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Employment Procedures

Purpose

The President has the authority to employ professional and staff employees as appropriate for the efficient discharge of official duties. Before filling any vacant position at Tennessee Technological University, the hiring manager must conduct a search as described below.

The following procedures apply to all regular, full-time positions and all regular part-time positions. Student employment is specifically not covered by these procedures. Exceptions to these policies may be granted by the President where there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. promotion). The procedures are designed to ensure the appointment of qualified personnel and the success of the affirmative action program at the University.

The process as described below may be modified as circumstances warrant.

External Search

Selection of Search Committee

A search committee shall assist in the search for all Executive and Faculty positions (EEO codes 1 and 2). In the case of a faculty appointment, the departmental chairperson shall call a meeting of all departmental faculty members, who shall vote to determine the composition of the search committee, which may include the departmental chairperson and may include faculty members outside the department. In other cases, the appropriate Administrative/Academic Officer, after consultation with the constituency involved, shall appoint a representative search committee. In all cases, it is desirable that the committee have both female and minority representation. For searches to fill a faculty position, the search committee shall elect its own chairperson. For searches to fill a departmental chairperson position, the Dean of the College shall appoint the chairperson, who may be a faculty member from another department. For all other searches, the chairperson of the search committee shall be appointed by the appropriate Administrative/Academic Officer. Non-executive administrative/professional (EEO code 3) and Clerical and Support (C & S) (EEO Codes 4-7) positions do not require a search committee.

1. Advertising

A position description, minimum qualifications, an advertising plan, a proposed advertisement, and search committee members (if applicable) must be submitted through the PeopleAdmin site jobs@Tennessee Tech University, hereafter referred to as jobs@TTU, to Human Resources via the Dean/Administrative Officer, Vice-President, and Affirmative Action for prior approval. All approvals and recommendations related to the request are built into the online workflow which is forwarded to various approving authorities. All advertisements must include the abbreviated affirmative action statement. The advertising plan must comply with the provisions of TBR Guideline P-010.

Minimum Amount of Time for Advertising

EEO Codes 1, 2, and 3 (Executive, Faculty, and Administrative/Professional) positions shall be advertised for a minimum of 30 days with the exception of Postdoctoral Research/Scholar positions which must be advertised for a minimum of 14 calendar days. The time required for
advertising clerical and supporting position vacancies, EEO 4 through 7, is a minimum of 10 calendar days. Any exceptions must have the President’s approval.

Advertisements

For all regular budgeted positions, the online system will download basic data as found in Banner. Changes to this data can be made as needed to note current or requested changes to a position. Jobs@TTU will require all pertinent information be entered before saving or submitting the request to advertise. Job advertisements for newspapers, journals, internet sites, etc. should include the following information: College and Department where vacancy exists; Position Title; Index Number; Position Number; Description of Position; Application Deadline Date (C&S positions only) or Application Screening Date (Faculty & Administrative positions only)(Initial review of applications will begin _____; open until filled.); and Affirmative Action statement (AA/EEO).

Sample newspaper ads:

Administrative Associate 2, Facilities and Business Services, Tennessee Tech University. Complete summary, including qualifications, essential functions, and application procedure is available at www.tntech.edu/jobs. All applicants must apply online and will be required to electronically upload a cover letter, resume, and email addresses for three references at time of application. Application deadline is __________. AA/EEO

Director, Counseling Center, Tennessee Tech University. Complete position summary including qualifications, essential functions and application procedure is available at www.tntech.edu/jobs. Applicants must apply online and will be required to electronically upload a cover letter, resume, email addresses for three (3) references, copies of transcripts (official transcripts required upon hire), and a copy of licensure. Screening begins ________________; open until filled. AA/EEO

A copy of the proposed advertisement must be attached to the online system for approval from Human Resources and Affirmative Action. Affirmative Action and Human Resources will review all proposed advertisements for proper content and will make any necessary changes. Major changes/problems in content will be discussed with the department chair or appropriate contact.

The advertising plan shall consist of a detailed listing of where the vacancy will be advertised and what affirmative action efforts will be taken to recruit women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities. Contacts should be made via email when possible to save paper, postage, and manpower. There should be broad dissemination of announcements (local, regional, and national as applicable). Lists of institutions with high female/minority enrollments are available on the Diversity and Legal Affairs website.

Full-time and one year appointment faculty positions must be advertised through appropriate professional and higher education publications, registries, list serves, etc. Advertisements may also be placed in local and regional newspapers.

Regular, full-time administrative positions will require at least regional advertisements and/or national advertisements as determined by the Affirmative Action Officer.

