



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

SEARCH COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

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Postings:

Develop, update, or review position description. When creating job postings consider the description of the job as a tool that can expand the applicant pool by eliminating unnecessary qualifications.

1. Give an overview of the department/institution, including a statement on commitment to diversity and recruitment. A statement that highlights the definitions of diversity and what it means for the respective program is beneficial.
2. Consider how diversity fits in with the scope of the requirements being asked for, including the following:
 - a. General description
 - b. Essential job functions
 - c. Non-essential job functions
 - d. Required knowledge, skills, abilities
 - e. Experience and training
 - f. Duties for the position
3. Ensure description shows no bias in regards to age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
4. Required or preferred experience in teaching, research, and service with populations having a critical representation in diversity.
5. Make sure to identify if a qualification is required or preferred. When developing qualifications make sure they are clear, specific, and flexible. To promote diversity, identify characteristics that allow for more varied backgrounds and experiences. In the position announcement qualifications should focus on acquiring a large pool of applicants.
6. List any special instructions for applicants applying for the position.
7. Make sure to identify both required and optional documentation that must be provided by applicants.
8. Include contact information. Ensure the contact is available or times are stated on when he/she will be available. Candidates need to have a reliable way to submit paperwork or contact someone in regards to questions.
9. Include information on how the applicant will be contacted in regards to scheduling an interview if he/she is selected.
10. Make sure any additional information needed is contained in the posting including job title, account numbers, full-time or part-time, members of the search committee, etc. (See Exhibit A for job posting example).
11. Submit copy to appropriate faculty/staff/human resources.

Advertisements:

1. Identify the markets/publications/websites where the job posting will be positioned. Websites with advertising focused on reaching a diverse pool of applicants include (but are not limited to):

Diverse Issues in Education – <http://diverseeducation.com/ad-rates/print-ad-rates>

Diverse Jobs – <http://diversejobs.net/online-ad-rates>

University Jobs.com – <http://www.universityjobs.com/employers/>

Academic Diversity Search, Inc. – <http://www.academicdiversitysearch.com>

The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education – <http://www.HispanicOutlook.com>

The National Association of Asian American Professionals – <http://jobs.naaap.org/>

Insight Into Diversity – <http://www.insightintodiversity.com/>

Chronicle Careers – <https://careers.chronicle.com/webbase/en/std/jsp/PackageIntroPage.jsp>

The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education – <http://www.jbhe.com/advertise>

Women in Higher Education – <http://www.wihe.com/main.jsp?category=advertise>

2. Have Dean's office financially support paid postings on websites that have larger national reach (e.g. Chronicles of Higher Education, American Public Health Association, American College of Sports Medicine).

3. Remember each site/publication has its own rates for publication. Advertisements must be tailored to the site or publication and meet funding requirements. However, essential elements for every advertisement are:

- a. Brief overview of department/institution
- b. Position information including job responsibilities clearly stated, and well-developed job qualifications (clear, specific, flexible).
- c. Include statement of diverse student population
- d. A statement about the University/Department's position on diversity or tag line such as "EEO/AA employer."
- e. How/where to apply for the position including what paperwork/information should be provided.
- f. Contact information should the applicant have problems/questions
- g. How the applicant will be contacted to schedule an interview

4. Consider using a variety of distribution avenues for job postings so as to distribute advertisements as widely as possible. Approaches to consider include direct mail, newsletters, personal contacts, online ads, professional journals, job fairs/conventions, direct emails to institutions, and postings on list-serves.

5. To expand the pool of candidates consider contacting minority/protected group caucuses of professional organizations or talk with faculty and staff who are members for help in identifying applicants. Outreach to colleagues who know and have interaction with underrepresented groups.

6. When it comes to communicating with candidates in regards to the position, points to consider are:

- a. The way you interact with a candidate is a reflection of Stephen F. Austin State University.
- b. All nominated applicants should receive an invitation to apply
- c. Make sure that all persons communicating information about the search have accurate knowledge regarding the search process, including legal guidelines.
- d. Keep all applicants informed in a courteous and timely manner about the progress of the search.

