Georgia Institute of Technology

Guidance on the Search Process for Academic Faculty

Office of Vice Provost for Faculty

February 2026

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Best Practices for Hiring Faculty in Academic Units

This guidance document is intended to assist units in conducting searches for new faculty members that are compliant with federal and state law, USG/BOR policy, and which will be successful. The guidance presented in this document promotes fair and consistent interview processes to improve faculty recruitment and retention.

The guidance presented in this document is primarily intended to direct searches for academic faculty. However, searches for research faculty to be appointed to GTRI, academic units, or other non-GTRI units should follow much of the guidance in this document.

This guidance document is broken down by the main stages of a faculty search. Those stages and tasks that are consistent for faculty and staff searches – for example, using CAREERS for job postings – are not covered herein. To make this document easier to use as a reference by search committees and their members, best practices are presented in list form. Appendix tables are available at the conclusion of the document. The academic faculty search process is broken down into:

- Search set-up
- Search committee formation
- The “charge” meeting
- Applicant review
- Long list interviews
- Short list identification
- Campus visits
- Offers and negotiations

In addition to the search stages, this document provides guidance on designing an appropriate rubric and various legal responsibilities. Throughout the faculty search process, keep in mind the BOR’s Statement of Principles affirming and protecting academic freedom and freedom of expression. (See also Appendix Figure 1.)

All members and chairs of search committees are required to complete the “Training for Faculty Searches” before the evaluation of any submitted application materials.

Search Set-Up

The first step in any faculty search is to properly set it up. If the search is not established appropriately or completely, it can jeopardize the entire process. In the end, both search committee members' and applicants' time and energy may be wasted if this step is shortchanged, and the reputation of Georgia Tech and the School may suffer.

The Office of Faculty Affairs provides a template for position advertisements when searching for a new academic faculty member. Although faculty ads may be placed in discipline-specific professional outlets, they must employ the template to the extent possible (given word and space-limitations) and direct applications to CAREERS.

Units are reminded that USG policy disallows the use of diversity statements, and any other kinds of oaths or affirmations, in the search process. All search committee members should review the Employee Recruitment and General Criteria for Employment documents from USG's Human Resources Administrative Practice Manual. Only application statements specifically related to the position may be required of applicants; for example, statements addressing research goals, teaching approaches, and/or student success activities may be specified. Units may require applicants to submit narratives specific to the items defined in the Strategic Plan. Additionally, competitive searches are expected for all faculty hires. According to USG policy (HRAP Employee Categories), faculty not hired through a competitive search are given a "term" appointment for one year and may be reappointed for only one additional year.

Application Statements	• If requiring application statements (e.g., research or teaching), define explicit prompts for candidates to answer and establish rubrics for evaluation. For example, a teaching statement prompt could be, "Describe instructional efforts that can be taken to ensure the success of all students; provide an example of your experience with those kinds of efforts."
Deadlines	• Be clear if there is a deadline for submissions, and if so, determine in the search committee how late or incomplete applications are to be handled. If no deadline is set, state that "application review will begin on [date] and continue until the position(s) are filled."
References	• Require reference letters for applicants to entry-level positions if they reach the "long list" or receive campus visits. Require reference names for applicants to senior-level positions. Prior to the search, decide when references will be contacted or when reference letters will be solicited.
Position Advertisement	• Use university-established templates, and make sure to clearly advertise for what is being sought (i.e., "open" rank, number of positions, expertise, etc.). Consider not specifying a research area to expand the pool and provide flexibility for choosing the best candidate. The eventual job offer must match the advertised position.

Search Committee Formation

The next step of the process is to form the Search Committee. Typically, the School Chair or unit head will consult with the Faculty Advisory Committee (or similar body) to select the members. Unit custom or bylaws may dictate whether the committee elects its own committee chair or if the committee chair is appointed by the unit head. It is also good practice to inform the Dean's Office (or other appropriate next-level supervisory unit) of the search committee composition, and perhaps to obtain the Dean's approval of the search committee. In general, a search committee functions better if it is not smaller than four members (including the committee chair) or larger than seven members (including the committee chair). (See also Table 6 in the Appendix.)

