

~~R203, Presidential Search Committee Requirements and Board's Selection of Presidents[†]~~

~~**R203-1 Purpose:** This policy provides requirements for presidential search committees and for the Utah Board of Higher Education's ("Board") selection of presidents in the Utah System of Higher Education ("USHE").~~

~~R203-2 References~~

- ~~2.1 Utah Code § 53B-2-102, Appointment of Institution of Higher Education Presidents~~
- ~~2.2 Utah Code § 52-4-202, Public Notice of Meetings—Emergency Meetings~~
- ~~2.3 Utah Code Title 52 Chapter 4, Open and Public Meetings Act~~
- ~~2.4 Board Policy R120, Board of Higher Education Bylaws~~

~~R203-3 Presidential Search Committees~~

~~**3.1 Equal Opportunity Employer:** The Board is an equal opportunity employer. The Board's decision to hire a president at a USHE institution shall be made only after an extensive search, including advertising the position nationally, thoroughly screening the applicants, and evaluating applicants without regard to race, ethnicity, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex, marital status, disability, national origin, veteran's status, or religion.~~

~~**3.2 Beginning of the Search Process:** Appointing a president is one of the Board's foremost responsibilities and the Board shall give the search process its highest priority. The Board chair shall initiate the search process as soon as practicable after a vacancy is announced. The Board may appoint an interim president during the search process if necessary.~~

~~**3.3 Chair Appoints Search Committee:** The Board shall establish a search committee that includes representatives of faculty, staff, students, the institution's board of trustees, alumni, the institution's executive council or cabinet, and the Board. The search committee shall be co-chaired by a member of the Board and the chair of the institution's board of trustees. The Board chair shall select the other members of the search committee with particular emphasis on ensuring that stakeholders and the community are well represented. The Commissioner of~~

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Higher Education (“Commissioner”), or their designee, and staff shall support and manage the search process. The Board may engage a consultant, as appropriate, to assist with the search.

3.4 Recruitment: For each search, the Board, through the Commissioner, shall create a comprehensive, active recruiting plan to ensure a strong, diverse pool of potential candidates. As part of a successful recruiting plan, all Board members, trustees, search committee members, the Commissioner, presidents, vice presidents, deans, department heads, faculty, students, alumni, friends of the institution, and members of the community should seek out and nominate qualified individuals and encourage them to apply for the position.

3.5 Duties of the Search Committee: The search committee shall meet regularly and, by a majority vote of those present, determine and direct all activities of the committee. The committee shall host constituent meetings to seek public input regarding the qualifications of ideal candidates and explain the search process. The committee shall have the duty to establish qualifications for the position, search for qualified individuals, receive nominations and applications, review the qualifications of nominees and applicants, seek out information about nominees and applicants, interview nominees and applicants as a committee, and transmit to the Board the names of at least three but not more than five persons who are fully qualified to serve as president of the institution. The Commissioner and their staff shall provide information, make confidential inquiries, and give reports about each candidate to the search committee.

3.6 Confidentiality: The search committee shall keep all information about applicants and nominees strictly confidential. The committee should exercise special care to avoid disclosure of confidential information and protect the right of all applicants and nominees to privacy and anonymity, as well as search committee members’ candid views on each applicant in search committee meetings insofar as is possible. The committee co-chairs and the executive assistant/secretary shall emphasize and constantly remind all search committee members of the importance of preserving the confidentiality of all information made available to all members of the committee. The search committee may not forward an individual to the Board as a finalist unless two-thirds of the search committee members, as verified by the Commissioner, find the individual to be qualified and likely to succeed as the institution’s president. The Board will make public the names of the finalists to be interviewed by the Board.

3.7 Interviews of Qualified Applicants: The search committee shall review the comprehensive files on all applicants and interview the applicants who appear to be qualified and show strong potential to serve as a successful president.

