

***Faculty Recruitment and Selection: A Guide for the Minot State  
University Faculty Search Committee***

## INTRODUCTION

This guide summarizes the recruitment and hiring process for faculty who are participating in searches for full-time, tenure-track and probationary roles. On behalf of our students and community, we thank you for your commitment to our 100-year history of excellence in selecting the highest qualified talent for Minot State University (MSU).

## Digital Recruiting and Hiring

MSU is a member of the North Dakota University System (NDUS) consortium for recruiting/hiring. MSU along with the other NDUS colleges and universities utilize Recruiting Solutions in the Human Resources Management System of Campus Connection. Approvals, postings and applicant communications all take place within Recruiting Solutions.

## Faculty Hiring Action Steps

1. The department/division chair meets with the VPAA to discuss departmental goals and the justification for a new faculty addition. If initially approved, the formal process begins where recruitment authorization, new position requests and hiring approvals take place. Contact Human Resources (HR) for system access.
2. Write the position announcement ([see sample](#) job posting template in the HR SharePoint library). Include the following information and that noted on the template:
  - a. Position summary – title, rank, department, tenure-track, start date, etc.
  - b. Responsibilities – duties and responsibilities of the role
  - c. Qualifications – skills, experience and attributes desired
  - d. Description of the university and department/division
  - e. Compensation – salary range, “depends on experience” and fringe benefits
  - f. Applicant instructions to apply
  - g. Other required statements (e.g., EEO/AA, veteran’s preference, etc.) will automatically be included.
3. Review compensation data with HR and determine salary range. Have the position announcement approved by the department/division chair and HR, who will position in the online system and route for digital approvals of appropriate supervisors and leadership.
4. Once approved, the job posting is displayed on the MSU HR site and is automatically picked up and advertised on Higher Ed Jobs, indeed.com, and other sites.
5. Advertise in other locations (e.g., journals and online organizations), if desired. Print a copy of all ads while posted.
6. Work with your administrative assistant and the VPAA’s administrative assistant on purchases and cost. Currently, the VPAA office provides \$1500 for each faculty search.
7. Create the search committee. Include members of the department/division, a member from outside the department/division, and when possible, include a student. Determine who will be the secretary and who will be search committee chair.
  - a. The search committee chair will be responsible for contacting applicants, organizing the search committee meetings and the applicant interviews, and ensuring the collection of all records kept during the search.

- b. The secretary will keep minutes for each search committee meeting.
8. Review applications and screen them for qualifications.
9. The search committee chair should contact each applicant via email to document receipt of their complete or incomplete application packet and to describe the next steps in the process. Keep all email correspondence with the applicant's file.
10. Meet with the search committee.
  - a. Review and discuss the applications and select finalists for Virtual/phone interviews.
  - b. Use a rating system aligned with the qualifications.
  - c. When rating, take into account Veteran's preference. Contact HR for more information about Veteran's preference and how to rate this.
  - d. Develop interview questions.
  - e. Determine tentative dates and times for initial virtual/phone interviews.
11. The search committee chair should set up the interviews or work with an administrative assistant to do this. Again, keep all email correspondence.
12. Conduct the virtual/phone interviews.
  - a. Use the same method of communication for all initial interviews to keep the process consistent and fair; i.e., use all virtual or all phone, but not a combination.
  - b. Use the same general questions for all interviews.
  - c. Do not ask inappropriate questions (e.g., citizenship, ethnicity, birthdate, religion, whether or not a candidate has a disability, if they are married, and whether or not they have children). Contact HR director for specifics.
  - d. End the interview with time for the candidate's questions and a description of the next steps in the process.
  - e. Let the candidate know that the committee will be contacting their references.
13. The search committee chair must email all applicants to update them about their status related to the search. Keep all email correspondence. If phone calls are used, take notes to document the date, times, person called, and subject of the conversation.
14. The committee selects a common set of questions to ask the references. References should be assigned to each committee member.
15. Committee members must contact (call and/or email) the references assigned to them. Take notes during the conversations.
16. Meet with the search committee and determine which candidate(s) to invite to campus for on-campus interview(s).
17. Notify the candidate(s).
18. Determine dates of the visit. Contact upper administrators (department/division chair, VPAA, and president) to determine when they are available before setting dates and purchasing travel. Once these dates are confirmed, book the travel and hotel, and write an itinerary. Share the candidates' CVs (and other requested materials) with appropriate administrators.
19. Conduct the on-campus interview(s).
  - a. Include students in the process.
  - b. Include a teaching demonstration for anyone who will be teaching as a faculty member.
  - c. If desired and applicable, include a research/scholarly presentation or demonstration.
  - d. Include a campus tour.
  - e. Include interviews with upper administrators (department/division chair, VPAA, and president).
  - f. Include a meeting with the HR director.

