

## 2.1.3 STAFF SEARCH AND SELECTION

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### POLICY STATEMENT

The University of St. Thomas is an affirmative action, equal employment opportunity employer that actively seeks to attract, hire, and retain a high caliber, diverse workforce comprised of employees whose talents and experiences best equip the University to accomplish its mission. Through this policy, the University affirms its commitment to a set of recruitment and selection procedures that are equitable, consistent, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The aim of this policy is to articulate a set of strategies by which recruitment and selection at the University take into account the values of equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, a diverse and inclusive workforce, and upward mobility for staff.

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### Applicability

This policy defines the recruitment and selection philosophy of the University of St. Thomas. Covered by this policy are recruitment and selection activities initiated to fill non-faculty positions, including those involving senior management and academic administrative vacancies, such as vice presidents, deans, associate and assistant deans, and program directors. Vacancies arising in areas covered by a collective bargaining agreement are also governed by this policy. Search and selection guidelines for faculty and adjunct faculty appointments are excluded.

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### Section I. DEFINITIONS

#### 1.1 *Academic and Administrative Leadership*

Is a group comprised of deans, academic program directors, vice presidents, and other direct reports of the two University executive vice presidents who preside over group meetings.

#### 1.2 *Affected-Class*

A group of individuals, as determined by state and federal law, who has historically been discriminated against in employment on the basis of race, gender, or disability status.

#### 1.3 *Lateral Transfer*

Is a management- or employee-initiated action where an employee obtains through a competitive process a new position in the same salary range as his or her previous position. A salary action generally does not accompany a lateral transfer.

#### 1.4 *Promotion*

Is an employment action resulting from an employee competing for and receiving appointment to a different position at a higher salary range. A salary increase generally accompanies a promotion.

### *1.5 Family Member*

An employee's spouse, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, parents, step-parents, siblings, mother- or father-in-law, sons- or daughters-in-law, and brothers- or sisters-in-law.

### *1.6 Underutilization*

Occurs when an institution has few minorities, women, and disabled persons in a particular job classification, job title, or job category than would be reasonably expected based upon their availability in the census data. .

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## **Section II Search and Selection Process**

### *2.1 Beginning the Search*

The way in which hiring officials approach the recruitment and selection process can affect the University's image as an employer and, in turn, its ability to attract qualified candidates. Hiring officials are expected to work with the appropriate Human Resources Partner to assure their recruitment efforts help the University achieve its workforce diversity goals. The search and selection process requires the hiring official to complete a [Request for Staff form](#), obtain the approval of the appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership and the appropriate Executive Vice President, and submit the form to the Department of Human Resources. Accompanying the Request for Staff form is a written statement from the hiring official describing the recruitment strategy he or she plans to engage ([Defining Recruitment Strategy Form](#)).

In instances where the vacancy represents a new position (regular or temporary), an increase in full-time equivalency (FTE), is a restructured position, or is a change in funding from restricted to unrestricted, the hiring official must obtain the approval of the President's Staff. When the employment opportunity occurs in a job group in which the University is underutilizing affected-class members, hiring officials should indicate the specific steps they will take to help the University achieve its established diversity objectives.

### *2.2 The Search Committee*

All recruitment activities initiated to hire exempt employees require the appointment of a search committee. Its role is to work collaboratively with the hiring official to develop recruitment strategies, screen, interview, and recommend candidates for further consideration. The composition of a search committee generally should include at least one affected-class member. At least one member of the committee serves as the chairperson and, among other responsibilities, assures the search process conforms to University guidelines and applicable state and federal employment laws. In cases where a hiring official initiates recruitment activities to fill a non-exempt vacancy for which a search committee is not required, he or she must work closely with the appropriate Human Resources Partner to assure compliance with University policy, diversity objectives, and relevant employment laws. This policy does not preclude hiring officials from using a search committee to recruit for and fill a non-exempt vacancy. It simply does not require it.

### 2.3 *Confidentiality*

Confidentiality is the foundation of a credible and trustworthy search process. The importance of maintaining strict confidentiality throughout the process cannot be emphasized too much. A breach of confidentiality threatens the successful outcome of the search process in two ways: First, it may result in the termination of the process resulting in a serious loss of time and resources and potentially viable candidates. Second, it may cause the most qualified candidates to withdraw from the process fearing that a premature disclosure of their candidacy will jeopardize their current employment. These likely negative consequences make a compelling argument for requiring absolute confidentiality from all persons involved in the search process throughout and following its conclusion, unless otherwise permitted under this policy.

### 2.4 *Job Profile*

The hiring official includes a detailed [Job Profile](#) with the [Request for Staff form](#). The Department of Human Resources determines the classification of the position and assigns a salary range.

