

Research Foundation for SUNY College at Oneonta

Search Procedures

Equal Opportunity

Federal equal opportunity laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, age, pregnancy, national origin (including ancestry), disability, being a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era, sexual orientation, gender expression and gender identity, marital status, or any other protected category. These laws and policies mandate that neither the Research Foundation nor any of its representatives discriminate in any employment decisions, including recruitment, selection, promotion, compensation, training opportunities, job assignments, disciplinary actions, discharge or any other conditions of employment. Equal opportunity requires the elimination of all existing discriminatory conditions, whether purposeful or inadvertent.

Affirmative Action

Federal affirmative action law requires employers to take positive measures to recruit and employ qualified women and minorities to correct effects of past discrimination, to eliminate present discrimination and to prevent future discrimination. An affirmative action program is a set of specific and result-oriented procedures done in good faith to encourage the ideals of equal employment opportunity. Affirmative action is not a quota system and does not give hiring preference to those who are not qualified for positions.

Federal law defines protected class candidates as those classified as Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, American Indian or Alaskan Native. Women are also included. Separate legislation covers Vietnam-era and disabled veterans and people with disabilities.

Affirmative action measures are designed to cast the net as far and wide as possible to reach the greatest possible number of minority and women candidates. These measures require more than simply placing an advertisement or posting a job vacancy notice. Extra efforts must be made to reach out specifically to minority and women candidates. This guide will assist you in these efforts.

A central function of the Office of Human Resources is to monitor and evaluate the college's implementation of Federal and State laws, and local policies regarding equal opportunity and affirmative action.

In order to support The Research Foundation College at Oneonta's Affirmative Action Policy, it will be our policy that:

1. All open positions at The Research Foundation College at Oneonta regardless of percentage of appointment, will be posted on the Sponsored Programs website and a link referencing this listing shall be prominently displayed on the Employment Opportunities page, and
2. All national advertisements for full-time positions shall list the SUNY College at Oneonta Sponsored Programs website address.

When to Conduct a Search

An affirmative action search **must** be conducted for any staff vacancy that:

- is .50 FTE or greater **AND**
- has a duration of six months or longer.

A search may be waived under only a few specific circumstances, as indicated below. Questions about the need for an affirmative action search should be directed to the Manager of Human Resources.

Waiver of Search Procedures

In keeping with federal law and Research Foundation for SUNY policy, a full and open affirmative action search will be conducted, whenever possible, prior to filling a vacancy. Occasionally, special circumstances may develop which make the search impossible to conduct. In such cases, a request for a waiver to the affirmative action search may be in order. To obtain approval for a waiver a Request to Search and Hire form (APP) and Recruiting Plan/Waiver of Search form (Goldenrod) must be completed delineating the reasons, consistent with the AA plan.

A waiver of the search procedure may be recommended for approval for the following reasons:

Reason	Condition	Appointment	Search
Emergencies	Continuity of service is essential	Interim/Acting	Full and open search required during the next search cycle
AA - Internal Promotion	Implement AA goals	Regular	None
Reorganization/Reclassification	Incumbent moving into a new title. No vacancy created	Regular	None
Temporary Appointment	Not to exceed 6 months	Temporary	Full and open search required at end of 6 months

The Search Process

There are two major stages of the search process. The first is the actual search itself, undertaken to identify and recruit qualified candidates. The second stage is screening - reviewing applications and interviewing candidates to make a hiring decision that is based on job requirements and applicants' qualifications.

Responsibilities of the Hiring Office

The hiring office is responsible for defining the duties, responsibilities, expectations, minimum qualifications, expected salary range and expected date of employment. The hiring office is responsible for working with the Office of Human Resources' to ensure consistency in a position's expectations and salary requirements. Formal approval of the position and its requirements must be obtained prior to the initiation of a search. The hiring office together with the Office of Human Resources is responsible for drafting the position advertisement, ensuring that the content of the ad reflects the duties and responsibilities of the position. The hiring office shall work with Human Resources to ensure that the ad meets local, state and federal laws. The hiring office is responsible for defining the primary selection criteria that are to be used in the screening of candidates.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for the appointment of a search committee. Establishing a strong and credible search committee is essential for success. Because decisions are made most effectively and efficiently by groups no larger than five to seven people, committees should be limited in size. The membership of the search committee shall reflect the constituencies served by the position. At least one member from outside a hiring department should be invited to serve on a search committee to share insights, challenge assumptions, and bring lessons of experience from other perspectives, disciplines and organizations.

The members of the search committee should be familiar with the position and should reflect the interests and characteristics of various constituencies, taking into consideration ethnicity, gender, age, different areas of specializations. The Research Foundation strongly recommends that the composition of the search committee be reflective of the diverse college community (if possible).

The hiring supervisor, working with the committee and its chair, participates in the recruitment and advertising process and in the interviewing of finalists recommended by the committee. The hiring supervisor is to advise the committee of their responsibilities, including the search process, check points, and when the committee's work is done. The supervisor may also solicit comments from the committee on the content of the position description and ad copy.

