Faculty Screening Committee Handbook

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
& EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
University of Central Oklahoma
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This handbook contains guidance and resources to enable faculty who are involved with the hiring process to be more efficient and effective. It is designed to provide assistance to the hiring official, the screening committee chairperson, and the members of the screening committee. This supplements but does not replace Appendix C of the Faculty Handbook. All Screening Committee members must have been trained/briefed by Legal Services within the previous 24 months.

Questions, comments, or suggestions about this HANDBOOK can be addressed to the Employment Services Office at extension 2327

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http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-staff/handbook.asp
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION  
and  
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The University of Central Oklahoma is committed to the principles, policies and practices of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. **The hiring process requires the conscious consideration of such factors as race/ethnicity, gender, national origin, age, disability, and veteran status to ensure the diversity of our faculty and staff.** It is the responsibility of every hiring official and screening committee member to ensure that applicants from underrepresented groups receive full and fair consideration on the basis of job-related criteria.

All hiring officials and/or screening committee members are encouraged to meet with the UCO Affirmative Action Officer and representatives of Employment Services as early as possible before the screening begins to review personnel considerations within the guidelines of our Affirmative Action Plan. All such must have been specifically briefed by the UCO legal counsel within the previous two years of participation in any screening or interviewing activity.

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**TIPS ON FORMING A SCREENING COMMITTEE**

- Committee chairpersons should hold positions at the same level as or a higher level than the vacant position. Exceptions are often made for faculty, who may be asked to chair faculty Screening Committees, regardless of their rank or tenure status.
- The Committee Chairperson may be appointed by the Provost or Dean or may be elected from among the members at the first organizational meeting or appointed by Chair of department.
- The size of the committee should reflect the extent to which the position is involved in the campus overall. Screening Committees for positions that have broad campus responsibilities might call for large committees, although there is no requirement for the size of any committee. Remember, it can be very difficult to schedule meetings and interviews with large committees.
- Committees should have an odd number of members. This can help eliminate the potential for a “tie” when it comes to final ranking of candidates.
- Attempt to form a committee that is diverse in terms of gender and race.
- Determine whether each potential appointee has sufficient time to devote to Screening Committee duties.
- Ensure that the committee represents a variety of perspectives on the role and function of the vacant position.
- Where appropriate, appoint stakeholders -- for example, a student representative on a Screening Committee for a College Activities position, faculty on a Screening Committee for a librarian, or a member of the President's Cabinet in a search for a vice president.
CHARGE TO THE SCREENING COMMITTEE CHECKLIST

In most cases, a hiring official (Provost, Dean or Department Chair) delivers a charge to the screening committee that includes the following:

- Reaffirmation of the University’s commitment to affirmative action and equal employment opportunity and the expectations of the committee in this regard.
- Request for the Screening Committee chairperson to schedule a meeting with the College's Affirmative Action Officer.
- Official or working title of position.
- Position (job) description and a copy of the advertisement or position announcement.
- Essential and preferred criteria for selection, criteria that are important to the department and the College, and the hiring official's view of the position's scope and short and long-term challenges and opportunities.
- Time frame for completing the search.
- Procedure for review of applications that are received after the Preference Date.
- Duties of the Screening Committee chair and individual committee members.
- Hiring authority's involvement in the search process.
- Preferred number of candidates to visit the campus and a general idea of the conduct of the campus visit and the individuals/groups with whom the candidates will meet.
- Format in which the committee's final recommendations are to be brought forward -- ranked candidates, unranked candidates, written narrative.
- Where and how the committee will receive administrative and logistical support.

FACULTY HIRING STEPS

- Elect a Chairperson, if one has not been appointed.
- Notify Employment Services of the choice of Chair.
- Decide on status of the On-Line Posting to be effective after the Preference Date:
  a. Continue as Open- new applicants may still apply.
  b. Change to “After Preference”- applicants receive an instant note that their materials will only be reviewed by the Committee if no viable candidates are found among those who applied on a timely basis.
  c. Removed from public view- no new applicants
- Agree on inclusion/exclusion of incomplete files.
- Review applications and supporting documents. (see following section)
- Reach an agreement on top candidates for telephone screening interviews.
- Arrange and conduct telephone interviews
- Select short list of candidates to be invited to campus.
- Notify Employment Services of candidates to be interviewed on-campus.
Committee members should conduct reference checks. The Committee decides on how many candidates they will check references - candidate of choice only; top two (or more) candidates.

On request, Employment Services will prepare a Screening Log and forward it to the Chair. This is a list of all applicants which can be used for logging the reasons for non-selection.

The names of the candidate of choice and alternates should be sent in a letter from the Committee to the Department Chair who will send a recommendation to the Dean.

The Dean will forward the recommendation for hire along with a “hiring packet” to the office of the Provost.

Academic Affairs will initiate the required background checks; Multi-state Criminal Records and National Sex Offender Registry searches.

Academic Affairs issues a “letter of intent”.

The candidate signs and returns the letter by the due date.

The Committee Chair collects all notes from the members and submits them along with the Screening Log to the office of the Dean (or Employment Services) to be archived for five years.