### 2.5 *Recruiting*

It is appropriate to recruit when a position becomes vacant or when a new position is created. Supervisors and managers are not required to recruit in instances when an employee's title changes or when less than fifty percent of the responsibilities of the job change, as a result of a reorganization or reassignment of duties between jobs within the same unit.

When recruitment is required, the hiring official may recruit from (1) the unit as a whole in which the employment opportunity exists; (2) the University as a whole; or (3) inside or outside the University simultaneously. A Human Resources Partner works with the hiring official and/or the search committee to generate an adequate pool of qualified applicants, including affected-class members, through suitable advertising and recruiting. Employment announcements shall carry the notation that "The University is an AA/EEO Employer. Women, applicants of color, and the disabled are encouraged to apply."

If employment opportunities at the University occur in job groups in which affected class members are underutilized based on their availability in the labor market and for which the University has established an affirmative action goal, hiring officials shall make a good faith effort to attract and appoint members of underrepresented group(s) by recruiting broadly and aggressively.

### 2.6 *Selection Process*

Applicants selected for employment opportunities at the University must meet established minimum job requirements. It is important that selection criteria are job related and applied consistently to all applicants. Hiring officials may use job-related information derived from applications, résumés, publication lists, seminars, interviews, reference checks, tests, and physical examinations (if the job has special physical demands) to make the hiring decision. Questions about the appropriateness of any pre-employment test or practice should be directed to the Department of Human Resources.

At the conclusion of the search, the hiring official submits to the Department of Human Resources a detailed report on the results of the search. The report should contain a description of the position, including special steps taken to attract women and applicants of color. The hiring official describes the selection process, including the number of applicants and the number of male and female applicants and

applicants of color, and their ranking, if ranked. The report should state the principal reasons for selection of the proposed candidate over other candidates and include the candidate's résumé.

For those searches in which female candidates and/or candidates of color are not chosen, the hiring official shall identify such candidates by name and include a copy of their résumés with specific reasons for non-selection. In addition, if any candidates were selected but declined the offer, the hiring official furnishes the reasons for the declination.

## 2.7 *Employment Offers*

The employment offer, including the recommended pay rate for the prospective employee, is initiated by the hiring official and approved by the appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership and, where applicable, the appropriate Executive Vice President. The hiring official and the designated Human Resources Partner jointly determine the beginning pay rate of prospective employees. All job offers must be in writing and signed by the appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership or his or her designee before being sent to prospective employees. Hiring officials shall not extend an employment offer that is contrary to University policy. Neither shall they state that an employment contract exists between the University and the prospective new employee. The Offer Letter Template should be used to develop the offer letter. The designated Human Resources Partner approves deviations in wording from the template offer letters.

Before extending a job offer, hiring officials must conduct a reference check. Reference checks are an important part of the selection process. This type of information is collected as a means of promoting a safe work environment for all University employees. Reference checks also enable hiring officials to gather additional applicant-related information that helps determine the candidate's overall employability.

## 2.8 *Immigration Reform and Control Act*

The Immigration Reform and Control Act requires all employers to verify the work eligibility status of newly hired individuals and to retain records as evidence that documents establishing identity and eligibility have been reviewed. An HR Partner works closely with the hiring official to assure the physical examination of required documents and to attest by signature that the documents were reviewed. The official form to be used for compliance is the federal government Form I-9.

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## Section III *Waiver of the Normal Search Process*

The University is committed to conducting a competitive and open search for all vacant positions. There are special circumstances, however, in which a hiring unit may request a waiver of the normal search process. These circumstances are listed below. Waiver requests must be in writing and approved by four individuals: the appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership, the appropriate Executive Vice President, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, and the Affirmative Action Officer. The waiver request should include a detailed explanation of the way in which at least one of the following special circumstances exists.

- A. An employee slated for termination during a reduction in staff;
- B. A former employee returning to the same job within one year of termination;

- C. An affected-class candidate filling a position in a category for which an underutilization exists;
- D. A candidate from the applicant pool used to fill an identical position within the previous three months when applications were solicited through the normal process.

Waiver requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and scrutinized closely. Approval is not automatic. If disapproved, the hiring unit must proceed with the search. If, on the other hand, the waiver is approved, the applicant is appointed to the position.

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## SECTION IV                      Employment of Relatives and Minors

### 4.1                                      *Employing Relatives*

All employment decisions are based on job qualifications and work performance. In keeping with this policy, members of the same family may be eligible for employment within the same unit. A family member is defined as an employee's spouse, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, parents, stepparents, siblings, mother- or father-in-law, sons- or daughters-in-law, and brothers- or sisters-in-law.

When members of the same family are hired to work for the same supervisor, written advance approval of the employment arrangement is needed by the appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership, the appropriate Executive Vice President, and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources. In such cases, a supervisor-employee relationship must not occur. Neither shall one family member advocate for the other or serve in a decision-making role with respect to terms and conditions of employment.