Committee Formation and Responsibilities:

1. The committee is responsible for recruiting, screening, interviewing and recommending qualified candidates for open positions.
2. The committee should be established as early as possible.
3. The committee members should be representative of the diversity of the department and of the University.
4. The committee should include members both from inside and outside the department.
5. The committee should include a faculty representative from a department/college/university Diversity Committee.
6. The committee should establish a feedback loop that considers recommendations from on campus student groups that include a critical representation of racial/ethnic minority groups during the campus visit/interview portion of the process.
7. Committee chairpersons should hold positions at the same level as or a higher level than the vacant position.
8. The size of the committee should reflect the extent to which the position is involved in the campus overall.
9. Committees should have an odd number of members to help eliminate the possibility of a tie when it comes to ranking candidates.
10. If possible, committees should appoint as a committee member an individual who has performed or held the vacant position or a similar position.
11. Committee members should possess technical expertise sufficient to make astute comparison among applicants.
12. Identify tasks to be completed by the search committee chair.
13. Identify tasks to be completed by the Diversity Committee member.
14. Plan the search committee meeting schedule.
15. The search committee has the responsibility to:
 - a. Review committee expectations regarding confidentiality and attendance at meetings; committee business is confidential and must not be shared outside the committee.
 - b. Delegate responsibilities among members for things such as communication with candidates, itinerary for candidates, record keeping, advertising, etc.
 - c. Develop a budget.
 - d. Make sure that appropriate parties are informed of committee's activities and proper forms are filled out and delivered as needed to appropriate departments.
 - e. Ensure the process of recruitment is conducted with appropriate attention to diversity and without bias, and is in line with the University/department's stand on issues of diversity.
 - f. Decide how screening and selection decisions will be managed.
 - g. Design a search process that is respectful of and courteous to all applicants.

16. The committee chair is the official committee spokesperson. In addition the committee chair has the specific responsibility of:

- a. Articulating the specific charge to the committee.
- b. Overseeing record keeping and maintaining the official record of all committee activities.
- c. Managing search committee business so that the committee can conduct its work effectively and efficiently.
- d. Communicate expectations for committee conduct to members.
- e. Mediate conflict.
- f. Identify and where appropriate, contact resources that may assist the search committee.

Screening Candidates & Selection Process:

1. Before scheduling interviews look at selection criteria:
 - a. Determine, prioritize, and document search criteria based on position duties
 - b. Make the criteria as objective as possible
 - c. Make criteria consistent with essential job functions
 - d. When screening for criteria omit any information which would potentially exclude individuals on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
2. Develop a mechanism for screening applicants, including record keeping indicating why a candidate was screened out.
3. Review the materials submitted by applicants, identifying those who do and do not meet minimum qualifications.
4. Develop a matrix with materials rated based on established criteria.
5. Faculty should adopt the view that a candidate's minority status is a plus factor.
6. Determine persons to be interviewed.
7. Critically review the selected group to ensure diverse group of interviewees; if diversity is lacking consider other methods to identify diverse candidates.
8. Create and maintain a file for each applicant including tracking form, correspondence, materials submitted, and documentation that pertains to the candidate. Make sure access to this file is limited to authorized individuals – consider confidentiality.
9. Determine when in the search process references will be checked:
 - a. It should be confirmed with candidates that references will be checked.
 - b. Develop a list of questions to ask references.
 - c. Develop procedures to follow should a reference be unavailable or be unable to be contacted.
 - d. Identify individuals to conduct reference checks.
 - e. Request letters of recommendation.
 - f. Determine time frame for reference check (i.e. 20-30 minutes), to ensure equity and consistency of reference checks.
10. When it comes to communicating with candidates keep the following in mind:
 - a. The way you interact with a candidate is a reflection of Stephen F. Austin State University.
 - b. Make sure that all persons communicating information about the interview process have accurate knowledge regarding the process, including legal guidelines for questioning candidates and references.
 - c. Send information provided by the Chamber of Commerce or other community information to candidates you have selected to interview.
 - d. Be prepared to answer questions about assistance for partners/spouses desiring employment.
 - e. Communicate confirmation of interviews and campus visits with letters, including an information packet with position, department, campus map, Nacogdoches map, and roster of the interviewing committee.
11. Send rejection letters to applicants who will not be considered for the position.
12. Ensure that documentation provides rationale for Search Committee decisions and recommendations. Keep records on file for 3 years.

