

Hood College

Staff Recruiting and Hiring Manual



Hood College Mission Statement

Through an integration of the liberal arts and the professions, Hood College provides an education that empowers students to use their hearts, minds and hands to meet personal, professional and global challenges and to lead purposeful live of responsibility, leadership, service and civic engagement.

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Dear Hiring Managers and Search Committee Members:

Our vision, mission, and goals have an underlying premise—that we will pursue **excellence** in all facets of what we do. Each one of us plays an important role in the success of the College.

This recruiting and hiring manual represents our commitment to provide you with the information and resources that will enable you manage the hiring process effectively and efficiently and get the most out of it. It has been designed and written in a way that makes it easy to access, use, and update. The College provides this resource to help answer questions you may have about how we recruit candidates and how we embrace new hires in the Hood community. The Human Resources Department is also available to help if you have any additional questions.

This manual outlines how Hood College desires to foster an environment where each employee can achieve success. The College and the Human Resources Department strongly believe in providing fair and consistent treatment for everyone. This manual provides guidelines on Hood College's values and standards.

Thank you for helping to build and maintain an inclusive and diverse community which is essential to Hood College's ongoing success.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christine Traini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Christine Traini
Director of Human Resources

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HIRING PROCESS OVERVIEW

To ensure that all Hood College recruiting and hiring decisions are made in a fair and consistent manner, compliant with applicable laws and regulations, we are providing this manual as a reference for hiring managers and search committee members who are involved in the recruiting and hiring for staff positions. This manual provides guidance on the College's commitment to maintaining a highly qualified, diverse and inclusive community.

A similar manual exists for faculty recruiting and hiring decisions and can be found on the Human Resources (HR) website. Questions about employment policies and procedures, including questions about equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies and procedures, should be directed to Human Resources (HR). HR can provide insight and assistance to hiring managers and search committees in all areas of the search process, including screening applications, interviewing, and reference checking.

The recruiting and hiring processes are described as clearly as possible, with a minimal use of the technical words and phrases that may appear in the Hood College Employee Handbook. However, the official Employee Handbook remains the final authority. In the event of a conflict with a policy or procedure described in this document, the Employee Handbook will govern in all cases.

Hiring Purpose and Goals

Hood College's primary purpose and goal of the recruiting and hiring manual is to ensure that all positions are recruited using a standard approach, ensuring consistency and fairness.

A set of specific procedures are outlined in this manual, designed to attract highly qualified, diverse candidate pools and to ensure equal employment opportunity for job applicants.

In accordance with these procedures, recruiting efforts shall require documentation that a good faith effort was used to attract highly qualified and diverse candidates to achieve the mission of the College, to meet the ongoing global challenges that we face, and to enhance our connections to our students. Therefore, it is essential that the recruiting and hiring process be understood and executed in such a way that it will effectively increase our work force by utilizing a system that ensures candidates are hired based on their ability, skill and knowledge to perform the job duties, rather than on non-job related factors.

This guide is designed to develop the following competencies:

- The ability to recruit a well-qualified and diverse applicant pool;
- The ability to screen applicants efficiently and without bias, based on job-related criteria;
- The ability to understand and implement appropriate legal guidelines and Hood College policies for interviewing and employment decisions (such as regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO));
- The development of good interview techniques to obtain the best information from a candidate;
- To conduct proper and appropriate reference checks on final candidates; and

- To ensure that the hiring process is carried out consistently and fairly by all offices and departments throughout the College.

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE OUR HIRING PRACTICES

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

These guidelines are developed according to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles. They provide an outline of a process to select staff in a non-discriminatory manner.

Hood College supports the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity. It is our policy to recruit, hire, train, and promote individuals, as well as administer any and all personnel actions, without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, ancestry, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation gender preference/identification, as well as without regard to disability or any other classification protected by applicable laws.

Diversity is valued, and the College expects each employee to treat every individual with courtesy, dignity and respect. The College seeks to create an environment that supports the growth and development of every individual.

