

Title/Subject: **SENIOR OFFICER SEARCH AND SELECTION PROCEDURES/GUIDELINES**

Applies to: faculty staff students student employees visitors contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: May, 2009

Contact for More Information: Human Resources

Board Policy Administrative Policy Procedure Guideline

INTRODUCTION

These procedures and guidelines have been developed to inform and to assist search committees in carrying out their responsibilities in a timely, orderly, professional and legal manner. The procedures and guidelines apply to the filling of all regular and provisional Senior Officer positions except for the President, and do not apply to interim appointments or when it is necessary to temporarily reassign duties to current employees. The procedures for the selection of the President are outlined in a separate Board of Trustees policy. In addition to exercising sound judgment in the selection process, search committees must use prudent judgment regarding recruitment expenses, as they actively seek strong candidates.

It is extremely important that all searches be conducted in a manner that ensures each applicant has a positive impression of Central Michigan University (CMU). To attract the interest of candidates requires that we actively promote and share the positive elements of the university and surrounding community. Candidates are evaluating CMU at the same time CMU is evaluating them. To obtain marketing materials for CMU and the Mt. Pleasant community, contact Human Resources.

As search committees proceed through the process, it is important to balance the interests of the candidate and CMU by preserving the confidentiality of the application while learning as much about the candidate as possible. Background checks including references are important at various stages throughout the process, but it is also important to communicate closely with candidates and provide flexibility that keeps their application confidential for as long as possible.

DEFINITIONS

Applicants: An applicant is anyone who expresses an interest in a specific vacancy by submitting an application, résumé or curriculum vitae.

Candidates: All applicants who are interviewed become candidates.

Finalists: The top candidates (typically 1-3) who come to campus for extensive interviews are considered finalists.

Supervisor: Individual to whom the vacant position reports.

Vice Presidents (for the purposes of this policy): Executive Vice President/Provost, Vice President/Finance and Administrative Services, Vice President/Development & Alumni Relations, Vice President/Governmental Relations and Public Affairs.

Authority: M. Rao, President

History: June 1, 2004; November 22, 2006

Indexed as: Search Committee, Senior Officer Guidelines; Hiring Senior Officers

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INTERNAL-ONLY SEARCH

The University is committed to affirmative action. Offering career opportunities internally enhances CMU's ability to retain quality employees. In rare situations, the supervisor may choose to submit written justification to seek approval of the Affirmative Action Officer and the President to conduct a search "internal" to the University instead of conducting an "external" search. By promoting from within, a vacancy will likely result that will subsequently be posted and filled through an external affirmative action search. All procedures outlined in this document, except those specifically noted otherwise, apply to "internal-only" searches.

The definition of an "internal" candidate for the purposes of recruitment refers to an employee who is currently in a benefit-eligible position and was hired by the University through a prior search. Therefore, "internal" candidates exclude temporary staff, some temporary faculty, students, independent contractors, graduate assistants and some provisional employees.

USE OF A SEARCH FIRM (does not apply to internal-only search)

A search firm may be used to assist in the recruitment/screening of applicants for Senior Officer positions. When a supervisor has decided to utilize the services of a search firm, he/she should work with Human Resources for assistance in selecting the search firm. Some firms have been pre-approved; other firms may be used following a bid process (see [Search Firm Policy](#)). The supervisor of the vacant position will determine the use and role of the search firm. Supervisors must work with Human Resources before entering into a contract with a search firm.

SELECTING A SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Vice President/President to whom the vacant position reports will appoint search committee members and a chair of the search committee. The search committee chair (when not the supervisor) will be expected to work closely with the supervisor throughout the recruitment and selection process. The composition of the committee will include a representative from Human Resources (HR) and should represent the diversity of CMU's institutional culture and advance the university's commitment to the principles of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. Each committee member should play a major role in the recruitment, interviewing, screening and evaluation of applicants as outlined in the Search Committee Charge that each committee member should receive (Attachment A).

The search committee chair will work with the supervisor to determine a timeline to ensure that the search is carried out in a timely, orderly, professional and legal manner. Human Resources will assist in the search process for all Senior Officers. The search committee chair will contact the Affirmative Action Office (AAO) at the beginning of the process to schedule training for the search committee.