- g. If desired, have a realtor show the candidate appropriate properties.
  - h. Include opportunities for the search committee to meet with the candidate (e.g., breakfast, lunch, dinner).
20. Solicit feedback from administrators, students, and others who interacted with the candidates.
  21. Meet with the search committee. Select a candidate for the position.
  22. Notify the VPAA about the decision. The VPAA will also reach out to the candidate to make the offer and negotiate if necessary, pending a successful background check. Moving expenses are often included in the offer and are typically shared among the department, college, and VPAA.
  23. Once an agreement is reached, a background check must be completed. The contract offer depends on a successful background check. Once the background check is completed and approved, an official contract will be created and sent to the new faculty member and onboarding will begin. HR will initiate these processes in coordination with the VPAA.
  24. The search committee chair must contact any finalists to notify them of the decision.
  25. The search committee chair must save all email communications with the applicants, between the search committee members and with others related to the search (e.g., HR, administrative assistants). The search committee chair must also save overall rating scales (not individual ones), minutes from the meetings, and itineraries. If a foreign national is hired, these materials must be shared with the attorney who works on the new faculty member's visa and labor certifications.
  26. If a foreign national is being hired, speak with the VPAA or HR for next steps.

### **Justification for the Position**

Departments and Divisions needing to hire a full-time faculty position must first present justification to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This justification should succinctly demonstrate the need for the hire. Upon approval for the search, the department or division can proceed with the search.

New positions, those that are not replacements of an existing line and that are intended to be on-going, require a significant commitment of funds; therefore, they require the approval of the President. Departments/Divisions wishing to hire in a new position line must link the justification for the position to their data from their degree program and request this during the annual budget process.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

Faculty hired for full-time probationary positions typically must possess a doctorate degree or a terminal master's degree. Faculty hired with master's degrees are typically hired on special contract appointments.

VPAA approval is required to switch from a special contract line to a probationary line and to apply for tenure. In addition, the President is the only one who can grant years toward tenure (three years maximum). Request for credit toward tenure should be made upon appointment to the position, and all approved credit toward tenure should be included in the faculty member's initial appointment letter, if appropriate.

All teaching faculty must meet [MSU's faculty qualification policy](#) and have at least a master's degree with at least 18 graduate credits directly related to the discipline they teach or equivalent qualifications. Department/division chairs must submit a completed Faculty Qualification Form to the VPAA's office upon hiring all new faculty.

New hires offered a probationary or tenure-track position during a semester when they are ABD (all but dissertation) are expected to have completed their dissertation and defense before the first day of their contract unless agreed otherwise. An extension can be granted with approval of the department/division chair and the VPAA.

### **Common Statements Used on Advertisements**

Applicants who are veterans and eligible to claim veteran's preference must include Form DD214 with the application for employment; claims for disabled veteran's preference must include Form DD214 and a letter less than one year old from the Department of Veterans' Affairs indicating disability; claims for preference as the eligible spouse of a disabled or deceased veteran must include Form DD214, a marriage certificate and a letter less than one year old from the Department of Veterans' Affairs indicating disability, or the veteran's death certificate. Due to access to restricted information, the successful candidate will be required to complete a satisfactory criminal background check.

