

MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY
M A N K A T O



Search Committee Training

**Presented by the Offices of
Human Resources and
Affirmative Action**

Objectives

- ❖ Design and conduct an efficient and effective search that complies with all affirmative action/equal employment opportunity principles and legal requirements
- ❖ Recruit and hire the most qualified applicant for the position
- ❖ Efficiently manage crucial steps in the search process



Overview

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and Minnesota State University, Mankato utilize hiring practices designed to promote equal employment opportunities for all qualified candidates. It is important to recognize that these practices are not used to lower essential hiring qualifications or mandate hiring quotas based on gender, race or other protected class status. The University's hiring practices are designed to afford all qualified applicants an equal chance to be evaluated on their merits without discrimination based on membership in a protected class.

The University is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity as documented in its Affirmative Action Plan. To that end, the Office of Affirmative Action provides search training to ensure consistency and fairness during the screening and selection process of new employees. The University believes that a diverse faculty is critical to optimizing its educational environment.



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Overview

Through its hiring process, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities strives to increase opportunity by broadening the diversity of the applicant pool and evaluating all qualified candidates using the same legitimate work-related criteria. These hiring practices generally include:

- ❖ Screening position descriptions and selection criteria to ensure the use of appropriate *merit-based* requirements;
- ❖ Including a thoughtful review of essential qualifications and preferred criteria;
- ❖ Comprehensive and inclusive advertising and recruiting efforts;
- ❖ Special or targeted recruiting in addition to traditional methods;
- ❖ Gender-neutral and culturally bias-free criteria in evaluating candidates.

Definitions

- ◆ *Equal Opportunity* – review of employees and applicants for employment solely on their ability to perform the job
- ◆ *Affirmative Action* – a set of specific and result-oriented procedures that a federal/state contractor uses good faith efforts to achieve.
- ◆ *Diversity* – broadly defined includes, but is not limited to, demographic variables such as religion, color, gender, national origin, race, disability, sexual orientation, experiences, research interests, knowledge bases, and strengths.



Definitions

- ◆ *Underutilization* – employment of members of a race, ethnic, or gender group, including individuals with disabilities, in a job or job group at a rate below their availability in the applicable labor force.
- ◆ *Good Faith Effort* - appropriate efforts taken to ensure that persons in underutilized groups as well as all others have knowledge of and access to the employment opportunity. Good faith effort includes recruitment strategies designed to reach women, minorities and individuals with disabilities for a job or job groups in which there is underutilization.



Role of the Office of Affirmative Action

- ◆ The Office of Affirmative Action is the University's resource for all matters related to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity principles and is responsible for the enforcement of the University's non-discrimination obligation.
- ◆ The Office of Affirmative Action facilitates affirmative action and equal employment opportunity based search training and is responsible for monitoring the recruitment and employment process for faculty and staff openings as dictated by the University's Affirmative Action Plan.



Role of Human Resources

- ◆ Human Resources is:
 - < the University's resource for managing the overall search process for consistent practice & equitability
 - < the contact for what steps need to be taken in order to request filling a position and all the way through the final offer
 - < a partner with the Office of Affirmative Action in conducting the mandatory search committee training sessions
 - < responsible to post, maintain and update the NeoGov applicant tracking system
 - < responsible to work with the hiring authority and search committee to post advertisements
 - < the final reviewer for the selected candidate's work experience and salary recommendation

Search Committee Structure

- ◆ Consists of at least three members including the chair
- ◆ Includes individuals with broad perspectives and diverse backgrounds
- ◆ Complies with search policies and procedures
- ◆ Ensures that all applicants are equitably considered
- ◆ Avoids conflicts of interest
- ◆ Maintains confidentiality throughout the process



Search Committee Charge: Recruiting and Hiring the Most Qualified Applicant

The Office of Affirmative Action shares a goal with every search committee to recruit and hire the best qualified candidate for each position while keeping in mind that merit and excellence can be found in all facets of diversity.

This goal will be accomplished by providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified and interested persons and by taking active steps to recruit and include members of underutilized groups in the candidate pool. The search committee will consistently and fairly implement the University's search process to fill unclassified positions.



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Search Committee Members

As a member of a search committee, your primary responsibility is to assist the hiring official in identifying the most qualified applicant for a particular position.

Internal candidates must be evaluated in the same manner as external candidates.

