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Needle in a Haystack – searching for your new faculty colleague

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1) Presentation Title: Needle in a Haystack – searching for your new faculty colleague.

2) Presenter Information:

Jeff Bright

Dr. Jeff Bright is head of the Department of Music and a Professor of Music at Arkansas Tech University. Before his appointment at ATU, Dr. Bright served on the faculties of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Dr. Bright's primary duties while at WKU included directing all athletic bands as well as the Symphonic Band, coordinating the graduate music program as well as teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in music education. Prior to his appointment at WKU, Dr. Bright held the Director of Bands position at Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, where he was responsible for all band activities as well as teaching low brass applied lessons. His experience spans thirty-five years of teaching music at the secondary and postsecondary levels. High school ensembles, under his direction, consistently received superior ratings and best-in-class awards. Dr. Bright has been recognized for his teaching excellence by the Kentucky Music Educators, being chosen as the Third District College/University teacher of the year in 2010, and also by his WKU colleagues who selected him to receive the Potter College of Arts and Letters Teaching Excellence Award for the 2012-2013 school year.

Dr. Bright's creative activities have led to presentations at both national and state National Association for Music Education conventions as well as at College Band Director's National Association athletic band symposiums. In addition, he is a regular contributor to the *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* series and has published music education research in *Contributions to Music Education*. Dr. Bright continues to maintain an active schedule as an adjudicator and clinician in the United States and abroad.

Dr. Bright holds bachelor's and master's degrees in music education from the University of Arkansas and a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Oklahoma. His professional affiliations include Phi Beta Mu Bandmasters Fraternity, American School Band Directors Association, College Band Directors National Association, College Music Society, Music Educators National Conference, Kappa Kappa Psi, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. Dr. Bright is married to his wife, Cindy. They have two daughters, Sarah, a speech pathologist with the Rogers Public School District, and Rachel, a youth librarian for the Bentonville Public Library.

3) Disciplines: Presentation has applications for any department planning a faculty search

4) Presentation Theme: Operating the Department

5) Presentation Type: Best Practice Presentation (50 minutes)

6) Abstract: The presenter and participants will explore best practices for conducting a search for a new faculty member. Topics covered in the session will include selecting search committee members, recruiting a candidate pool, virtual interviews, scheduling the campus visit, do's, don'ts, and bias in the screening process.

7) Keywords: faculty, search, recruitment, bias, interview

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9) Description of the Session:

Searches for new faculty hires have the potential to impact student learning outcomes and departmental reputations for decades. Green and Van Kuren (1996) state that “Hiring faculty members is one of the most important duties a college or department undertakes. Adding the right person to the faculty can raise the quality of the institution, attract students, and increase the productivity of other faculty members. Selecting the wrong person can lead to general departmental discord or to the type of faculty turmoil often associated with dismissing an individual or denying him or her tenure” (Green & Van Kuren, 1996).

Department leadership often finds itself at the nexus of this important process. At any given time, the leader of a department can find themselves responsible for updating job descriptions, appointing search committee members, reviewing application materials, advertising and recruiting for the position, and scheduling virtual and campus interviews (Buller, 2017), all while navigating increasingly stringent human resources regulations and conflicting faculty interests.

This session will present best practices attained from faculty search literature for navigating the hiring of new faculty members by relating those approaches to the presenter's experiences hiring five new tenure-track faculty members in the last two years. Conference attendees will also be encouraged to share their expertise in the faculty search process. Topics included in the presentation include working with the human resources department, selecting the search committee, developing a hiring schedule, writing the job advertisement, screening application materials, developing questions for the virtual and campus interview, eliminating bias, and creating a schedule for the campus visit, to name a few.

Selected References

Buller, J.L. (2012). *The essential department chair*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Columbia University Office of the Provost. (2016). *Guide to best practices in faculty search and hiring*. Retrieved from <https://provost.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/BestPracticesFacultySearchHiring.pdf>

Green, T.J., & Van Kuren, N.E. (1996). Conducting a faculty search. *ASEE Prism*, 5, 26-31.

Harvard University. (2016). *Best practices for conducting faculty searches*. Retrieved from https://faculty.harvard.edu/files/fdd/files/best_practices_for_conducting_faculty_searches_v1.2.pdf