Applicants must be eligible to work in the U.S. and I-9 employment certification is required at hire.

Persons who may need additional job information or may require accommodation or assistance with the application or interview process should contact [hr@minotstateu.edu](mailto:hr@minotstateu.edu)

**CONFIDENTIALITY OF APPLICATION MATERIALS:** Pursuant to NDCC 44-04-18.27, applications and any records related to the applications that identify an applicant are exempt from public record, except records related to the finalists of the position, which are open to the public after the search committee has identified finalists.

**EEO/AA STATEMENT:** The NDUS is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status.

**VETERAN'S PREFERENCE NOTICE:** Veterans claiming preference must submit all proof of eligibility by the closing date. Proof of eligibility includes a DD-214 and if claiming disabled status, a current letter of disability from the VA dated within the last 12 months.

**NO SMOKING NOTICE:** As an employer, the State of North Dakota prohibits smoking in all places of state employment in accordance with N.D.C.C. § 23-12-10.

### **Recruitment Authorization**

A well thought out position description provides the basis for the job as well as a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities associated with the position. For full-time faculty, the job description addresses expectations for teaching, service and scholarship. The job description is also useful in determining the compensation range for a new hire. At a minimum, the job description should include:

- Title of the position, including rank, college and department or division
- Whether the position is probationary or special contract
- Whether the contract is 9, 10, 11 or 12 months
- To whom the person reports
- Qualifications
- Primary and secondary responsibilities in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship

The job ad should flow from the position description but must contain a description of the type of employment, a listing of the duties and responsibilities for the position, request for a cover letter, vitae, statement of teaching philosophy or a teaching portfolio. In addition, the advertisement must list the minimum qualifications, and state instructions with a deadline for submission of all materials. Remember to request transcripts; unofficial transcripts can be used for initial screening.

Official transcripts are required prior to issuance of a contract. Include contact information for the department or discipline if an applicant should require more information. If a department chooses to submit an abbreviated ad to a discipline-specific publication, that ad should direct applicants to the MSU HR website for more information and submitting the application.

Ads are posted on MSU's HR website and on an online higher education job posting site (e.g., Inside Higher Ed) free of charge to the department. Costs of running ads on other sites or in discipline-specific publications are the responsibility of the department and can be included in the \$1500 search allowance provided by the VPAA. Ads running on MSU's website will also be carried by Job Service in North Dakota. There is no charge for this additional posting. Departments/disciplines may also want to consider contacting regional research universities with graduate programs in the area of expertise sought to publicize the position.

Departments/disciplines that expect international applicants to be in their finalist pool will need to meet increased authorization guidelines. The search committee chair should meet with the HR director to make sure current U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service (USCIS) regulations are met in the recruiting process.

All applicants should be considered through a competitive process following MSU's policies.

Department/division chairs and the VPAA should be aware of salaries of faculty in rank within the department or discipline and consider internal equity among faculty members.

Contact HR for questions about veteran's preference law.

### **Search Committee**

The main assignment for a search committee is to screen job applicants, coordinate and participate in interviews, complete reference checks, and provide a recommendation to the department/division chair, or immediate supervisor, on hiring. The search committee does not have the authority to offer a position to any of the candidates. Offers are typically made by the VPAA. In some cases, the VPAA may delegate this authority to the new hire's immediate supervisor.

The committee and chair are approved by the VPAA and should consist of at least three members of the discipline or department. Search committees should also include an outside committee member from another discipline or department, as appropriate. While student representation is not required on a search committee, the search committee chair may choose to include a student representative.

The search committee chair should schedule a meeting for the members of the search committee and the director of Human Resources to discuss the proper procedures for the search and to answer any questions the committee might have.