When conducting joint-appointment searches or searches for inter/transdisciplinary units, search committees should include representation from all associated units.

Leadership searches should include members from the unit and similarly placed leaders from across the Institute.

All search committee members are required to complete training on faculty hiring.

Membership	• Committee members should differ by expertise, perspective, and background. Confirm all members' availability for the full duration of the search process.
Conflicts of Interest	• Members should disclose any conflicts of interest to the entire committee. The Dean's Office (or analogous next-level supervisor) will determine any modifications to the search committee or process, if any.
Fairness	• To increase fairness, committee members are encouraged to consider assumptions the might affect their judgments, decisions, and actions during the hiring process. By being mindful of these factors, the committee can work toward a more fair search outcome.
Search Advocate	• Consider identifying an advocate that will intercede if goals of fairness and transparency are threatened or being violated. For searches without one, identify college- or Institute-level resources or representatives that can answer questions or provide procedural clarity.

The "Charge" Meeting

The "charge" meeting may be run by the unit head or the search committee chair, if predetermined, but both must attend, as must all committee members. Listed below are some of the housekeeping issues to be discussed at the "charge" meeting. Of primary importance, however, is a review of hiring and search requirements stated in federal/state law, by the USG, and by the Institute. The charge meeting is a good opportunity to remind committee members of questions and topics that may not be asked of applicants (see Tables 3 and 6 in Appendix).

An important role of the search committee is to develop the applicant pool so that it includes as many high-quality candidates as possible. Committees should consider using the following strategies toward that goal: (1) joining relevant consortia and/or posting on their listservs/etc.; (2) contacting faculty, postdocs, and fellows at other institutions; (3) reaching out to alumni, colleagues, and experts in the field and industry; (4) attending conferences, particularly poster sessions, and encouraging strong students to apply that year or a future year; (5) using social media and other forms of communication to reach and connect with potential candidates; and/or (6) reaching out to professional associations.

Goal & Criteria Setting	• Develop specific, measurable, and agreed-upon criteria on which to review and evaluate candidates, making sure they directly tie to the job description. Establish the search outcome: single candidate, ranked list, unranked list, etc.
Search Schedule	• Develop a timeline including the following targets: committee meeting schedule, application deadline, review start date, long list generation, long list interview period, short list generation, short list approval (if needed), campus-visit period, and final evaluation. Include major benchmarks in the schedule.
Review Guidelines	• Set intentions for sharing and valuing multiple viewpoints. Review position expectations, both required and desired. Decide if initial reviews of the entire pool will be performed by everyone or if the pool will be divided; ensure that at least two committee members review each candidate.
Applicant Outreach	• Establish expectations and responsibilities for outreach to develop the applicant pool.
Member Responsibilities	• Establish expectations and responsibilities for committee members, including attendance and confidentiality. Determine who will contact candidates and under what circumstances (if at all).

Applicant Review

The applicant review stage may be the most challenging and lengthy part of the search process. Before the application deadline, consider reaching out to alumni, colleagues, and experts at other institutions to encourage them and their graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to apply. Be proactive in building the applicant pool. Search committee members should make use of their academic and professional networks to do so.

Committees should review all complete applications received by the closing date. A standard screening process may be used to reduce the pool when many applications have been received. Do not consider submitted materials not required for all applicants. For example, if an applicant submits a teaching statement although one was not required, do not consider that teaching statement (or any other teaching statements). Any submitted diversity statements may not be reviewed or considered because they are prohibited by USG policy.

All applications should be evaluated against the same criteria, preferably using a rubric or similar assessment method. (See "How to Develop an Appropriate Rubric" in this document.) If applications are reviewed by a subset of the committee, be sure to use a random, rotating method to assign evaluators to applications. Avoid reliance on notions of "school fit." Research has shown that, across academia, PhDs from the same few doctoral programs are hired by top institutions. Do not be unnecessarily blinded by PhD institution when evaluating candidates.

