Opportunity Rule Guidelines for Executive Search Firms

These guidelines establish the responsibilities and procedures that contracted Executive Search Firms will follow in order for the university’s Hiring Authority to comply with policy UTS187, Interviews of Executive Administrators and Other Senior Administrators. The policy promotes diverse candidate interview pools for leadership positions within The University of Texas at Austin while complying with applicable laws. The policy was developed by Chancellor McRaven for UT System and all UT institutions; its objective is to promote diversity for positions Dean and above.

Executive Search Firm Responsibilities

The policy impacts each position that performs executive duties and reports directly to the president, each dean, and each other position the president designates as an Executive Administrator.

To fill a new or vacant position the university’s hiring authority is required to:

- Prepare a well written position description.
- Use inclusive language (see examples in section that covers reasonable recruitment efforts).
- Conduct finalist interviews with an interview pool that is Opportunity Rule compliant: at least one female candidate, at least one male candidate, and at least one candidate from an underrepresented group (male or female).
- Interview only candidates who meet the qualifications for the position and have the bona fide skills and experience reasonably related to satisfactory performance in the position.

Executive Search Firms will comply by maintaining candidate records, demonstrating reasonable recruitment efforts, and delivering an Opportunity Rule compliant interview pool.

Deliver an Opportunity Rule compliant interview pool to the hiring authority:

- at least one female candidate
- at least one male candidate
- at least one candidate from an underrepresented group (male or female)

While race and ethnicity information should not be shared with the hiring authority, candidate records must be retained in compliance with the university’s Records Retention schedule.
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Reasonable recruitment efforts
Activities that Executive Search Firms may take to demonstrate a reasonable recruitment effort include:

- Post the position to multiple outlets, e.g. the Executive Search Firm’s website and recruitment advertising websites

- Use inclusive posting language
  - Language expressing a commitment to diversity can appear in a description of the position, the specific department/college/school or in the description of the University. For example:
    - The University of Texas at Austin is committed to increasing the diversity and inclusion of the university community and curriculum.
    - The College of Natural Sciences is especially interested in qualified candidates who can contribute through their research, teaching, and/or service, to the diversity and excellence of the academic community.

- Interweave the importance of diversity throughout the job posting. For example:
  - The University of Texas at Austin is interested in candidates who will contribute to diversity and equal opportunity in higher education through their teaching, research and service.
  - The University of Texas at Austin is committed to a diverse and inclusive working and learning environment.
  - Candidates should describe and include specific examples on how their experience and commitment to diversity would contribute to The University of Texas at Austin’s mission and values, including but not limited to their research, methodological and pedagogical approaches, mentoring and recruiting activities, community engagement, interdisciplinary collaborations, experiences working with underrepresented communities on and off campus, etc.
  - Seeking an individual who pursues excellence through diversity at all levels and is committed to fostering an environment in which faculty, staff, and students from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and personal experiences are welcomed and can thrive.

- Consider possible implications of the job description that may exclude applicants, and define the job posting in broad terms consistent with the department’s needs to ensure a broad candidate pool

- Include as a qualification in the job description a reference to demonstrated experience working with diverse populations; examples might include mentoring activities, committee service, recruitment and retention activities

- Consider using competency requirements in the posting that illustrate a commitment to diversity. For example:
  - Understanding of the business value of diverse perspectives and opinions and ability to understand, appreciate and employ the unique contributions of associates of varied cultures, nationalities, ethnic backgrounds, genders, ages, points of view, etc.
  - Explains the concepts and premises behind managing workforce diversity.
  - Differentiates preconceptions from actual knowledge about other cultures.
  - Demonstrates receptivity to diversity.
  - Describes organizational resources for managing diversity.
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- Demonstrates a willingness to examine own biases, assumptions, and attitudes.
- Demonstrates cultural sensitivity in communicating with associates of diverse backgrounds.
- Models an attitude of respect for cultural differences.
- Discusses how diversity in the marketplace impacts business fundamentals.
- Establishes positive working relationships with associates from various backgrounds.
- Shows respect and value for the unique contributions of each associate.
- Identifies and complies with relevant legislation on diversity issues.
- Mentors individuals of diverse backgrounds.
- Wherever possible, builds solutions based on consensus among all involved.
- Directs work groups consisting of diverse backgrounds, experiences, talents, and points of view.
- Coaches others in importance and methods of paying attention to diversity in the customer base.
- Contributes to training in effective communications and collaboration in a diverse workforce.
- Promotes collaborative climate that recognizes, celebrates, and rewards diversity.
- Facilitates interactions between individuals and groups of many diverse backgrounds.
- Maximizes the contribution of people with diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and styles.
- Analyzes how effective management of a diverse workforce impacts business profitability.

- Advertise in the Chronicle of Higher Education as well as publications that reach a diverse audience
  - The university’s recruitment advertising vendor will have suggestions as to the most cost effective recruitment sources for the position, for example:
    - Diverse Issues in Higher Education
    - Insight into Diversity
    - Hispanic Outlook
    - American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity

- Circulate the posting to relevant affinity groups and/or professional organizations
  - Affinity groups, sometimes referred to as networking groups, provide forums for employees to gather socially and share ideas outside of their particular work unit. For example:
    - National Society of Black Engineers
    - Hispanic Bar Association
    - The Association for Women in Communications
    - Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education

- Recruit at diverse conferences

- Utilize passive recruitment strategies, such as networking with diverse groups, to generate potential candidate pools even when there is no open position

Some of these examples were adapted from the Faculty, Graduate Students, and Postdoctoral Fellows Recruitment Toolkit developed by the Office for Equity and Inclusion.
### Definitions

**Executive Administrator**
- Each position that performs executive duties and reports directly to the president,
- Each dean, and
- Each other position the president designates as an Executive Administrator under this policy.

**Other Senior Administrator**
- Associate vice president,
- Assistant vice president,
- Associate dean,
- Assistant dean,
- Department chair,
- Associate department chair,
- Assistant vice chancellor,
- Division chief,
- Section chief or
- Head coach,
- Other similar administrator, and
- Each other position the president designates as an Other Senior Administrator under this policy.

**Hiring authority**
- The decision-maker who is attempting to fill a new or vacant Executive Administrator or Other Senior Administrator position.

**Underrepresented group candidates**
- Hispanic or Latino – an applicant of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race;
- Black or African American (Not Hispanic or Latino) - an applicant having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Not Hispanic or Latino) - an applicant having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands;
- Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino) - an applicant having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam;
- American Indian or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino) - an applicant having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
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Reasonable Recruitment Efforts

- Use inclusive posting language
- Post the position to multiple outlets
- Advertise in the Chronicle of Higher Education and other publications especially those that reach the most diverse audience possible
- Circulate the posting to relevant affinity groups and/or professional organizations
- Engage a search firm, and require Opportunity Rule compliant interview pool
- Recruit at diverse conferences
- Utilize passive recruitment strategies, such as networking with diverse groups, to generate potential candidate pools even when there is no open position