

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

Applies to: faculty staff students student employees visitors contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: March 8, 2018

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, and professional manner. The President has the authority to waive all or any part of these procedures. 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 candidate.

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). Candidates are evaluating CMU at the same time CMU is evaluating them. To attract the interest of candidates requires that we actively promote and share the positive elements of the university and surrounding community. 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.

As an executive leader, it is important that each candidate understands and demonstrates CMU's Leadership Standards, as well as CMU's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and are evaluated on these standards throughout the hiring process. The university is committed to affirmative action and fosters a culture that inspires excellence.

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 (including video and off-campus) 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.

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Vice Presidents (for the purposes of this policy): Executive Vice President/Provost, Vice President/Finance and Administrative Services, Vice President/Government and External Relations, Vice President/Advancement, and Vice President/Enrollment and Student Services.

INTERNAL-ONLY SEARCH

Offering career opportunities internally enhances CMU's ability to retain quality employees. The Vice President may choose to submit written justification to seek approval of the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity 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 apply to "internal-only" searches, unless noted otherwise.

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 external affirmative action search. Therefore, "internal" candidates exclude temporary staff, some temporary faculty, students, independent contractors, graduate assistants and conditional 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 Vice President or the President 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/role of the search firm. Supervisors must work with Human Resources before entering into a contract with a search firm. CMU's voluntary self-identification form must be shared with all applicants; therefore, a link to the form will be provided to the search firm by Human Resources.

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. Once all committee members have accepted the appointment to serve on the search committee, the Vice President/President will work with University Communications to announce the search, including committee members. 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 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. For positions in the Academic Division, the committee will also include a representative from the Provost's office. Each committee member should play a major role in the recruitment, interviewing, screening and evaluation of applicants as outlined in the Search Committee Charge (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, and professional manner. Human Resources will assist in the search process for all Senior Officers. Human Resources or a representative from the Provost's office will contact the Office of Civil Rights and Internal Equity (OCRIE) at the beginning of the process to schedule training as part of the first meeting with 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 not going to be used to collect applications because a search firm is being used, a job posting will still be placed on CMU's job website and may be initiated by the support person. 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.

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For consistency and efficiency, the search committee chair, Human Resources or the 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. In consultation with University Communications, the search committee chair should also handle any inquiries from the news media.

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; therefore, Human Resources will forward the final job description to the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity for approval before the position is advertised or otherwise announced. All Senior Officer job descriptions and advertisements must include as a minimum qualification "demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion," which will be evaluated during the interview process. In addition, the standard statement outlining leadership expectations will be added to every senior officer job description.

ADVERTISING

Human Resources will assist the search committee/firm with the development of the advertisement, using the approved job description as the basis for the advertisement. The search committee chair may choose to approve the advertisement. Senior Officer positions are generally advertised nationally, unless an internal search has been approved by the President and the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity.

The advertisement may 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 approved AA/EO statement. In addition, a standardized statement describing CMU has been developed for advertisement and may be used in order to promote uniformity, consistency and accuracy in describing the university. 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, the approved, shortened AA/EO statement, and refer the reader to the CMU website for the full-text version of the vacancy notice.

Human Resources will ensure that the advertisement is placed on the CMU website, which will be the only announcement for internal-only postings and will also assist in placing advertisements in external resources. In addition, Human Resources will share market data and a recommended salary range to the President for approval. After University Communications has announced a Senior Officer search to campus, they will include the posting on a university webpage that will provide the status of all Senior Officer searches.

RECRUITMENT

Recruitment is not a passive activity. In conjunction with the supervisor, the search committee chair must 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. Human Resources 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.

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.

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RECEIPT OF RÉSUMÉS

Once an applicant completes the application process, a confirmation number will be electronically generated, acknowledging receipt of their materials. In accordance with affirmative action guidelines, a voluntary self-identification form is available as part of the electronic process. If a search firm is used and CMU's electronic system is not used to gather applications, Human Resources will provide the search firm with a link to CMU's voluntary self-identification form that must be shared with all applicants.

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. Anonymity 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). Confidentiality should also be maintained even after a position is filled. Discussions or comments about applicants or the search process with individuals outside of the search committee are not appropriate.

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 allows the use of required questions that assists with screening applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications. After the review and approval of the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity, search committees may choose to conduct video or off-campus 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 Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity will need to approve questions used to pre-screen candidates. 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.

INITIAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Prior to conducting the initial interview, the search committee chair will formulate interview questions in conjunction with Human Resources, which may include the input of the search committee and the supervisor. All candidates will be asked a standard question about CMU's Leadership Standards and how they have demonstrated their commitment to diversity and inclusion. Information gathered will include verification of circumstances under which a candidate was ever terminated or asked to resign from a position. The search committee chair will ensure that interview questions are specifically job related in order to gather pertinent information. The interview questions must be presented to the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity for approval prior to conducting interviews.

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INITIAL INTERVIEW APPROVAL

Prior to the initial interviews, the search committee chair or designee must update the electronic hiring system to accurately reflect the status of each applicant and obtain the approval of the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity. The Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity will notify Human Resources of the approval status. Once approval is received, the committee can begin making arrangements for interviews.

