

Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neurosciences

Standard Operating Procedures/Policies for Recruitment of Faculty and Leadership Roles

1. Searches for new faculty/or leadership positions

These procedures will be followed for the recruitment of new faculty members to the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University. These procedures will also be followed for the selection of faculty for leadership positions, including endowed Chairs within the Department's existing Faculty. The Department seeks to create and foster a culture of academic excellence based on merit amongst faculty, staff, and trainees. The Department also values recruitment of the highest quality faculty through a fair and transparent process. Further, the Department also recognizes that there is greater excellence when the faculty and staff composition reflect the diversity of our community, both in terms of proportional representation of women and diverse ethnic groups.

The search process for faculty recruitment will comply with the McMaster University Hiring Guidelines and Policies and Procedures for the Recruitment and Selection of Faculty Members:

https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/faculty/Appointments/SPS_A1-Recruitment-Selection.pdf

http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/facultyrelations/recruitment_for_full_time_faculty.html

http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/link.php?link=OD:rec_for_div

The scope of the search may be limited to Canadian citizens and permanent residents or open to Canadian and non-Canadian applicants in the case of International searches. National searches are recommended at a minimum to attract the highest caliber recruits. However, the scope of the search may be determined by the search committee based on financial and other resources, as well as the depth of local candidates. The appointment of a non-Canadian to a position requires evidence be submitted to ESDC and that all attempts to find a Canadian citizen or permanent resident to fill the role have been unsuccessful. Please refer to the University's policies for requirements of hiring foreign academics.

2. Ensuring diversity and equity

We recommend use of tools to raise awareness regarding unconscious bias among search committee members. There are a few versions of the Implicit Association test and it is mandatory for search committee Chairs, committee members and members of the Promotions & Tenure Committee to complete one. Suggested tools include:

- The Harvard Implicit Association Test
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/canada/takeatest.html>
- The American Association of Medical Colleges AAMC unconscious bias e-learning seminar: https://www.aamc.org/members/leadership/catalog/178420/unconscious_bias.html
- The unconscious bias in medicine online CME from Stanford
<https://med.stanford.edu/cme/courses/online/Bias.html>

3. *Striking a search committee*

For searches initiated by the Department Division Directors for new faculty recruitment, the slate of committee members will bring together a diverse mix of faculty, administrative staff and sometimes trainees to generate multiple perspectives. The committee must have wide representation of the division and/or Department. No committee member can be eligible to apply for the position.

4. *Posting a position*

All external searches, as well as all internal leadership positions must have wide circulation. A draft posting will be generated by the Chair's office and sent to the division head for review before final approval by the Department Chair. After appropriate approvals by the Faculty of Health Sciences Dean, the posting will then be placed on the McMaster University, Faculty Careers Website and publicly announced (via email) to all members of the department and division. Positions will be posted for a minimum of two-week to one month to ensure maximum awareness of the position. The position wording will avoid language that carries with it unconscious bias with respect to gender and diversity.

5. *Finding the best candidate*

During the period of posting, the search committee chair and members will generate a candidate pool both through open and targeted strategies. The department is encouraging applications from diverse populations, i.e. women, visible minorities for these positions. In addition to broad and formal networks being used to make individuals aware of the posting additional strategies recommended include:

- I. Inviting Department and search committee members to identify viable internal and external candidates and initiating contact. The committee and/or Chair will follow up personally with potential candidates
- II. Contact prominent members of relevant/diverse organizations/committee to solicit their support to identify candidates. Advertise in electronic resources to reach diverse applicants based on memberships in certain organizations and readership. If this proves difficult, contacting the Vice Chair to assist in ensuring a wide candidate pool is aware and qualified applicants are encouraged to apply for the position is recommended.
- III. The committee must report all applications received and basic data for the longlisted candidates including characteristics such as their Canadian/permanent residency status, current institutional rank. Statistics on gender will be collected centrally and provided to the committee after review of applicant pool by the Chair.

6. *Standardizing the interview*

- I. The Chair of the interview committee will ensure that all committee discussions are confidential. A standardized list of interview questions will be developed and circulated amongst committee members and committee members will be asked to adhere to the questions chosen; supplementary questions will be allowed where further exploration is required. There will be no requirements for letters of reference until a short list of candidates is made. CV gaps that correspond with parental or illness leave will not be viewed negatively. Using the standardized questions and comparing responses to each question horizontally across candidates is recommended.

ii. Additional Guidelines for the Committee Chair

- Ask committee members to score/rate each candidate according to the interview questions score mechanism and criteria. Committee member should rank order the nominees based on the interview scores and before hearing the recommendations of any other members. Research has shown that implicit bias can enter via unintentional “criteria-shifting” after nominees are discussed.
- Ask committee members to review the candidates alongside the list of attributes for the position (if available).
- Consider whether comments unintentionally include “doubt raisers” (i.e., negative language, personal comments about physical appearance, hedges, unexplained comments, faint praise and irrelevancies, such as “might make an excellent leader” versus “is an established leader”), and ask for clarity from the committee member if such comments are raised.
- Ensure that every committee member’s voice is heard; be respectful of others’ views. All members are expected to participate; do not let any committee member remain silent.
- Take adequate time to make a decision. Research has shown implicit bias is mitigated when committees have time for thoughtful reflection and discussion, instead of making snap judgments.
- Avoid potential conflicts of interest. Often candidates are so well-known that associations with selection committee members are unavoidable. In all discussions, members will make clear any connection they may have with a person under consideration, and recuse themselves if appropriate.
- Consider use of confidential electronic ranking tools before discussion is initiated, both to address the first bullet in this list, and to ensure that all members of the committee have input into the ranking process
- Consider use of a score for each question and if decisions will be made based on total scores or some other method, i.e. secret ballot.