You are bound by the principles of non-discrimination which prescribe that each applicant's qualifications be evaluated without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, status in regard to public assistance, or membership or activity in a local human rights commission.



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Conflict of Interest

Any search committee member who may have a conflict of interest, personal or professional, with any applicant should make the search committee chair aware of the situation as soon as it is known. The chair will make the determination as to how to proceed. If the chair has a conflict of interest, he or she should notify the Dean/Vice President.

Confidentiality

- ◆ Data privacy violations can create legal liability for both institutional and personal liability: “Any person who willfully violates the provisions of this chapter or any rules adopted under this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor. Willful violation of this chapter by any public employee constitutes just cause for suspension without pay or dismissal of the public employee.” Minnesota Statutes section 13.09. In addition, the College could be subject to civil damages for violations of the data privacy requirements.
- ◆ The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) governs “personnel data” collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by a governmental entity such as Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Personnel data includes information on both applicants for positions and employees. Minnesota Statutes sections 13.03, 13.43
- ◆ The identity of all applicants is private except for those who become finalists as defined by law. Note that the search committee may use the term “finalist” in a different way than the law defines the term. The search chair, in conjunction with human resources officials, is responsible for determining when an applicant is considered a finalist under the law.

Affirmative Action Plan Hiring Goals

Keep in mind your college or administrative unit's Affirmative Action Plan hiring goals when developing your recruitment plan. If there is underutilization, you are obligated to take aggressive efforts to recruit women, minorities and/or individuals with disabilities. The University, as a federal and state contractor, is legally obligated to make good faith efforts to eliminate underutilization in its workforce.

Also remember that the University is committed to a search process that affords equal employment opportunity to all applicants and that complies with all affirmative action principles and legal requirements.



WORKFORCE, AVAILABILITY & UTILIZATION ANALYSES 2008-2010

	ALL EMPLOYEES					MINORITIES			WOMEN			Individuals w/ Disabilities					
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	DISABILITY	MINORITIES	% IN GROUP	% AVAILABILITY	UNDER UTILIZED	% IN GROUP	% AVAILABILITY	UNDER UTILIZED	% IN GROUP	% AVAILABILITY	UNDER UTILIZED			
Unclassified Positions																	
President & VPs	20	11	9	0	4	20.0%	5.1%	0	NO	45.0%	37.8%	0	NO	0.0%	11.31%	2	YES
All Deans	13	6	7	0	1	7.7%	5.1%	0	NO	53.8%	37.8%	0	NO	0.0%	11.31%	1	YES
Administration	58	19	39	1	5	8.6%	5.1%	0	NO	67.2%	37.8%	0	NO	1.7%	11.31%	6	YES
Professionals	93	41	52	0	15	16.1%	8.0%	0	NO	55.9%	53.8%	0	NO	0.0%	10.88%	10	YES
Faculty																	
Allied Health & Nursing	73	18	55	1	6	8.2%	20.0%	9	YES	75.3%	46.3%	0	NO	1.4%	10.9%	7	YES
Arts and Humanities	101	56	45	3	5	5.0%	20.0%	15	YES	44.6%	46.3%	2	YES	3.0%	10.9%	8	YES
Business	51	35	16	1	12	23.5%	20.0%	0	NO	31.4%	46.3%	8	YES	2.0%	10.9%	5	YES
Education	60	26	34	1	8	13.3%	20.0%	4	YES	56.7%	46.3%	0	NO	1.7%	10.9%	6	YES
Libraries	22	6	16	0	0	0.0%	20.0%	4	YES	72.7%	46.3%	0	NO	0.0%	10.9%	2	YES
Social/Behavioral Sciences	116	67	49	2	26	22.4%	20.0%	0	NO	42.2%	46.3%	5	YES	1.7%	10.9%	11	YES
Science, Engineering & Technology	135	107	28	1	20	14.8%	20.0%	7	YES	20.7%	46.3%	35	YES	0.7%	10.9%	14	YES
Professional, Other	38	22	16	1	1	2.6%	20.0%	7	YES	42.1%	46.3%	2	YES	2.6%	10.9%	3	YES

Recruitment Plan

- ◆ Explore diverse recruitment strategies
- ◆ Provide for broad extensive advertisement in journals, newspapers, and electronic postings
- ◆ Actively recruit students and alumni
- ◆ Include contacting professional organizations in the private sector as well as academic oriented organizations
- ◆ Outline active recruiting steps such as utilizing conferences to network with potential job applicants from other colleges and universities
- ◆ Utilize listservs, blogs and social networking sites

Be active recruiters!



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Screening the Applications

Equitable treatment must be afforded to all applicants.

- ◆ Treat all applications (internal and external) consistently and fairly
- ◆ Applications must only be evaluated on the pre-approved screening criteria found within the Job Posting
- ◆ Only present findings on the Screening Summary Report that reflect the qualifications found on the Job Posting!!



Reference Checks

- ◆ NeoGov application requires each applicant to provide three references.
- ◆ NeoGov contains a notification that MSU reserves the right to conduct blind reference checks. Search Committees should decide whether they want to conduct blind reference checks.
- ◆ Reference check questions should be taken from the qualifications listed on the Job Posting.
- ◆ Call applicant first before conducting reference checks to make sure they are still interested in the position.



Finalist and Offeree

- ◆ The Dean/VP, the Offices of Affirmative Action and Human Resources must approve the pool of finalists **before** candidates are contacted to schedule potential interviews.
- ◆ The same is true of recommending an offer to the selected candidate; all appropriate offices must sign off their approval before an offer can be made. The hiring authority will be the one to extend the offer of employment as well as discuss other terms and conditions with the candidate.
- ◆ If you need to go back into the pool (Column 5 of the Summary Screening Form) to conduct additional interviews, the finalist approval form **must** be resubmitted with the new finalist list before the additional interviews are conducted.

Conducting the Interview

The interview is one of the most critical stages of the search process and offers the best opportunity for the search committee to evaluate an applicant. A core set of questions based **solely** on job-related criteria found within the Job Posting is one way of ensuring that the process is equitable.

The same questions should be asked of all candidates, which will allow comparative evaluations while ensuring that crucial job-related information is obtained. This has the beneficial effect of minimizing unconscious biases. It is also acceptable to ask follow-up questions of an applicant when appropriate.

The Office of Human Resources will assist search committees in designing appropriate interview questions.

Remember: While you are interviewing the finalist, they are interviewing MSU.

Conducting the Interview

The Office of Affirmative Action recommends that search committee members pay special attention to questions and areas of questioning that are potentially discriminatory.

During the course of an interview, it is easy for conversation and follow-up questioning to veer into the terrain of illegal questioning, especially if the applicant offers personal information. You may answer the applicant's question but refrain from pursuing the topic further. In cases in which the applicant offers personal information which may be related to a protected class such as religion, marital status or other protected classes, committee members should quickly return the discussion to job related matters.



Search Process Checklist

Step 1:

◆ Request approval to fill and search a position

< Submit the below documents for approval by the Cabinet and university President:

- [Vacant Position Review \(Cabinet\)](#)
- [Position Requisition Form – Unclassified](#)
- For MSUAASF or Administrator positions, please also submit the following respective documents:
 - Position Description
 - Position Analysis Questionnaire
 - Organizational Chart



Search Process Checklist

Step 2:

◆ Establish the Search Committee

- < Obtain the mandatory search training by contacting the Office of Affirmative Action (OAA) who will coordinate a training session in partnership with Human Resources (HR).
- < Prior to the search training session, you will be asked to provide to OAA a list of your search committee members, along with a copy of any proposed search materials including a draft/final version of the job posting and Recruitment Plan.
- < During the training session, OAA will review your hiring goal while HR will review the search process.

Note: All search committee members should read "[Summary Statement on Equal Opportunity in Hiring Practices](#)".



Search Process Checklist

Steps 3 & 4:

- ◆ **Submit DRAFT materials to the Dean/VP:**
 - < Job Posting (previously called a Notice of Vacancy)
 - Clear & Specific Minimum Qualifications
 - < Applicant screening forms
 - < Reference check questions
 - < Interview questions (phone and/or on-campus interviews)
 - < Recruitment Plan

- ◆ **The Dean/VP will review and forward to HR who will:**
 - < Review & suggest any changes to Dean/VP & search chair

Search Process Checklist

Step 5:

◆ Implement Recruitment Plan

- < Applicants apply on-line through the new applicant tracking system – NeoGov

Step 6:

◆ For Open IFO Probationary Positions - Conduct Prior Review

- < See Article 21, Section A, Subd. 2 of the IFO Agreement
- < Conduct a prior review of any internal fixed term candidates
 - May consider only the internal candidate & no others - OR -
 - May consider internal candidate along with all candidates



Search Process Checklist

Step 7:

- ◆ **HR will review applicants and:**
 - < Screen out the non-qualified and/or incomplete applicants
 - < Send out the applicable electronic notifications

Step 8:

- ◆ **HR transmits qualified & completed applicants to the search committee members (SME's) for electronic viewing**
 - < HR sends out an electronic notification to the qualified and/or completed applicants acknowledging receipt of their documents and/or if a transcript is necessary to move forward in the process.
 - < Search committee will determine potential finalists and record results on the [Screening Summary Report](#) form.



Search Process Checklist

Step 9:

- ◆ **Search Committees should notify potential finalists by phone:**
 - < Inquire about continued interest and notify the applicant that reference checks will be conducted.
 - < If candidate has not already submitted an official transcript of highest completed degree, please ask them to do so.
 - Official transcript must come directly from the institution
 - Search Chair can also verify to see if HR has received one

Step 10:

- ◆ **Conduct reference checks**
 - < Use standard questions, approved by HR
 - < Notify referees of data privacy issues & record data (take notes)
 - *NOTE: data collected from a reference check constitutes private data on the candidate*

Search Process Checklist

Steps 11, 12 & 13:

- ◆ **Submit Finalist Approval Form & Required Documentation:**

The Dean/VP, Office of Affirmative Action and Human Resources must approve the pool of finalists before candidates are contacted to schedule potential interviews.

- ◆ **After Finalist Approval Form is approved, the interviews may be arranged and conducted.**

Record all results of the interviews on the [Screening Summary Report](#) form.

- ◆ **Candidates must fill out Work Experience Summary ([IFO](#)) ([MSUAASF](#)) to be used to determine appropriate salary.**



Search Process Checklist

Step 14:

- ◆ **If no candidate is recommended, fill out & submit the [Notice of Failed Search](#) form**
 - < HR will send out electronic notification to candidates informing them of the failed search

Step 15:

- ◆ **If candidate(s) recommended, provide information to Dean/VP**
 - < Remember that the VP selects the final candidate
 - < Dean will notify Search Chair of status regarding selection



Search Process Checklist

Step 16:

- ◆ **Submit Offeree Approval Form & Required Documentation:**
 - < The Dean/VP, Office of Affirmative Action and Human Resources must approve the recommended selected candidate before a verbal or written offer can be extended
 - < The hiring authority will be the one to extend the offer of employment, as well as, discuss other terms and conditions with the candidate
- ◆ **NOTE: If you need to go back into the pool (Column 5 of the Summary Screening Form) to conduct additional interviews, the Finalist Approval Form must be resubmitted, along with required documentation, before the additional interviews can be conducted**
- ◆ **A new Offeree Approval Form would also need to be resubmitted**



Search Process Checklist

Step 17:

- ◆ **After the Offeree Approval Form has been approved, the hiring official must:**
 - < Review and sign the Work Experience Summary (completed by the applicant)
 - < Forward the work experience packet to the VP's office, which includes the following documents:
 - Resume/vitae
 - Completed Offeree Approval Form
 - < Vice President's Office & HR will review and communicate back to the hiring official applicable salary information to extend an offer



Search Process Checklist

Steps 18 & 19:

- ◆ **Upon completion of the Work Experience, the appropriate VP extends the offer**
- ◆ **HR will review the Offer Letter and Terms of Appointment before being sent**
- ◆ **After candidate accepts in writing, Dean/VP notifies Search Chair of acceptance**
 - < HR sends out electronic notifications to the remaining candidates



Search Process Checklist

Step 20:

- ◆ **VP's Office will submit the necessary appointment documents to HR accordingly, and return all other recruitment materials to Search Chair**

Step 21:

- ◆ **Search Chair will submit all search materials to HR**
 - < Including: screening forms, Screening Summary Report, and any other application materials

Summary

- ◆ We always look forward to working with you and helping throughout the search process, however, it is important that we follow the process in order to prevent any potential liability to the university for wrongful decisions or hiring practices.
- ◆ Please use the most up-to-date forms and [Search Process Checklist](#) found on the Human Resources website.
- ◆ We always encourage asking questions before taking the next step.....

What Questions Do You Have??



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