In an effort to minimize time spent on paperwork and increase the committee's productivity, a support person may be appointed by the supervisor or the committee chair to provide assistance to the search committee. If it is determined that the electronic employment application system is going to be used, a job posting will be initiated by the support person. If the electronic process is not used, the support person will assist and/or work with the search committee/firm in preparing the advertisement, collecting résumés, maintaining an applicant log, preparing any required documents and handling correspondence with applicants. He/she will also be prepared to assist with meeting arrangements and committee activities which should ease the burden on the search committee chair and assure that all required contacts are made with applicants.

For consistency and efficiency, the search committee chair or search firm should handle all inquiries regarding the search including any applicant or potential applicant's written or verbal request for information about the search process or timelines, as well as any inquiries from the news media.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

The Vice President/President to whom the vacant Senior Officer position reports approves the job description, although the search committee may be requested to provide input. The search committee and/or search firm will use the job description as the basis for developing the advertisement. All Senior Officer job descriptions and advertisements must include as a minimum qualification “demonstrated commitment to diversity,” which will be evaluated during the interview process.

ADVERTISING

Human Resources will assist the search committee/firm with the development of the advertisement. The supervisor must approve the advertisement and forward it to the Affirmative Action Officer for approval before the position is advertised or otherwise announced. Senior Officer positions are generally advertised nationally. However, an “internal-only” search may be conducted when a written request has been approved by the Affirmative Action Officer and the President.

The advertisement should include the title of the position, a description of the major responsibilities, minimum required qualifications and any desired qualifications, application deadline date, where to apply, and the AA/EO statement. In addition, a standardized statement describing CMU has been developed for advertisement in order to promote uniformity, consistency and accuracy in describing the University. It can be found under search information at www.cmich.edu/aaeo. Use of this statement is highly recommended when advertising position vacancies externally. In the interest of conserving finances, paid advertisements must include at least a brief description of the job, a shortened AA/EO statement, and refer the reader to the CMU website for the full-text version of the vacancy notice.

The AAO will forward a copy of the approved advertisement with the assigned job number to Human Resources as well as to the search committee chair and the supervisor. Human Resources will place the advertisement on the CMU website, which will be the only announcement for internal-only postings, and will also assist in placing advertisements in external resources.

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment is not a passive activity. In conjunction with the supervisor, the search committee chair is encouraged to develop a recruitment plan that will result in attracting an applicant pool that meets the university’s affirmative action goals. Supervisors and search committee members have an obligation to actively participate in the recruitment process and assist in identifying a diverse pool of candidates. The rest of this section does not apply to internal-only searches.

A good faith effort should be made to utilize a wide variety of sources in soliciting applications from a diverse applicant pool. The AAO is responsible for advising units with respect to appropriate sources and techniques that constitute a good faith effort to attract qualified minorities, women, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and others from under-represented groups as referenced in the Search Committee Charge. A list of numerous resources for identifying individuals and agencies is available on the AAO website www.cmich.edu/aaeo.

Advertising may not always be effective in attracting a mix of qualified applicants. Therefore, the search committee is encouraged to use other recruitment methods aggressively, such as, making personal contacts and sending vacancy notices to various universities, businesses, organizations, professional associations, alumni groups, listservs and trade journals.

RECEIPT OF RÉSUMÉS/ACKNOWLEDGMENT LETTERS

The search committee chair or search firm will send a letter to each applicant acknowledging receipt of materials and notifying the applicant whether any further documentation is required (sample letters are available from HR). In accordance with affirmative action guidelines, an affirmative action card must be sent to all applicants; the card

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should be enclosed with each acknowledgement letter. The job number, provided by the AAO, and an applicant identification number, must be placed on the affirmative action card before it is sent to applicants. Each applicant will be given the option to return the affirmative action card or complete the card on-line at www.cmich.edu/aaeo/jobcard.asp. Note: If the electronic application system is used, it is not necessary to send affirmative action cards since the information is gathered as part of the electronic application process.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality of the names of applicants and information developed about them and their employing institutions is necessary to attract high quality candidates, to avoid putting their current employment in jeopardy, and to protect CMU's integrity. Confidentiality is extremely important until the finalist(s) are identified and come to campus to meet with representative members of the university community. Search committee members will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement and will be expected to conduct meetings and deliberations consistent with this commitment (Attachment B).