Milestones	• Keep track of applicants and dates at specific stages. Consider tracking candidate progress and interaction by these possible stages/actions: nomination, contact, application, review, success/failure to meet minimum requirements, long-listed, short-listed, campus interviewed, selected/eliminated.
Materials Review	• Consider varied research outlets, including non-standard journals and conferences; focus on the quality of the work, not necessarily the outlet.
Credentials Review	• Consider applicants from non-peer institutions, and evaluate similarly to applicants from peer institutions; consider potential as well as accomplishment. Review each candidate and their credentials separately, in their own right, and through a lens of fairness.
Alternate Actions	• Forward strong candidates who do not meet the criteria for the current search for future positions; keep in touch, and encourage them to apply in the future.

Long List Interviews

The search committee will review all applications and create a preliminary list of promising candidates. This initial "long list" usually includes between five and fifteen names, depending on how many positions need to be filled. The purpose of interviewing candidates on this long list is to narrow down the pool to a "short list" of at least three top candidates. Before moving forward, the long list may need to be reviewed and approved by the School Chair or unit head, and may also be shared with the Dean's Office (or the appropriate next-level supervisory unit).

Conduct the long list interviews as similar to each other as possible. Use the same questions, delivered the same way. The committee should agree to these stipulations prior to conducting the interviews. The committee should also agree to how members will evaluate the interviews, whether through a rubric or some other standardized assessment technique. Once these individual evaluations are complete, the committee should convene to review them together, jointly agreeing to a final short list for campus visits. (For additional information on designing and conducting fair, consistent, and compliant candidate interviews, see Appendix Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.)

Make sure that candidates are given the opportunity to ask questions of the committee and be sure that committee members are reminded of the kinds of topics and questions are not permitted (see Appendix Table 3.)

Consistency	• Make sure that all interviews are conducted similarly, including the format (e.g., Teams, Zoom, phone, etc.), to the extent possible. Assign someone to monitor the interview time.
Questionnaire	• Develop a standard set of questions to be asked of each candidate; design questions that focus on experiences and examples; make sure questions tie to the position advertisement. Leave time for the candidate to ask questions.
Planning	• Plan enough time for consideration and evaluation. Shortcuts and superficial reviews challenge fairness. Be aware of the tendency to find a "good fit" which may exclude candidates that think or act differently.
Evaluation	• Create a rubric or develop a standardized method to evaluate the interviews. Evaluate candidates on their ability to perform functions for the job (those included in the advertised job description).

Short List Identification

Upon completion of the long list interviews, the search committee should have a short list of candidates identified. It is recommended that units identify no fewer than two and no more than five candidates for a single position. When hiring for multiple positions, more short list names may be identified. In such situations, it might be advisable to identify subgroups of candidates for ease of comparison and fairness.

The search committee chair and/or the entire search committee should review the list with the School Chair or unit head, who will also review the short list with the Dean's Office (or next-level unit) for approval prior to the extension of campus visit invitations. Once the short list is approved, share it with the entire school or unit. At times during various interviews and visits, candidates volunteer personal and irrelevant information. Do not to pursue the information and do not make a note of it. Eliminate the information as a discussion point and determining factor. Disregard all non-job-related information.

References are usually checked at this stage or after the campus visit. If the reference check is to be conducted at this stage, do so consistently across all potential candidates. It may be the case that, after the long list interviews, a few candidates have already been evaluated as unfit for the position. This kind of reduction is usually done if the long list was particularly long.

Candidate Evaluations	• Share reminders on fairness, and review all application materials prior to evaluating the candidates and selecting finalists.
List Creation	• Aim for no fewer than two invitees and no more than five for a single position. Inform only the applicants that the committee agreed are "absolutely not qualified" of their dispensation status.
Notifications and Approvals	• Share the short list with the chair (or analogous unit-level supervisor) for approval. Share the approved short list with all the faculty and staff in the unit for notification. Seek Dean's Office (or analogous next-level supervisor) approval for invitation lists of two or fewer.
Reference Checks	• If previously determined to check references at the campus visit stage, solicit all letters at the same time and use a consistent format and approach. If conducting reference calls, have pre-prepared questions to ask and ensure multiple committee members participate in each call. Document in writing reference-checking activities and their results.

