I. Purpose and Scope

As an institution of higher learning, Western Kentucky University seeks to hire and promote individuals with the requisite skills and abilities necessary to assist the University in accomplishing its mission.

II. Policy

A. Recruitment Philosophy and Compliance

Consistent with University policy and applicable federal and state regulations, decisions regarding applicants and employees are made without regard to race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or veteran status. Employment decisions are based on the principles of equal employment opportunity consistent with the intent to achieve the goals identified in the University’s Affirmative Action Plan.

B. Searches Subject to This Policy

All full-time and regular part-time positions with an expected duration of more than six (6) months are subject to this policy. Any deviations from these search procedures must be approved by the Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office and the Department of Human Resources through a waiver request.

C. General Guidelines
1. All recruitment and employment activities conducted by the University are to be carried out in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, principles of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, and established University policy. Department/Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring that recruiting and hiring recommendations are administered within these guidelines.

2. All persons interested in employment with the University are encouraged to file a formal application, according to procedures, for any vacancy for which they possess the minimum qualifications and wish to be considered. Comprehensive job vacancy information can be obtained from the Department of Human Resources and is continuously available on the Department’s web page located at www.wku.edu/hr.

D. Applicant Requirements - Staff Positions

1. Support Staff

Applicants for support staff positions are required to complete an official employment application for the specific position(s) in which they wish to apply in response to published position vacancy announcements. Support staff job applications are only accepted in electronic format through the on-line system managed by the Department of Human Resources. Applicants are encouraged to contact Human Resources for required assistance.

2. Executive, Administrative, Managerial and Professional Staff

a. Applicants for executive, administrative, managerial and professional service/support positions are required to file application materials for a specific job vacancy according to the requirements contained in each position announcement. **Individuals will only be considered “eligible applicants” when all required information is provided as specified within position announcements within the required time period.** “Non-eligible applicants” shall be considered as those applicants who do not provide the required information as specified within position announcements within the required time period. The University reserves the right to contact “non-eligible applicants” for additional information, but is not required nor obligated to do so. All application materials are determined to be inactive upon completion of a given search process.

b. The University has no obligations to consider or take any action in regard to unsolicited applications (applications which are not for a specific vacancy announcement).

c. All applicant information, as submitted through the application process, is subject to verification for accuracy and completeness.

3. Applicant Requirements- Faculty Positions

a. Applicants for faculty positions are required to file application materials for a specific job vacancy according to the requirements contained in each position announcement. **Individuals will only be considered “eligible applicants” when all required information is provided as specified within position announcements within the required time period.** “Non-eligible applicants” shall be considered as those
applicants who do not provide the required information as specified within position announcements within the required time period. The University reserves the right to contact “non-eligible applicants” for additional information, but is not required nor obligated to do so. All application materials are determined to be inactive upon completion of a given search process.

b. The University has no obligations to consider or take any action in regard to unsolicited applications (applications which are not for a specific vacancy announcement).

c. All applicant information, as submitted through the application process, is subject to verification for accuracy and completeness.

III. Procedure

A. Recruitment Procedures - Staff Positions

1. Recruitment for a vacancy may only begin following official approval through

2. University administrative channels. All openings for regular full-time and regular part-time positions shall be filled through an open and competitive search process except as otherwise provided by policy.

3. All vacancy announcements shall contain the following policy statement:

   “Western Kentucky University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified individuals are encouraged to apply, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and disabled veterans.”

4. The primary means of communicating (advertising) position vacancy information is through the University’s web site. Upon administrative approval to fill a vacancy, the Department of Human Resources shall be responsible for posting job vacancy information on the web site and for initiating application procedures.

   a. For support staff (non-exempt) positions, the minimum required application period is five (5) calendar days from the date of original publication on the University’s web site.

   b. For professional (exempt) positions, the minimum required application period is seven (7) calendar days from the date of original publication on the University’s web site.

   c. For administrative positions—Director/Unit Head or higher—the minimum required application period is twelve (12) calendar days from the date of original publication on the University’s web site.