OFF-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS (INCLUDING VIDEO INTERVIEWS)

Interviews conducted off campus may be used to assist the search committee 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. If the committee chooses to record the interviews, the candidates will be asked for their approval prior to any recording. Any recording will be destroyed before the search is complete.

WESTLAW AND INTERNET SEARCHES (2-4 do not apply to internal-only searches)

Before finalist(s) are invited to campus:

1. Human Resources will work with Library staff to conduct a WESTLAW search. WESTLAW provides authoritative legal, news, public records and business information online.
2. Human Resources or designee 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.
3. In addition, Human Resources or designee will conduct a search of the current employer's website. 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.
4. Search committee members may also choose to search public information; however, if they choose to do so, they must follow the same process for all of the finalists invited to campus. All information must be evaluated by the entire committee from a job-related perspective.

Any information resulting from the above searches will not be used to automatically disqualify any candidate. Information will be discussed with the appropriate candidate and evaluated in connection with the responsibilities of the position. 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).

ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Finalist(s) will be invited to campus for interviews with the search committee, representative members of the university community, the supervisor and the President. The search committee chair should work with University Communications to release the names of finalist(s) to the campus community prior to on-campus interviews, unless an exception is approved by the President. 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, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, and marital status are non-job related and are not allowed when interviewing candidates for positions. For more information, see [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 feedback forms 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 recordings by the university of open forums for vice president and dean finalists is permitted with the approval of the supervisor.

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Where academic tenure might be included in the offer of employment, the supervisor must first inform the Executive Vice President/Provost and Faculty Personnel Services to ensure that tenure is appropriate for the position. If tenure is appropriate for the position, a time will be scheduled for the candidates to meet with faculty in the department where tenure would be awarded. The academic department reviews the credentials of the finalist(s) and makes a recommendation to the Dean. The Dean recommends tenure to the Provost; however, the award of tenure resides exclusively with the Board of Trustees. The terms and conditions of any agreement that is reached will be outlined in the appointment letter.

The finalist(s) may have lunch or dinner with the President and/or search committee 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, Human Resources or designee will inform finalist(s) prior to checking references. Reference checks are only required on the selected finalist, but the search committee or search firm may use them to assist in determining the best qualified candidates. Human Resources should honor requests to refrain from contacting 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 are encouraged to check "off-the-list" references on the finalists to assist in making the hiring decision; in addition, an attempt must be made to contact the selected finalist's current supervisor. The search committee chair will remain accountable for responsibilities delegated to other members of the search committee.

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

Prior to any job offer, Human Resources will work with the supervisor to document a rationale for the selection of the recommended hire and a reason why each of the other finalists were not selected. Responsibility and authority to select and appoint Senior Officers resides with the President; therefore, the supervisor will affirm in the justification document that the President approves the hire **prior to** making a contingent job offer. The justification must be electronically forwarded to the Executive Director/Civil Rights and Institutional Equity or designee for approval. Once Human Resources receives the approval from the Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity they will notify the supervisor that the recommended hire has been approved.

The Vice President/President must consult with Human Resources regarding the terms and conditions of employment. Human Resources or the search firm will conduct a state and national criminal history check and a national sex offenders 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 obtained from background checks will be shared with the Vice President and with the President as appropriate. Any information of concern will be discussed with the President or his/her designee before a final offer of employment is made.

SALARY AND BENEFITS (Prior to a job offer)

Human Resources will assist 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.

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A summary of Senior Officer benefits can be found at <https://www.cmich.edu/fas/hr/Documents/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 <https://www.cmich.edu/fas/hr/Documents/so-handbook.pdf>.

OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Once the hiring justification has been approved by the Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity, the supervisor may extend a contingent offer of employment. 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 offer of employment will remain contingent until successfully passing the background check(s) and affirming the required degree, even when a search firm has been utilized.

The amount of reimbursement for moving expenses is negotiable up to a maximum of \$10,000. Any exception to the maximum must be approved in advance by the supervisor.

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 supervisor or designee should work with University Communications regarding the campus announcement. Human Resources will notify the search firm, if applicable.

APPOINTMENT LETTER

Human Resources will generate the official appointment letter, which will be shared with the Vice President 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 when 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, Human Resources or the search firm will personally contact those who were interviewed, but not selected. It is recommended that the system generated notifications be used to notify applicants not interviewed that the position has been filled.

RECORD RETENTION AND PERSONNEL FILES

After the completion of the hiring process, search committee members and the supervisor must forward all interview notes and other search materials to Human Resources. Human Resources will electronically retain the hiring justification and other related search materials. Human Resources also maintains the official personnel file for 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

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, (name of search firm), an executive search firm.*

The search committee *and search firm* will use a job description developed by (***title of the supervisor***) and 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 Executive Director/Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity, *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 affirmative action approval, conduct confidential interviews with select candidates. The search committee will then develop an unranked list of up to four finalists to invite 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.

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 candidates 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, candidates 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 a candidate for the position and that I do not have a predetermined candidate 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 a candidate and myself.
5. I understand that confidentiality does not preclude me from sharing concerns about the search process with Human Resources and/or the Vice President/President.
6. 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 candidates 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.
7. I understand that the chair of the search committee may dismiss me from the search committee if I violate this agreement, and that the chair of the search committee may be dismissed if he/she violates this agreement.

Signature

Date

Printed Name