Clerical & Support positions are required to be advertised on jobs@TTU. Advertisements in local and regional newspapers are optional.

TTU also has an annual agreement with HigherEdJobs.com to provide unlimited online advertising for Administrative, Executive, and Faculty positions. Advertising on this site is free of charge to all University departments. Human Resources will coordinate the posting of positions to HigherEdJobs.com.
No advertisement should be posted without prior approval from Affirmative Action and Human Resources. After receipt of approval of the advertising plan and the advertisement, the University through Human Resources will post all vacancies on jobs@TTU website, HigherEdJobs.com (if applicable), Tech Times, and externally to the Vocational Rehabilitation Office and Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development Offices. Personnel in the unit in which the vacancy exists will place any additional advertisements and take other steps in accordance with the advertising plan.

A record of the content and distribution of advertising and announcements must be retained by the hiring department. This should include a copy of the actual advertisement, name of the publication, website, etc., where it was placed, and date that the advertisement actually ran as confirmation of compliance with the approved advertising plan. This document must be uploaded to the position on jobs@TTU under Documents – Advertising Copy.

2. Application Process

Application Process for Faculty, Executive, and Administrative/Professional Positions

All prospective applicants for Faculty, Executive, and Administrative/Professional positions must complete the online TTU application form. In this way, all applicants will be given an opportunity to indicate their status as a member of a protected group. Applicants must submit all required documents and materials required in the job announcement. Submission of these materials is the applicant’s responsibility. Applications without all required materials are incomplete and will not be considered. Applications are ensured full consideration if received by the screening date listed on the job announcement. Applications received after that date may or may not be reviewed depending upon the progress of the search.

Application Process for Clerical and Supporting Positions

All prospective applicants for clerical and supporting positions will be required to complete the online TTU application form. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), employers may use pre-employment tests as selection criteria. If the tests tend to screen out applicants with disabilities, the employer must demonstrate that the test is job related and consistent with business necessity. Applicants who are applying for positions which require specific clerical skills may be tested by the hiring department at time of interview. If a typing exam is required by the department, applicants who do not have an official typing score on file with TTU (kept on file for 5 years), must contact the Upper Cumberland Career Center to schedule an appointment for a typing exam.

If administered, Human Resources will use the test results to screen applicants according to the minimum clerical skills requirements. To assure TTU's compliance with the Federal Employee Selection Guidelines, any testing of applicants by departments shall be limited to tests which have been approved by Human Resources prior to advertising.

Review of C & S Applications

After the application deadline date, the Employment Manager in Human Resources will review the applications for completeness and determine which applicants possess the minimum qualifications. Applicants who do not fully meet the minimum qualifications will not be considered. Meeting the minimum qualifications does not assure applicants of an interview.

Complete applications of applicants who possess the minimum qualifications will be released via the jobs@TTU website to the department for review. The department will notify, schedule, and perform interviews after approvals are received.

Prior to the initial review and release of applicants for departmental review, hiring managers will be unable to see the applicant pool or the number of applicants in the pool.
The Applicant Pool

The applicant pool must generally reflect the availability data for the defined vacancy in that discipline or field as determined by the appropriate job group in the Affirmative Action Plan. After the hiring department/search committee has completed a review and matrix of the applications and supporting materials, the matrix must be uploaded to the position on jobs@TTU under Supplemental Documentation – Matrix. The hiring department must then submit a request for pool and interview approval via email to the Dean/Administrative Officer and the Affirmative Action officer. Faculty positions must be approved by Academic Affairs.

Review of Applicant Pool

The Affirmative Action Officer shall review and approve all applications through jobs@TTU to determine the qualified applicant pool. In cases in which an applicant is clearly and obviously not qualified for the position (example holds an M.A. when the job description requires a Ph.D.); the applicant will not be included in the applicant pool. Reasons for the elimination based on qualifications must be documented for the record.

Prior to beginning interviews or other selection procedures, the qualified applicant pool shall be reviewed through jobs@TTU by the Affirmative Action Officer under TBR Guideline P-010 to ensure adequate representation of applicants from underutilized groups. If there is inadequate representation of minority and female applicants, it may be necessary to close and reopen the search and/or extend the deadline to strengthen the efforts. In determining whether or not the search must be reopened or the deadline extended, the Affirmative Action Officer shall consider the efforts that have been made to recruit minority and female persons in the appropriate labor market.

Immediate Elimination

In cases in which an applicant is clearly and obviously not qualified for the position (i.e. applicant possesses an M.A. when the job description required a Ph.D.), the applicant may be immediately informed that they are not considered a qualified candidate, thus eliminating the need for further review or addition to a matrix.