5. The intended outcome of vacancy communication (advertising) is to establish a pool of highly qualified individuals from which to select. A desired candidate pool is one that is reasonable in size and diverse with respect to gender and ethnicity. It is recognized that applicant pools may be limited in number for specialized positions or those having
restrictive qualifications. The Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office reserves the right to determine the adequacy of a given applicant pool.

6. At the option of the Department/Unit Head or Hiring Official, other means of position vacancy communication (advertising) may be used such as local newspapers, regional newspapers, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and professional organization listserves as may be appropriate for the specific vacancy.

B. Recruitment Procedures - Faculty Positions

1. Recruitment for a faculty vacancy may only begin following official approval through University administrative channels. All openings for regular full-time positions shall be filled through an open and competitive search process except as otherwise provided by policy.

2. All vacancy announcements shall contain the following policy statement: "Western Kentucky University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified individuals are encouraged to apply, including women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and disabled veterans."

3. The primary means of communicating (advertising) position vacancy information is through professional journals such as The Chronicle of Higher Education, and listserves. Upon administrative approval to fill a vacancy, the Department of Human Resources shall be responsible for posting job vacancy information on the University’s web site. The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for placement of vacancy information with appropriate external sources.

4. For faculty positions, the minimum required application period is fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of original publication in The Chronicle of Higher Education, professional journals and listserves.

5. The intended outcome of vacancy communication (advertising) is to establish a pool of highly qualified individuals from which to select. A desired candidate pool is one that is reasonable in size and diverse with respect to gender and ethnicity. It is recognized that applicant pools may be limited in number for specialized positions or those having restrictive qualifications. The Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office reserves the right to determine the adequacy of a given applicant pool.

6. For additional information pertaining to faculty searches, please refer to guidelines provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

C. Outreach Sources and Strategies

1. On a quarterly basis, the Department of Human Resources shall be responsible for placement of a general recruitment advertisement in;

   a. the local newspaper,

   b. a regional newspaper, and
c. The Chronicle of Higher Education.

2. The purpose of these advertisements is to provide general information and generate interest in employment opportunities with Western Kentucky University.

3. All position vacancy information is provided to the following community resources:
   a. Kentucky Department for Employment Services/Cabinet for Workforce Development
   b. LifeSkills Inc.
   c. Kentucky Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired
   d. Kentucky Department for Vocational Rehabilitation

4. Vacancy information for administrative, professional and faculty positions is provided to the following outreach sources:
   a. American Association for Affirmative Action
   b. Florida A & M University
   c. Hampton University, VA
   d. Howard University
   e. Jackson State University
   f. Kentucky State University
   g. North Carolina A & T University
   h. Southern University, Baton Rouge
   i. Tennessee State University
   j. Texas Southern University

D. Use of a Previous Candidate Pool

1. A department/hiring unit may request to use a previous applicant pool to fill the same or a similar position, with respect to qualifications, under the following conditions: 1) if the request is made within a period of ninety (90) days from the date of vacancy publication on the University’s web site, and 2) if the vacancy has similar job qualifications.

E. Positions Requiring Search Committees

1. In order to ensure objective and fair hiring decisions, search committees are required for all executive, administrative, professional service/support, and faculty positions (EEO Groups 10, 20 and 30). Search committees may be utilized for other vacancies at the option of the department/unit head.
F. **Search Committee Requirements/Responsibilities**

1. Each search committee shall be comprised of a minimum of three (3) individuals with as much gender and ethnic diversity as possible.

2. Search committee members are to determine and agree on an effective process and means of evaluating candidates.

3. At the conclusion of the candidate evaluation process, which may include reference checks and interviews, the search committee chair is responsible for presenting committee recommendations in writing to the applicable department/unit head. Search committee recommendations shall not contain any “order ranking” of candidates nor any recommendations to hire a specific candidate. Committee recommendations are to contain an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the identified top applicants.

4. All search committee deliberations and documentation shall remain and be considered confidential/personnel information.

5. The Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office is available as a resource to assist search committees.

For faculty searches, please refer to additional search committee guidelines provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

G. **Applicant Evaluation**

1. To ensure a fair and competitive selection process it is generally recommend that a minimum of three (3) applicants be interviewed.

2. The department/unit head (or search committee) is responsible for conducting interviews and candidate reference checks.

