

---

*College of Science Searches Policy*

---

## **CONTEXT FOR THE POLICY**

The College of Science is committed to advancing the diversity of our faculty and staff and enhancing research and learner success. To help achieve this end, COS includes specific expectations in position descriptions, position announcements, and search procedures.

This policy applies to all searches for faculty and staff positions funded primarily by education and general (“E&G”) funds, except (a) “pool” hires and (b) those with a Waiver of Search.

## **POLICY CONTENT – PROCESS FOR SEARCHES**

Searches should follow OSU best practices for recruiting a diverse pool of applicants, as outlined in OSU Search Advocacy training and in the guidelines at the following website: <http://hr.oregonstate.edu/search-excellence>.

Please consult these documents for OSU best practices in terms of search process roles, position descriptions, recruiting practices, applicant screening, etc.

## **POLICY CONTENT – CoS SEARCH COMMITTEE GUIDELINES**

COS will follow OSU best practices developed during the Provost Initiative hires. These are:

1. Search Committee Chairs should have completed Search Advocate Training.
2. A Search Advocate, currently up-to-date, from outside the hiring unit must (preferably outside the College) be a part of the search committee.
3. Search advocates will be involved in the process along with the search committee before the position description is finalized and before it is posted, and will be included as a committee member at every stage of the process through the final hiring recommendation.
4. The hiring authority and the College of Science Human Resources Strategic Partner or their designees should meet with the search committee, including the search advocate, to charge the committee and to discuss expectations for the search.
5. Search committee effort should be directed toward the recruitment of a qualified and diverse applicant pool. This includes the use of personal contacts and

networks to identify potential candidates and encourage applications from underrepresented groups.

6. COS faculty/staff within the hiring unit and other stake holders of the position are also expected to engage in identifying potential candidates and encouraging applications from underrepresented groups.
7. The hiring authority – typically the Dean – or that person’s designee will review and approve the applicant pool prior to each stage of the process: e.g. reference checking; phone interviews; campus interviews, etc. This review is to ensure alignment with diversity and student success goals.

Applicant pools that are not as diverse as the available pool of potential candidates, or that do not adhere to these guidelines, may result in a restart of the search.

Special searches (Student Success, Provost Initiative, etc.) may have additional steps.

### **POLICY CONTENT – HIRING AUTHORITY**

The dean or their designee is the hiring authority for all positions within the College of Science. The dean normally retains that authority for direct reports to the dean (associate deans, department heads, etc.) and for all tenure-track faculty. The dean normally delegates hiring authority to the unit head for non-tenure-track faculty, professional faculty and other positions within a unit or to an associate dean for positions within the Dean’s office. In some cases, such as faculty research associates and research associates, the dean may delegate the hiring authority to a faculty member.

### **POLICY CONTENT – REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS FOR TENURE-TRACK FACULTY**

Statement of (1) current and proposed research interests; (2) teaching philosophy, experience and interest; and (3) how you would contribute to the OSU commitment to diversity, multiculturalism, and community.

### **POLICY CONTENT – REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS FOR NON-TENURE-TRACK INSTRUCTIONAL FACULTY**

Statement of (1) teaching philosophy, experience and interest; and (2) how you would contribute to the OSU commitment to diversity, multiculturalism, and community.

### **POLICY CONTENT – POSITION SUMMARY LANGUAGE**

The Position SUMMARY section will include the following language:

OSU has an institution-wide commitment to diversity, multiculturalism, and community. We actively engage in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and student body that includes members of historically underrepresented groups. We strive to build and sustain a welcoming and supportive campus environment. OSU provides leadership opportunities for people interested in promoting and enhancing diversity, nurturing creativity and building community. All employees are responsible for helping to maintain and enhance OSU's collaborative and inclusive community that strives for equity and equal opportunity.

### **POLICY CONTENT – POSITION DUTY LANGUAGE**

The Position DUTY section will include this introductory paragraph:

All COS employees are expected to demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion, including efforts promoting equitable outcomes among learners of diverse and underrepresented identity groups. For further explanation of OSU's vision and principles, please see information on the Institutional Diversity page at Oregon State University, specifically their goals captured in their Strategic Plan detailed here: <http://diversity.oregonstate.edu/innovate-integrate-plan-inclusive-excellence> .

**Specific activities** in research, teaching, service, and/or other duties, that demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion may be appropriate in some positions.

### **POLICY CONTENT – REQUIRED QUALIFICATION SECTION**

The Required Qualifications section should include elements related to equity and inclusion. Examples may include:

- A commitment to educational equity in a multicultural setting and to advancing the participation of diverse groups and supporting diverse perspectives.
- Demonstrated ability or significant potential for teaching excellence and commitment to student success which can benefit the graduate and undergraduate programs of COS.
- Demonstrated ability or significant potential for mentoring undergraduate students, graduate students, and post-doctoral scholars.
- Commitment to advancing and equalizing student success across different demographic groups.

