

Overview of Search Process for Custom Classification Positions

This checklist provides the major steps involved in searching for and proposing a hire for Civil Service Custom Classification positions.

1. Select Search Committee EO

For all categories of job openings, LAS requires units to form a search committee involving multiple individuals who can properly assess the qualifications for the position. Individuals should have broad perspectives and a commitment to diversity. A diverse search committee will strengthen the pursuit of a highly qualified, diverse pool of candidates; preserve the integrity of the search process; and avoid the appearance of undue influence.

- Whenever possible, create a search committee that is diverse by race and gender. Provide a justification if this cannot be met (via *Attach a Note* in HireTouch).
- Search Committees must have a minimum of 3 members.
- Whenever possible, select a chair for the search committee that is not the person to whom the position will report to when hired so the search committee can serve in an advisory role. Provide a justification if this cannot be met (via *Attach a Note* in HireTouch).
- Provide the charge to the search committee (either at first search committee meeting or via email): what you expect them to do (will they conduct initial interviews and present an unranked or ranked list to the EO; will they only be reviewing applications and presenting a short list to an executive committee or the EO and not conduct any interviews); what a potential hire must have to succeed in the position; etc); and answer any clarifying questions on qualifications for the position.

2. Job Posting (Advertisement) EO, Staff

- Create the job posting using the information from the approved job description. The *Search Committee & Processing Documents* BOX folder contains a sample ad with basic headers and required language.
- Job Posting will be reviewed and approved by college and Illinois Human Resources(IHR)
- Minimum search window is two weeks.

If advertising will take place outside of the campus the following should be considered:

- Create a short ad (to be used in sources that charge by the word). A short ad example can be found via the LAS Hiring Website- *HireTouch Job Aids*. <https://las.illinois.edu/faculty/hiring>
- Create a short url- Please consider creating a short url for your search. If your unit wishes, you can replace <https://jobs.illinois.edu> in the long ad you post with the short url. The job board is a bit cluttered, so you may want to direct candidates directly to your ad. The short url can also be used in your approved short ad. Instructions on creating and editing a short url are on the LAS Hiring Website- *HireTouch Job Aids*. <https://las.illinois.edu/faculty/hiring>

3. Establish Search Plan and Recruitment Sources EO and Search Committee should discuss

recruitment sources/strategies to ensure the most diverse pool of qualified candidates. For all ad sources, please ensure that the price and timeline for postings will work with your budget, search plan and proposed application deadline. The position announcement will automatically be added to the Illinois Jobs Board once approved.

Units need to discuss if disciplinary sources should be used for the search. Units should utilize special recruitment efforts or methods which target members of the designated classes, including U.S. military veterans and persons with disabilities as well as members of historically underrepresented groups. A proactive recruitment plan should be used and could utilize some of the following:

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<http://www.academickeys.com/>

<http://diverseeducation.com/>

<http://www.insightintodiversity.com/>

Dice.com- for technology positions

Hireveterans.com

4. EO gives information above (1-3) to Staff to enter into HT via the Job Posting Form

- Staff contact should check ad costs and publishing dates to ensure that all ad sources can be used.
- Consult LAS Hiring website- HT Form Instructions- Creating Workflows and Editing Forms for assistance with this form. <https://las.illinois.edu/faculty/hiring>
- Job Posting form is reviewed by LAS and Illinois Human Resources (IHR).

AFTER Job Posting Form is approved:

5. Advertising Staff, Search Chair

- Begin advertising after receipt of job posting approval from IHR. It is good practice to keep copies of the ads placed to provide an accurate record of the search.

6. Search Committee Meeting to plan the search

Invite the following: Search Committee, Hiring Manager/Executive Officer, staff support (if applicable). Please contact IHR to ask if the Talent Acquisition Partner would like to be at this meeting so they can provide an overview of their involvement in this process. This meeting, which can be conducted in person or over the phone, should happen before any applications are reviewed. The Hiring Manager will discuss the position duties and qualifications. The search committee should then begin discussing the items noted below.

The following outline should be used to start an agenda for the meeting:

- Obtain Charge from Executive Officer**
- Review the following documents** (each opens in new window):
 - [Interview Questions and Pre-Employment Inquiries](#)
 - [Non Discrimination Statement](#)
- A WORD ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY**
 - Search process is confidential
 - Maintain confidentiality before, during, and after the search of all applicant information and deliberations.
 - Applicant information should not be shared
 - Finalist information should not be shared
 - Reference checks must be done with guidance from Search Chair/Department Head
 - For searches where there are internal applicants, the search committee must take extra care to NOT discuss any aspects of the search in front of internal applicants. The department must also take care when scheduling interviews to ensure the confidentiality of finalists.

Planning Your Search

Search Process Best Practices

- Free of bias or stereotyping of applicants in verbal or written communication
- Applicants must be evaluated fairly

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- Search Committee discussions need to focus on the materials submitted (cover letter, resumes, applications, references, etc), interviews, and comments from individuals that also met with the finalists. Personal information on any applicant must be kept out of the search committee discussions.
- Campus visit provides similar opportunities for each finalist
- Interview procedures treat finalists consistently

□ Discuss Advertising Sources [if meeting happens when search is open for applications]

Staff contact should provide the Search Chair the list of ad sources used for the search. Will sources already identified be effective in soliciting and recruiting a qualified and diverse pool of applicants? Should additional sources be used?

Planning for Review of Applicants

□ Brief Overview of Review of Applicants

- The criteria to be used in evaluating applications has already been set in the job description.
 - The **first review of applications** involves assessing which applicants meet the required education and experience qualifications from the job description (not who best meets the qualifications). The search committee will conduct this review and meet with IHR to discuss who does meet the requirements. After this review the Master Referral list is created.
 - The list of referred applicants will most likely be very large, so the search committee should discuss if an initial interview should be done via email with a list of 4-5 common interview questions sent to all referred applicants. This stage is called the email questionnaire. Begin development of these questions early in the process. See section 9 below for detailed information on this process.
 - In the **review of applicants from the Master Referral list AFTER email questionnaire responses received**, the search committee will use the required AND preferred qualifications, including items listed in the ad as “Successful candidates will have the following”. Required education does not need to be used at this point, as everyone on the master referral has been assessed with that criteria; required experience can now be evaluated as to who best meets that qualification. All applicants on the Master Referral are entitled to an interview.
- Discuss the **Interview review criteria**- Extent of each finalist’s experience with and their ability to effectively perform each of the duties stated in the ad, in addition to the degree that they meet the required and preferred criteria.
- Interview process (mode and questions) must be consistent throughout the process
- Obtain approval from LAS for each set of questions BEFORE they are used

□ Discuss letters of reference

- There must be a consistent plan concerning reference checks.
 - Will the search committee be involved in reference checking OR the hiring official?
 - Will references be requested for all semi-finalists; all finalists; or only the proposed hire?
- Whatever plan is selected, it must be consistent for all applicants at each stage of the process.
- Evaluation of references- strength of letters or information shared (if done via phone) as related to applicant screening criteria
- **Please note- Search Committee members cannot be references for any applicants.**

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- If references are contacted via phone, the common set of questions and answers from the conversation must be documented and uploaded into HireTouch.
- Review the LAS Hiring site- *Letters of Reference- using HT for collection* for information on using HT to collect reference letters. <https://las.illinois.edu/faculty/hiring>
- Hiring officials may ask their HR representative to contact IHR to ask if any of the on campus finalists who are current U of I employees have a PPP (performance partnership program) on file. Contact is Sonya Holley (sonyah2@uillinois.edu). Hiring officials can also request to see the IHR file on a current U of I civil service employee- we suggest doing this only for your proposed hire.

Establish timeline for search process

7. Committee Review of Applications

- Review applications to assess which applicants meet the MINIMUM required education and experience qualifications - not who best meets the qualifications.
- Keep in mind information from the **Office for Access & Equity on reviewing applications**:
 - Be mindful of unconscious bias as you review applicant names, experiences, educational institutions, etc.
 - Evaluate each applicant's entire application; don't depend too heavily on only one element such as the "prestige" of the degree granting institution
 - Be able to defend every decision for eliminating or advancing an applicant
 - Spend sufficient time (at least 20 minutes) evaluating each applicant

8. Search Committee meeting with IHR Talent Acquisition Partner (TAP)

- The search committee, IHR TAP, and dept HR representative will meet to discuss all applications and determine which meet the minimum required education and experience qualifications.
 - After the meeting, IHR will assign a score to each applicant, based on application screening criteria and the Civil Service Statues and Rules
 - The top three banded scores will make up the referred applicant list on the Master Referral
 - IHR TAP sends Master Referral to the unit contact
 - Discuss if regret emails should be sent to applicants who did not meet mins at this time. It is best to keep applicants informed along the way whenever possible. Regret emails should be sent via HT. See the HT Resources tab- *Email Correspondence* for instructions.
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9. Screening Interview Process and Review

- All referred applicants on the Master Referral must receive an interview
 - Interview process (mode and questions) must be consistent
 - Initial interview options and procedures:
 - **Email a list of common questions**: If the list of referred applicants is very large, the search committee should discuss if the initial interview should be done via email with a list of 4-5 common interview questions sent to all referred applicants.