Hood College will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination and prohibits any harassment based on legally protected classifications. Violations of this policy and related policies including but not limited to, 301 Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment, and 302 Individuals with Disabilities, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The College will promptly and thoroughly investigate allegations to determine facts and appropriate corrective actions.

Individuals, who feel that they are being unlawfully discriminated against or harassed, will report this to the Director of Human Resources. Individuals who report or pursue claims of unlawful discriminatory or harassment activities will not be subject to retaliation.

HIRING PROCESS

Staff vacancies may occur because of a business need for additional headcount, or with an employee's retirement or resignation. For all vacancies, the College will carefully assess how each position aligns with the College mission and strategic priorities, while also keeping the financial implications in mind.

A manager needs to become familiar, understand and follow the recruiting policies and procedures; know the approved staff positions for their department and maintain current job descriptions.

Human Resources provides and maintains recruiting and hiring guidelines, and supports hiring managers with regard to the recruiting and hiring guidelines.

New Staff Position

In all cases, new staff positions must be requested through the annual budgeting process, which includes submission of a Key Action Plan (KAP) request. The KAP process is a mechanism for securing new resources in the budget. The budget year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30. As part of the KAP request process, the hiring manager presents a business case to the division vice president as a demonstration of the need for a new staff position, including its connection to the College's strategic plan, the job responsibilities and how the role will be assessed. Once a KAP request is approved, the hiring manager prepares a job description and job requisition (see Creation of the Job Requisition and Job Description) and submits this information to their manager for review by the division vice president.

If approved by the division vice president, the requisition will advance to senior team for review and decision. The position is forwarded to HR for posting once approved by senior team.

Replacement of an Existing Staff Position

A staff position that is currently in the budget and vacant due to someone leaving the College (e.g. retirement or resignation) or due to someone's transfer or promotion must go through a similar vetting process. All vacant positions at the College are reviewed to ensure ongoing alignment with the institution's strategic priorities and needs. Budget and other considerations must also be carefully weighed. Vacant positions may be either refilled, reallocated, modified, delayed, or discontinued.

Requests to replace a staff member must be accompanied by an updated job description and job requisition (see Creation of the Job Requisition and Job Description). If approved by the division vice president, the requisition will advance to senior team. The position is forwarded to HR for posting once approved by senior team.

Creation of the Job Requisition and Job Description

A [Job requisition](#) – a job requisition is required to initiate an open position including any recruiting efforts, interviewing, and offers of employment. The job requisition should reflect the desired timeline of a search and benchmarked salary range among other things.

A [Job description](#) – the primary purpose of a job description is to outline the essential functions, responsibilities and qualifications that are required for a particular position. A job description must:

- Comply with the existing [Job description template](#)
- Be developed by the manager and approved by the division vice president;
- Specify the experience and qualifications required for the position and the academic degree required or desired;
- Identify behavioral competencies needed, such as a growth mindset, approachability, and a commitment to student success; and
- Specify the major job duties or responsibilities of the position including supervisory and administrative responsibilities.

Job Posting

The primary objective of posting a job is to receive a pool of qualified and diverse candidates in order to find the best individual for a vacancy. Efforts are made to target a diverse population.

Posting jobs are a part of the College's ongoing efforts to provide opportunities for career development and/or advancement of employees within the College and to retain our highly qualified and engaged staff.