Interviews:

1. Identify all persons and groups to be involved in the interview process.
2. Review the interview process with interviewers, including:
 - a. Relevant information about the position.
 - b. Responsibility for interview facilitation.
 - c. Interview format and schedule.
 - d. Importance of consistency of questions for all candidates.
 - e. Confidentiality expectations.
 - f. Importance of emphasizing positive aspects of Stephen F. Austin State University.
 - g. Guidelines for asking questions during the search process.
 - f. Eliminating bias.
3. Develop interview format to include these basic elements:
 - a. Welcome
 - b. Questions to be asked of candidate – make sure to develop questions that relate to the position based on job description.
 - c. Questions from the candidate to the committee.
 - d. Current status of the search process.
 - e. Closing.
4. Take steps to ensure that interview formalities are not biased.
5. Develop interview rating sheet and distribute to all interviewers.
6. Provide transportation to and from airport and hotel and an individual to escort the candidate to and from interviews.
7. During the interview/campus visit, schedule an introduction to the Multi-Cultural Affairs Center to help facilitate a chance for the applicant to see the diversity that exists on campus. They may also find some other supports such as organizations and previous organization members with which to find common ground.
8. Consider an opportunity for the candidate to meet with the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs and/or an organized racial/ethnic minority faculty/staff committee/group composed of faculty and staff university-wide.
9. During visits, allow for an opportunity to include a meeting with student groups that include a critical representation of racial/ethnic minority groups. Discuss SFASU's wonderfully diverse student population and tout the campus efforts to retain students.

Interview Diversity Guidelines for the COE:

1. The SFA College of Education is committed to ensuring that applicants have equal opportunity in the COE. This guideline is written to:
 - a. Provide equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons.
 - b. Prohibit discrimination in employment based on race, sexual orientation, veteran status, national origin, gender, age, color, religion, disability, parental status, or reprisal for engaging in protected activity.
 - c. Maintain a work environment that is free of harassment or reprisal.
 - d. Promote a positive employment program designed to eradicate barriers to employment.
 - e. Manage the diversity of the work place by improving communication and accepting individual differences.

2. Federal laws that prohibit workplace discriminations:
 - a. *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* (Title VII), which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It also protects individuals from retaliation if they complain about discrimination.
 - b. The *Pregnancy Discrimination Act*, which amended Title VII to make it illegal to discriminate against a woman because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth.
 - c. The *Equal Pay Act of 1963*, which makes it illegal to pay different wages to men and women if they perform equal work in the same workplace. It also protects individuals for retaliation if they complain.
 - d. *Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2008 (ADA)*, which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability. It also protects individuals against retaliation if they complain.
 - e. *Sections 501 and 505 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, which makes it illegal to discriminate against a person with a disability in the Federal Government.
 - f. The *Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA)*, which protects people who are age 40 or older from discrimination because of age. It also protects individuals against retaliation if they complain.
 - g. The *Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)*, prohibits the improper use of genetic information in health insurance and employment. This bars employers from using genetic information when hiring, firing, job placement, or promotion decisions.
 - h. The *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)* which addresses protection against discrimination regarding prior, current, or future military service.

3. Interviews provide information that is used for job selection. They help evaluate oral communication and interpersonal skills. It also provides opportunity for a face-to-face meeting affording the applicant and the COE to learn about each other. The chair of each department reserves the right to interview or not interview when making a selection. However, the selection process must give equal consideration for each candidate.

4. It is unlawful to ask questions that probe race, national origin, religion, age, marital status, family situation, or disabilities.

5. You may not ask about the health or medical condition of a candidate prior to offering a position; or ask any question that might lead an interviewer to learn about any of the protected groups. This is interpreted as a violation of the candidate's rights. All candidates must be treated consistently.