Campus Visits

Campus visits by shortlisted candidates are not only a way to evaluate them but also a way to showcase the School and Institute to the candidates (and, by word of mouth, to their colleagues). We want every campus visit to be as smooth, positive, welcoming, and respectful as possible. Be sure to query about and meet any dietary restrictions, mobility needs, and other requests. Do not ask candidates whether they need accommodations; instead, contact GT's Office of Disability Services for candidates who request them to determine what is needed before, during, and after the visit. Provide candidates with a welcome packet – including background on the unit, the Institute, and Atlanta, as well as information on faculty benefits and supports, and dual-career opportunities. Ensure that internal and external candidates are treated consistently. Invite faculty from other units if there is a possibility of a joint appointment or transdisciplinary work. Address any inappropriate behavior by internal or external unit members.

Address recency and primacy effects by discussing the middle candidates first during deliberations. Recency and primacy effects are the tendency to remember the first and last candidates in a search. Do not be unnecessarily blinded by PhD institution when evaluating candidates.

Arrangements	• Develop a consistent process for travel accommodations. Develop and use a standard visit schedule, to the extent possible. Share the schedule with the candidate several days prior to the visit; ensure some breaks for the candidate; provide names and information on any leaders that they will meet.
Candidate Liaison	• Consider designating a search committee member to be the direct contact for each candidate during the visit; this liaison will be responsible for ensuring a smooth visit logistically, within the specifics of the schedule.
Expectations of Involvement	• Set expectations that all unit faculty (and staff and students, as appropriate) participate in the visit; state responsibilities for attending presentations, meals, and receptions and for sharing feedback with the committee, if appropriate.
Final Evaluations	• If possible, schedule search committee meetings to occur immediately after each campus visit to individually evaluate each candidate.

Offers and Negotiations

After the campus visits, the search committee should solicit the feedback of the unit(s) and use it in their review of the finalists' visits. The committee should submit their evaluation to the School Chair or unit head; this evaluation should be a report of each finalist's strengths and weaknesses. The search committee may or may not recommend which one(s) may receive an offer. The unit head will discuss the finalists with the Dean (or next-level supervisor) to determine which finalist(s) will receive an offer. Offers should be made by the unit head in as transparent a method as possible. Finalists should not be made to feel that they must fight for their best offer. Instead, unit heads should present themselves as an advocate to a candidate who has likely never negotiated a faculty offer before.

Although the goal is to have the first finalist offered a position accept it; it is not uncommon that offers must be made to finalists who ranked after the top finalist. Because of that, the unit head will want to remain in touch with finalists, keeping them as informed as they need to be to remain interested and not remove themselves from consideration. Once all positions are filled, all remaining finalists should be personally contacted by the search committee and/or the unit head; each remaining finalist should be thanked for their interest.

Make sure to retain formal search materials (interview questions, rubrics, and scoring sheets). The units must store these formal search materials in-line with federal and state legal requirements (*i.e.*, according to the USG retention schedule). Informal notes are not to be collected and are not included in the retention expectation.

Communication	• Maintain prompt, clear communication, and conduct honest, open negotiations. Ensure follow-through on negotiated commitments. Some candidates will not have received mentoring on negotiating; consider offering a list of items that are open for consideration.
Transparency	• All short-listed candidates should be kept up-to-date but should not be told if another candidate has received an offer until it is accepted. If a candidate is officially eliminated, inform them with a personal email or phone call.
Time	• Allow the candidate time to consider the offer. To ensure transparency and fairness, establish unit- or college-level timelines for all offer considerations.
Fairness	• Be aware of and consider the different factors that may decrease fairness. Consult with other appropriate units on salary trends, benefits offered, etc. to ensure consistency and fairness.

Additional Considerations

Once a new junior faculty member is hired, School Chairs or unit heads should make sure to provide them with all the support possible for success. For example, access to coaching and mentorship is vital.

External leadership searches should be conducted in ways that encourage the participation of the unit. Methods to balance candidate confidentiality and search transparency should be encouraged. Searches for School Chairs, Deans, and other leadership positions may require multiple presentations to different constituencies and will likely require additional meetings and interviews. It is recommended that units coordinate with their next-level unit when conducting a leadership search. Internal leadership searches should also be conducted in a transparent manner. Note that USG policy 2.6.3 requires all institutions to have established requirements for senior administrator hires, including details surrounding the search process, priorities, search committee membership, hiring criteria, and the use of search firms.