Positions are posted on the [Jobs at Hood](#) web page and automatically post onto the following sites, paid for by HR:

Faculty and Staff Positions (Grades 5 and above)	Staff Positions (Grades 2, 3 and 4)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chronicle.com• HigherEdJobs.com• Diversity Resources via HigherEdJobs.com• LinkedIn.com• Indeed.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indeed.com• LinkedIn.com• Mid-Atlantic HERC.com (a Higher Ed DEI-focused site)• Glassdoor.com• MWEJobs.com

Each department is responsible for advertising on discipline-specific external sites, including the cost of the ad and the effort to post jobs. A manager that identifies a discipline-specific DEI site may contact HR about additional funding for DEI advertising.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

The role of a search committee is to review qualified resumes for key skills, qualifications, and experience, develop an interview schedule from the qualified pool of applicants, and to provide feedback to assist the hiring manager when making the final selection. A committee may be made up of colleagues, and students when appropriate. The hiring manager should consider committee members that will have regular interactions with the person that fills the open position. Typically, search committees are established for higher level vacancies, such as director level position. However, the manager has discretion to establish a committee for other vacancies. The manager should strive to have a diverse committee that will lend different perspectives to the hiring process.

Not all positions warrant a search committee. A search committee is not necessarily needed in certain employment situations such as individual contributor roles or part-time positions for example.

After a search committee is formed, the hiring manager is encouraged to set up an initial meeting to discuss their expectations of the search committee. During the meeting,

- Provide a copy of the job description so that all members are familiar with the open position;
- Inform search committee members to evaluate candidates based on the job description;

- Discuss the use of the [Candidate Evaluation Form](#) to ensure fair and unbiased screening of resumes;
- Discuss the interview schedule; and
- Discuss required training.

Bias in the Hiring Process & Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Training

Hood College supports employment practices of equal opportunity in all personnel policies. The goal for any search committee should be to eliminate bias from the hiring process. Bias, albeit unintentional, is common. In fact, research highlights that bias is present during a search committee's evaluation of a candidate's application, during the candidate's interviews, and when making a final hiring decision (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Moss-Racusin, et al., 2012).

When biases are left unchecked or go unnoticed, they can blur our ability to make sound and equitable decisions. Search committee members should be aware of potential biases that can produce additional exclusions during the selection and hiring process. False narratives about a candidate are not just formed in the first few seconds of reviewing an application but can be formed before the position is ever posted, and those narratives can influence the overall equity of the hiring process. More information about bias is available in Appendix A.

Search committee members are required to complete Implicit Bias training with the Division of Community & Inclusivity's Director of Inclusive Excellence before starting the search process and annually thereafter. The hiring manager is responsible for scheduling this session and ensuring that search committee members attend. Additional online training resources are available via the [HR website](#), including Conducting Job Interviews, and Diversity in the Workplace. However, these are not a substitute for the in-person requirement of training with the Director of Inclusive Excellence.

SCREENING & INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES

Reviewing Applications

All applications must be submitted via the [Hood College Job Board](#). If a candidate submits a resume or inquires via email or other means, they should be directed to the Job Board to apply.

The hiring manager and search committee (when applicable) will have access via the Recruiting Gateway to candidates' applications which include cover letters, resumes, and reference letters or reference contact lists.

When an employee wants to be considered for another job on campus, they should use the College's job posting system. The employee must apply and go through the standard hiring process, including submitting a cover letter and resume, being interviewed if determined to be qualified, etc.

Internal candidates must have performed satisfactorily for at least 90 calendar days in their current position and possess the required qualifications.

How to Access the Recruiting Gateway

HR provides each search committee member access to the Recruiting Gateway to view candidate documents. The hiring manager or administrative assistant notifies HR of the names of each search committee member, preferably by including their names on the requisition form.

To view documents, search committee members begin by logging into the [employee portal](#) and following the procedures on [How to View Applicants](#). An [Evaluation of Candidates](#) form is available for each search committee member to assess applicant materials and determine who will advance to the initial round of interviews.

Some applicants may indicate in the application process that they are not legally authorized to work in the US and will need visa support if selected for a vacant position. Unfortunately, due to the expense associated with sponsoring employees for work visas, the College has determined it will not sponsor candidates for staff positions.

Preparation for the Interview

Interviews are a crucial part of the hiring process. Effective interviews help the hiring manager and search committee identify the most qualified candidate for a job. A consistent interview process is one way to demonstrate inclusivity.

