

Charging a Committee

Search committees should always receive their charge before they begin their work. The hiring authority should keep in mind that a poor hiring recommendation by the committee is often the result of a poorly conceived or written charge. The charge should indicate without any ambiguity the committee's task, deadline, and budget and the kind of candidate that the hiring authority wishes to attract. The task varies. In some cases, the search committee is instructed to make a hiring recommendation. In other cases, the committee is instructed to hire an individual. If the committee is instructed to rank candidates for the hiring authority, the charge should make clear that the hiring authority is not bound by the committee's listing or ranking in making his or her selection. If the committee is not made aware of the hiring authority's prerogative, and the hiring authority chooses the third-ranked rather than the top-ranked finalist, the committee may feel that its work was not as important as it was led to believe.

Charge Checklist

Baseline/Foundational Information

- Discuss the appointing authority's vision for the position. Should include: scope, short and long term challenges and opportunities, and criteria that are important to the department and institution.
- Clarify position title (working title, official title, advertised title, rank, etc.)
- Provide members with a position description and job posting.
- Discuss selection criteria (essential, preferred, minimum, specialties, disciplines, etc.)
- Discuss the expected time frame for the search.
- Discuss UMKC policy and goals on diversity and review Affirmative Action policies.

Screening and Selection Parameters

- Describe scope of authority of the committee and chair. What decisions & tasks will be the responsibility of the committee?
- Establish the appointing authority's involvement during the search process. (Authorize budget expenditures, approve interviewees in advance, etc.)
- Discuss the preferred number of finalist candidates to visit campus & general idea of campus visit.
- Discuss final recommendations: How it is to be brought forward (candidate strengths and weaknesses, single candidate, ranked, narrative description of finalists, etc.)

Support & Logistics

- Discuss any ex officio members and staff assistant support during the search.
- Discuss/clarify where and how the committee will receive administrative and logistical support.
- Identify and discuss how HR and the Affirmative Action office will support process.
- Discuss financial resources

- Discuss documentation or reports required of the search.
- Discuss and special requirements of the search.