At the conclusion of any search – successful or failed -- an evaluation should be conducted. If there were gaps, identify methods to reduce or eliminate them during the next search. If the pool of applicants did not meet quality expectations or lacked sufficient breadth or depth, identify methods to improve coverage, quality, or quantity during the next search. Units are encouraged to take multi-year, multi-pronged approaches to faculty recruitment to generate strong pipelines for faculty hiring.

Mentoring

- Mentoring or coaching should be offered to all new faculty hires. Consider designating several senior faculty members to be initial onboarding liaisons. Assist the new faculty member in forming a mentoring *team*.

Developing the Pool

- Posting beyond the traditional outlets and taking a multi-year, multi-pronged approach to recruitment is vital. Take steps to generate a strong pipeline for future hires.

Leadership Searches

- Selected finalists for campus visits should be simultaneously announced to the unit, when possible. Any meetings or presentations should be made available to the entire constituency during the campus visit. Provide a mechanism for community input to the search committee that allows this feedback to be considered in the final decisions.

Evaluating the Search

- Evaluate the completed search process; consider all rubrics, evaluation forms, scoring spreadsheets, interview summaries, etc. If the pool of applicants was not as qualified as desired, discuss how the process could have been improved. Share findings and conclusions with chair (or analogous unit-level supervisor).

How to Develop an Appropriate Rubric

In the context of hiring, a rubric is a tool used to assess candidates on a standardized set of criteria. The use of rubrics increases objectivity in candidate evaluation because idiosyncrasies are less likely to influence decisions. The steps described below may be followed to develop a rubric appropriate for a specific faculty search. Units that hire new faculty frequently may wish to establish more generalized rubrics that can be utilized across different searches. Rubrics may also be specified for different stages of the faculty search process. For example, a search committee may use different rubrics to evaluate candidates prior to the long list stage than they would use to evaluate candidates moving to the short list stage.

Search committee chairs and members should thoroughly discuss any rubric prior to its use and should review its usage. Such discussion should focus on developing a shared understanding of the criteria to be measured and of the various levels to be employed.

Analyze the ad and identify all stated expectations for the position.

Distinguish between required and desired expectations for the position.

Determine levels to differentiate each criterion (between 3 and 5 levels in a rating scale is typical).

Optional: Write detailed descriptions of each level/category.

Review examples of rubrics provided by GTHR and ASC.

Create rubric.

Optional: Pilot test the rubric.

Best Practices for Rubrics

- Limit the rubric to a single page.
- Make the rubric easy to read, from left to right and vice versa.

- Use similar language and wording across columns.
- Maximize the descriptiveness of the language in the rubric.

- Share and discuss the rubric with the committee and others.
- Consider reusability for different stages and different searches.

Checking for Perspective

Assumptions about certain groups of people can influence how candidates are assessed. Unacknowledged, unconscious beliefs about different backgrounds and experiences stem from a tendency to organize social worlds through categorization. We can take steps to recognize these tendencies and mitigate our responses. Below are several tips to consider during the search process.

Salary History
- Never ask for prior salary history. Instead, ask for salary expectations. Prior salary history is not objective criteria upon which to make employment or compensation decisions.

Search Committee
- Form a search committee that differs by expertise, perspective, and background.

Use Rubric
- Develop an interview rubric that explains to committee members what is expected from candidates in an interview; distribute it to committee members to review before the interview.

Independent Scoring
- Allow search committee members to score independently prior to any group discussion. Focus on how a candidate adds "value" rather than how they "fit."

Resist Labels
- Resist the impulse to label one or more candidates as the "most promising" or with other superlatives because this may interfere with giving other candidates full consideration.

All search committee members should be aware of any potential blind spots that can arise in the candidate evaluation process. The list on the next page includes information on the most typical types of blind spots that can arise in hiring. It also provides guidance on ensuring that all candidates receive fair treatment by following the included advice.

Halo Effect

- This happens when an interviewer forms a global, positive impression of a candidate based on a non-job-related characteristic that affects the interviewer's assessment of the candidate's qualifications.