5a. Lawful and unlawful questions:

Subject of Question	Lawful	Unlawful
Name	Whether applicant has	- Any question about the origin on a

	worked under a different name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - candidate's current or previous name. - The original name of a candidate whose name has been legally changed - The ethnic association of a candidate's name - The candidate's maiden name.
Age	If applicant is older than 18.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your age? - How old are you? - What year did you graduate from high school? - What is your date of birth? - Requests for birth certificate - Questions which tend to identify the age of an applicant over the age of 40.
Residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applicant's place of residence. - Alternative contact information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous address. - Birthplace of candidate's parents. - How long have you lived at this address?
Race or color	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's race or color of skin - Candidate's complexion, height, weight, or life style.
National origin and ancestry	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's lineage, ancestry, national origin, parentage, or nationality. - Nationality of candidate's parents or spouse. - Candidate's maiden name.
Creed	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's religious affiliation. - What holidays candidate observes. - What school(s) candidate attends or attended.
Citizenship	Whether the candidate is a U. S. Citizen or has a current permit/visa to work in the U. S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where were you born? - Questions regarding the birthplace of candidate's parents, spouse or other relatives. - Questions as to the nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent or parentage of candidate, candidate's spouse, parent or relative. - Whether candidate is a citizen of a country other than the U.S. - Date of U.S. citizenship.
Language	What language the candidate speaks and/or writes fluently, "if it's job-related."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's native language. - Candidate's language commonly used at home.
Arrest record and convictions	If candidate has ever been convicted of a crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you ever been arrested? - Whether candidate has ever been arrested.
Reference checking	Previous work contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name of applicant's religious leader. - Candidate's political affiliation and contacts.
Relatives	Names of relatives already employed by the university	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name and/or address of any relative of candidate.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whom to contact in case of emergency.
Organizations	Candidate's membership in any professional, service, or trade organization are relevant to his/her ability to perform the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of all clubs or social organizations the candidate is affiliated with.
Physical limitations or disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether the candidate has the ability to perform the duties of the job for which he/she is applying. - All posted job offer questions or inquiries into the employee's condition must be job-related and consistent with the university business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have a disability? - Have you ever filed for worker's compensation? - Have you ever been injured on the job? - How much sick leave did you use at your previous job? - The nature or severity of an illness or physical condition. - Whether candidate has ever filed a workers' compensation claim. - Any recent or past operations or surgery and dates. - Whether candidate has ever had prior work-related injuries. - Whether candidate has ever requested a reasonable accommodation.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training candidate has received if job-related - Highest level of education attained, if certain background is necessary to perform the job. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Date of high school or college graduation. - What school(s) candidate attends or attended.
Financial status	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you own a car? - Do you own a home? - Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? - Candidate's debt or assets. - Garnishments.
Military	Type of training, education, and work experience the candidate received in the military.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's type of discharge. - Candidate's type – enlistment or commissioned.
Credit Report	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's credit rating. - Any report which would indicate information which is otherwise inappropriate to ask, e.g., marital status, age, residency, etc.
Marital status	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's marital status; (e.g., Are you married?) - Do plan to have a family? When? - Do have children? - What are your childcare arrangements?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not ask questions regarding pregnancy, child birth, or birth control.
Gender	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate's gender
Religion	NONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What religion do you practice? - What is your religion? - Do your religious beliefs prevent you from working certain days of the week? - What day(s) candidate observes. - What school(s) candidate attends or attended.
Photograph	Statement that it may be required after hiring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request for photograph before hiring.

6. Interviewing Tips

- Allow a consistent designated amount of time for each interview.
- Rotate questions among interview committee members.
- Take appropriate, job-related notes during interview.
- Do not consider factors unrelated to the job criteria.
- Treat candidates with respect, sensitivity, and impartiality during the interview process.
- Provide all applicants the opportunity to ask questions about the job and selection process.
- Provide feedback about the hiring decision in a timely and courteous manner.
- Record scores and notes on interview sheet, as appropriate.
- Interview committee should review notes and rank candidates.
- The interview committee may use a scoring matrix identifying ratings of candidates.
- Forward top-ranked candidate to the chair who then forwards to the dean.