SCREENING QUALIFICATIONS

Using the approved advertisement, the search committee/firm will assess every applicant's qualifications and assure that all applicants are evaluated using the same criteria. The screening of applicants should eliminate from further consideration those applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications set forth in the advertisement. The electronic system can assist with screening applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications. After the approval of the Affirmative Action Officer, search committees may choose to conduct phone or video interviews with applicants in order to assist in the screening process.

Some committees may also check listed references to narrow the pool of candidates. **As a professional courtesy, the search committee should inform candidates prior to checking references.** At this point, reference checks should be limited to references supplied by the candidate. The search committee should honor requests to refrain from contacting particular references until the candidate reaches the finalist stage.

If using a search firm, the search firm representative will present and discuss applicants who are recommended for candidate status. Search committee members may recommend other applicants for further consideration.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Prior to conducting any interviews the search committee chair, along with the committee and supervisor, will formulate interview questions. The search committee chair will ensure that interview questions are specifically job related in order to gather pertinent information, including verification of circumstances under which a candidate was ever terminated or asked to resign from a position. The interview questions along with the activity record/justification discussed in the next paragraph must be presented to the Affirmative Action Officer for approval prior to conducting interviews.

INTERVIEW APPROVAL

The search committee chair or designee must complete the appropriate sections of the senior officer activity record located on www.cmich.edu/aaeo and **forward it to the Affirmative Action Officer for approval prior to interviews.** Interview questions and all résumés must be submitted along with the activity record. Obtaining approval and forwarding of résumés can be processed automatically if the electronic system is used. The AAO will notify the search committee chair and Human Resources of the approval status. Once approval is received, the committee can begin making arrangements for interviews. At this time, letters may be sent to applicants who will no longer be given additional consideration.

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OFF-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Interviews conducted off campus are encouraged to assist the search committee chair in determining the finalist(s) to invite for on-campus interviews. The search committee may instead choose to conduct video interviews to assist in identifying the finalist(s). This paragraph does not apply to internal searches.

Candidates should sign an Employment Verification Form at this stage which verifies that the information on the résumé is accurate and acknowledges that a criminal history check may be conducted. If the electronic system is used, this information is gathered through the on-line application process. Official academic transcripts should also be obtained at this point in order to verify the educational qualifications of the candidates.

LEXIS/NEXIS AND INTERNET SEARCHES (does not apply to internal-only searches)

Before finalist(s) are brought to campus, HR will work with Library staff to conduct a LEXIS/NEXIS search. LEXIS/NEXIS provides authoritative legal, news, public records and business information online. The search committee chair must be confident that a good-faith effort is made to collect all appropriate information from relevant sources (within legal guidelines).

The search committee chair will also ensure that at least one internet-based search is conducted on the finalist(s) using any one of the several search engines available for this purpose. Human Resources can provide assistance and/or guidance on this process. In addition, a search of the current employer's website must be conducted. The search may be used to confirm information given by the finalist(s), review publicity related to the finalist(s) and assist in analyzing any other information that may be helpful in making the final hiring decision.

ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Finalist(s) will be invited to campus for interviews with the search committee, representative members of the University community, and the President. The search committee chair shall release the names of finalist(s) to the campus community prior to on-campus interviews. It is the responsibility of the search committee chair to establish, in conjunction with the supervisor, a schedule of campus meetings. All time spent with a finalist(s) is considered part of the interview process including social functions and meals. The search committee chair should caution everyone who meets with the finalist(s) in a business or social context to avoid asking personal questions that are not job related. Questions related to areas such as race, gender, religion, age, disability and marital status are non-job related and are not allowed when interviewing candidates for positions. For more information on this point, see the [Michigan Department of Civil Rights Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide](#).

If the position is a Vice President or has broad responsibility, consideration should be made for forums with a wide campus audience and comment cards for participants. Faculty, staff and students should be encouraged to attend the forums. A member of the search committee must be present at all meetings to insure that no inappropriate questions are asked of the finalist(s). Audio or video recording of forums is not permitted.

Where academic tenure might be included in the offer of employment, the supervisor must first coordinate with the appropriate Dean, who will work with the academic department, the Provost and the President to ensure that they are in agreement. The terms and conditions of any agreement that is reached will be outlined in the appointment letter.