Stereotyping

- Stereotyping is a generalization based on characteristics that are not job-related. It affects a candidate's rating if it elicits a negative or positive reaction in the interviewer.

Order Effect

- The order in which candidates are interviewed can result in inaccurate ratings. A good candidate who is interviewed after an outstanding candidate may be given a lower evaluation than is merited because of the overshadowing effect of the prior candidate. Furthermore, the time of day may also influence an assessment; a tired committee is not as attentive or accurate as it would be earlier in the day.

Early Judgments

- Committee members should avoid making snap decisions or early judgments (positive or negative) based on factors not related to the position, such as appearance, voice, or handshake.

Rating Tendencies

- Leniency and strictness errors occur when interviewers gravitate to either extreme on the rating scale and are consistently too generous or too rigid in their scoring. Errors also occur when interviewers rate all candidates as average. Rating tendencies reduce the effectiveness of the assessment process by making it hard to draw clear distinctions among candidates.

Influencing the Candidate

- The more you talk, the more you inadvertently influence a candidate's response. In the beginning and middle phases, say as little as possible about the position and get back to questioning and listening. Body language and tone of voice will also influence a candidate, so be aware of the signals you may unintentionally be communicating.

Losing Control of Interview

- Committee chairs should control the interview, not the candidate. Use communication techniques to take control of a chatty or rambling candidate, to refocus the conversation when it gets off track, to signal other committee members to ask their questions as expected, and to monitor time.

Influence of Previous Role

- The scale and scope of a candidate's previous role(s) should not disqualify or qualify them, as those are just one aspect of assessing suitability. Ensure that factors like skills, achievements, relevance, adaptability, expertise, and alignment are also considered in the decision-making process.

Knowing Your Legal Responsibilities

As you move through the interview process, use the checklist below to ensure you are complying with all relevant federal, state, and local laws.

Recruitment compliance is vital. By following this checklist and associated practices, you will do far more than just safeguard the Institute against lawsuits and fines. You ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity to obtain a faculty position at Georgia Tech.

Before the Interview

- ❑ **Does the position advertisement accurately reflect the responsibilities of the role? Is the language in compliance with Anti-Discrimination laws?**
  - ❑ Use neutral language
  - ❑ Ensure that preferred and required qualifications are legitimately job-related
  - ❑ Focus on qualifications, not personal characteristics
  - ❑ Include equal opportunity statements
- ❑ **Are you utilizing fair and consistent screening criteria across all candidates?**
  - ❑ Utilize impartiality when screening candidates
  - ❑ Consider transferrable skills
  - ❑ Perform consistent screening process across all candidates
  - ❑ Make candidates aware of the interview process and provide them with a chance to ask for accommodations (but do not directly ask them if they need them)
  - ❑ Contact GT's Office of Disability Services for candidates who request accommodations to determine what is needed before, during, and after the interview

During the Interview

- ❑ **Are you conducting an interview process that is legally compliant and standardized across all candidates?**
  - ❑ Develop a list of questions that are appropriate and legally compliant for the role that you are hiring
  - ❑ Utilize evaluation rubrics
  - ❑ Educate committee/panel members on required legal guidelines around questioning and evaluating candidates

After the Interview

- ❑ **Are you conducting background checks that are legitimately required for the role?**
  - ❑ Follow rules and regulations that stipulate the usage of each type of check according to HR background check legal guidelines
- ❑ **Has the interview process been well documented and stored appropriately?**
  - ❑ Ensure that the interview process is well documented and that retention of formal search documents (interview questions, rubrics, and scoring sheets) follows the USG schedule; informal notes are not included in the retention expectation

Appendix

Table 1: Interview DOs and DON'Ts

DO	DON'T
Utilize neutral language	Use extreme modifiers such as "world-class," "unparalleled," or "rock-star"
Schedule interviews with enough time in between each candidate to ensure you have adequate time with each candidate	Rush your interview because you are running behind on time
Interview each candidate with the same prepared list of questions	Ask legally prohibited interview questions (see Appendix Table 3)
Give the candidate your full and undivided attention	Spend more time talking than listening
Provide a welcoming atmosphere for all candidates	Make assumptions based on a candidate's appearance, background, or personality
Use a standard rubric or assessment system to rate candidates on each question or on the interview as a whole	Assess candidates based on memory or first impression
Focus on how the candidate adds value, not how the candidate "fits" with the School	Focus on how a candidate is like you
Employ a search committee that differs by expertise, perspective, and background	Select search committee members with affiliation to candidates