3. Care should be exercised through each step of the selection process to ensure that no applicant is discriminated against on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

4. The final recommendation of a candidate for a specific vacancy is the responsibility of the department/unit head.

5. Notification to unsuccessful applicants for *staff* positions will be coordinated by the Department of Human Resources.

6. Notification to unsuccessful *faculty* applicants will be coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs.

H. **Special Search Requirements for Positions at the Director Level and Higher**

1. Because of the significant leadership responsibilities, vacancy searches for positions at the level of “Director” or higher must comply with special search requirements as follows:
a. Search committees shall be comprised of at least 6 individuals plus a committee chair. In order to ensure broad institutional input, it is desirable that two individuals represent Divisions of the University other than the Division where the vacancy exists. Upon receipt of a Form 1, the Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office will contact all Administrative Council members in order to solicit the names of such individuals. The Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Office will then add the appropriate names to the Form 1. Should Administrative Council members believe that Divisional participation is unnecessary, no additional Committee members will be appointed.

b. An open forum with an appropriate group of campus constituents, shall be held for each interviewed candidate for purposes of interaction with the campus community. A means shall be provided for written feedback to the search committee.

c. Candidates shall have a question/answer session with employees in the respective department/unit where the vacancy exists. A means shall be provided for written feedback to the search committee.

d. Upon approval of a Form 3 (approval to make offer), an offer of employment may be made contingent upon the following: receipt of validated official transcript(s); results of a criminal background check; results of a reference check including references provided by the candidate and others (not provided by the candidate) who have knowledge of the candidate’s work history.

e. The Department of Human Resources will provide guidance and oversight in conducting the criminal background check. The WKU Police Department will be consulted as appropriate.

f. The Director of Human Resources and the Director of Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance may approve appropriate exceptions to these special search procedures. The Director of Human Resources will notify the President of any approved exceptions.

I. Intradepartmental Promotion/Transfer Option

1. The University encourages the advancement of employees in keeping with their qualifications, experience, job performance and interests. Consistent with this philosophy and the desire to staff positions in the most efficient means possible, department/unit heads may elect to fill a new or existing position with personnel from within the department/unit. The following steps must be followed when this option is elected:

a. Department/unit employees must be informed of the vacancy through an internal memorandum, posting or e-mail communication.

b. Interested candidates must complete an on-line employment application (support staff positions) or submit a letter of application and resume (professional staff positions) within the specified announcement period. A minimum application period of three (3) working days must be provided.
c. The customary and usual equal opportunity/affirmative action documentation is required for all promotion/transfer decisions.

2. Temporary and part-time employees are not eligible for promotion/transfer under this option (except for situations where a part-time position was filled through a competitive search process).

3. The Intradepartmental Promotion/Transfer Option is not applicable to positions at the director level and above. It is important that such position searches be conducted in an open and competitive manner given position qualifications and salary levels.

J. Internal Searches

1. In some circumstances, a search may be conducted internal to the University only. Such exceptions must be approved by the Equal Opportunity/504/ADA Compliance Officer and only when determined to be in the best overall interest of the University. Internal search vacancy notices will be published on the Human Resources web page with a minimum application period of five (5) working days.

K. Guidelines for Interim/Acting/Temporary Appointments

1. Individuals appointed to interim/acting/temporary assignments are intended to assist the University in meeting an immediate staffing need to ensure continuous operations. Supervisors/department heads should avoid situations which place interim/acting/temporary appointees at a competitive advantage or disadvantage in relation to other candidates for a regular position vacancy. Prior to considering an individual holding an interim/acting/temporary appointment for a regular position vacancy, supervisors/department heads must gain approval in advance and in writing by the appropriate senior division administrative officer based on compelling business reasons. This requirement does not apply in situations where an interim/acting/temporary appointee wishes to apply for a position different from the position held, whether in the same or different department/unit.

L. Right to Deviate

1. Western Kentucky University reserves the right to deviate from the requirements as set-forth in this policy in rare instances when the best interests of the University are served.

IV. Exclusions

1. Departments/units may appoint individuals in full-time or part-time positions for up to six (6) months without any formal search/recruitment requirements.

V. Related Policies

See also: 4.2000 Employment Authorization and General Working Conditions

VI. Reason for Revision

Appendices: