

Quick Reference Guide: Search Committee Best Practices

Who should be on a Search Committee?

- Four to six people makes it easier to schedule meetings and make decisions. One member will be appointed the search committee chair.
- Composition of committee members should include:
 - Members with different backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise
 - Members with knowledge of the department
 - Members with technical expertise that can evaluate the candidates' qualifications
 - Appropriate stakeholders, such as peers, supervisors, those in similar positions, and people in other departments who will work with the person who is hired

Why Ensure a Diverse Search Committee?

- Provides a welcoming and inclusive environment to all applicants
- Offers a diversity of perspective to hiring managers, who make the final hiring decisions
- Can help to mitigate implicit (or unintentional) bias which otherwise might lead to inadvertently removing well-qualified applicants from the pool

Roles and Responsibilities

- Search Committee Chair (SSC)
 - Facilitate the search process
 - Organize committee
 - Provide committee with search criteria based on the minimum and preferred education and qualifications listed in the posting
 - Keep detailed documentation of the process
 - Communications and documentation related to a search may be subject to a public records request so it is important to be mindful of this
 - Inquires related to a public records request should be directed to the Office of Legal Affairs
 - Compliance
- Search Committee Members
 - Review all applicants
 - Advocate for candidates who should be considered
 - Be consistent in the way applicants are evaluated
 - Search committee members should all be using the same criteria to evaluate applicants
 - This criteria should be based on the minimum and preferred qualifications as they are listed in the job posting and should be set prior to the initial review of applicants
 - Use tools such as screening matrices to quantify your evaluation of the applicants
 - Maintain confidentiality
 - Discussion among search committee members are confidential
 - Applicant materials should not be shared with people outside the committee

- All notes and records of the search process should remain confidential, even when the search process concludes
 - Avoid unconscious bias and assumptions when evaluating candidates
- Administrative Support
 - Schedule search committee meetings
 - Organize applicant materials for committee
 - Schedule interviews with candidates
 - Coordinate travel for candidates
 - Assist with NinerTalent documentation

Unconscious Bias

- Implicit/Unconscious Bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
- Avoid Unconscious Bias
 - Contemporary forms of discrimination are subtle, unintentional, automatic, unconscious, and pervasive
 - These effects are the same as for “traditional” discrimination, but they are harder to address
 - Best Practices for Avoiding Bias
 - Ensure the position description aligns with the evaluation matrix
 - Candidate evaluations should be completed prior to any group discussions
 - Take time when evaluating the candidates
 - Be aware of the possibility of your own bias
 - Insist on evidence and not opinions
 - Test yourself at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Links and Information

- [EHRA Non-Faculty Administration Website](#)
- [Legal Affairs – Search Committee Fundamentals Website](#)
- Contact eparecruitment@uncc.edu with any questions