While general responsibility for assuring adherence to these policies must rest with those responsible for appointments and assignments (principally members of the Academic and Administrative Leadership), a particular responsibility for sensitivity to the potential conflicts falls on those whose family or personal relationships may give rise to them.

### 4.2                                      *Employing minors*

Federal and state laws restrict the nature and amount of work that persons under the age of 18 can perform. Contact the Department of Human Resources to assure compliance with child labor laws when considering hiring a minor.

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## SECTION IV                      *Addressing the New Employee's Needs*

### 5.1                                      *New Employee Orientation*

The Department of Human Resources coordinates the orientation program for new employees. New Employee Orientation introduces new employees to the University of St. Thomas. The hiring unit provides new employees a separate orientation session that informs them of internal procedures, introduces them to colleagues, and provides appropriate training and performance feedback.

## 5.2 *Visas*

Individuals holding citizenship in countries other than the United States are subject to special conditions related to employment. Eligibility to work in the U.S. depends on an individual's visa status. The University hires and compensates only those foreign nationals who are permanent U.S. residents or who possess an appropriate visa for the position being sought. To this end, the University may sponsor and provide financial and staff support to foreign nationals to aid in their applications for appropriate visas or permanent residency. Although it is unlawful to inquire of an applicant about his or her national origin, there are occasions when applicants volunteer that they are not United States Citizens. In those cases, hiring officials who are considering hiring a foreign national applicant must contact the Department of Human Resources to assure all legal and policy requirements are met before any job offer is made. (Please refer to the Visa Application and Process Procedures.)

## 5.3 *Relocation*

When preparing a [Request for Staff](#), the hiring official shall indicate the ability of the unit to pay for relocation for the new employee. The job will be advertised accordingly. More details are available by reviewing the University's Relocation Procedures.

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# SECTION VI EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

## 6.1 *Types of Appointments*

Non-faculty staff appointments are designated as regular full-time, regular part-time, temporary, extended temporary, interim, or per diem. The following provisions define the various employment appointments available at the University.

**Regular Full-time:** An appointment that is expected to continue indefinitely and requires an employee to work a regular schedule of at least 40 hours per week.

**Regular Part-time:** An appointment that requires employees to work a regular schedule of less than 40 hours per week and whose duration is expected to continue indefinitely.

**Temporary:** The appointment of an employee to a position or job assignment that has a definite end date and whose duration is less than six (6) months.

**Extended Temporary:** An appointment intended to meet the needs of a unit that has extra or cyclical work or special projects that have clearly defined beginning and ending periods. These types of appointments must be made for a minimum of six (6) months and may last no longer than twelve (12) months.

**Interim:** The temporary assignment to a regular position, which generally occurs following the promotion, transfer, or departure of an employee who held a regular appointment. In most cases, the interim assignment shall not exceed six months.

**On-Call:** The assignment of an employee whose appointment is not a part of the labor budget or regular work schedule of a unit and the employee is scheduled to work only on an "as needed" or "on-call" basis.

**Term Appointment:** A benefits eligible appointment to a position whose term is more than 12 months but lasting not more than two years for the purpose of staffing new or existing programs for a limited duration. The term may not be extended beyond the original appointment period. President's Staff approval is required.

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## **SECTION VII                      RETENTION OF RECORDS**

7.1        Hiring officials shall maintain documentation of the steps taken in the hiring process. Since an applicant generally has 365 days to file a charge of illegal employment activity with a regulatory agency, names of applicants interviewed, their ranking, and notes taken during the interviews should be maintained for at least one year. Notes taken should be sufficient to explain the hiring decision in the event a comparative analysis of applicants' credentials is requested by a regulatory agency or is subpoenaed by a court.

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## **SECTION VIII                      ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 8.1        Members of the Academic and Administrative Leadership or their designee(s) are responsible for assuring within their respective units the objective consideration of qualified applicants and for conducting a proper search and selection process, including adequate documentation. Members of the Academic and Administrative Leadership or their designee(s) also are responsible for assuring that new employees in their units are oriented to the policies and procedures of the University, introduced to their new colleagues, and provided appropriate training and performance feedback.
- 8.2        The Associate Vice President for Human Resources or his or her designee is responsible for assuring the consistent application of the provisions of this policy, keeping adequate documentation of the search and selection process, and complying with all applicable state and federal requirements.
- 8.3        The appropriate Executive Vice President, the University's Affirmative Action Officer, and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources approve waiver requests that are consistent with university policies.
- 8.4        Hiring officials are responsible for completing and submitting the "Request for Staff" form; generating an accurate job profile of the vacant position; assuring the full and objective consideration of all qualified applicants; and assuring a proper search and selection process, including adequate documentation.