request Searches – Path: Department Head → Dean → Provost

1. Department heads should initiate the following packet of materials and forward to their Dean for review:
 - a. Position Justification form for each position being requested (rehire or new)
 - b. Faculty Rehire Justification IR data packet – found on the Blazer Insights portal by logging into MyVSU
 - a. Enter data from Blazer Insights into this document. (Enter data as appears in Insights. Do not edit.)

NOTE: Please provide documents in Word format to allow for easy editing.

2. Deans should review the position justifications from all the college departments and develop a college-wide hiring plan to discuss with the Provost. No plans for hiring can move forward without the Provost's approval.

Steps to Post Faculty Positions – HR/Academic Affairs

1. Once a search is approved by the President, the department and Academic Affairs should be prepared to move quickly. Academic Affairs will prepare a Personnel Action Request (PAR) (<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/human-resources/documents/par-for-lusg-10-2019.pdf>) and initiate in DocuSign for required signatures. Simultaneously, Academic Affairs will also work with the Dean/Department Head to have the position description reviewed/updated. This position description should address the following:
 - rank
 - status (10 month/12 month)
 - tenure vs. non-tenure track
 - position responsibilities (including expectations for time on campus and/or online)
 - required and preferred qualifications and experience
 - names of at least three references to be contacted (two of the three must be able to address the applicant's teaching experience or potential), and
 - application deadlines (**NOTE:** For most full-time faculty positions, a minimum of 30 days is required for the receipt of applications).
 - CV

- Cover letter that addresses teaching, service, scholarship, and commitment to diversity and inclusion

Note: All positions must include the boilerplate language under minimum requirements: Demonstrated commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, as well as scholarship. Commitment to diversity and inclusion.

2. Academic Affairs will forward the approved PAR and updated Position Description to Human Resources. By this point, the department head should have appointed a chair of the departmental search committee. Depending on common departmental practices/by-laws, the department head may appoint the entire committee or appoint the committee in consultation with the search committee chair. The search committee should include a chair as well as appropriate stakeholders. Moreover, a department head search committee should include a student member. Department head search committees are appointed by the dean.
3. Human Resources will initiate the posting in OneUSG Careers and submit for approvals. Workflow approvals include Faculty Manager, Department Head, Dean, Budget, Provost, and Human Resources for final review and posting.
4. Once posted on the Human Resources OneUSG website, Academic Affairs will post to the USG Applicant Clearinghouse database, HigherEdJobs.com and the Chronicle of Higher Education online. Academic Affairs will work with departments on any additional professional venues for posting.
5. Academic Affairs will work with Creative Services to develop a one-page pdf that can be used by the department and/or search committee to recruit for the position.

Search Committee Steps

1. Once the posting has gone live, the search committee should have an initial meeting (if it has not already at this point), for the dean/department head to deliver the committee's charge. This initial meeting should also include representatives from the Office of Social Equity and Human Resources. The department head and these representatives will review the search protocols, which should include a rubric/matrix outlining the specific criteria used to evaluate all applicants. Such criteria should be drawn from the qualifications and job description in the position announcement. These criteria and an evaluation matrix developed from them will be used in each phase of the selection process. (See sample rubrics in appendix.) It is important to note that all applicants must be treated the same at each phase of the process from the initial screening of minimum qualifications through the on-site interviews and recommendations. Additionally, search committee members should be reminded that the work of the committee is confidential. Hiring Managers/Search Committee Chairs must follow the guide provided by Human Resources to transition applicants in the portal.
2. The committee should move quickly to review applications. Within a week to ten working days after the application deadline, the Search Committee Chair should be prepared to submit to the Office of Social Equity (OSE) a listing of applicants to consider further via a Teams interview. This submission should be done via email to

OSEreview@valdosta.edu. The committee should include the rubric used to determine finalists. This list should be unranked and contain the names of all applicants, including an explanation of why excluded candidates will no longer be considered.