Applicants to be Interviewed

After reviewing all candidate applications/resumes/vitas, etc. the search committee chair/supervisor will choose those applicants they wish to interview, and note why other candidates were not chosen for interview. This information is input into jobs@TTU, by changing the applicant’s status to Selected for Interview, along with attaching the matrix to Supplemental Documents - Matrix. The Chair/Supervisor will then submit an email through their appropriate chain of command to the Affirmative Action Officer requesting to certify the pool of candidates and conduct interviews. The department will notify, schedule, and perform interviews.

Sample email (request for pool approval / request to interview):

To: Affirmative Action
From: Name, Title, Department
Subject: Request Certification of Applicant Pool for Interview
All applicants for posting number 00000, Title of Position, have been reviewed and moved to the statuses “Selected for Interview” as appropriate. Please contact Jane Smith at x1234 with any questions or concerns. We are requesting pool and interview approval.

You will receive approval to begin interviews via email from the Affirmative Action Officer or their designee for Administrative and Clerical & Support positions and from Academic Affairs for Faculty positions. Comments about the pool candidates who are not approved will be included in the email from Affirmative Action.
Interviewing Process

When the decision is made on the selection of the applicants to be interviewed, the chair / supervisor is to make the appropriate interview appointments. The purpose of the interview is to collect additional information on the applicant's job related knowledge, skills and abilities, which should be helpful in selecting the individual most likely to succeed on the job.

An interview should be as structured as possible, yet tailored to each particular applicant. Candidates are easier to compare if the same questions are used in each interview. Each interviewer should evaluate the same general criteria for each applicant. Search committees need to keep in mind the position description and the needs of the department. A time for informal conversation should be part of the interview schedule. The candidate should also be given an opportunity to ask questions; an interview is a mutual exchange of information.

Any inquiry must be avoided that is designed to elicit information as to race, color, ancestry, age, sex, religion, disability, or arrest and court records unless based upon a bona fide occupational qualification.

Checking References and Background Investigation

Since reference checks provide useful indicators for predicting the applicant's potential for success, the interests of both the hiring office and the applicant are served by reference checking. Reference checks from a recent employer are required before a candidate recommendation is made by the appropriate departmental authority. After approval to hire, a completed Background Investigation Authorization Form from the recommended candidate must be sent to Human Resources. Human Resources will conduct appropriate background checks on selected candidates. All investigations, disclosures, and notifications will be in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Candidates cannot begin employment until results of the background investigation are received in Human Resources.

3. The Appointment of an Applicant

Required Documentation for Appointment Recommendations for All Positions

All recommendations shall be submitted as a completed Personnel Action Form and the supporting materials on the recommended applicant. The matrix, all ad copy (actual ad that ran with the name of the publication and the dates the ad ran), along with any other documentation involved in the search must be uploaded to the posting on jobs@TTU website. If the affirmative action goals for the job category in question have not been met by the University, TBR Guideline P-010 must be followed.

Employment Subject to the Approval of the Chancellor

TBR Guideline P-010 requires approval by the Chancellor for the following positions:

- All vice presidents (academic, business, student affairs, etc) including interim appointments.
- Academic deans, academic department and/or division heads, directors of the centers of emphasis and excellence including those officers who with varying titles have line responsibility for administration of academic faculty or staff at the academic disciplinary unit level.
• Appointments, promotions, and/or transfers to positions with salaries in excess of $100,000 (the promotion process for faculty is governed by TBR Policy 5:02:02:10).

• Any other positions which may be designated by the Chancellor.

Procedure for Recommending Appointments for Administrative & Faculty Appointments

After screening/interviewing, the appropriate hiring manager or Search Committee Chair (if applicable) shall make a final recommendation of an applicant, accompanied by the required documentation, to the Dean/Administrative Officer, Affirmative Action Officer, Provost (faculty only), President (if applicable), and Human Resources Director.

Faculty Proficiency in Oral and Written English

Effective January 1, 1985, all candidates for faculty positions must be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively in the English language. When appointing new full-time faculty and new part-time and/or temporary faculty, item number 25 on the Personnel Action Form must be completed by the originating department certifying that the applicant can communicate effectively in the English language.

Procedure for Recommending Appointments for C & S Positions

After screening/interviewing, the appropriate hiring manager or Search Committee Chair (if applicable) shall make a final recommendation of an applicant, accompanied by the required documentation, to the Dean/Administrative Officer, Affirmative Action Officer, and Human Resources Director.

