

## **LADDER-RANK SEARCHES AND INDEFINITE CLOSING DATES**

Past practice at UCSC, with a few exceptions, has been to have definite closing dates for ladder-rank searches. This has proved helpful to search committees in clearly defining the group of applicants for which they need to be accountable (only those applications received by the deadline) and also in documenting the record. A clearly documented recruitment record is our best defense against a complaint or audit.

However, to allow search committees maximum flexibility in conducting their searches, and in keeping with the trend at other universities and UC campuses, search committees have the option of advertising their positions as “open until filled.” If a search committee chooses this option, they should put a process in place at the beginning of their recruitment to determine how and when applicants will be ranked and selected for interviews.

The search committee should establish an initial screening date to begin their selection process. The wording in the job description can say something like “The position is open until filled, however, all applications received by XXX will be guaranteed a review.” From that initial screening, the search committee may wish to submit the Applicant Screening record (Part B) for the dean’s approval to begin interviews for the initial pool of applicants. In the meantime, other applications will continue to arrive. Will the search committee proceed with Applicant Screening for this group of applicants also? Will they begin interviews? It is up to the search committee to decide how many internal screening dates they wish to have. If the committee decides to review applications that were submitted after the initial screening date, then all of the applications received by a certain date must be reviewed. Depending on how a search committee decides to proceed, there could be multiple iterations of Applicant Screening (Part B) and Final Candidate Ranking (Part C). If more than one position has been allocated for a search, it would be possible to send an offer of appointment to one final candidate while continuing to select and interview other candidates. The search committee will need to decide at some point in the process when to stop screening applications. Not all applications have to be screened. However since the position technically remains open until filled, all applications received must be documented for the record.

Searches with open-ended closing dates provide more flexibility to search committees, but the documentation of the recruitment record is more cumbersome and complicated.