

Guidelines for History Department Searches

As early as possible, the Head will appoint a Search Committee, which will draft a job description subject to departmental approval. Typically, the department will discuss upcoming possible positions during the spring semester to determine the parameters of anticipated searches. When the Search Committee is formed in the fall semester, the committee will draft an ad that conforms to the parameters of the search set by the department faculty. The position will be widely advertised in appropriate print and electronic publications. The Head and the Search Committee will determine a deadline for submission of applications, leaving enough time for the committee to review all files and select a short list.

The Search Committee in consultation with the Head will determine a short list of candidates (typically nine to twelve candidates) to be interviewed at the appropriate convention or over the telephone.

Department members (tenured and tenure-track faculty) will have access to the files of all candidates from the beginning of the search, but they should not review materials in any way that might delay the work of the Search Committee. Members of the department should address any commentary and suggestions in writing to the Search Committee. Faculty feedback is most useful after the Search Committee has selected the short list of candidates to be interviewed. Several weeks will normally pass between selection of candidates and the interviews, providing ample time for evaluation and commentary by members of the department. Since serving on a search committee is a major time commitment, the department should accommodate committee members as much as possible in their efforts to make time for this primary responsibility.

The candidates will be asked to provide complete dossiers, including at least three letters of recommendation from those most qualified to evaluate the candidate's research and teaching. Candidates selected for preliminary interviews (short-list candidates) will also be asked to provide writing samples and teaching materials, which could include a statement of teaching philosophy, practices, or goals, as well as sample syllabi and assignments.

Immediately upon completion of short-list interviews, the Search Committee will convene, agree on a list of finalists, and present its recommendations to the Department Head, who, in turn, will make recommendations to the Dean. Prior to selection of finalists, the Search Committee may seek further clarification from references of the candidate or, with the candidate's permission, solicit input from other individuals familiar with the candidate's work or experience.

After the Dean has selected the finalists for the campus interview, the full department will meet to hear and discuss the Committee's recommendations.

Search Committee chairs should communicate clearly to candidates what they will be expected to present on their visit, their audience, and details on the timing of their presentations. Every candidate will receive the same instructions on this matter.

The faculty-at-large should take every opportunity to discuss teaching and research with the candidates. Faculty members should make every effort to attend each of the departmental functions (meals, informal interviews in the lounge or meeting room, and especially the formal talk). If a faculty member is unable to attend at least one of these functions for all candidates, he or she must refrain from voting.

Faculty hosting social events for candidates should be consistent in their invitation list, either inviting only faculty, or faculty and spouses/partners.

Faculty member should not discuss personal issues or the department's decisionmaking process with any candidate before or after the search. In all contacts, members of the department (faculty and staff) should refrain from asking questions about a candidate's marital or partner status. Nor should they discuss the identities and qualifications of other candidates. Questions about the search schedule should be referred to the Head to insure that accurate information about the search timetable is conveyed to the candidates. After the search, faculty should maintain absolute confidentiality about the job search process, including ways in which individual faculty members voted and vote tallies.

As soon as possible after interviews are complete, the tenure-track and tenured faculty will meet to vote on a candidate. A successful candidate must earn 60 percent of department votes. The faculty will also vote on whether and in what order to authorize the Head to offer the job to the other candidates.

At the beginning of a faculty search, all faculty will review these search procedures.

Adopted October 2007.