The search committee chair in consultation with the department/division chair is responsible for managing the search budget and timeline. The office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs has limited funds available to help with expenses that include advertisements and expenses associated with bringing the candidates to campus. Additional funds may be available from departments/divisions and colleges. Search committee members are encouraged to make use of appropriate technologies during the search to enable both the sharing of documents and scheduling of meetings.

Throughout the search, the search committee chair is responsible for keeping records. These include application materials, ranking methods and a blank rubric for scoring candidates, minutes of meetings, and summaries of decisions made. As faculty positions are veterans-preference exempt, the committee can construct its own rubric to use in screening applicants. If an applicant sends in a portfolio showing exemplary work, this can be returned to the applicant. Rubrics used to evaluate the candidates, at least from the initial screening, should be summarized and placed in the committee's records. Rankings and notes of individual committee members can be destroyed. Minutes serve as a record of the decisions made during the search. In that light, minutes should contain the names of candidates who do not advance in the search and the reason why. While it is very uncommon to be charged with illegal discrimination, the record from the minutes of the committee meetings should provide an affirmative defense by showing how the decision was reached. As a practical matter, the greatest use of the hiring file comes when the University addresses immigration issues for faculty members. The hiring file is maintained for the current calendar year and then for an additional three calendar years. It is an open record.

Upon conclusion of the search, the search committee chair is responsible for submitting to the department/division chair and/or VPAA a report that summarizes the number of applicants, those who met minimum qualifications, those who were selected for a first interview, on-campus interview, etc. Details of the report and a timeline for its submission should be settled upon with the search committee chair and the department/division chair and/or VPAA.

### **Initial Screening**

An initial screening should be conducted by members of the search committee to determine which applicants meet minimum qualifications. Search committee members should then determine which candidates they wish to move forward in the search. It is important that committees work with a rubric or scoring matrix that reflects the committee's attempts to create a fair process that identifies the best candidates to fill the open faculty position.

All candidates should receive notification that their applications have been received by Minot State University. Candidates who do not meet the minimum qualifications cannot proceed further in the search and should be notified that they will not be considered as viable candidates at this point in time.

In evaluating the materials submitted by the candidates. The search committee members should first determine if all required information and materials have been submitted.

Recruiting Solutions tools and folders in Campus Connection can be used to track applicant dates, materials, and communications within one convenient folder, accessible by all members. Applications can be rejected if degrees were obtained from universities that are not accredited. They can also be rejected if

the applicant is not able to teach the courses needed in the curriculum because their educational background is too narrowly focused, or their research interests do not fit well with expectations in the department.

Again, search committees considering international applicants should meet with the director of HR to ensure they are meeting U. S. Department of Labor and USCIS requirements for the evaluation process.

### **First Interviews**

First interviews can be conducted by phone or using virtual technology. The committee must be consistent in how they conduct this first round of interviews, using the same method for all candidates.

Topics to be covered in the first interviews should include an explanation of the job, a discussion of teaching philosophy, etc. Questions for the candidates should follow the job description. Objective questions such as education and past employment should be asked as well as those that are more subjective and may center on topics such as teaching philosophy. The committee should include questions that are of general nature as well as some questions that may be more specific to a candidate's experience or expertise.

Some sample questions include:

- Why are you interested in this position?
- Describe your teaching style.
- Which courses are you prepared to teach? How do you prepare for your classes?
- What types of assessment activities do you use in your classes?
- Give us an example of a challenging situation you faced in a class and how you resolved it.

Be sure to include time at the end of the interview for the candidate to ask questions of the committee.

Committees must not ask questions about citizenship, ethnicity, birthdate, religion, whether or not a candidate has a disability, if they are married, and whether or not they have children.

### **Recommendation of Candidates**

The search committee should inform candidate finalists that they will be contacting references before making a decision. At this time, candidates should also be informed of the required background check. If the reference check is satisfactory, the search committee chair and/or members of the search committee should meet with the department/division chair and VPAA to discuss the candidates they are considering bringing to campus. Upon approval of the VPAA, arrangements should be made to bring the candidates to campus. The committee chair should coordinate the on-campus interviews with the schedules of key personnel, making sure they are available to meet with the candidates before booking flights or hotels. Ideally, key personnel will be given at least a two-week notice of a planned campus interview.