Employment Services notifies all non-selected applicants that the position has been filled and archives the posting.

The new faculty member will be given a check-in sheet from the department. Documents will be taken to Human Resources to begin university paperwork for hiring and payroll. This also initiates an IT request.

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**SAMPLE REASONS FOR NON-SELECTION**

1. Insufficient academic achievement
2. Lack of experience
3. Unstable work history
4. Incomplete application file
5. Salary
6. Applicant declined position (or interview)
7. Other candidates more qualified
8. Other (specify reason to be sited)
TIPS ON TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Telephone interviews can be conducted as the first step in the search process, especially when there is a "long list" of potential interviewees. Certain rules of uniformity should be followed when conducting telephone interviews: the same questions should be asked of all candidates, the same information about the process should be given to the candidates, and the same members of the Screening Committee should participate in all telephone interviews. Telephone interviews with the Screening Committee should be planned in advance -- the candidates should be given a brief description of the process so that they can be prepared. The interview should be conducted in a room large enough for all committee members to sit comfortably and within hearing and speaking range of the telephone. There should be no distractions -- cell phones and pagers should be turned off, the door should be closed, telephone extensions should be forwarded to other lines -- and committee members should be seated and ready before the interview begins. A "dry run" to insure proper logistics can be helpful. If requested, IT can arrange face-to-face interviews via Skype.

PLANNING AND ARRANGING THE TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

- Schedule a call of no more than 30 minutes with interviewee and committee.
- Review interviewee's application materials.
- Prepare questions.
- Determine the order in which interviewers will introduce themselves.
- Determine the order in which interviewers will ask questions.
- Test the speakerphone.
- Make sure there are no scheduling conflicts with the interviewing room.
- Agree on an evaluation tool (see Samples that follow).

CONDUCTING AN ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEW

Interview Preparation:

- Schedule a conference room where there will be no distractions.
- Review the job description.
- Draft and agree upon specific questions to be asked of all candidates. Questions should be open-ended, informational, situational, and behavioral (see Samples that follow).
- Review the candidate's resume/application.
- Agree on the format for the interview.
- Ensure that you know and can identify the indicators of the candidate's ability to perform the job.
The On-Campus Interview:

Create a schedule of day events for the committee, candidate, departments, dean, Academic Affairs, and others. A faculty position is an investment. Plan events to get to know the candidate and for them to get to know UCO and the department. When the candidate leaves the campus they should leave with a good idea of UCO’s Mission, Transformative Learning and the culture of the department.

Required events:

- Interview with search committee
- Visit with department chair
- Visit with college dean
- Visit with Academic Affairs

Suggested opportunities for the search committee and candidate:

- Departmental tour
- College tour
- Campus tour
- Edmond tour—get packet from Edmond Chamber of Commerce
- Presentation to a class in their department
- Presentation of research to faculty and/or students
- Meet and greet with departmental faculty, staff, TAs, and RAs.
- Visit Transformative Learning links (many require appointments):
  - Office of Research & Grants in CTL
  - Volunteer Service Learning Office
  - Center for Global and Cultural Studies—CASTLE opportunities
  - Center for Professional and Distance Education
  - Health & Wellness Center
  - Other centers or activities related to discipline
  - Center for Excellence in Teaching & Transformative Learning (formerly FEC office)

If the candidate is staying overnight, look for on campus or UCO activities for the evening (performances at ACM, Mitchell Hall, Jazz Lab, or student presentations, Passport activities, invited speakers)

Interview-in-Process:

- Introduce committee members.
- Describe the format of the interview.
- Let the applicant do most of the talking.
- Keep the interview on track.
• Observe nonverbal behavior.
• Take notes.
• Leave time for the candidate to ask questions.
• Describe the remainder of the search process and the approximate time frame. DO NOT MAKE PROMISES YOU CANNOT KEEP AND KEEP PROMISES YOU MAKE. If you tell a candidate that you will get back to him/her by a specific date, be sure to follow through. If the time frame should change, be sure to notify the candidates.
• Thank the candidate for his/her time.

Post-interview:

• Check references if not checked already. Faculty can check references not on the reference list.
• Evaluate the candidate with agreed upon evaluation format (see Samples that follow).
• At the conclusion of the work, the Committee Chairperson will gather all personal notes and deliver them to the Office of the appropriate Dean or Employment Services to be archived.
SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FACULTY CANDIDATES

This is a sampling of generic questions to assist Screening Committees in developing interview questions that may be asked of candidates for faculty positions.