Table 2: Interview Modality Best Practices

Modality	Best Practices
General	➢ Provide ample time for candidates to ask questions ➢ Remember that you are selling the position and the Institute as much as assessing candidates ➢ Conduct all interviews as if they were physically in person regardless of modality used ➢ Create a welcoming environment by greeting all candidates and maintaining eye contact ➢ Provide accommodations when needed to ensure that candidates can perform at their best
In-Person	➢ Provide accessible restrooms ➢ Provide periodic rest breaks ➢ Share clear instructions on how the candidate can get to the interview and where they should go when they are on campus ➢ Provide a parking pass to the candidate if they will be driving to the interview ➢ Arrange for a golf cart if the interview will occur across buildings
Virtual	➢ Check internet connection and speed to ensure that the interview runs smoothly ➢ Utilize plain backgrounds to avoid distractions to candidates during the interview ➢ Provide clear instructions to the candidate about interview times and relevant links to avoid delays during the process ➢ Make sure the light source is clear so that candidates get a clear view of the committee members ➢ Review submitted questions thoroughly to ensure they are admissible before presenting to the candidate ➢ Test presentation services to ensure that they are functioning correctly
Phone	➢ Avoid noisy settings during phone interviews as this can disrupt the candidate from hearing clearly ➢ Resist the urge to multitask during phone interviews, and give the candidate your full attention

Table 3: Questions to Avoid

All questions asked throughout the search process should be relevant. Certain interview questions are off-limits because they open the door to implicit and/or explicit discrimination. Below is a list of legally prohibited topics you must **avoid** during all parts of the search process.

Topic	Example Questions to AVOID
Age	How old are you? What is your date of birth? When did you graduate?
Arrest Record	Have you ever been arrested?
Health Information	Will you need accommodations? What kind of accommodation will you need?
Marital Status	Are you married? What does your spouse do?
National Origin	You have a slight accent in your voice; where are you from? [Questions on how a candidate acquired the ability to communicate in English.] Are you a U.S. citizen?
Parental Status	Do you have children? How old are your children? Are you looking for childcare information? Are you planning to have a family?
Religion or Creed	What is your religion? What church/synagogue/mosque do you attend? Will you need to take religious holidays off?
Salary History	What do you earn in your current position? Are you expecting a salary bump if offered this position?
Veteran Status	What type of discharge did you receive when you left the military? Do you receive disability payments? Do you have a military pension?

However, this is not an exhaustive list, so seek guidance from HR/FA representatives in the unit if you are unsure about a question or topic. Some additional topics to avoid include native language, physical features, and reference checking.

Table 4: Types of Interview Questions

When constructing the question guide for the long list interviews, consult the table below to design questions that will yield the desired results.

Question Type	Defined and Example
Behavioral	Designed to elicit specific examples of a candidate's past behavior and experiences. They aim to assess how a candidate has responded to various situations in the past, providing insight into their skills, abilities, and suitability for the position. *Example: Could you share an example of a situation where you had to adapt to a significant change at work?*
Situational	Present hypothetical scenarios that candidates may encounter in the position. These questions assess a candidate's problem-solving skills, decision-making abilities, and how they would handle various challenges or situations in the role. *Example: Suppose you are leading a project, and a key member unexpectedly quits. How would you reorganize the team and keep the project on track?*
Open-Ended	These questions do not have a specific, predetermined answer and require candidates to provide detailed and thoughtful responses. These questions encourage candidates to express themselves freely and can reveal their depth of knowledge, creativity, and communication skills. *Example: Tell me about your leadership style and how you foster collaboration within a team.*
Self-Appraisal	Questions that ask candidates to reflect on their own strengths, weaknesses, achievements, and growth areas. These questions provide insight into a candidate's self-awareness and ability to assess their performance and professional development. *Example: Reflecting on your past experiences, what areas of professional development or improvement have you identified for yourself?*
Informational	Seek to gauge a candidate's knowledge and understanding of relevant topics, such as industry or technologies associated with the position. These questions help assess a candidate's research skills, preparedness for the interview, and technical knowledge. *Example: Can you explain your familiarity with the technology relevant to this role?*