Responsibilities of the Search Committee

Subject to the hiring supervisor's request, a search committee's responsibilities may include establishing selection criteria, arranging and conducting the interviewing process with the interested constituencies, and recommending candidates to the hiring supervisor.

Confidentiality

All matters relating to a search are strictly confidential. We strive to maintain confidentiality about the identity of the candidates until the final stages of the search. **Please remember to abstain from any discussion about the search outside the confines of the search committee meetings.**

Search Documentation

It is the intention of the Research Foundation to maintain the integrity of the search process by protecting applicant confidentiality.

Search-related information, such as interview questions, committee notes and screening matrices produced by the search committee members, should remain confidential among the committee members.

Other key individuals related to the search should have access to this information on a need-to-know basis only. Search-related information or documentation must not under any circumstances be released to unauthorized individuals. Any request from an unauthorized individual must be made through the "Freedom of Information" act.

Members of the search committee act as agents of the college and The Research Foundation in fulfilling legal and philosophical commitments to non-discrimination in hiring. Further, committee members are responsible for working toward the campus mission of cultural diversity. The following outlines the steps required:

Initiating the Search

A search is initiated by the Project Director. The process is documented by the Request to Search and Hire form (APP) and the Recruiting Plan/Waiver form.

The Request to Search and Hire form (APP) includes the following:

- Department
- Effective dates of position
- Title of vacant position (both Official and Local)
- Status (FT/PT)
- Salary range and grade
- Obligatory period (College Year, Calendar Year, etc)
- Pay basis (Annual, Biweekly, Hourly)

The Recruiting Plan/Waiver form includes the following:

- Department
- Title of vacant position
- Job objectives and minimum requirements
- Proposed advertisement copy
- Type of search to be conducted (National, Regional, On-Campus)
- Special notes (i.e. advertising suggestions)
- Composition of Search Committee
- Reason for waiver request (if applicable)
- COREquisites™ Questionnaire

A search committee is established to assist the Project Director conducting the search. This committee acts as a team to recruit and screen candidates. The composition of the committee is important to the integrity of any search. The committee chair is designated by the Project Director.

Development of the Position Description

A well-defined position description will facilitate the search process. To accomplish this goal, the qualifications for the position should match as closely as possible the skills and abilities a candidate would need to perform the job effectively.

Under the regulations of ADA, employers are required to make "reasonable" accommodations for an individual's mental or physical limitations as long as these accommodations do not present an undue hardship on the employer. Therefore, it is the employer's responsibility to clearly identify all essential duties necessary for the position versus those which could be easily accommodated. Basically, under the ADA, The Research Foundation is required to hire individuals with disabilities, if absent the disability, they are the best qualified for the position and can perform the essential duties with reasonable accommodation.

Assessing Department Needs in Order to Create a Position Description

The position description is a comprehensive document which clearly outlines the responsibilities, essential duties, expected outcomes, and reporting relationships, as well as required and desired qualifications. With the collaboration of the search committee, a list of responsibilities and qualifications should be established to meet the needs of the department and also to attract the broadest possible candidate pool.

Qualification Requirements

All preferred and required qualifications necessary to perform the job must be clearly stated. In addition, everything that will be used as criteria during the screening process needs to be accounted for in the qualifications. In order to attract the broadest pool of applicants, carefully consider how many years of experience are really necessary, what degree is really necessary, or would a lesser degree with related experience be satisfactory?

Development of Written Criteria for Screening and COREquisites Questionnaire

The committee chair, in consultation with the Project Director and the Office of Human Resources, must decide upon the criteria to be used for the preliminary and final screening stages prior to advertising. In addition, the COREquisites Questionnaire for posting on Interview Exchange must be developed. The preliminary screening and the COREquisites Questionnaire should include criteria specified in the advertisement and other criteria developed in cooperation with the search committee. Each search committee member is given access to Interview Exchange in order to review the candidates. When the committee meets and discusses the candidates, the chair may then start moving candidates into folders, ie. "Yes," "No" or "Maybe." This should be an objective process. Once all candidates have been reviewed by each committee member the committee can begin their review.

Proposed Ad Copy

The advertisement is crucial for recruiting qualified candidates and ensuring a legally-conducted, affirmative action search. Once an advertisement has been placed, the RF is bound by it. If information concerning the search should change, the Research Foundation must re-advertise the vacancy. Advertisements should include the following information:

- Brief position description
- List of required qualifications, including minimum degree and/or licenses and preferred qualifications.
- Date that review of resumes will begin or application deadline.

Since advertising is costly, ad copy should be kept to a minimum. Ad copy will be reviewed by the Office of Human Resources. Suggested changes will be discussed with the Project Director.

Advertising Sources: Choice of advertising venues is partly determined by the scope of the search: internal, local, regional or national. Please list ad sources on the Recruiting Plan/Waiver Form under "Type of search to be conducted." Indicate all advertising sources selected including newspapers, journals and professional publications. The list of ad sources will be reviewed and ads will be placed only by the Office of Human Resources. In addition, advertising sources can include the Internet, minority/women-targeted newsletters and/or recruiting at professional conferences.

