

Affirmative Action Guidelines for Faculty Searches

It is the policy of St. Mary's College of Maryland to provide equal opportunity in education and employment for all qualified persons; to prohibit discrimination in employment because of age, citizenship, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or special disabled veteran and Vietnam veteran status; and to promote equal employment opportunity through well-managed employment practices.

The College's Affirmative Action Plan notes that for faculty searches the College advertises nationally, recruits vigorously, and hires qualified candidates. Additionally, the plan provides that the College uses every resource available to attract qualified women and minority candidates.

These guidelines have been developed to help achieve the College's affirmative action plan. Questions about the guidelines should be directed to Provost Larry Vote.

Job Review

The first step in faculty recruitment is to define the position for which you are hiring. This, of course, depends on department needs for teaching and research areas as well as the broad needs of the College. You should consult with the provost in developing a description of the duties for the position. Once the description for the vacant position is developed, the description should not change during the course of the search.

Recruitment

The College's Affirmative Action Plan requires a vigorous, national search for all faculty positions. *Please consult with the affirmation action/EEOC officer and provost in developing your recruitment plan.* The recruitment plan should achieve the goal of recruiting a diverse pool of qualified applicants within reasonable advertisement expenses.

Besides advertising in national journals for your profession, your recruitment plan might include an advertisement in publications of professional associations of minorities or women, such as the *Association of Black Anthropologists*. Your recruitment plan also might include posting a hiring notice on list serves maintained by professional organizations.

Beyond advertisements, your recruitment plan should include a plan to write letters announcing the vacant position to women or minorities listed in the *Minority and Women's Doctoral Directory*. The provost's office will send you the relevant pages from this publication. Finally, your recruitment plan could include letters to department chairs at historically black institutions or to other individuals who might help identify appropriate applicants for your position.

Advertisement

The provost's office has developed a standard opening paragraph to use in position description. This template is attached (**Attachment A**) to these guidelines for your use in drafting your advertisement. If you include quantitative information about College in your advertisement, please refer to the current issue of the *Fact Book* to be sure that your figures are accurate.

You have two choices in setting an application deadline in your advertisement. The first is to have a firm deadline, for example, January 15. The second is to have a rolling deadline, for example, applications will be reviewed beginning January 15 and review will continue until the position is filled. The advantage of the rolling deadline is that if a terrific application comes in on January 20, you can consider the qualified applicants who submit late. You cannot consider such applicants with a firm deadline.

All advertisements should state: St. Mary's College is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

Screening applications

Before screening applications, the search committee should develop the selection criteria for the position. These criteria must relate directly to the duties of the position as initially identified and as stated in the advertisement. These criteria must be followed throughout the search process. For example, if your advertisement states that a Ph.D. is required, A.B.D.'s should not advance in the search.

Do not make notes on original applications.

During the screening process, you should avoid stereotyping applicants. For example, an applicant should not be rejected because a search committee member wonders why someone who is 50 would want to teach 18 year-olds. Some candidates may have non-traditional career paths and they should not be excluded on this basis.

Material in an applicant's file is confidential. Only members of the search committee should review applications until the first short list of candidates is developed. After the short list is developed, the search committee may ask a colleague with expertise in a particular area to review an application and respond to the committee.

Interviewing applicants

Interviews should be carefully planned. Interview questions should be written in advance of the interview and each applicant should be asked the same questions. Different or follow-up questions may be asked of a particular candidate to clarify an answer given in response to a question or to expand on material in the applicant's c.v. as long as the questions are nondiscriminatory and job-related.

Interview questions should focus on the job requirements. Questions not related to the job description may be considered discriminatory. Please see the affirmative action officer if you have any concerns about questions you might ask during an interview.

Checking references

Checking references is one of the most important steps in deciding which applicant to hire. Just as in selecting interview questions, selecting questions to ask of references requires careful planning to ensure that you get the information you seek and to ensure that you do not ask questions that may be discriminatory. Please consult with the affirmative action officer if you have any concerns about questions to ask a reference.

Before beginning to check references, it is courteous to inform the candidate that you intend to begin checking references. This gives the candidate an opportunity to alert references to expect a call. It is also best to refrain from contacting potential references not listed on an applicant's list of references unless you get specific permission from the applicant. The reasons for this are several. First, the applicant may not want certain individuals to know they are engaged in a job search. Second, the applicant may be able to supply you with reasons as to why that individual might not be able to give a favorable recommendation. Information that will be helpful to you in deciding how to evaluate what a reference has told you. It certainly is permissible, even wise, to wonder why an obvious person is not listed as reference. Just be sure to get the applicant's permission before contacting that individual.

Communicating with applicants

Each applicant should be sent a letter acknowledging receipt of the application. This letter should ask the applicant to fill out an affirmative action card and return it to the affirmative action office. The letter should also inform the applicant about when the hiring decision will be made. After a candidate is hired, each applicant should be sent a polite letter announcing completion of the search.

All applications must be kept on file for three and one-half years after selection of a candidate. This ensures that if a complaint or lawsuit is filed, the College will have all documents that may be relevant to the issues in the case. If a lawsuit or complaint is filed, no documents relating to the search should be disposed of until the Office of Human Resources or the Attorney General's Office advises you the documents will no longer be needed.