The finalist(s) will have lunch or dinner with the President to provide less formal interaction. For positions that report to the President, all finalists will be scheduled to meet with the President's direct reports. This paragraph may not apply to internal searches.

REFERENCE CHECKS ON THE FINALIST(S)

As a professional courtesy, the search committee should inform finalist(s) prior to checking references. Reference checks are only required on the selected finalist, but the search committee or search firm is encouraged to use them earlier to assist in screening candidates. The search committee should honor requests to refrain from contacting

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particular references until the candidate reaches the finalist stage. If a finalist refuses to allow contact with a potential reference that the committee deems important, the finalist should be informed that this refusal limits the committee's ability to complete its evaluation and that the finalist may not receive full consideration.

The search firm, search committee chair and/or supervisor of the position may choose to check "off-the-list" references on the finalists to assist in making the hiring decision; however, an attempt must be made to contact the selected finalist's current supervisor, as well as three "off-the-list" sources prior to any offer of employment. Any responsibilities delegated to other members of the search committee will remain accountable to the search committee chair.

SELECTION APPROVAL AND CRIMINAL/FINANCIAL CHECK (Prior to a job offer)

The supervisor or designee will document a rationale for the selection of the recommended hire on the activity record and a reason why each of the other finalists was not selected. The activity record and resumes of the finalists must be forward to the Affirmative Action Officer for approval. Affirmative Action will submit the activity record to the President for final approval prior to notifying the department that the search has been approved.

The supervisor must consult with HR regarding the terms and conditions of employment. Human Resources or the search firm will conduct a state and national criminal history check on the selected finalist, in accordance with current policy. For selected Senior Officer positions, a financial background check may also be necessary after obtaining consent of the selected finalist.

Information is shared with the supervisor and with the President as appropriate. In cases where information of concern is identified on the finalist, it will be discussed with the President or his/her designee before an offer of employment is made.

Responsibility and authority to select and appoint Senior Officers rests with the President, as outlined in Article III, Section 2 of the Board of Trustees Bylaws; therefore, the activity record **must** be approved by the President and the Affirmative Action Officer before an offer of employment can be made.

SALARY CALCULATION (Prior to a job offer)

Human Resources will assist the supervisor in determining an appropriate salary for the selected finalist. Consideration will be given to the candidate's education and overall relevant experience, current applicable external market data, and the experience and salary of internal employees in comparable positions. The final salary for Senior Officers must be approved by the President prior to any offer of employment.

BENEFITS

A summary of Senior Officer benefits can be found at <http://www.hrs.cmich.edu/benefits/download/bsopdf>. Benefits are standard and no one has the authority to offer benefits outside of those outlined in the Senior Officer Handbook. For the full terms of employment, refer to the Senior Officer Handbook at www.hrs.cmich.edu/so-handbook.htm.

OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Once the selection has been approved as noted above, the supervisor should extend the offer of employment, even when a search firm has been utilized. This will permit direct conversation about important topics such as initial salary, start date, benefits, moving expenses, house hunting expenses, at-will status, information about the community, and any and all other terms/conditions of employment.

The amount of reimbursement for moving expenses is negotiable up to a maximum of \$7,500. Any exception to the maximum must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

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When the final selection has been approved and an offer is made and accepted, the supervisor will be responsible for an announcement to the search committee, senior officers and the campus community. The search committee chair will notify the search firm, if applicable.

APPOINTMENT LETTER

Human Resources will generate the official appointment letter, which will be shared with the supervisor and signed by the President, prior to sharing the letter with the new Senior Officer. The appointment letter should be signed by the new Senior Officer accepting the terms and conditions of employment and returned to HR for the personnel file. Human Resources will provide a copy of the appointment letter to the applicable supervisor, and where the appointment is in the Academic Division, also to Faculty Personnel Services. Human Resources is responsible for entering the applicable information into SAP for all Senior Officers.

NOTIFICATION TO UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

After an offer of employment has been accepted, the search committee chair will personally contact those who were interviewed, but not selected. The search committee chair or search firm will also send letters notifying all candidates that the search has been concluded and thank them for their interest in employment with CMU. Letters may be sent earlier in the process to applicants who will not be given additional consideration; this should be done after the Affirmative Action Officer reviews the résumés and activity record. If the electronic application system is used, it is recommended that the system generated notifications not be used in order to provide more personalized letters to the applicants.

