Sample Agenda
Search Committee’s First meeting
(with thanks to WISELI—U. Wisconsin for several points)

The first committee meeting is like the first day of class. Setting the goals, rules, timetable and expectations is critical. Make sure committee members understand that their input, participation and attendance at meetings is important to the success of the search.

And, like a class, it is important that you keep to a schedule and keep control of the meeting. “Control” means that you don't let one person dominate the entire meeting, for example, and that you get through the agenda items in the time scheduled. And, be sure to summarize/wind up each topic so that all "agree" with the conclusion—the conclusion will be put into minutes and should not be revisited anew every meeting. Actively involve all committee members in discussions, and think ahead of time about the search process.

One-hour meeting:

5 - 10 minutes: Introductions
Be sure all committee members know each other, each other's interests, and points of view of the search. Getting to know each other is becoming of greater importance as we get more interdisciplinary and have cross-college/department committee. Even if the committee members already know each other, these introductions will make everyone more comfortable with each other and accepting of each other's expertise and point of view.

5 minutes: Establish a regular weekly meeting time
Take the time to schedule a regular weekly meeting time with the understanding that the meeting may be cancelled at times when the work load is minimal, but that all members of the committee can and will block that time out on their schedule. Make it clear that attending the meeting will be a good use of their time (that is, you will have an agenda with clear tasks to accomplish). Also make it clear that this committee will take up their time and that they should clearly schedule a minimum of 1/2 day per week for this work.

10-15 minutes: Establish grounds rules
Is it acceptable to take cell phone calls while in the meeting? To be online on one's laptop checking e-mail? What is the confidentiality agreement, if any? Be sure all committee members understand and accept these rules whatever they are. Also, decide who (you?) will take notes and minutes and how and when they will be distributed to committee members. Make it clear that each meeting will start with a survey of the last meeting's notes, paying particular attention to tasks assigned—with a report back from the person who did that task. In future meetings 5-10 minutes at the start of the meeting should be a review of the minutes and reports on action items.
**20 minutes: Go over THE SEARCH**

*What is it that you are searching for and why? What did the dean/deputy dean/chair indicate about this opening? What is truth and what is assumption or rumor? What are the committee members’ expectations of a successful applicant? Remind the committee that this search is for the college/university as a whole, not just for their group, or department.*

**10-15 minutes: Discuss diversity and its congruence with excellence**

*Perhaps use an example from this workshop. Have committee members air their opinions on diversity and excellence.*

**10 minutes: Assign tasks**

*Each committee member gets one task to be reported on at the next meeting. For example, one member should talk to the chair of last year's committee for advice on good or bad strategies. (Perhaps invite that person for a meeting.) One person should think about and report on strategies to recruit a bigger pool of applicants—the bigger and better the pool the more chance of an excellent and successful search. One person could look over the rubric and report back on its usefulness in this search and/or modifications to be made. Giving each committee member a "job" will make them more responsive.*

Note that this agenda is already 70 minutes, which is over one hour even if the chair is able to contain the discussion and reach consensus in each category. If items cannot be completed, they can be moved over to the agenda for the next meeting, although that is not desirable.

Example items for future meetings (before the actual evaluation of applicants occurs):

**10 minutes:** Report on last week’s tasks (discussion of and consensus on the rubric; extra resources for the committee and the candidates, e.g. what are the university's family-friendly policies, what questions can/can't be asked on an interview . . .)

**20 minutes:** Discuss clear interview schedule tactics. Note that all candidates should go away with a great feeling about UD and so should have a complete interview experience, no holes in their schedules. Department members should meet and hear *all* candidates so that they can compare them, not just hear the one they think they are interested in and then go around proclaiming that candidate. Someone on the committee should be assigned the task of monitoring and structuring the interviews—this task is NOT the duty of the secretary.