
Appendix 6

Handbook for Chairs and Members
of Faculty Search Committees
Hendrix College

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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to serve as a guide for chairs and members of faculty search committees at Hendrix College. Because the typical faculty member participates in such a search committee infrequently, it may be useful to have for handy reference a description of the process of filling a faculty position. The sections below outline the roles played by the various parties involved and clarify the responsibilities of the chair. They are not intended to cover every conceivable turn of events that might occur during a search process. The handbook is, however, intended to be comprehensive in its coverage of the typical flow of events, and some effort is made, particularly in Section XI, to anticipate a few kinds of anomalous situations.

This handbook is not intended to address questions concerning qualifications for appointment to faculty positions at Hendrix College or the criteria to be used in making recommendations and appointments. As indicated below, these matters will be discussed with each search committee, ordinarily in an organizational meeting called by the chair for that purpose.

II. THE ALLOCATION PROCESS

Openings in faculty positions at Hendrix occur ordinarily in one of two ways. A newly created position may be authorized by the president on the recommendation from the Committee on Faculty, or an existing position may fall open through the departure of a current faculty member. In the former case, the authorization of the newly created position defines it and assigns it to a department of the faculty. In the latter case, the Committee on Faculty recommends the definition and placement of the open position after a comprehensive review of the college's needs for staffing. In both cases authorization of the new position is made by the president, who acts on the recommendation of the Committee on Faculty.

It sometimes happens that departments or individual faculty members make formal proposals to the Committee on Faculty requesting recommendation of the definition and placement of an open faculty position, or of some anticipated opening, in a particular field and department. The Committee on Faculty considers such proposals, but its discussion is not limited to the range of proposals which have been made to it. Rather, the Committee has the responsibility of monitoring all of the college's needs for faculty staffing (whether these have been proposed by a department or not) and of making recommendations accordingly.

Ordinarily the Committee on Faculty will conduct a preliminary review of openings and possible openings for the academic year at its planning session at the beginning of August. A tentative indication of the number of prospective openings may be made in the fall faculty conference. Within a few weeks of the opening of the academic year, the Committee on Faculty will ordinarily review the college's needs in light of the available openings and make recommendations to the president. At this time the committee will also report on anticipated needs and openings. The recommendations will include general definitions of the positions involved, their assignments to specific departments, and general indications about the level of rank and experience to be sought. When a position in a given department has been authorized, the chair will be notified by the provost and will be asked to give preliminary consideration to the two matters discussed in subsequent sections: appropriate membership for the search committee and the method of advertising the position.

III. THE APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

Faculty search committees are appointed by the provost in consultation with the chair of the relevant department and the relevant area chair. For tenure-track searches, the area

chair, and, in most cases, all continuing full-time members of the relevant department will be members of the search committee. In large departments, the department chair in consultation with the department may limit the number of departmental faculty serving on the committee, but care should be taken to ensure appropriate representation with regard to rank as well as gender and ethnicity. Each committee should also include one faculty member from another department in the same area and at least one faculty member from another area of the college. Each search committee should also have two student members. Ordinarily, the chair of the department will be the chair of the search committee. For non-tenure-track searches, the composition with regard to the area chair, departmental faculty, and students is the same, but faculty outside the department are not required. For all searches, all members of the search committee are full voting members except the Area Chair, who may vote only when he/she is a member of the department in which the position is being filled.

Committee members are appointed by a letter from the provost which informs them that further correspondence concerning the search will come from the chair.

While every attempt is made to balance search committees as far as possible, no member of any search committee is representative of a special constituency. Rather, every member should assess candidates in light of needs of the college as a whole.

In an organizational meeting, the chair of the committee will describe the process of the search, including the method of advertisement and application, the manner in which applications are being processed, the anticipated procedures for identifying finalists, and the interview process. A provisional timetable for the search, worked out in collaboration with the area chair and the provost, should also be discussed with the committee at this stage. At this organizational meeting the chair should describe the position in detail, and outline the characteristics desired in the successful applicant. The area chair or the provost should also discuss at this point the necessity of strict confidentiality in the search process, including limiting access to the files to those directly involved in the search, subjects and questions that are inappropriate to the selection process, and should outline the general criteria sought in all new faculty at Hendrix. The promise of excellence in teaching, indications of continuing scholarly vitality and productivity, and the prospect of active collegial participation in the life of the college are the principal general considerations relevant to the assessment of candidates.

This meeting is also the occasion for discussion of matters such as the college's commitment to increasing the ethnic and gender diversity of its faculty and staff.

