The Faculty Affairs Team (FAT) was tasked by the Faculty Senate to research and report on the Search and Screen practices and standards at FGCU as compared to other SUS Universities. The FAT met with the Interim Head of HR, General Counsel for the University, Director of Equity and Diversity, and representative from the Office Academic Affairs to review the Search and Screen Procedures at FGCU and ask questions as needed. In addition, based on the problems/issues reported by faculty, the FAT surveyed six other SUS Universities asking the following questions:

1. Emailing: are your search committee chairs allowed to email their committee members directly to set up meeting times, or must they use an intermediary (secretary, non-member of the committee) to communicate with their committee members?

2. Do lunch and dinner events with candidates have to be noticed as public meetings and be open to anyone?

3. Once the search pool is certified, must the finalist list and interview pool then be certified again?

4. Must there be a written analysis or matrix be completed and submitted to HR for every individual applicant even if there are over 100 qualified applicants?

5. What is the policy regarding reference letters being posted online, e.g. in an online self-application system? Are all letters posted online, even those marked “confidential” by the sender?

6. If there are less than 3 qualified candidates for specialized positions, may the search proceed with only 2 qualified applicants? If there are only two qualified applicants put forth as recommendations from the Search & Screen Committee, can a hire be made from that pool of two?

7. After what time period or event are rejection letters sent to non-selected candidates, for those applicants who:
   a. Do not meet minimum qualifications and
   b. Did meet minimum qualifications but were not selected for a short list.

**Summary of Findings:**

- Sunshine Law can be interpreted differently by different institutions. Most SUS Universities have a practice that reference letters submitted for an applicant are not publicly available unless a public record’s request is made.
- All searches are approved by Office of Equal Opportunity or other hiring official.
- Matrix required by FGCU was established as way of defending searches. Schools can develop their own systems consisting of a grid or summary.
- Listing of positions as available until filled can result in extended delays.
- Search Committee Chair is responsible for scheduling the training of search committee members and for calling meetings. This is important in keeping the search process on a timeline. Otherwise there can be timely delays.
- FGCU requires 3 qualified candidates for a pool to be certified but can make exceptions.
- Overall FGCU has very receptive HR Department that regularly updates Search and Screen Procedures and provides training for a large number of Search Committees.
• Because FGCU is still a rapidly growing institution, HR processes a high volume of applicants, expends a great deal of personnel time and effort, and has few staff available to accommodate all search and screening needs.

FAT identified the following faculty concerns in FGCU Hiring Process:

1. Poor timeline and poor communication with applicants results in applicants going elsewhere, positions not getting filled, and poor public opinion.

2. Posting as “position available until filled” can result in long search and delayed process

3. Matrix required by FGCU as way of defending searches but can be very time consuming, especially with a lot of applicants.

4. Extended delays from the time the Search Committee makes its recommendation until the Official Letter of Offer is sent to the selected candidate often results in valuable candidates withdrawing from the search.

Recommendations:

1. Search and Screen Guidelines should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of the Search Committee Chair. The Chair should:

   • Schedule the training for search committee members (can be before the pool is certified).
   • Establish a timeline (e.g., from start of search to hiring conclusion) and agenda for search.
   • There is no evidence from other Universities that Search Committee Chair cannot communicate with other members of Committee to set up meetings. At some SUS Universities the Search Chair schedules the meetings and corresponds with applicants to keep them updated on the status of search. FAT recommends reviewing these procedures.

2. HR should develop more timely process to keep applicants informed about the status of search. FAT recommends that qualified applicants receive updates.

3. HR should notify people not qualified for a position so they can be released as soon as possible.

4. Goal: As much as possible, set closing date for Search with an opportunity to extend if necessary.

5. Eliminate the Matrix process. FAT could find no evidence that other SUS Universities use this matrix process. FAT recommends eliminating the use of a matrix for non-selected candidates or streamlining the matrix as it can be very cumbersome for large applicant pools.

6. Once Search Committee has completed its work, timely action needs to be taken. Suggest that HR, Dean's office, and Office of Academic Affairs work together to develop timely process to select and notify candidate.