

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

## Office of Academic Affairs

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**To:** Health Science Dean Search Committee (see list below)  
**From:** Myron Allen  
**Subject:** Charge to the committee  
**Date:** 26 August 2008  
**Copies:** Beverly Sullivan, Aneesa McDonald, Nell Russell, Rollin Abernethy,  
Nicole Ballenger, Maggi Murdock, Wilma Varga, Justin McDonald

Name	Department
Don Roth, chair	Dean, Graduate School
Steve Barrett	Associate Professor, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Neuroscience Program
Tami Benham-Deal	Professor, Kinesiology and Health
Mary Burman	Dean, School of Nursing
Linda Coyle	Senior Lecturer, Communication Disorders
Diane Kempson	Assistant Professor, Social Work
Keith Miller	Director, WIND
Jun Ren	Professor, School of Pharmacy, INBRE Director
Jerry Saunders	Director, Medical Education & Public Health
Brent Sherard	Director, Wyoming Department of Health
Lisa Shipley	Manager of Student Advising

Thank you all very much for agreeing to serve on the search committee for the next Dean of Health Sciences. This search comes at an opportune time: the college has an unprecedented level of integration among its clinical degree programs; funding for medical education rests on a solid footing; and the state looks to the university for strong contributions in issues surrounding health care delivery. It is critical for the academic mission of the college, the stature of the university, and the future of the state that we appoint a new dean who will continue this record of progress.

I would like the committee to undertake the following tasks:

1. **Develop a pool of high-caliber applicants.** Academic leadership requires strong credentials and a commensurate record of professional accomplishment, a keen understanding of teaching, decision-making ability, solid academic values, and vision. The field of applicants need not be limited to academics. The health care professions and government agencies with health-related missions are also potentially fertile sources of candidates. Please also pay careful attention to the diversity of the applicant pool and to the principles of fair hiring and equal opportunity. I urge you to meet with Ms Nell Russell, Associate Vice President for Diversity, to review the required steps and to solicit her insights into these principles.

One of the committee's first tasks will be to craft a position announcement, a draft of which I've attached to this memo. This document should include the major selection criteria, which the committee should review during each subsequent stage of the search.

Please also develop a strategy for soliciting applications. The strategy should include advertising, personal contacts with talented potential applicants or people who may be able to recommend them, and a broad call for nominations.

2. **Screen the applicants to produce a list of no fewer than three and no more than six potential interviewees.** This screening process should involve the development of a short list based on well defined criteria, the solicitation of references from candidates on the short list, reference checking and telephone interviews, and careful scrutiny of each candidate's credentials and qualifications against the requirements announced in the position description.

To facilitate the screening, my office will establish a secure web site where committee members may view electronic versions of each applicant's materials.

To ensure fair comparisons among short-list candidates, the committee should develop a set of common questions to ask candidates and their references during the telephone interviews and reference checks.

3. **Deliver this list to my office no later than 16 January 2009.** Please leave the list unranked, but include a summary of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses. This list should be a confidential communication from the committee to me.
4. **Help orchestrate and participate in the interviews.** Each interview should involve opportunities for the candidate to interact with College of Health Science faculty members, academic professionals, and staff; with interested representatives of other colleges; with appropriate UW administrators; and with representatives of the state's health-related professions.

In searches at this level, it may be appropriate to invite interviewees to bring a spouse or domestic partner to Laramie during the initial visit. My office will work with the interviewees to make these arrangements as necessary.

5. **Follow up.** As soon as possible after the interviews, develop a refined list of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses, to help focus a discussion that I would like to have with the committee at that stage.

I have asked Ms. Aneesa McDonald, in my office, to provide staff assistance to the search committee.

A few tricky points commonly arise in searches at this level. I hope the following observations help clarify matters:

- **Salary.** The committee need not try to answer candidates' questions about salary, which will be subject to negotiation after the interview process. Salaries of UW's college deans, vice presidents, and president — all matters of public record — may provide an indirect gauge, but there's no algorithm leading from this information to a yet-to-be-negotiated salary.
- **Tenure and rank.** During your screening process, questions about tenure and academic rank may arise. I expect the successful candidate to have a professional record that is at least commensurate with a tenured appointment at the rank of professor, whether or not the person currently holds an academic appointment. However, tenure, academic rank, and academic home are subject to the review and recommendation of the affected academic units and to the approval of the Board of Trustees. Even for tenured faculty members, all administrative appointments are at will.

The committee's list of potential interviewees should include any recommendations you have about possible academic homes, so we can schedule visits with the appropriate departments during the interviews.

- **Confidentiality.** Please keep the identities of applicants confidential, except insofar as it's necessary to discuss their applications with people during the reference-checking stage. The interviews will be open to the public, at which point confidentiality is no longer an issue.
- **Contacting references.** It is a matter of courtesy not to contact references or others about an applicant's candidacy until the applicant has made a short list. At that point, it's appropriate for the chair of the search committee to contact the applicant to ask (a) if the

person is still interested in the position and (b) if we may speak with references. This is also a good time to ask whether the candidate objects to our contacting other people not listed as references.