7. **Appropriate and Inappropriate.** The word "appropriate" used in the heading means that the question asked is justified by college or department necessity and the word "inappropriate" refers to a question that is asked that could give rise to a claim of illegal discrimination. Employment application forms and pre-employment interviews are the appropriate instruments for eliminating, at an early stage, unqualified or unsuitable persons from consideration for employment.

It is inappropriate to ask pre-employment questions that may disproportionately screen out members of a protected category and are not valid predictors of successful job performance, or which cannot be justified by "college or department necessity."

8. Sample "appropriate" and "inappropriate" interview questions

Subject of Question	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before hiring, asking if you are the minimum age for the hours or working conditions - After hiring, verifying same with a birth certificate or other ID, and asking age on insurance forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How old are you? - What year were you born? - When did you graduate from high school?
Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you able to provide proof of employment eligibility upon hire? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you a citizen of the U.S.? - Are your parents or spouse citizens of the U.S.? - On what dates did you, your parents, or your spouse acquire U.S. citizenship? - Are you, your parents or your spouse naturalized or

		native-born U.S. citizens?
Criminal Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you ever been convicted of a felony? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have you ever been arrested? - Have you ever spent a night in jail?
Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you perform the specific duties of the job? - After hiring, ask about medical history on insurance forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you have any disabilities? - What's your medical history? - How does your condition affect your abilities?
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you work overtime? - Is there any reason you can't start at 8:00 a.m.? - Whether an applicant can meet specified work schedules or has activities or commitments that may prevent him/her from meeting attendance requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions concerning spouse, or spouse's employment, salary, arrangements, or dependents. - What kind of child care arrangements have you made? - How will your spouse feel about the amount of time you will be traveling if you get this job?
Marital Status	After hiring, marital status on tax and insurance forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you married, divorced, separated, engaged, widowed, etc.? - Is this your maiden or married name? - What is the name of your relative/spouse/ children? - Do you live with your parents? - Do you take care of your parents?
Military	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the relevant work experience as it relates to this position that you acquired from a U.S. armed forces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What type or condition is your military discharge? - Can you supply your discharge papers? - What is your experience in other than U.S. armed forces?
National Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What languages do you speak, read or write fluently? NOTE: THIS QUESTION CAN ONLY BE ASKED IF IT IS REQUIRED FOR A GIVEN JOB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your nationality? - Where were you born? - Where are your parents from? - What's your heritage? - What is your mother tongue? - How did you acquire the ability to speak, read or write a foreign language? - How did you acquire familiarity with a foreign country? - What language is spoken in

		your home?
Parental Status	- After hiring, asking for dependent information on tax and insurance forms.	- How many kids do you have? - Do you plan to have children? - How old are your children? - Are you pregnant?
Race (or skin color)	NONE	- What race are you? - Are you a member of a minority group?
Religion or Creed	- Can you work on Saturdays?	- What is your religious affiliation? - Which religious holidays will you be taking off from work? - Do you attend church regularly?
Residence	- NONE	- Do you own or rent your home? - Do you live in town? - With whom do you live?
Sex	- NONE	- Do you wish to be addressed as Mr. Mrs., Miss, or Ms.? - What are your plans to have children in the future?

9. Do's and Don'ts

Do's	Don'ts
Write down notes as you listen to the candidate to remind you what you perceived as a good, excellent, or poor response, based on the established criteria.	Write down that which isn't pertinent to the discovery of how the candidate meets the desired criteria.
Be outgoing and honest. Treat all candidates with consideration and enthusiasm. Smile!	Write any comments other than those required by the selection process.
Be aware of bias as interview committees tend to select people who are like them.	Express your personal preferences to others during the interview process.
Be prepared for the interview process and have water and/or refreshments available.	Share data about candidates with others outside the interview process.
Treat candidates like you would like to be treated.	Be tempted to learn about an applicant's protected status while making conversation during "down time," such as after the interview or during the campus tour.
Put the COE best "foot forward" and be professional in all instances.	Make general assumptions that handicapped individuals will always require an accommodation.

10. The guiding principal behind any question to a job applicant is: "Can the university demonstrate a legitimate job-related or college/department necessity for asking the question?" Both the intent behind the question and how the information is to be used by the university are important for determining whether a question is an appropriate pre-employment inquiry.