Statement of Best Practices for Job Searches

Being on the job market is a time- and energy-consuming process, often undertaken by applicants already carrying heavy workloads, sometimes at multiple institutions and often without access to university resources. Excessive requirements for job applications place an undue burden on applicants.

When composing a job search, SCMS encourages university search committees to keep the needs, employment conditions, and humanity of job applicants at the forefront of their practices. The spirit of this document recognizes the physical and emotional labor of academic job searches. SCMS encourages search committees to consider the following best practices where possible, while recognizing that some requirements are beyond the control of a committee, department, or institution:

1. Limit first round job search materials to standard documents, without undue page length specifications or other requirements. Standard documents are understood to include the following:
   a. Cover letter
   b. CV
   c. Writing Sample
   d. Teaching Statement
   e. Research Statement
   f. Diversity Statement
   g. Names and contact information for three references.
2. Request additional materials for second round candidates and practice good faith efforts by allowing for flexibility in material type and length (i.e. requesting only one sample syllabus, allowing candidates to provide a syllabus or examples of teaching excellence of their choosing, limiting or omitting requests for student evaluations, which are known to reflect gender and race bias, etc.).
3. Include an approximate timeline or a process outline in the job ad, noting that these are always subject to change.
4. Inform candidates as soon as possible when the search process has moved to its next stage, and inform finalists of their candidacy status as soon as possible after a job offer is accepted. If Human Resources or state law prohibits the information from being shared, search committees can make this clear in job ads and/or application receipt acknowledgments.
5. Conduct first round interviews via video or phone rather than in person.
6. Provide candidates with a minimum notice of 14 days prior to campus visit interviews.
7. Fund campus visits upfront rather than asking candidates to pay campus visit expenses then seek reimbursement.

8. Limit a campus interview day to 8 hours of face-to-face time and provide candidates with regular breaks, including time to eat in private (beyond scheduled breakfast/dinner/lunch meetings).
9. Accommodate candidate requests for shorter interview days, such as for candidates who are nursing, and provide an opportunity for candidates to request any other accommodations, ideally to a liaison not on the search committee.
10. Contact HR when policies conflict with SCMS best practices and make good faith efforts for exceptions to policy. Search committees may use any portion of this statement to support such efforts.