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- Create the email questionnaire that will be sent to all applicants on the Master Referral. This should be developed early in the process (preferably before the search deadline, at the initial search committee meeting)
 - Send the email questionnaire to LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu for review before sending out the questionnaire.
 - Send out the email questionnaire to all applicants on the Master Referral after receiving LAS approval on initial interview process. Provide a deadline for submission of answers.
 - After deadline, search committee reviews the questionnaire responses and application materials of all applicants on the Master Referral. Search Committee uses the screening review criteria (the required and preferred qualifications from the job description) to evaluate these materials.
 - Search Committee meets to discuss their evaluations and select applicants for a second round of interviews
 - Search Committee must state reason for non-selection of each applicant on the Master Referral. The reasons must be specific and relate to the required and/or preferred qualifications the applicant lacked
 - The unit can email the reasons for non-selection to LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu for review
 - **If the list of referred applicants is small, perhaps one of the following is the next best step:**
 - **Phone/skype interviews with search committee**: if the list of referred applicants is small, but include out of town applicants, interviews via phone/skype are suggested.
 - **In person interviews with search committee**: if the list of referred applicants is small, then in person interviews may be the best next step if all applicants are local.
- Submit questions that will be used to LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu for review **before the interview process begins**
- See section 10 below for information on the next steps in the process
- Staff contact updates status codes in HireTouch. This will make sending regret emails much easier.

Status Codes to choose for applicants:

- *Application complete* = sent email questionnaire, but they did not response (unit will send regret emails out via HT)
- *Meets Mins, not preferred experience* = responded to email questionnaire, not chosen for interview (unit will send regret emails to this group via HT)
- *Withdrew* = withdrew at any stage of the process
- *Semi-finalist (screening/phone interview)* = answered email questionnaire, interviewed via phone, not chosen for final interview (unit will send regret emails to this group via HT)
- *Finalist and/or on campus interview* = answered email questionnaire and chosen as a finalist in the search (Once a hire has been made, the unit will send regret emails to those in this group that were NOT chosen for the position. This can be done via HT (email) or search chair can reach out via phone or email)

FYI- We cannot use the *Declined offer* code because it triggers HT to send an email to the person asking why.

10. Semi-Finalist & Finalist Interview Process

Options for the next round of interviews include phone or skype interviews and/or in-person interviews. The

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best practices for interviews include establishing the following before any interviews begin:

□ **Interview Review Criteria-** used to evaluate each on campus interview

Interview Review Criteria should be the extent of each finalist's experience with and their ability to effectively perform each of the duties stated in the ad, in addition to the degree that they meet the required and preferred criteria.

□ **Basic set of Interview Questions**

Applicants should be asked similar questions, thereby allowing comparative judgments to be made while ensuring that crucial job- related information is obtained. These questions are asked by the search committee to each finalist. Examples from various searches in the recent past can be found in the [LAS Search Committee BOX folder](#).

□ **Interview schedule**

All interviews should, barring unique circumstances, be conducted under reasonably similar circumstances, and all applicants should be given similar opportunities to meet the same set of colleagues.

All individuals interviewing the finalists should review the following;

Position Announcement

Finalist's Vita

[Interview Questions and Pre-Employment Inquiries](#)

□ Before interviews begin, ensure LAS has reviewed and approved the interview questions and review criteria- email LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu

□ Conduct interviews

11. Search Committee provides recommendation to Executive Officer/Hiring Official

The search chair provides the Executive Officer/Hiring Official a narrative outlining the search committee's recommendation. The recommendation may end with a ranked list or only include the overview of each finalists strengths/potential limitations. The Executive Officer/Hiring Official needs to provide guidance on what they expect to receive. The recommendation should be submitted using the *LAS Search Summary & Proposed Hire Request* document and will include the following:

□ Evaluation of each Finalist by Search Committee- completion of the Master Referral list

Justification for finalists must include how he/she met or did not meet the following:

– Approved Evaluation Criteria- qualifications; experience; references, etc.

– Interview Review Criteria- in depth review of qualifications and experience, etc.

12. Requesting permission from LAS to make an offer

The executive officer will review the search committee's recommendation (section 1) and finish the *LAS Search Summary & Proposed Hire Request* document by providing their request for a proposed hire (sections 2 & 3).