In addition, the Office of Human Resources sends vacancy notices to numerous organizations for advancement of traditionally protected classes and posts the position on the following web sites:

- Sponsored Programs Employment Opportunities Webpage
- SUNY College at Oneonta Employment Opportunities page

The Application/Screening Process

The Research Foundation College at Oneonta has moved to an on-line application process for searches. All positions are posted on our website. The website address for on-line application is used in all advertisements.

If applications are received by any other means (mail, e-mail, fax), the applicant will be contacted and asked to apply on-line. In most cases, the applicant will be willing to do so. If the applicant cannot apply online, Office of Human Resources can input the resume; however, this is highly discouraged as many of the advantages of the on-line process will be lost (i.e. statistical data, qualifying questions, etc.).

Applications & Acknowledgement of Receipt

When applying on-line candidates will be asked to complete the following steps:

- Provide Contact Information
- Complete COREquisites™ Questionnaire (as set forth by the search committee chair, or Project Director)
- Upload Your Resume (Up to four additional files can also be added, i.e. cover letter, list of references, transcript)
- Answer Optional EEOC Questions
- Answer questions related to where they saw the job posting

Once the steps above are completed successfully and submitted, the applicant will automatically receive an acknowledgement via e-mail.

Suggested Procedures for Search Committee Chair / Members Prior to Screening Applications On-line

The search committee chair should set up a meeting for all search committee members to meet with the Office of Human Resources. Agenda for this meeting will include:

- Overview of the search process as outlined in these *Guidelines*.
- Introduction/demonstration of on-line application system

Suggested Procedures to Follow Prior to Inviting Candidates to Campus

- Telephone Referencing: The search committee should discuss in advance the questions to be asked. These questions should be in writing to ensure that consistent questions are asked of each candidate. Contact only persons who have been listed as references by the candidate. With the candidate's permission, you can contact references other than those listed by the candidate.
- Telephone Interview: The committee may wish to hold a formal interview with a candidate by telephone, if the candidate lives too far away to attend a preliminary interview. As always, it is important to strive for fairness, consistency and equal treatment during telephone interviews.

The list of questions asked of all candidates should be structured and approved by the Office of Human Resources. All candidates should be asked the same or similar questions and be given approximately the same amount of time to respond.

Clearly, conversation may deviate from the original question to allow full explanation of the candidates' qualifications and merit for the job. These interviews must conform to all professional standards and the interviewers should be sensitive to the principles of non-discrimination.

The chair should call each candidate to set up a telephone "appointment."

At the appointed time, the interviewer places the call, and explains the format of the interview. Keep in mind that a telephone interview is just as official as a face-to-face interview.

Consultation with Project Director and the Office of Human Resources.

The hiring manager and HR should be informed as to the characteristics of the applicant pool and of the qualifications of the finalist who may be invited for an in person interview. The number of candidates to invite for in person interviews will be decided in consultation with the Project Director.

How many finalists should you interview? A good rule of thumb is the rule of “three” three candidates in an optimal number.

Contacting Potential Interview Candidates

Some candidates will drop out of the pool even before an interview, because they have accepted another job or they have changed their plans. You should confirm with the candidates their continued interest in the position. You should also confirm the salary range. If they wish to be interviewed, be sure to describe the interview process, the location, the time and the number to call if they have any problems or questions.

The hiring department will be responsible for making the necessary arrangement for the day including reserving rooms, making appointments.

In person interview

In order to hire from the strongest possible pool, it is important to invite candidates for an in person interview as soon as possible. The committee should have written questions that have been vetted and approved by the Office of Human Resources. Each candidate must have the same opportunity to provide information about skills and qualifications, which should be assured by using the same questions for each interview.

At the conclusion of each interview, search committee members should independently complete a candidate evaluation form. This should describe the candidate’s qualifications for the job and the observations should be as objective as possible and should be job related.

Keep records as your search proceeds. It is a good idea to keep minutes of search committee meetings. Retain candidate evaluation forms and all written comments.

All candidates must be afforded as equal as possible interview opportunities.

Selection/Recommendation

The chairperson of the search committee reports the committee's recommendations to the Office of Human Resources and Project Director.

Final Selection

After the offer has been made and verbally accepted, the hiring department head completes the Final Report of Search Committee and/or Hiring Supervisor on the back of the Recruiting Plan and/or Waiver of Search Form. This form should be forwarded to the appropriate parties for signature. The following supporting documents must be attached before an appointment can be processed

- Resume
- Letters of Reference (if collected)

Upon receipt of the completed Request to Search and Hire form and supporting documents, the Office of Human Resources will generate an appointment letter.

Thank you/Regret Letters

Candidates are entitled to a prompt response. All correspondence with candidates is done by email via interview exchange, with the exception of correspondence to candidates who are interviewed either by phone or in person.

In many cases and especially when there is a very large applicant pool, email notification should be sent immediately to those applicants eliminated in the initial screening.

Upon notification that a successful candidate has been identified and accepted the position, email notification should be sent to the remaining applicants in the pool. However, formal letter should be sent to candidates who were interviewed.