Prior Approval for Employment

Under no circumstance shall a commitment be made to an applicant until all approvals for employment are obtained. The recommendation is considered confidential until final approval is received. This would preclude the recommended candidate being informed of his/her status as the person being considered. No employee shall be hired or begin work without final approval from the Human Resources Director or without being completely processed through the Human Resources department. Employees who begin work prior to approval will not be paid by Tennessee Tech University for the time worked. Department heads that allow potential employees to begin work prior to formal approval and completion of the I-9 form may be personally liable for wages due during the period prior to formal approval being obtained.

Faculty Positions - Once approvals have been granted, the department chair writes a formal offer letter to the successful candidate, stating all the requirements of the position, salary, applicable moving expenses, tenure/promotion credit, etc. The candidate should be asked to respond in writing to the University President. Once the acceptance letter is received, Academic Affairs prepares the official contract and all related paperwork and mails the packet to the selected candidate. Once all signed documents are received by Academic Affairs, the remaining hiring paperwork is processed. Original paperwork is sent to Human Resources for processing. Official transcripts for all degrees conferred are required for faculty members.

Administrative/Professional and C & S Positions – Once approvals have been granted, the position can be officially offered. A representative from Human Resources will notify the department that a formal offer can be made. Official transcripts for the highest degree earned are required for administrative/professional positions.

Notification of Applicants

All applicants who completed an online application and submitted all required materials will be notified via email through the jobs@TTU website that the application has been received and is
being reviewed. All applicants who are reviewed and/or interviewed will be notified via email through the jobs@TTU website that the search has been concluded and a selection made, or that the position is being re-evaluated and re-advertised.

Internal Search

The process shall generally follow the procedure for external searches. However, positions will not be broadly advertised but will be posted internally as approved by Human Resources and shall clearly indicate being open for current TTU employees only.

Promotion/Re-assignment

Promotions involve the re-assignment of an employee to a position having either higher pay, increased responsibilities, or increased benefits. Promotions can occur between the various departments or within the same department at the University.

Employees may be reassigned either within a department or between departments of the University. The employee may be moved laterally to a position with the same job title and similar duties in another department either at the employee's request or at the request of the supervisor.

A search is not required for either promotions or reassignments; however, the vacated position may require a search. Promotions and re-assignments must be approved by the Director of Human Resources.

Hiring of Temporaries and Adjunct Faculty

Temporary positions are defined as those positions expected to last one calendar year or less. Due to the nature of temporary positions, most will not require advertising. Temporary appointments are approved for a maximum of one calendar year. If a limited continuation is necessary, a break in service of 14 calendar days must occur before a continuation can be approved.

Adjunct Faculty are defined as all faculty whose temporary appointments are based on demand each semester.

Procedures for Hiring Temporary Employees and Adjunct Faculty

When an employee is hired on a temporary or adjunct basis, a Personnel Action Form accompanied by an application form (resume/curriculum vitae, and official transcripts for all degrees conferred for adjunct faculty) is forwarded through proper signatory channels prior to the date the employee is needed. Only PAF and application required for most temps.

No employee shall be hired or begin work without final approval from the Human Resources Director or without being completely processed through the Human Resources department. Employees who begin work prior to approval will not be paid by Tennessee Tech University for the time worked. Department heads that allow potential employees to begin work prior to formal approval and completion of the I-9 form may be personally liable for wages due during the period prior to formal approval being obtained.
Orientation Procedures

All regular, full-time employees and regular part-time employees working at least 80% must attend a New Employee Orientation during which University policies are explained. Benefits enrollment is administered at orientation as well. Prior to beginning employment, a new employee must sign an employment contract letter and complete an I-9, W-4, Direct Deposit, etc. forms in the Human Resources office. New employees should make an appointment with a member of Human Resources for a new employee orientation.

Employment Agreements, Contracts and Letters of Agreement

The President or designee must approve employment agreements, contracts, and letters of agreement used in the appointment and employment of TTU personnel.

Probationary Employment Period

All new employees are required to complete a minimum six-month probationary period. During this period, their work will be continually reviewed and evaluated to determine if continuation of employment with the University is appropriate. If deficiencies are noted, new employees may be terminated during the six-month probationary period or the probationary period extended. Supervisors should contact Human Resources for assistance with these decisions. As notification of successful completion of the probationary period, the supervisor shall conduct a formal performance appraisal with the new employee, obtain his/her signature, and submit the form to Human Resources for insertion into the employee’s personnel file.

Emergency Provisions

In the event the President determines there is an extreme emergency, he/she or their official designee may grant exceptions to the provisions of this section.