- Describe your teaching style.
- Describe your teaching philosophy.
- What technology applications have you utilized in the classroom?
- How do you engage students, particularly in a course for non-majors?
- Share your ideas about professional development.
- In your opinion, how should the workload of a faculty be split and into what areas?
- What changes have you brought to the teaching of (particular discipline)?
- How would you go about being an advocate and resource for the use of technology in the teaching and learning process?
- What courses have you created or proposed in the past five years?
- What do you think are the most important attributes of a good instructor?
- Where does this position fit into your career development goals?
- How do you define good teaching?
- What do you think are your greatest strengths as an instructor?
- In which areas do you feel you can use some further development?
- How do you feel your teaching style can serve the student population of the University of Central Oklahoma?
- In what professional development activities have you participated over the past few years?
- What pedagogical changes do you see on the horizon in (particular discipline)?
- How would your background and experiences strengthen this academic department?
- How do you adjust your style to the less-motivated and under-prepared student?
- How have you involved your students in your research?
- What are your current research interests?
- What are the most recent books and articles that you have read?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO AVOID

Questions relating to an applicant's race, color, religion, age, gender, national origin, or disability CANNOT be asked during an interview because they are illegal. Questions to avoid include:

- Are you a U.S. citizen?
- Where were you born?
- What is your birth date?
- Do you have a disability?
- Are you married?
• What is your spouse's name?
• Do you have any children?
• Do you have childcare arrangements?
• What church do you attend?

The following questions should be asked only when there is a bona fide, job-specific reason to ask them. If asked of one candidate, they should be asked of all candidates for the same position:

• Do you have any responsibilities that would conflict with the job's attendance or travel requirements?
• Are you able to work in the United States on an unrestricted basis?
• Are you able to perform the duties on the job description with or without reasonable accommodations?
• Do you have any conflicts that would prevent you from working the schedule discussed?
• What languages do you speak or write fluently?
• Have you worked under any other professional name or nickname?
• Do you have any relatives currently working for the College?
• Would you have any problem working overtime if required?

The basic rule of thumb is to ask questions that pertain to the particular position and the experiences/education of the candidate. Do not try to gather "personal" information about a candidate. If candidates disclose unsolicited personal information do not question them about it unless there is a job-related reason to do so.

Evaluation Forms: Committees may elect to utilize either set of sample evaluations which follow or create a combination of both. The first is more general and the second is specific and more directly related to faculty positions.
SAMPLE INTERVIEW EVALUATION BASED ON GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Candidate's Name _____________________  
Date of Interview ______________  
Position for Which Interviewed ________________________________

1. Candidate's strengths:

2. Candidate's weaknesses:

3. Describe your level of satisfaction with the candidate's responses to questions asked? Which questions, if any, were left unanswered?

4. Does this candidate appear to be able to perform the job?

5. What reservations, if any, do you have about this candidate's ability to succeed at the University of Central Oklahoma?

6. Other comments.

7. Where do you rank this candidate in relation to the other candidates who have been interviewed?

Name of Individual Completing Form ________________________________
SAMPLE INTERVIEW EVALUATION FOR FACULTY CANDIDATES

Candidate's Name ________________________________
Date __________________

Position for Which Interviewed ________________________________

- MASTERY OF A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

In your opinion, did the candidate have sufficient mastery of a body of knowledge in (specific discipline)?

Was the candidate's area of professional emphasis evident and was his/her level of knowledge in this area sufficient to be considered expert?

- TEACHING ABILITY

Was the candidate's teaching philosophy consistent with the needs and expectations of UCO faculty and students?

How would you evaluate the candidate's presentation?
• SCHOLARSHIP

Did the candidate have a well thought out and planned research agenda?

Has the candidate been published and presented papers? How often and where?

• SERVICE RELATED TO THE PROFESSION

What committees has the candidate worked on?

What professional associations does the candidate participate in?

Overall Evaluation

Excellent Candidate _____

Good Candidate _____

Unacceptable Candidate _____

Name of Individual Completing this Form_______________________________
QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATING CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

• Was the candidate's bearing professional?
• Was the candidate well prepared?
• Was the learning objective clear?
• Did the candidate attempt to establish rapport with the class?
• Did he/she demonstrate mastery of his/her subject?
• Did he/she present the subject matter in an effective manner --clarity, well paced?
• Were learning aids used? If so, how effective were they?
• How did he/she handle questions from the class?
• Did the candidate engage the class and hold its attention?
• Did the presentation start and end on time?
• Did you learn something worthwhile from the presentation?

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES FOR EVALUATING A CANDIDATE'S POTENTIAL "FIT" TO THE DEPARTMENT AND COLLEGE

The following list includes examples of attributes that might be sought by a department and the College. Screening Committees can use this as a guide in developing a list for the particular search they are involved in.

Attributes Sought by a Department

• Team oriented
• Flexible in terms of job responsibilities and their evolution.
• Customer service oriented
• Possesses leadership experience
• Possesses sense of humor
• Supports flexible scheduling
• Supports professional development
• Understands diverse learning styles
• Has published, given presentations, done research, received grants
• Has interdisciplinary emphasis

Attributes Sought by the College

• Supports diversity
• Welcomes innovation, creativity, new perspectives
• Supports community service
• Understands and is open to making accommodations for people with disabilities
• Is technologically savvy
For Further Screening/Hiring Information, Contact:

Academic Affairs  Employment Services  UCO Legal Counsel
lbeasley@uco.edu  cirwin3@uco.edu  bmorelli@uco.edu
ADM 228  ADM 204  ADM 114D
405.974.3371  405.974-2327  405.974.3377

For more information on Full-time Faculty and Adjunct Hiring see appendix C & D in the Faculty Handbook

http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/faculty-staff/handbook.asp