3.7.1 At the conclusion of all interviews, the search committee shall discuss openly and fully each applicant. All committee members should give the committee the benefit of their candid views on each candidate.

3.8 Search Committee Vote: Following the interviews discussion, the search committee members shall vote by secret ballot on each interviewee who has indicated their willingness to serve as president. The voting procedure shall be as follows:

3.8.1 By electronic or other means, the committee members will answer yes or no to the following questions for each candidate: “Is this individual qualified and likely to succeed as the institution’s next president?”.

3.8.2 The Commissioner’s staff shall tally the votes and present the results to the search committee. Only those candidates who have received a two thirds majority vote by the search committee may be forwarded to the Board for consideration.

3.8.3 The search committee is not required to send more than three finalists, even if more than three candidates have received a two thirds majority vote. The committee may decide to either send the highest scoring three to five candidates or hold additional votes to narrow the list to the number of candidates the committee wishes to forward to the Board. If the voting results in fewer than three candidates with two thirds majority votes, the co chairs may allow for further discussion of candidates and then call for subsequent votes or the committee may report to the Board chair that it was unable to find three qualified candidates, at which time the Board chair may direct the committee to continue recruiting and interviewing until it can forward at least three candidates, or the Board chair may end the committee’s service and form a new committee.

3.8.4 The co chairs shall forward the finalists to the Board for consideration.

3.8.5 The Board shall select an institution of higher education president from among the finalists presented by the search committee. If the Board has good cause to believe the finalists forwarded by a search committee are not qualified or unlikely to succeed as president of the institution, the Board may direct the search committee to resume the search process until the search committee has forwarded three finalists with which the Board is satisfied, or the Board chair may appoint a new search committee.

3.9 Proxy Voting by Search Committee Members: Search committee members may vote by proxy, but no search committee member may vote on a candidate unless they have interviewed the candidate. The proxy vote will be transmitted to the committee co chairs by email or other verifiable written form.

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4.1 Files and Reference Information Available to Board: The Commissioner or their designee will provide the Board with the comprehensive files of all finalists for their review prior to the candidates’ scheduled interviews. If the Board deems it necessary, the Commissioner or

their designee will make additional inquiries to gather more information on the finalists and report their findings to the Board.

4.2 Schedule of On-Campus Interviews: The Commissioner or their designee will schedule all finalists for on-campus interviews and make the necessary arrangements with all finalists and the institution. In compliance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, the Board will make public the names of all finalists to be interviewed by the non-student members of the Board prior to the scheduled interviews.

4.3 Finalists' On-Campus Meetings and Interviews with the Board

4.3.1 Prior to interviews with the Board, the finalists shall present in public meetings as well as meeting with on-campus groups, including the institution's board of trustees, the cabinet, faculty, staff, and students. The Commissioner or staff shall provide feedback from these groups to the Board.

4.3.2 The Board, along with the board of trustees executive committee, shall interview the finalists on campus in a closed executive session.

4.4 Deliberations after Interviews: After the interviews of the finalists are completed, the Board, the trustee executive committee (up to a maximum of five trustees), and the Commissioner shall comprehensively discuss the strengths and weakness of each finalist.

4.5 Preliminary Qualification of Candidates: Prior to seeking consensus to appoint the president, Board members shall consider the question: "Is one or more of these candidates fully qualified, and will one or more of them, in our judgment, perform the duties as president of this institution with distinction?" If a majority of the members present appear to agree with the above question, the Board members will proceed to appoint a new president. If, however, a majority appear to disagree with this question, the Board members will request the search committee to reconvene and to search for additional qualified persons.

4.6 Board of Trustees May Petition for Consultation: Prior to the final selection of a president, the board of trustees may petition the Board to arrange for more extended communications regarding the selection of the president.

4.7 Voting to Appoint a President: In compliance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act, the Board will vote to appoint a new president in a public meeting. A finalist can be appointed only upon an affirmative vote of five members of the Board.