

Weinberg Faculty Searches – Committee Tips

The goal

Weinberg College appoints the strongest possible candidates to its faculty, individuals who show outstanding potential or accomplishment in scholarship and meet similarly high standards in their teaching. The College is committed to increasing the diversity of its faculty. Success requires concerted, well-planned action on the part of the search committee, the department chairperson, and the department at large.

A search is more than an ad

A search committee must also seek out the names of outstanding candidates by means of letters and phone calls, and solicit applications from strong candidates who have not already applied. No one should assume that every strong candidate automatically applies to Northwestern. Department members have a responsibility to keep informed of outstanding junior scholars soon coming onto the market. When a senior search is authorized, a department should develop a wish list of potential candidates and then invite their applications. Wooing senior candidates can take time; be patient but reasonably persistent.

Serious candidates require thoughtful preparations

Plan carefully for a successful visit. If possible, arrange in advance for transportation to and from the airport. Provide the candidate with a schedule and ensure that he or she is accompanied from one appointment to the next. Hold the candidate's seminar in a pleasant room and make sure there is a good turnout. Supply each candidate with a faculty information packet available from the Dean's Office. In a jointly run search, keep all units up-to-date on the progress of the review.

The campus visit should permit the candidate to meet our community of scholars

Invite members of related departments to the candidate's talk and other events. Our interdisciplinary programs and research centers are a strong selling point for many candidates. Use the Dean's Office to help put candidates in touch with other women or minority faculty. Let graduate students meet as a group with the candidate, especially with junior candidates. Invite undergraduate majors and minors to the talk.

Convince your candidate of our strengths

Keep up contact after the offer. Marshal specific evidence, tailored to that candidate, about why Northwestern is the best place for his or her career. If the candidate volunteers personal concerns, offer to assist. The Dean's Office has considerable expertise in helping the partner search for a job, in surveying the housing market, in providing information about schools and child care. (But please be careful not to promise more than we can deliver.) Show off our lakeshore campus and emphasize the intellectual, cultural, and other advantages that Chicago offers.

Diversity is an achievable goal that takes commitment

The committee must be aggressive in identifying minority and female candidates, must initiate contact when appropriate, and must give careful consideration to such candidates. Extra ads and phone inquiries are called for. Searches must not be defined in a way that downplays those subfields in which women and minority candidates are likely to be found. Departments are expected to invite for a campus visit the leading minority and female candidates.

Allow enough time for each stage of the search process

The search process involves several essential approvals -- see reverse. Plan ahead, keep the Dean's Office informed.

Search procedures

Search committees and department chairs must coordinate their activities in the search. To ensure that the best scholars are hired and to ensure that affirmative guidelines are followed, search committees and chairs must adhere to a prescribed protocol. Key steps are listed here. For full details, consult the *Chairperson's Handbook*, Chap. 3
<http://www.wcas.northwestern.edu/faculty/handbook/>

1. The Dean and Provost authorize the hiring plan; the Dean writes to the department chair, designating a sum to cover recruitment expenses. The chair confirms available space with Joel Trammell, then appoints a search committee, which includes female and/or minority members and at least one colleague from outside the department.
2. Each search committee submits to Marie Jones the pre-search form with text, placement, and cost of ad. On this form, the committee must also indicate special actions it will take to locate female and minority candidates. Advertisements cannot be placed until the search strategy and advertising budget are approved in the Dean's and Provost's Offices.
3. Upon approval of the search form, the committee advertises, makes phone calls, scours lists of women and minority scholars, sends out letters to promising scholars, and initiates contact with highly recommended candidates who have not applied.
4. Applications are reviewed by at least two members of the committee. Applications from members of underrepresented groups must receive close attention and should not be ruled out because of a possibly unconventional educational path.
5. Search committee members must receive authorization from John Franks before interviewing at professional meetings with Dean's Office support.
6. Departments must forward to Kelly Mayo (lab sciences) or John Franks (all other departments) copies of application materials for all invited candidates before the visit. Visits should be scheduled far enough in advance to allow for discount airfares. Candidates for tenured positions must meet with the Dean. *Schedule such meetings as early as possible and call Fran Petty (1-3276) to confirm all appointments with the Dean before making the candidate's reservations.*
7. Entertainment costs are limited by the University's entertainment policy. The department pays expenses above the recruiting budget provided by the Dean's Office from discretionary funds and faculty pay excessive meal expenditures from personal funds.
8. The chair of the department recommends the job offer in a letter to the Dean that details the case for hiring. The department also proposes terms of an offer, including an indication that appropriate space is available. For an untenured offer, the department must submit the blue affirmative action paper, the candidate's cv and letters of recommendation, and the similar materials from the best female and minority candidates identified in the search.
9. Tenured offers are reviewed by the Appointments Committee or a special *ad hoc* committee appointed by the Dean. This process takes six weeks minimum, usually longer. The *Chairperson's Handbook* lists the items for the dossier. The CVs and letters of recommendation for the best minority and female candidates are required along with the blue affirmative action summary form.
10. All offers are initiated and signed by the Dean. Departments do not independently negotiate with candidates about the terms of the offer. Departments may not tell any candidate that an offer will be made until the Dean has so decided, nor should they promise terms or a date by which a decision will be made.