



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance

Search Committee: Best Practices

The search committee is critical in the search process and plays an advisory role to the hiring official. It is a best practice for the hiring official and the Affirmative Action Representative to provide the committee with a verbal and/or written charge that clearly communicates the committee's role and responsibilities regarding equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, the role of the Search Committee Chair, the extent of authority of the search committee, the recruiting goals of the College/Division/Department, and the protocols required to make the recommendation to the hiring official.

The committee members must clearly understand that participation on a search committee represents a significant responsibility. NIU policies require that participants in the search process maintain protocols of confidentiality. It is expected by the University that complete confidentiality towards the search process will be observed by every search committee member. Search committee members are expected to preserve and protect the confidentiality of the candidate information. This responsibility includes non-disclosure of the names and/or status of any candidate participating in the search process and/or the content of search committee meeting proceedings to any person outside the search process. Adherence to this requirement is considered a component of satisfactory employee performance. A breach of complete confidentiality will immediately disqualify a search committee member from service on the committee. All members of the Search Committee must sign the Confidentiality Agreement before proceeding with the Search. The agreements are maintained with the department search file.

SAMPLE EMAIL

Thank you for your willingness to serve on the {insert position title} search committee. The role of the committee is advisory in nature and is vital to the success of the search process. As outlined in the NIU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM), the committee makes a recommendation for hire to the hiring official. The final hiring decision will be made by the {insert title of the hiring official}. For your convenience, the job description, a list of search committee members, a timeline, and confidentiality agreement are attached.

As a member of the search committee you are required to sign the attached confidentiality agreement. Once signed, please return it to {name of contact person} via email as a pdf or through campus mail. Your participation on this committee is not confidential; however, it is essential that the finalists remain confidential as well as the dates of the interviews. If you are asked if you are on the search committee, you may answer yes. We will not release the names of the search committee members publicly. This is so you will not have media or others contacting you about the search. You may also consult constituencies you represent (e.g., Faculty, SPS, Deans) to get their feedback on questions to ask the finalists. We will be using Blackboard and other electronic media for reviewing candidate files and sharing information. This information should not be printed or shared with anyone other than the individuals involved in the search process. If you have questions or if you receive any inquiries regarding the search please let me know.

INFORMATION FOR THE SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

- The position requirements, advertisement, and job description.
- The expectations of the hiring official, confidentiality, candidate evaluation, etc.
- The present and future needs of the College/Division/Department.
- Northern Illinois University's Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM).
- University Policy on Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace.
- The University's Mission Statement.
- Diversity as an essential component of the University's excellence and an ability to articulate the University's commitment to diversity.
- University/College/Division/Department research, curriculum, services, and programs that create a welcoming and inclusive work environment.