The hiring manager and/or search committee should conduct an initial round of virtual interviews to determine two or three finalists.

- Interview questions should be prepared in advance of a candidate's interview.
- All candidates interviewed should be asked the same primary set of questions.
- Focus on asking questions directly related to the job.
- It is appropriate to ask probing or follow-up questions which will vary based on a candidate's response.
- It is acceptable to query candidates about certain items on a candidate's cover letter or resume.
- Questions should enable each candidate to showcase their strengths, experiences and how their knowledge, skills and abilities align with the position.
- Relax, listen, and take notes. Let the candidate know your format and inform them you will be taking notes.

Guidance about standardized questions is available on the HR website within [Training Resources](#). See [Conducting an Effective Job Interview](#), or you can consult with the Director of Human Resources. This site also has a link to illegal questions to avoid during interviews.

Keep in mind that interviews are a mutual evaluation process for both the employer and the candidate. Candidates are assessing whether Hood College is a suitable fit for them. Therefore, it's important to highlight or 'sell' the College as a great place to work and highlight some of its unique benefits. Allow time at the end of each interview so candidates can ask questions too.

In Person/Finalist Interviews

The top two or three candidates are invited to campus for in-person interviews. This round of interviews is a way to expand understanding of each candidate's experience and how it aligns with the job and culture at the College. A robust interview schedule should include meetings

with key stakeholders. Finalists may be asked to prepare a presentation for campus community members. The goal of in-person interviews is to identify the most qualified candidate from among the finalists.

Interview Schedule

The hiring manager or administrative assistant invites and schedules candidates for preliminary and on-campus interviews. An interview schedule is sent to the candidate in advance and should include the names and titles of those the candidate will meet. This courtesy gives the candidate a chance to prepare and understand their audience. The hiring manager or administrative assistant will provide the guidelines on how to complete a travel expense report, if applicable. If a candidate is outside the local area, all travel costs are paid for by the hiring department.

Documentation, References and Background Screening

Review of applications is commonly a rolling process, with preliminary interviews of earlier applicants taking place while initial application materials are being reviewed for candidates that apply later. It is, therefore, important to keep careful records of actions at the various stages.

The hiring manager and each search committee member should evaluate a candidate using a rubric or evaluation form using guidance available on the [HR website](#) to ensure fair and equitable decision making. Administrators or other community members who interact with candidates brought to campus for interviews should be asked to complete an evaluation form too. Allow time to discuss ratings and debrief immediately following the interview. Discuss any differences in ratings and be sure to consider all perspectives. More information about best practices for search committees is available in Appendix A.

A thorough reference check process confirms the accuracy of a candidate's qualifications and evaluates their past performance in previous positions. It is strongly encouraged that the hiring manager ensures a minimum of two references are called prior to a verbal offer being extended to a final candidate. Candidates must be informed that they will be subject to a thorough reference check process.

The Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) advises that "federal laws addressing the retention of...hiring records, include Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)." Therefore, hiring managers and search committees must retain hiring records for each position for at least one year from the date the position is filled. Hiring records include applications and resumes considered for the position, evaluation forms and rubrics, and reference checks. The manager is responsible for saving hiring records on a department shared drive or OneDrive account that is easily accessible regardless of who manages the department in the future.

A background screening process, which is different than checking references, ensures a candidate's integrity and reliability, and reduces the risk of hiring individuals who may misrepresent themselves. Background screenings include identity, criminal, education and employment screenings. For some departments, driving records are also checked. Background screenings are conducted by a third party and are not initiated until a verbal offer is accepted. The potential new hire will receive instructions from Human Resources to begin the background

check process. HR will notify the manager when the background screening is completed successfully or when something significant is flagged in the candidate's results.

OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT & CONCLUDING THE SEARCH

Verbal Offer

The hiring manager extends a verbal offer to the most qualified candidate. The conversation should address the starting salary and start date for employment. The starting salary should not exceed the approved budgeted salary, so a manager may want to start at a lower salary than what is budgeted to allow room for negotiation. For example, if the budgeted salary is \$55,000, the manager may want to initially extend a starting salary of \$50,000. This approach will allow for some room to negotiate the salary and stay within budget.