IV. ADVERTISING THE POSITION

All faculty searches at Hendrix will ordinarily be advertised in general higher education publications, in at least one journal or job openings circular specific to the discipline involved, and on the Hendrix website, via the Director of Human Resources. Because discipline-specific journals or employment bulletins may be the best sources of prospective applicants, and because the lag time between submission and publication of an advertisement varies widely, chairs of search committees should ascertain, immediately upon notification from the provost of the authorization of a position, the closing dates for submission of advertisements in relevant employment bulletins. That information should be conveyed immediately to the provost.

Barring stylistic requirements imposed by particular journals, advertisements should ordinarily include a description of the position matching that contained in its authorization, a standard description of Hendrix College and its environment, and an account of the method of application. Application is ordinarily made to the chair of the search committee. These advertisements are composed by the chair of the committee and approved by the Committee on Faculty. A sample advertisement is provided in Section XII.

Announcements may also be sent out to selected graduate schools and to networks of colleagues in other institutions. Because this mailing may be among the most productive source of applicants, the department should consider carefully to which graduate schools and individuals announcements should be sent.

The advertisement should indicate that a complete application consists of a letter of application addressing the candidate's interests in and qualifications for the position, a curriculum vitae, transcripts (graduate and undergraduate) and three letters of recommendation. The advertisement may set an application deadline beyond which materials will not be considered, or it may simply state that review of materials will begin on a specified date. In the latter case, the committee is free to consider late-arriving materials.

In cases in which the timing of national or regional disciplinary meetings makes possible recruitment activities at those gatherings, members of the search committee attending them are encouraged to distribute advertisements, to recruit candidates, and even to conduct interviews with candidates in those settings. No more than three members of the search committee will be funded by the Recruiting budget. However, additional faculty may apply for Faculty Travel funds to cover their expenses.

V. RECEIVING APPLICATIONS

Advertisements should ordinarily instruct applicants to send their applications to Professor John Doe, Chair, Department of Paleontology, Hendrix College. On receipt of each application, the chair of the committee should review it briefly and turn it over to the area or departmental assistant. The assistant should maintain a file on each applicant, containing all material that has been received pertinent to that applicant's candidacy. Each application should be acknowledged with a brief letter of thanks. Sample letters are contained in Section XII.

VI. SCREENING APPLICATIONS

The initial round of applicant screening may take place in one of two ways. In one case, the chair and members of the committee from the relevant department may form a subgroup to read all applications carefully and then identify a leading group of candidates. Otherwise, all members of the committee may go through the applicant files to identify a leading group. The precise method used for this initial screening is at the discretion of the committee chair. Depending upon the size of the applicant pool and other variables, this group may range in size from approximately half a dozen to two dozen. In addition to this screening process, the file of any applicant put forward by any individual member of the committee or by any continuing, full-time department member not on the committee should be placed in the leading group for the inspection of all committee members. Members of the search committee should then be informed of the existence of this leading group. The faculty assistant may isolate their files for convenience, and all members of the committee should read these dossiers. Care should be taken to limit access to these files to those directly involved in the search, and members are advised to avoid making marks on any of the official documents provided by the candidate. All written communications with the candidate, including emails, should be included in the dossier.

After the leading group of candidates has been identified, the chair of the search committee should call a meeting of the committee, offering ample time for all committee members to read the files in the leading group. At that meeting the committee, acting corporately, should identify a group of semifinalists or finalists.

VII. IDENTIFYING FINALISTS

If the group of well qualified applicants is large, and the prospects for discriminating among several well qualified candidates are not clear, the committee may wish to identify a group of four to six to be interviewed by telephone. When telephone interviews are used, a small group should be identified to conduct them. This group should include ordinarily no more than four persons including the chair of the committee, one other member of the department, a faculty member outside the department (when included on the committee), and a student.

Telephone interviews should be carefully designed beforehand to focus on specific issues that have been raised in prior discussion of the applicant's candidacy. It is often difficult to get a reliable general sense of the candidate over the telephone, and committee members' perceptions of the candidates based on telephone interviews often vary widely. Therefore, care should be taken to design the interviews to answer specific questions, and each member of the interviewing team should know beforehand what role he or she is to play in the interview. Long, drawn-out telephone interviews can be draining, and should be avoided.

In order to minimize candidates' frustration following telephone interviews, when the chair calls candidates to set up this round of telephone interviews, he/she should say something like the following: "After this round of telephone interviews, we will invite one or more candidates to campus. If that results in a hire, all other candidates will be notified immediately. If it does not, the process will be repeated, and will continue until the position has been filled. This can run into weeks or even months, so you might not hear from us for some time. If you need to know the precise status of the search and your candidacy in the interval, you should contact me."

When telephone interviews are used, the same group should interview each candidate who is called. The candidate should be apprised of the status of her/his candidacy in a preliminary call placed by the chair to set up a time for the extended conversation. After the calls have been made, the interviewing group should then proceed with the identification of finalists to bring to campus for interviews.