RECORD RETENTION & PERSONNEL FILES

After the completion of the hiring process, search committee members and the supervisor must forward all interview notes and other search materials, including the activity record and résumés to HR. HR will retain the activity record and other related search materials for a period of five years. HR also maintains the official personnel file for all Senior Officers. The AAO maintains applicant tracking information on all Senior Officers.

ORIENTATION

The Associate Vice President of Human Resources will meet with newly appointed Senior Officers for general orientation purposes. The supervisor will provide other appropriate orientation to new Senior Officers.

Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to, modify or eliminate this policy. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures and directives relative to the subject.

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ATTACHMENT A – SEARCH COMMITTEE CHARGE (EXAMPLE)



Search Committee Charge
Position Title

Optional statements related to search firms are included in italics

Every member of the search committee will actively seek nominations and applications from qualified candidates for the position of **title** of Central Michigan University. *The search committee will be assisted by a search firm.*

The search committee *and search firm* will use a job description developed by the supervisor, reviewed by the committee and the search firm and approved by the Vice President/President as the basis for vacancy notices and advertisements.

The search committee is asked to meet with the Affirmative Action Officer, *including a representative of the search firm*, to review the elements of an affirmative search and the affirmative action officer's role.

The search firm representative will meet with the search committee to present and discuss likely candidates. Search committee members may present other candidates for further consideration.

Advertising may not always be effective in attracting a mix of qualified applicants. Therefore, the search committee is encouraged to use other recruitment methods aggressively; such as, making personal contacts and sending vacancy notices to various universities, businesses, organizations, professional associations, alumni groups, listservs and trade journals.

Using the approved job description, the search committee will assess all candidates and after approval of the Affirmative Action Officer, conduct confidential interviews with the most likely candidates. The search committee will then develop an unranked list of one to three of the finalist(s) who will be invited to campus to meet with the President and representative members of the university community.

The President is very interested in the search committee's assessment of the most likely candidates. Responsibility and authority to select and appoint the final candidate rests with the president, as outlined in Article III, Section 2 of the Board of Trustees Bylaws on Delegating Authority.

All applications and nominations are confidential until the final stage. Confidentiality for nominees and applicants, except any final candidates who may be invited to campus to meet with representative members of the university community, is extremely important. Confidentiality of the names of candidates and information developed about them and their employing institutions is necessary to attract high quality finalists, to avoid putting their current positions in jeopardy, and to protect Central Michigan University's integrity. The search committee will be required to conduct its meetings and deliberations consistent with this commitment. Each member of the search committee will sign an Agreement to Confidentiality and a Code of Ethics.

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ATTACHMENT B – CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT



Agreement to Confidentiality and a Code of Ethics

The person signing below is a member of the search committee asked to assist in recruiting and assessing candidates for the position of *title*. Each member of the search committee is asked to execute this agreement to maintain confidentiality and to adhere to a code of ethics.

By my signature below, I pledge to adhere to the following:

1. As a member of the search committee, I understand that the work of the search committee requires that I have access to information developed and received about applicants and their employing institutions. I understand that confidentiality of this information is necessary to attract high quality finalists, to avoid putting their current positions in jeopardy, and to protect Central Michigan University's integrity. I agree that I will not reveal the identity of, or any other information about, applicants either during the search or after the search committee completes its work, unless obligated to reveal such under the law.
2. I acknowledge that only the chair of the search committee is authorized to speak to the news media on behalf of the search committee.
3. I certify that I am not an applicant for the position and that I do not have a predetermined applicant for the position.
4. I agree to disclose promptly to the search committee any appearance of real or potential conflict of interest in a relationship between an applicant and myself.
5. I will be fair, accurate, honest, and responsible in my management of information germane to the search. I will guard against inaccuracies, carelessness, bias, and distortion made by either emphasis or omission of information. I will strive to treat issues impartially and handle controversial subjects dispassionately. I will give accurate and complete reports on applicants to the search committee chair. I will place the best interests of Central Michigan University ahead of all special and personal interests, and I will use common sense and good judgment in applying ethical principles to screening work.
6. I understand that the chair of the search committee may dismiss me from the search committee if I violate this agreement, and that the president may dismiss the chair of the search committee if he/she violates this agreement.

President

Date