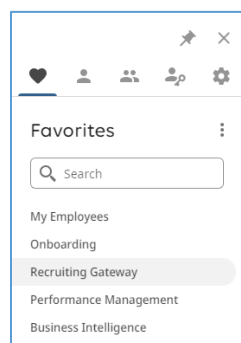
If negotiations drive the salary higher than the approved budgeted salary, the hiring manager must contact and receive written approval of a higher salary from the division vice president and president. HR is not able to extend a written offer letter without this documentation.

Written Offer

When the verbal offer is finalized, the hiring manager should email HR's Sr. Employment Coordinator to request a written offer letter. HR needs to know the new hire's name, approved salary and date of hire to prepare an offer letter. Once signed and returned, HR will inform the Manager.

At the same time the written offer is being prepared, the hiring manager must electronically disposition all applicants who applied for a position. HR may delay extending an offer letter until this process is complete. Follow these process steps:

1. Log into the employee portal, and select Recruiting Gateway from the menu on the left of your screen.



2. In the Recruiting Gateway, select Opportunities > Published. Find your job posting by entering the job title or some key words in the title in the Search field.

Click on the number of applicants that applied and a list of candidates will appear.

Published Opportunities

assistant coach

FILTERS

Location Recruiter Hiring Manager Schedule

72 Opportunities | 0 Selected View 20

Create Clone Close More Actions

All Shared Mine

Title	Applicants	Recruiter	Status	Date Posted
Assistant Coach, Baseball (Pitching Coach) ASSIS001876 Frederick, Maryland 401 Rosemont Ave Frederick, MD 21701, USA +1 more	16 15 new	Vanessa Roberts	Published Hot Posted	06/05/2022
Assistant Coach, Softball ASSIS001974 Frederick, Maryland 401 Rosemont Ave Frederick, MD 21701, USA +1 more	0 2 new	Vanessa Roberts	Published Link Email Print	06/02/2023

3. Scroll to the end of the row for each candidate and click the three dots in the Action column. A drop-down menu will appear. Select **Disposition** at the top of the list.

Rank Actions

1-9999

- Disposition
- Decline
- Apply to another Opportunity
- Send Email
- Schedule Meeting
- Forward Applicant Details
- Create Offer
- Add to Pools
- Print Application

4. Complete the first two fields in the subsequent screen. The recruiting step selected should correspond to how far the applicant got in the selection process. In the example below, the applicant's resume was reviewed and it was determined this person's qualifications were not in line with the job requirements. This candidate was not advanced to the interview stage.

Move
Lewis

* Choose recruiting step.

Review Resume

Choose a reason for the move.

Candidate qualifications not in top tier

Comments.

4000 characters left

Mark this move as important so other recruiters can easily see it in the Notes section.

Save
Cancel

5. Click **SAVE** to complete dispositioning the applicant.
6. Repeat Steps 3-5 for each applicant.

Finalists will expect timely follow-up. It is an important courtesy to let unselected finalists know as soon as possible that a position has been filled.

Internal candidates interviewed should receive direct communication from the hiring manager to extend a verbal offer or that the position is filled. If an internal candidate is not selected for a vacancy, the manager is encouraged to provide feedback on what experience or development would help the person to be more qualified in the future. Human Resources will notify the remaining candidates electronically that the position is filled.

Note: occasionally, an employee may be transferred or promoted to another job through a management-initiated decision. Hood College reserves the right to transfer or promote an employee in order to meet changing business needs. Managers should contact the Department of Human Resources for information regarding management-initiated hiring decision.

ONBOARDING

Onboarding begins after the candidate accepts the offer. While the process is initiated in the Human Resources department, the manager and department team members play a vital role welcoming and onboarding the new employee successfully.