Reference Checking: Hiring official needs to check references for the proposed hire BEFORE submitting a

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request to LAS for a hire. References may have been checked along the way, perhaps letters were requested for all finalists, or references are to be checked only for the proposed hire. This should have been decided at the beginning of the process.

Hiring officials may ask their HR representative to contact IHR to ask if any of the on campus finalists who are current U of I employees have a PPP (performance partnership program) on file. Contact is Sonya Holley (sonyah2@uillinois.edu). Hiring officials can also request to see the IHR file on a current U of I civil service employee- only for a proposed hire.

The unit will submit the following to LAS via email LASCollegehiring@uillinois.edu:

- Completed LAS Search Summary & Proposed Hire Request** document
- Completed Master Referral list**
- Letters of reference** or typed transcripts of reference checks for all finalists (Upload into each finalist's HT file- code as *Letters of or List of References-CONFIDENTIAL*)

LAS will review and send request to IHR for salary review, copy to unit HR contact. NOTE: IHR approval on the proposed salary offer MUST be obtained before any offer can be given.

13. Contingent Offer and Background Check Process

IHR will contact the college and unit via email with approval to issue the offer.

Issue offer letter

- To ensure that your offer letter includes all necessary elements, please consult the [IHR website](#).
- Timing of the start date: The start date for the position cannot be before the background check is complete. Please review the steps below so you can plan accordingly.
- Moving expenses- review the LAS Moving Expenses Information document from the <https://las.illinois.edu/faculty/hiring> website, under Offer letter resources; add information to the offer letter if needed.
- While the offer is being considered, please make sure these items are completed:
 - Inform all other applicants of their status in the search. You may want to hold off on contacting the other finalists until after your top candidate has accepted the offer. All applicants must be informed of their status in the search- this may have been done in stages throughout the search (an email to applicants that did not meet the minimum requirements sent after the first review of applicants, etc.). Regret emails should be sent via HT. See the HT Resources tab- *Email Correspondence* for instructions. Regret email examples can be found via the *LAS Search Committee and Processing documents* Box Folder: <https://uofi.box.com/s/sjvxm0hzhuzexnl8upux1nfw71uke4w>
Contact Amy Elli for access.

If offer ACCEPTED

- After the written acceptance of the contingent offer and signed job description have been received, proceed with submitting the **background check request AND master referral**.
Background Check Request Form. [Information from IHR on Background Checks](#). The BCF can be submitted right after obtaining a signed offer letter and job description. The BCF can be found in the Staff Vacancy workflow in HireTouch.
 - Click on the light blue *Forms* tab

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- Click *Start* on the Background Check Request row
- Complete all fields and submit to **Illinois HR background check review*
- IF background check **needed**, IHR will email the staff contact:
 - “Background check ordered. Please inform your candidate(s) to expect a message from GIS from the following email address, noreply@hireright.com and the subject line will state: Action needed in connection with your application for employment with University of Illinois.”
- IF check **not needed OR** when Background check **process complete**, IHR will email the staff contact:
 - “Proceed with the hiring process. A copy of the email should be attached to the HR Front End transaction.”
- Illinois Human Resources notifies the candidate of the successful completion of the criminal background check process
- If needed, the unit could follow-up with the candidate to confirm the start date and other details (such as visa or moving arrangements)
- Ensure all applicants have been notified of their status in the search

Master Referral. Submit the following to the IHR TAP for your search and LAS HR:

- Completed Master Referral document. Justifications for not moving someone forward in the review **MUST** relate to the qualifications and duties of the position.
- First round interview questions (normally the email questionnaire)
- Signed offer letter
- Copies of any ads the unit placed

□ If offer **DECLINED**

If the proposed hire turns down the offer please complete the following:

- IF you wish to request to make an offer to a different finalist:
 - The search chair/Exec Officer will write up an addendum to the *LAS Search Summary & Proposed Hire Request* document indicating the date of the declined offer and the next steps the unit wishes to take. Send this revised document to LAS- LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu and include reference letters.
 - Update the master referral indicating the decline and who is the next proposed hire.
 - IF the unit will NOT make another offer:
 - Email the updated master referral to IHR and the LAS (LASCollegehiring@illinois.edu)
 - Ensure all applicants have been notified of their status in the search
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14. Finishing HireTouch portion of search

Ensure that all applicants have been notified of their status in the search. See section 9 above.

15. Process the hire through HR Front End

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Consult the IHR website for instructions: <http://humanresources.illinois.edu/hr-professionals/hr-front-end-transaction-tips.html>