## **POLICY CONTENT – OTHER POSITIONS**

It is the College’s intent that good search advocacy processes be applied to all recruitments funded by education and general (“E&G”) funds. It is recognized that the nature of the position, size of search committee, and breadth of recruitment will vary. We are also aware of the need to increase the number of Search Advocates available to assist in searches within and outside the college.

## **POLICY CONTENT – KNOWN APPLICANTS AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

All COS searches will follow best practices for known applicants and conflicts of interest described at the end of this document.

## **POLICY HISTORY**

<b>Revision Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>10.27.2017</b>	Initial version
<b>08.20.2019</b>	Initial posting to CoS Policy and Processes website
<b>2.18.2020</b>	Revised for known applicants, COI, and to specify policy for all searches

## Known Applicants & Conflicts of Interest – Promising Practices

BEFORE REVIEWING APPLICATIONS
<p><b>Initial discussion:</b> Before beginning to screen, committee members should disclose which applicants they know and how they know them. These questions may help guide the discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Which of these applicants (if any) do you know?</li><li>2. How do you know them?</li><li>3. Would you be advantaged or disadvantaged (personally or professionally) if they were selected?</li><li>4. Can you evaluate them objectively?</li><li>5. Will you agree to withhold outside information about them until/unless the search committee decides to consider such information later in the process?</li><li>6. What steps will we as a committee take to mitigate any potential OR perceived bias?</li></ol> <p>A committee member might not recognize a candidate's name at first, so begin each remaining search committee meeting by asking whether anyone has <i>now</i> realized that they know any of the candidates.</p> <p><b>Conflict of interest (COI):</b> A relationship with a candidate may pose a <i>conflict of interest</i> if it could hinder a committee member's ability to evaluate the candidate objectively, often because the committee member might benefit personally or professionally (or occasionally because they might be disadvantaged personally or professionally) if the candidate were selected. Examples of COIs include (but are not limited to) the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Committee member and candidates share any relationship described in OSU's <a href="#">P&amp;T guidelines</a> or <a href="#">Consensual Relationship policy</a></li><li>2. The committee member experienced significant personal, professional, or economic advantage/disadvantage resulting from research/policy work performed by the candidate</li><li>3. The committee member is serving as a reference for an applicant</li></ol> <p>Any committee member with a <i>conflict of interest</i> or one who may not be objective about a candidate should consider resigning from the committee unless their content expertise is essential to the search process. <i>Even the appearance of favoritism can make it difficult for the successful applicant to be accepted and can damage their chance of success.</i></p> <p><b>Known applicants:</b> Refrain from providing outside personal/ professional knowledge about an applicant's strengths, weaknesses, performance, etc. until <i>after</i> interviews. Credible knowledge of an egregious issue which must be considered sooner may be communicated privately to the search chair, search advocate, or hiring manager.</p>
APPLICATION REVIEW
<p>Discuss only the materials provided by applicants. <i>Everyone has a story, but committee members only know the stories of a few. Keep the application review as equitable as possible for all applicants.</i></p> <p>If known information must be shared (or is accidentally shared) for one or more applicants, discuss how to obtain similar information for other candidates still under consideration before the next round of screening decisions.</p>
INTERVIEWS
<p><b>Before:</b> without sharing specific information about known candidates, committee members may suggest interview questions to explore related qualifications or performance skills that are relevant to the job for all candidates.</p> <p><b>After:</b> if needed, relevant and credible information about known applicants may be shared <i>after</i> interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Facts</b> - share factual information, not judgments or feelings: <i>"She was often late to meetings" vs. "She was lazy and disorganized."</i></li><li>• <b>Source</b> - if the information about an applicant comes from someone else, consider the reliability of the source.</li><li>• <b>Relevance</b> - consider whether the information is relevant to the job for which you are hiring. <i>"His driving is dangerous"</i> may not be a problem if driving is not part of the job.</li><li>• <b>Evidence</b> - avoid jumping to conclusions or making assumptions. Ask yourself whether the new information supports your conclusions or whether it raises questions which require additional evidence to answer.</li><li>• <b>Seek comparable information for unknown candidates</b> - track what you are learning about known applicants and <i>plan reference checks to collect similar information for unknown applicants.</i></li></ul>
REFERENCES
<p>In addition to any questions you may already have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>For known applicants:</b> Make sure to ask questions of references that may confirm or deny the hypotheses you have made based on the input of committee members who may know the applicant.</li><li>• <b>For unknown applicants:</b> Fill in gaps where you have less information about unknown applicants than known by asking intentional questions of references.</li></ul>

Source: OSU Search Advocate program, November, 2019