- **Appropriate conduct.** Please also conduct the interview with professionalism. Especially in high-level searches like this one, independent conversations between committee members and individual candidates require scrupulous judgment, to avoid misleading candidates or inadvertently instilling misgivings about the institution. When in doubt about the appropriateness of such a conversation, please consult with me or with Dean Roth.

Please keep in mind that we've wasted an expensive interview when a candidate leaves Laramie not wanting the job. The tenor of your conversations with a candidate can have a tremendous influence here.

I want to thank you again for your willingness to serve. If you have any questions during any phase of the search, please don't hesitate to ask.

## **DRAFT POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

Dean, College of Health Sciences  
University of Wyoming

The University of Wyoming invites nominations and applications for the position of Dean of the College of Health Sciences. As the only public baccalaureate and graduate degree-granting institution in Wyoming, the university takes pride in its distinctive role and support in the state and its stature as a national research university. Preferred qualifications include an earned doctorate, expertise in at least one of the disciplines represented in the college, a distinguished record of teaching and scholarship consistent with a tenured appointment as professor, demonstrated leadership ability, and evidence of strong managerial skills. The Dean of the College of Health Sciences is the college's chief academic officer, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and providing leadership in academic, intellectual, administrative, outreach, and fundraising activities. We welcome applicants and nominations from academia, government, and the private sector.

The College of Health Sciences offers 12 degree programs arrayed in seven divisions, schools, and institutes. In addition, the college has two family medicine residency centers and delivers medical education through a cooperative arrangement with the University of Washington. Among the college's assets are a strong tradition of professional training, a research-active faculty committed to teaching excellence at all levels, and outstanding facilities that promote interdisciplinary clinical education. More information is available at the college's web site, <http://www.uwyo.edu/hs/>.

The main campus is in Laramie, a city of 28,000 people in a scenic valley between the Laramie and Medicine Bow Ranges of the Rocky Mountains. Laramie is a two-hour drive north of Denver, Colorado. More information about the university and its geographic setting is available on the University's Web site, <http://www.uwyo.edu>.

Complete applications include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, names and contact data for at least three professional references, and a brief narrative summarizing the candidate's leadership experience and interest in the University of Wyoming. The search committee will begin screening in December, 2008; however, applications will be accepted until the position is filled. We expect to make an appointment effective August 1, 2007. Please send all nominations and applications to Dr. Myron Allen, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Wyoming, Dept. 3302, 1000 E. University Avenue, Laramie, WY 82071. We welcome electronic applications, sent to Ms. Dawn Gould at [dgould@uwyo.edu](mailto:dgould@uwyo.edu).

The university adheres to the principles of affirmative action and welcomes applications from qualified individuals, independent of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, sexual orientation or political belief. We welcome applications from underrepresented groups, including women and people of color.

## SAMPLE LETTERS

### 1. External solicitation

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

As you may know, the University of Wyoming is in the midst of an international search for \_\_\_\_\_. I'm including a copy of our position announcement, which includes more details about UW and the nature of the position.

I would greatly appreciate your help in bringing this opportunity to the attention of talented colleagues whose interests and qualifications would, in your opinion, be a good fit. Especially of interest are individuals who have strong scholarly values, professional accomplishment, and administrative promise but who may not be seeking new positions actively. We welcome applications from all qualified candidates, including candidates from underrepresented groups as well as those who have had unusual career tracks.

If you feel comfortable nominating individuals for the position, please feel free to do so by contacting me via mail, e-mail, fax, or telephone. I will be delighted to contact all nominees. If you have questions about the position, I'll be happy to try to answer them.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

[Search committee chair]

### 2. Internal solicitation

Dear colleagues:

As you may know, UW is conducting an international search for \_\_\_\_\_. I'm including a copy of the position announcement.

I would greatly appreciate your help in bringing this opportunity to the attention of talented colleagues whose interests and qualifications would, in your opinion, be a good fit. Especially of interest are individuals, from UW or elsewhere, who have strong scholarly values, professional accomplishment, and administrative promise. The search committee welcomes applications from all qualified candidates, including candidates from underrepresented groups as well as those who have had unusual career tracks.

If you feel comfortable nominating individuals for the position, please feel free to do so by contacting me via mail, e-mail, fax, or telephone. I will be delighted to contact all nominees. If you have questions about the position, I'll be happy to try to answer them.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

[Search committee chair]

### 3. Nomination thanks

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you very much for nominating \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of \_\_\_\_\_. I'm indeed grateful for your suggestion. I will contact \_\_\_\_\_ to inform [him/her] that [he/she] has been nominated and to invite [him/her] to submit an application.

The position holds exciting possibilities, and it is certainly gratifying to have such a talented prospect.

Sincerely,

[Search committee chair]

### 4. Nomination notification

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

As you may know, the University of Wyoming is currently searching to fill the position of \_\_\_\_\_. I am pleased to say that you have been nominated for this position. I urge you to consider applying for it.

I have enclosed a copy of the position announcement. If you have questions about the position or about any aspect of the University of Wyoming, I hope you'll feel free to contact me. I look forward to receiving your applications.

Sincerely,

[Search committee chair]