Question Type	Defined and Example
Compare and Contrast	Prompt the candidate to highlight similarities and differences between two or more concepts, approaches, or experiences. These questions assess a candidate's analytical thinking and their ability to discern nuances in various situations or contexts. *Example: Contrast your leadership style when working with a cross-functional team versus a specialized, skilled team.*
Reversal	Aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of the candidate by seeking instances of behavior that contrast with or diverge from behaviors that have been previously discussed. *Example: First tell me about a time where you effectively managed competing priorities … Now tell me about a time when you tried to balance priorities but were not successful.*

Table 5: Proper Use of Probing Questions

At times, candidates may provide ambiguous responses to interview questions when more detailed answers are required. In these cases, seek clarity by probing for a more complete and precise answer.

Guidelines

- Probing questions should come organically based on the candidate's response and should not be pre-rehearsed before the interview.
- Avoid probing questions that reference topics that are not permissible to ask.
- Acknowledge the candidate's response and then prompt them into more detail without giving away the answer you might want to hear.
- Avoid using too many probing questions, as they tend to make candidates defensive.
- Some candidates will volunteer personal and irrelevant information. Do not pursue the information, and do not make note of it.

Examples of General Probing Prompts

- You said, "[repeat portion of candidate's response]." Can you explain what you meant by that?
- I am not sure I understand what you meant by "[repeat portion of candidate's response]." Can you give me some examples?
- Tell me a little bit more about [question related situation or response].
- I understood your response to mean [your interpretation]. Is this correct?

Table 6: Search Committee Checklist

☐ Before Any Interviews or Campus Visits

- [ ] Ensure the committee has been fully briefed on the requirements and knowledge to participate in the search
- [ ] Confirm members' availability for the entire search process
- [ ] Draft with or provide committee members the position description
- [ ] Establish candidate selection criteria (*e.g.*, finalize any rubrics) with committee members
- [ ] Provide committee members this faculty search guidance document
- [ ] Confirm committee members have completed all relevant training
- [ ] Emphasize the importance of confidentiality
- [ ] Provide committee members ample time to review application materials prior to any meetings
- [ ] Include committee members throughout the search process, in all ways possible

☐ After Any Interviews or Campus Visits

- ☐ Work to evaluate candidates and determine who will advance in the process
- ☐ Meet regularly to discuss the process
- ☐ If possible, identify one committee member to act as a candidate liaison during candidate campus visits (the liaison position may rotate)
- ☐ Encourage members to voice opinions freely
- ☐ Expect all members to engage in the discussion and participate fully in the entire search process
- ☐ Ensure that interview notes and discussions are centered around job-related criteria
- ☐ Reiterate the importance of confidentiality
- ☐ Recognize the hard work and the time that is required to serve on a faculty search committee
- ☐ Produce a final evaluation of finalists' strengths and weaknesses, include a hiring recommendation if requested
- ☐ Retain formal search documents (interview questions, rubrics, and scoring sheets) according to the USG retention schedule (4 years); informal notes are not included in the retention expectation.

Figure 1: USG Statement of Principles

As you make decisions throughout the search and hire process, please keep in mind the Board of Regents approved Statement of Principles that affirm and protect academic freedom and freedom of expression for students, faculty, and staff at all 26 USG colleges and universities.

PRINCIPLE 1: The BOR affirms the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom (from the American Association of University Professors).

"Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.

College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."

PRINCIPLE 2: USG values the diversity of intellectual thought and expression, which shall be reflected in a student body and faculty that respect the individuality and beliefs of all.

PRINCIPLE 3: The BOR values our faculty and the important role they play in teaching, conducting research and providing service. Faculty have the right to be unburdened by ideological tests, affirmations, and oaths. The key basis for hiring promotion and tenure should be achievement and a commitment to student success.