Either with or without preliminary telephone interviews, the committee should identify two finalists to invite to campus for interview. If, after both have been interviewed, neither is found acceptable for the position, further on-campus interviews may be conducted, depending on the particular circumstances of the search.

VIII. INTERVIEWS ON CAMPUS

A sample itinerary for candidates is included in Section XII. Each candidate will meet with the president, the provost, the department, the search committee, the Committee on Faculty, and a representative group of students, who should ordinarily include members of the search committee. The chair of the committee should work with the provost's assistant in scheduling days for interviews and the details of each candidate's schedule. In inviting each candidate to campus for interview, the chair should map the process out for the candidate in reasonable detail.

Candidates are ordinarily asked to pay for their own travel and to document their expenses for reimbursement by the college following the processing of their receipts. This process usually takes seven to ten days. Candidates should be advised not to expect reimbursement while they are on campus. Documentation of candidates' expenses should include relevant names, dates, and receipts. Vouchers for search expenses must be signed by the provost and copies of the vouchers kept in the provost's office. In cases in which reimbursement arrangements are not feasible, the college can make arrangements to provide an airline ticket for the candidate. Members of the search committee will be reimbursed for expenses they incur in entertaining candidates or in shuttling them to and from campus. The

Payment Request Form is available on Appendix page 8-10 or on-line at (<http://www.hendrix.edu/resources/resources.aspx?id=551>). Usually, search committees will entertain each candidate over at least one meal off-campus. To facilitate conversation and control expenses, the college will pay for the meals of the candidate and no more than four members of the search committee. On these occasions committees are not expected to scrimp, but extravagance is to be avoided. The appropriate faculty assistant will make arrangements for lodging for each candidate, and it is the chair's responsibility to see that each candidate is met at the airport (where appropriate), conveyed to his or her lodging, and brought to campus.

Most members of the search committee will have opportunities for informal conversation with candidates. Since excellence in teaching is an essential factor in appointment to the Hendrix faculty, it is highly desirable that students and faculty members should also attend the candidates' lectures. The interview of the candidate with the search committee should be managed by the chair so that it enlarges the committee's understanding of the candidate, rather than simply repeating earlier questions and answers. In particular, the interview should give the committee an opportunity to assess the following:

1. the candidate's command of the relevant academic subject matter and/or professional abilities;
2. the candidate's understanding of and enthusiasm for the aims of Hendrix College;
3. the candidate's promise as a contributor to the College's continuing academic advancement;
4. the candidate's command of the language and of skills of conversation and discussion;
5. the candidate's promise for continuing intellectual vitality and scholarly productivity.

It will often be useful, at the time candidates are selected for on-campus visits, to determine areas which are to be explored in interviews. As the same time, the structure of the interview should be flexible enough to allow for any appropriate line of inquiry or discussion.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS AND THE APPOINTMENT

After both candidates have been interviewed on campus, the search committee will meet to consider a recommendation. The committee may recommend that both candidates are acceptable, that neither is, or that one is but not the other. If both are recommended, the committee may also wish to rank them.

The Committee on Faculty also makes a recommendation in each search and may recommend to the president in any of the ways just indicated. The search committee should be reminded at the time of making its recommendation of the role of the Committee on Faculty.

Both recommendations are carried to the president by the provost. After the decision, the provost then contacts the candidate who has been approved and extends the college's offer. Depending on circumstances, the candidate may be allowed to consider a pending offer for a period of several days. Upon receipt of oral acceptance, the provost informs the chair of the search committee and prepares a letter of appointment for the president's signature. When a signed copy of that letter is returned by the candidate, the appointment is formally completed, and the search is over.

X. CLOSING THE SEARCH

When the provost is notified that the successful candidate's letter of appointment has been returned with his or her signature, the provost will cue the chair of the search committee to write the remaining applicants, informing them that the search has been closed with an

appointment. A sample letter for this purpose is included in Section XII. Candidates who were invited to campus for interview but not appointed should be called by the chair of the committee and offered the college's thanks for their interest and participation in the process. Such candidates should also receive a letter similar to the one provided in Section XII for this specific purpose.

Application materials for the successful candidate should be forwarded to the office of the provost. The contents of all of the other dossiers are to be placed in secure storage in the office of the departmental or area assistant and retained for one year from the closure of the search. Notes made by individuals should be destroyed.

