

APPROVED

**FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Presidential Search Committee Minutes**  
**Monday, January 22, 2024**  
**9:30am**  
**Presidents' Hall**  
**Guglielmi Mazzaferro Center**

Committee Members Present: Lindsay Carpenter Connors, Mario Delci, Jennifer Flanagan, Eric Gregoire, Meg Hoey, Carolyn Hughes, Kelli Lundgren, Jessica Murdoch (ex-officio), Adriana Padilla Salgado, Deborah Phillips, Elise Takehana, Jonathan Thompson, Richard Toomey, Allison Turner

Absent: David Tiernan

Others Present: Ryan Crawford (WittKieffer), Tanya Crowley, Greg Duyck (WittKieffer)

Call to order

Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, Eric Gregoire called the meeting to order at 9:31am and opened the meeting to public comments. There were none.

Approve minutes from the December 7, 2023 meeting – VOTE 03PSC-23/24

A. Turner made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 7, 2023 search committee meeting. D. Phillips seconded the motion.

The Committee voted to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Delci	yes
J. Flanagan	yes
J. Thompson	yes
C. Hughes	yes
L. Carpenter Connors	yes
E. Takehana	yes
M. Hoey	yes
R. Toomey	yes
D. Phillips	yes
A. Padilla Salgado	yes
A. Turner	yes
E. Gregoire	yes
D. Tiernan	absent

Approve minutes from the December 15, 2023 meeting – VOTE 04PSC-23/24

M. Hoey made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2023 search committee meeting. A. Padilla Salgado seconded the motion.

The Committee voted to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Delci	yes
J. Flanagan	yes
J. Thompson	yes
C. Hughes	yes
L. Carpenter Connors	yes
E. Takehana	yes
M. Hoey	yes
R. Toomey	yes
D. Phillips	yes
A. Padilla Salgado	yes
A. Turner	yes
E. Gregoire	yes
D. Tiernan	absent

Recruitment overview and next steps

Randi Miller from WittKieffer was introduced to the committee and provided a recruitment overview to the group. WittKieffer sent the profile to over 4000 individuals from presidents, provosts, vice presidents, assistant provosts, deans, etc. They have been focusing on regional peer institutions, minority groups, geographical locations as well as nationally. The WittKieffer team has personally reached out to about 1000 individuals. To date, there are 24 applicants, 41 interested, 41 nominations and 62 declines. WittKieffer is actively speaking with the interested parties and the numbers are ever changing. Randi informed the committee that the strongest candidates typically apply towards the end of the deadline, which is February 16, 2024 and that this is a healthy number. The eliminating factors for the declines could be from salary constraints, location, public process etc. WittKieffer is also thrilled that we are attracting a diverse candidate pool and they are continuing to focus on diversity.

WittKieffer will continue to follow up with candidates, continue outreach and follow up to interview any individuals that were nominated. The committee was encouraged to submit any nominations and encourage others to do the same.

Access to application materials through Workzone

The deadline for applications is February 16, 2024 and committee members will receive the login information then. It was noted that there may be late applications and the committee was encouraged to review those that may come in after the deadline. An overview of the Workzone application was given. WittKieffer will have candidates separated into three categories; A. meet all the criteria, B. meet some of the criteria and C. not qualified. The committee will be able to see all candidates, but focus should center on the A list.

WittKieffer referenced the rubric handout and let the committee know it should be used as a tool. It is not something that will be required or collected. Committee members can edit the rubric if they choose. The committee discussed adding a context box at the top of the rubric for members to populate with information about the candidate such as key experiences, or previous institutions. Eric Gregoire asked the committee to also be sure to review the cover letters as it will indicate how candidates tell their stories.

### Committee poll

A few days before March 1, a poll will be sent to committee members with candidate names. Members should select eight names for airport interviews based on their review of candidate materials. The poll is not a formal vote but rather it will shape the conversation for deciding which candidates should be interviewed.

### Timeline recap

Ryan Crawford reviewed the interview process of the airport interviews; 75-minute interviews, which could vary based on number of candidates. 60 minutes for the committee questions and 15 minutes for the candidate to ask questions. There will be 15 minutes between each interview to allow a short break, and for the next candidate to be escorted to their interview. It was advised that the committee have approximately 10 questions for the candidates and a sample list of questions was given to the committee as a starting point. Committee members were asked to send three questions they would like to ask candidates to the WittKieffer email by February 5.

There was a discussion about some of the questions being scenario based vs. behavioral based. The committee was advised to word the questions as they choose. Behavioral based questions such as “what have they accomplished?” are appropriate. The committee also agreed that hypothetical questions related to riots, protests, hate crimes, etc. can give some insight into how well the candidates react to the unexpected. Randi asked the committee to avoid multi-part questions and not cram a lot of questions into one.

There was a discussion about whether to send questions to candidates before the interviews so that the candidates can prepare. WittKieffer has been involved with searches that have done this in the past. The committee discussed the possibility of sending 1-2 questions ahead of time, but that we want to see if the candidate has done their research and can answer questions based on what they have learned. The committee believes that based on the contents of profile, the candidates should already know the types of things we are focused on and does not necessitate providing interview questions in advance.

The committee would like to have additional meetings to discuss the questions; one prior to the March 1 meeting and another between March 1 and the March 14-15 interviews. This will allow the committee ample time to review the interview questions. A Doodle poll for dates will be sent to the committee and meetings will be scheduled.

Ryan reviewed our timeline for upcoming meetings as follows:

- Preferred application deadline is February 16 although there may be some late submissions
- Workzone access will be given to committee members on February 16
- Selection of the candidates for first-round interviews is March 1 from 2pm-5pm
- Airport interviews are March 14 and 15 at the Hilton Boston airport

In addition, we will schedule two additional meetings to finalize the interview questions.

Ryan reminded the committee about the importance of confidentiality. Candidate names need to be kept confidential and shouldn't be discussed. All meetings that discuss candidates are confidential in nature.

Trustee Gregoire asked if there were any additional questions or comments. There were none.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn by Allison Turner and seconded by Deborah Phillips.

Roll Call

M. Delci	yes
J. Flanagan	yes
J. Thompson	yes
C. Hughes	yes
L. Carpenter Connors	yes
E. Takehana	yes
M. Hoey	yes
R. Toomey	yes
D. Phillips	yes
A. Padilla Salgado	yes
A. Turner	yes
E. Gregoire	yes
D. Tiernan	absent

With no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:29am.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Eric A. Gregoire, Chairman of the Presidential  
Search Committee  
Board of Trustees