Human Resources Responsibilities:

- Share and collect employee new hire paperwork and information;
- Submit a new hire form to the IT Help Desk requesting a Hood email. Note: the manager will receive an email from IT requesting the new hire's department needs, such as, technology, and access to the department's share drives
- Host new employee orientation. The new employee will receive an electronic invitation, and the manager is copied. Orientation includes an IT overview, information about the College's history, values and culture, and an overview of the benefits plans.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Read and follow guidance in the Staff Onboarding Manual, [A Guide for Supervisors](#). This manual explains why the importance of good onboarding and lists the top seven best practices for supervisors;
- Create an onboarding schedule for the first 1-2 weeks of employment. It is good practice to schedule introductory meetings with key stakeholders;
- Ensure that you review the job duties and responsibilities, work behaviors, standards and expectations with the new employee;
- Ensure the new employee understands other team members' roles within the department;
- Tour the department/campus and introduce the new employee to their team members and other members of the College;
- Take the new employee to lunch within the first day or week and include other team members, if possible;
- Assign a [Blazer Buddy](#) to the new employee. Ideally, a Blazer Buddy is someone who welcomes and supports a new employee during their first year of employment at Hood. A buddy should be at a peer level to the new hire preferably outside of the department. A Blazer Buddy is not a mentor or should not be the new employee's manager.

Colleague Responsibilities:

- Be prepared to train the new employee on aspects of their work, if requested by the manager;
- Share information about team norms with the new employee; and
- Be approachable and helpful to a new employee and answer any day-to-day questions that come up.

APPENDIX A

The Case for Bias in Search Committees

Biases are a salient to who we are as humans. To make sense and process complexities of our day to day lives, we unconsciously create mental schemas. Schemas are templates of knowledge that sort specific examples into broader categories. In these schemas, generally, we form bias -- generalizations, stereotypes, attitudes, and associations-- based on individual experiences. These biases incorporate our beliefs, values and experiences, and often impact our social and professional circles.

Bias, albeit unintentional, is common during a hiring process. In fact, research highlights that bias is present during a search committees' evaluation of a candidate's application, during the candidate's interviews, and when making a final hiring decision (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003; Moss-Racusin, et al., 2012).

When biases are left unchecked or go unnoticed, they can blur our ability to make sound and equitable decisions (Posselt et al., 2020). Recruiters, hiring managers, and others who participate in the hiring process should be aware of potential biases that can produce additional exclusions during the hiring and selection process. False narratives about a candidate are not just formed in the first few seconds of reviewing an application but can be formed before the position is ever posted, and those narratives can influence the overall equity of the hiring process.

Types of Bias

Explicit Bias

Explicit bias incorporates the attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that we are aware of and acknowledge (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Explicit biases are intentional and typically derive from our personal beliefs and values, life experiences, and the desire to belong or be surrounded by people similar to ourselves. **When reviewing a resume, explicit bias may be expressed in intentionally only interviewing candidates who graduated from a certain school or the deliberate dismissal of qualified candidates who have not earned a degree.**

Institutional Bias

Institutional norms, practices, procedures, and policies that create a culture of belonging for the dominant social groups in the workforce, while creating a disparate impact and culture of isolation for those who may be underrepresented in the workforce (Oxford Reference, 2024). **When developing evaluation criteria or job postings, institutional bias may be expressed in unnecessarily adding an advanced degree as a "desired qualification" or seeking applicants with knowledge of UW systems.**

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias incorporates attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that we are not aware of and do not control (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Consider the expression of “running on autopilot.” Many of our day-to-day actions are performed subconsciously or without much thought. Likewise, our implicit biases may go unnoticed in our daily lives and can show up in ways that conflict with our stated beliefs and values. **Even if you are working to create a fair and equitable hiring process, undetected biases can have a negative impact on your screening and selection decisions.**