XI. WHAT ELSE CAN HAPPEN?

Searches sometimes have unusual twists and turns. Committees may become deadlocked. Qualified candidates may fail to appear. Circumstances external to the search, such as the scheduling of candidates, other searches, or other college activities may impede and retard its progress. It is sometimes necessary to close a search without an appointment. In such cases it is extremely important that all parties understand precisely the status of the closed search. The position may retain its authorization and the search may be simply postponed. The search may be closed and the position returned to the pool for possible reassignment. The position may be redefined, in terms, for instance, of qualifications desired, or from a tenure track to a one-year appointment, or vice versa. In all such cases the responsibilities of the search committee and the Committee on Faculty are parallel to their ordinary roles in the processes of authorization and appointment.

XII. SAMPLE LETTERS, ADVERTISEMENT, AND SCHEDULE

June 21, 2008

Name<1>

Dear <1>:

Thank you for your application for the position of (name of position) at Hendrix. The materials you have submitted will be reviewed carefully, and I will be in further contact with you regarding the status of your candidacy as the search progresses.

Sincerely,

John Doe
Chair, Department of Paleontology

February 29, 2008

John Doe
111 Sandstone
Seattle, WA

Dear Dr. Doe:

Thank you for your application for the Assistant Professor position in the Hendrix department of Paleontology. The materials you have submitted will be reviewed carefully. However, at this time, your transcripts and letters of recommendation have not yet arrived.

I will be in further contact with you regarding the status of your candidacy as the search continues.

Sincerely,

Herbert Smith
Department of Paleontology

June 21, 2008

Name<1>

Dear<2>:

Many thanks for your letter of May 23 regarding the candidacy of (name of candidate) for the post of (name of position) here at Hendrix. Your assistance in our consideration of his candidacy is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John Doe
Chair, Department of Paleontology

JC:sp

Sample Advertisement

HENDRIX COLLEGE FACULTY POSITION

Hendrix College invites applications for the position of Assistant Professor of __. The College seeks to extend its tradition of excellence in teaching and scholarship by attracting faculty who combine mastery of their disciplines with broad intellectual interests and commitment to the aims of a liberal arts college. The position listed is tenure track and will begin in Fall, 20___. The doctorate is required for appointment as assistant professor; ABD's will be considered for appointment as instructor.

Application should include a letter addressing the candidate's interest in teaching in a demanding liberal arts environment, a curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation, (including the phone numbers and email addresses of the referees), and transcripts of all graduate and undergraduate work. Application materials should be sent to: Dr. __, Chair, Department of __, Hendrix College, 1600 Washington Avenue, Conway, AR 72032. Review of materials will begin [date], and will continue until the position is filled.

Hendrix is a Phi Beta Kappa, Carnegie Baccalaureate I institution, with an endowment of \$185 million located in Conway, Arkansas, thirty miles from Little Rock at the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. The College, related to the United Methodist Church, has a strong commitment to excellence in teaching liberal arts. Hendrix is an equal opportunity employer. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to apply. Please visit our website at www.hendrix.edu.

Typical Schedule for an On-campus Interview

[CANDIDATE'S NAME]

Monday, January 10, 2009

4:00 p.m. Research/Professional Activity Presentation
Title and Location

6:00 p.m. Dinner
List Participants

Tuesday, January 11, 2009

7:00 a.m. Breakfast with Department chair

8:00 a.m. Provost
Office of Academic Affairs

9:00 a.m. Time with Department

10:00 a.m. Committee on Faculty
List Committee on Faculty

11:00 a.m. Campus Tour

12 noon Lunch with Students
Students listed

1:30 p.m. Teaching Presentation: title and place

2:30 p.m. President
Fausett Hall

3:00 p.m. Search Committee
List names of faculty and students
Meeting place

6:30 p.m. Reception and dinner
Place

NOTES:

1. Attach curriculum vitae and evaluation form; send to all those meeting the candidate.
2. Make sure someone is assigned to take the candidate from meeting to the next.

EVALUATION OF FACULTY CANDIDATE

CANDIDATE _____ INTERVIEW DATE _____

POSITION _____ YOUR NAME _____

Please Return to Committee Chair Today Low Med High

1. Your evaluation of candidate's background and sense of ability to be an effective teacher in the classroom. 1 2 3 4 5
Comments

2. Your sense of candidate's interpersonal skills, the ability to relate to students, colleagues and staff. 1 2 3 4 5
Comments

3. Your sense of candidate's likely contribution to the campus outside of teaching and advising. 1 2 3 4 5
Comments

4. Your overall evaluation of the candidate's likelihood of becoming a successful faculty member (should the candidate be invited to become a member of our academic community?). 1 2 3 4 5
Comments

Please elaborate on any of the above in what you consider to be strengths or concerns, and indicate how you would compare this candidate to others (candidates for this position or those whom you've seen in the past in comparable positions). Use back of sheet if necessary.

Special Strengths Favoring Candidate

Particular Concerns Regarding Candidate