3. Once OSE has completed its review, that office will notify the Search Committee Chair and Department Head with a cc: to Academic Affairs that the committee is free to move to the next step of the process. OSE may also request that a committee take a further look at an applicant not on the initial interview list, who appears to meet the minimum qualifications, in order to diversify the pool.
4. Depending on the size of the applicant pool, the next step will be Teams interviews to narrow the pool further OR a request for on-campus interview.
5. Reference checks should be made on at least the top four candidates.
 - a. At least one of these references must be a direct supervisor, who must be interviewed before any on-campus visit is approved. If the candidate does not list any direct supervisor, the department head and dean should consult how to proceed.
6. Once these reference checks are completed, the committee should forward to the Department Head a request for campus interviews that would, under normal circumstances, include a minimum of three applicants.
7. The Department Head will then request the Dean's approval to move ahead. The Dean will then email the Provost requesting approval to move forward with on-campus interviews.
8. Once on-campus interviews are approved and the applicants have a confirmed date to interview, the Search Committee Chair or Department Head must email Academic Affairs (hhatcher@valdosta.edu) with the names and interview dates. Academic Affairs will then email each applicant with next steps. (**NOTE:** On some occasions, units of the University System receive applications from faculty members from other units of the System. If the search committee has identified another faculty member in the System, the committee should alert the Provost so that a request to bring this person in for a campus interview can be forwarded to the President of the sister institution.)
The Search Committee Chair will work to coordinate the on-campus interview day. After candidates have accepted a campus interview invitation, an itinerary for each candidate should be provided via email to Academic Affairs: hhatcher@valdosta.edu.
9. On-campus interviews should include the same basic itinerary for all candidates:
 - Interview with the departmental search committee
 - Individual and/or group interviews with departmental faculty and other relevant stakeholders
 - Individual interview with the department head
 - Individual Interview with the Dean or designee
 - Teaching demonstration to students/faculty
 - Meeting with students in the department or program
 - Other meetings as appropriate to the position
 - Tour of the campus and Valdosta area
 - Meals with department members or other invitees

10. As soon as possible (within no more than five days) following the conclusion of all on-campus interviews, the search committee should solicit feedback from faculty in the department/program according to departmental practice/by-laws. The search committee will then make a recommendation to the Department Head or Dean regarding to whom (one or more candidates) an informal offer could be extended.

Note: In accordance with the policies of the University System of Georgia, all application materials and committee actions (including written records) are subject to the Open Records Act.

Note: Social media and internet searches on candidates are allowed but should not be done until just prior to campus interviews. If concerns arise, the department head should consult with the dean and provost.

Administrative Steps for Extending an Informal Offer

1. The department head will discuss the search committee's recommendation with the committee, or entire department before forwarding a hiring recommendation to the dean. If more than one candidate is acceptable, the committee should provide a rationale for their recommendation. If the dean accepts the recommendation, the dean will email the Provost a request to move ahead with the informal offer. The email should include the following:
 - name of the applicant
 - posting Job ID #
 - rank
 - tenure status
 - relocation allowance (if requesting), and
 - initial salary.

Once approval is given, the department head/dean may proceed with the informal offer.

2. The Dean or the Department Head will then call the applicant using the following language:
 - a. *On behalf of the Department of XXXX, I am calling to let you know that I have recommended to the Provost that an offer of employment be extended to you for a (tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure track) position as (job title) of (discipline) at Valdosta State University (VSU), starting (date) and at a base salary of (salary). I have every expectation that the Provost will give his approval. Assuming the Provost concurs, he will extend an offer of employment to you in writing within a few days. This offer will be contingent on completion of a satisfactory background check, on establishing that the finalist has the right to work in the United States, as well as upon our receipt of official transcripts and any other items noted. Please feel free to contact me in the interim should you have any questions or concerns.*
 - b. If the candidate wishes to negotiate, the department head and dean will discuss and then get final approval from the Provost about any adjusted details. The Board of Regents of the University System allows a maximum of three years that

can be applied to tenure and/or promotion. These years are based on years of higher education experience and any years of credit applied toward tenure and/or promotion must be included in the formal written offer mailed. Rank offered must reflect the rank stated in the job ad.

3. Once the candidate accepts the informal offer, the department head will notify the dean via email. The dean will then contact the Provost and Academic Affairs (hhatcher@valdosta.edu) with all details for a formal offer. The formal offer letter will be emailed to the applicant and once accepted will be included in the OneUSG portal as part of the offer process to the applicant.
4. At the conclusion of the search/hire process the Hiring Manager should forward to Shelby Lamar in HR all search documents used to make the hiring decision.
5. The department head should personally contact the candidates who were not selected and inform them of the decision.