



## Sample Models for Structuring Faculty Search Committees

There are **multiple models** for structuring effective search committees: what is possible and practical will depend on the size of your unit, how your subfields typically interact, how many searches you conduct in a given hiring season, and your overall unit culture and climate.

Keep in mind that how you structure search committees signals **what your unit values**—e.g., subfield autonomy, faculty seniority, and the discretion of the chair or director, on the one hand, or, on the other, broad unit consensus and issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion—but also **how your unit distributes and enacts power**. Who gets to provide significant input during the hiring process? Who gets to ask questions? And who makes decisions?

Below are a few sample structures to consider, each of which can be modified to meet the needs of particular units and disciplines, and/or specific faculty searches.

### A. Basic structure that engages the expertise of specialists in the subfield of the search:

1. Senior specialist in subfield serves as committee chair
2. Second senior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit

**Advantages:** focused and efficient; subfield exercises high level of autonomy

**Disadvantages:** isolated from the larger unit; limited perspectives; subfield may have trouble building broad consensus for its choices

### B. More elaborate structure that engages broader expertise across the unit:

1. Senior specialist in subfield serves as committee chair
2. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Senior specialist in different subfield from within the unit
4. Graduate student representative from within the unit
5. Member of unit leadership team serves *ex officio*; participates but does not vote

**Advantages:** balance of senior and junior perspectives; multiple subfields have buy-in; broader investment should build consensus across the unit

**Disadvantages:** more difficult to schedule meetings; potential for disagreement about goals and expectations for the new hire

**C. More elaborate structure that engages expertise both within and outside the unit:**

1. Senior specialist in subfield serves as committee chair
2. Junior specialist in related subfield from within the unit
3. Senior or junior specialist in different subfield from within the unit
4. Senior specialist in related field from outside the unit
5. Graduate student representative from within the unit
6. Member of unit leadership team serves *ex officio*; participates but does not vote

**Advantages:** multiple perspectives; multiple subfields have buy-in; broader investment should build consensus across the unit; potential to build networks within and outside the unit for the new hire

**Disadvantages:** more difficult to schedule meetings; potential for disagreement about goals and expectations for the new hire

**D. More elaborate structure that emphasizes equity and inclusion:**

1. Senior colleague outside the subfield serves as committee chair; participates but does not vote
2. Senior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit
4. Specialist in different subfield from within the unit
5. Specialist in related field from outside the unit
6. Graduate student representative from within the unit
7. Member of diversity committee from within the unit

**Advantages:** committee chair focuses on search process but does not advocate for specific outcome; member of diversity committee is charged with making sure applicants from underrepresented backgrounds are considered fully and fairly; multiple perspectives; multiple subfields have buy-in; broader investment should build consensus across the unit; potential to build networks within and outside the unit for the new hire

**Disadvantages:** more difficult to schedule meetings; potential for disagreement about goals and expectations for the new hire; senior specialists in subfield may feel disempowered