Key Characteristics of Implicit Bias

- Inherent in our make-up as human beings (intuitive vs analytical)
- Often based on stereotypes, exposure, lived experience, and dominant culture
- May not align with our declared or perceived values
- May not be mutually exclusive of our explicit biases
- Impact is often explicit and may show up as discrimination, racism, homophobia, etc.
- Hinders the ability to assess and evaluate equitably
- Impacts our decisions, perceptions, and positionality

Ways to Mitigate Bias on Search Committees

Become aware of your internal biases and how they may affect others involved in the search process (Hode, 2022). You can bring awareness to your internal biases by asking the following questions when evaluating applicant’s interview materials:

- Does this applicant remind me of myself or someone I know?
- Are there elements of this resume such as format or style that positively or negatively influence my overall impression?
- What elements of this resume am I considering that are not relevant to the job? Are they connected to the pre-determined competencies in the rubric?
- Am I evaluating the skills and experience listed on the resume or my interpretations and assumptions of the candidate’s?
- What ways have I already excluded or endorsed this candidate? Why?

Ask yourself and the search committee:

- Why do we see this applicant this way?
- Could our “norms” or assumptions be factors?
- Do we have the information we need to make this conclusion?
- Is this conclusion evidence-based?
- Have we considered all perspectives?
- Look for ways to say yes:
 - Don’t overlook or undervalue the unfamiliar or unexpected.
 - Compare candidates to criteria.

- More experience doesn't always mean most experienced.
- Recognize the ways institutional bias may influence how you define merit and excellence.
- Consider culture adds, which are the various forms of diversity that add value to your team and department.

Best Practices for Search Committees

- Criteria should be based on the candidate evaluation form developed by hiring team and search committee.
- **Questions Matter:** Interview (phone and in-person) questions should directly correlate to specific criteria and competencies being rated on the form.
- **All members on search committee** should help **define and confirm expectations** and components of a "quality answer" prior to starting the candidate evaluation process.
- **Hold each member accountable** to be consistent in rating. Discuss with the committee what defines each rating, e.g., what is the difference between a 2 and 3?
- **Discuss** multiple ways candidates can meet or demonstrate the criteria prior to screening, but be consistent and equitable.
- Include brief descriptors or indicators for each criteria being evaluated (can pull directly from candidate evaluation form).
- **Check-In.** Briefly review criteria and expectations prior to all interviews to ensure consistency.
- **Assume Bias. Audit your Bias.** Ask yourself and committee:
 - What ways have we already excluded or endorsed this candidate? Why?
 - Could our "assumptions, or biases be affecting our rating?
 - Do we have the information we need to make this conclusion?
 - Are there attributes about this person such as style or appearance that positively or negatively influence my overall impression?
- **Identify top competencies** and high priority requirements (not all criteria will be weighted the same).
- Prior to rating, **create three groups** in which to rank candidates. Consider using minimally qualified, qualified, or highly qualified.
- Ratings should be used for **consistency and documentation** purposes only. Total scores should not be used as the sole deciding factor.
- Allow time to discuss rating and **debrief immediately** following the interview. Discuss any differences in ratings and be sure to consider all perspectives.
- **Discuss strengths first.** Discuss strengths and any potential skills gaps and challenges for each candidate. Reference the predetermined criteria when discussing ratings and candidates.
- **Don't hold candidates to individual "scores."** Use ratings to help assess each candidate's qualification to the criteria and scores to help group candidates into minimally qualified, qualified, or highly qualified.
- Consider using a **group range vs individual ranking system** when grouping candidates, e.g., all candidates with scores totaling 15 to 20 will be considered top-tier or highly qualified. After groups are identified, audit the diversity of your "highly qualified" pool.

- **Select** the candidate that is most qualified for the role. Most qualified does not automatically mean the candidate who is most formally educated or with the most years of experience. It also does not mean the candidate with the overall highest score. The most qualified candidate is the candidate who can demonstrate they meet or exceed the criteria for the role and may also bring an unique expertise to the position and department.

Resources

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