Vitae of candidates should be made available to department/division chairs, VPAA, and the president at least one week before the campus interview occurs. A teaching demonstration should be scheduled while the candidate is on campus, and students should be encouraged to attend that demonstration and provide feedback to the search committee.

Travel expenses incurred by the candidates during the interview process are paid only for candidates

interviewing for full-time faculty positions. Expenses for spouses and children are not covered and incidental charges added to hotel bills will not be paid by the University. Typically, the VPAA's office pays \$1500 of the search expenses for a position. Expenses beyond \$1500 are typically paid by departments/divisions and/or colleges. Wherever possible, travel and lodging should be direct billed to the University. Reimbursement is based on the same rules as travel reimbursement for MSU employees. The rates for mileage, lodging, and per diem are the same; however, the reimbursement process is different. Rather than the candidate filing a travel voucher, the department will submit a voucher for MSU to pay the candidate. For this purpose, the candidate must complete a W-9 form to accompany the voucher. Rates for the current fiscal year are available from the Business Office. Submitted receipts must show a zero balance. Credit card receipts are not sufficient.

Guidelines for entertaining candidates brought to campus can be found at MSU's Business Office website [Search Committee Guidelines Policy](#) [pdf].

Committees are also encouraged to include a meeting with a realtor during the interview in Minot, if appropriate.

### **Criminal Background Checks**

Criminal background checks are required for candidates who will be offered a position. Information supplied by the candidates for background checks is held confidential by Human Resources.

Generally, criminal background checks take 24-72 hours. An offer is not official until that background check is returned. If a criminal history record is found, this information will be shared with the search committee chair, department/division chair, and VPAA, who will discuss the information with the HR Director and any others relevant decision makers before making a hiring decision. Individuals on the sexual offender registry in any state are not eligible for employment at MSU. Other than this one issue, all other matters are open for discussion.

### **Offers and Negotiations**

Upon completion of the on-campus interviews, the committee chair should provide a listing of strengths and weaknesses for all candidates granted a campus interview to the department/division chair, VPAA, and the President. After consultation with the VPAA, the VPAA will make an offer to one of the candidates, pending an acceptable background check. Once the background check is received, an official contract will be signed by the president and forwarded to the candidate for signing.

If the President, VPAA, and department/division chair agree, new hires may be granted years in service towards promotion and/or tenure. Current NDUS policy allows a maximum of three years to be granted toward tenure. As indicated earlier, the President is the only one who can grant years toward tenure. Request for credit toward tenure should be made upon appointment to the position, and approved credit toward tenure should be included in the faculty member's initial appointment letter.

Contract dates for new hires are adjusted to reflect the dates for the required New Faculty Orientation program, generally occurring just prior to fall Convocation. Mid-year hires will be invited to attend New Faculty Orientation the following fall semester as well as spring semester of the current year. It is expected that the department will work with various offices on campus to orient mid-year hires to Minot State University.

HR and the VPAA office coordinate to send all relevant paperwork to the new faculty member (e.g., FERPA, Teachers Oath, Title IX, etc.). Completion of relevant paperwork in advance of their arrival on campus allows MSU to set up the faculty member's ID number, PeopleSoft access, and to allow them to complete the required FERPA training online prior to the start of New Faculty Orientation.

#### **Notifications of Candidates Not Selected**

Candidates who do not meet minimum qualifications should be notified early in the process that they are not considered viable candidates. Those who make the first interview or the on-campus interview stage should be notified they were not selected for the position upon conclusion of the search. The committee chair or a committee member will send out notification letters.

#### **Failed Searches**

If a search fails, the search committee chair and/or department/division chair are encouraged to meet with the VPAA to determine if the position will be re-advertised immediately or if it will be reopened at a later date.