Guide to Equity
In the Student Assistant Hiring Process

This guide outlines expectations and responsibilities for a hiring department when hiring a Student Assistant. It is designed to support a fair, consistent, and equitable recruitment process while maintaining confidentiality and compliance with university and legal requirements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Hiring Department

The Hiring Department is responsible for:

- Document creation:
  - Position Description
  - Interview Questions
- Completing an optional reference check
- Making sure a student is eligible for student employment
- If using work study funds, verifying the student has work study funds available
- Selecting the final candidate
- Notifying candidates not selected after interviews or second interviews

Challenging Bias in Hiring

Bias can influence decisions at any stage of the recruitment process. Committee members share responsibility for recognizing and addressing bias when it appears.

During applicant review and interviews, committee members are expected to:

- Only consider candidates that are tied to the hiring department
- Give each applicant equal time, focus, and consideration
- Minimize distractions and take breaks as needed to support thoughtful decision making
- Use the interview questions submitted and limit additional commentary

Areas Where Bias May Appear

- Language or personal assumptions about a candidate
- Vague statements about fit that are not tied to job related criteria
- Unequal time or attention given to applicants
- Lack of consideration for accessibility needs

When bias is identified, it should be acknowledged and removed from the decision-making process. **For example:** If a committee member departs from the approved interview questions due to a personal connection or shared background with a candidate, the chair should address this professionally after the interview and remind the committee of the importance of consistency.

Types of Bias

- **Confirmation Bias**: We make snap decisions based on perceived truths and then spend the rest of the time, subconsciously or not, trying to justify our bias
- **Affinity Bias**: We are more inclined to hire/promote candidates who have similar traits as us
- **Conformity Bias**: When decision making is affected by group members
- **Halo Effect**: Focusing too heavily on one positive aspect of a candidate, like where they went to school or who they know
- **Horn Effect**: The opposite of the Halo Effect, when something bad about the candidate negatively grabs our attention and we can't move beyond it

- **Performance Bias**: Overestimating or underestimating ability based on race
- **Illusory Correlation**: Assuming a relationship where none exists
- **Beauty Bias**: Associating appearance with competence
- **Contrast Bias**: Comparing candidates to each other rather than to criteria
- **Intuition Bias**: Framing personal preference as gut instinct

Committee Guidelines

To protect applicant privacy and the integrity of the recruitment process, committee members agree to:

- Not conduct outside searches, including internet or social media reviews
- Limit notes to information directly related to application materials and interview responses
- Ensure all committee members have an equal voice in screening and interview discussions, regardless of role
- Not ask or prompt applicants about current or past compensation at any stage of the process

Interview questions have been reviewed and approved by Human Resources to ensure compliance with Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DGEH) guidelines and to prevent discriminatory inquiries. Committee members must use only the pre-approved questions and should not deviate from them during interviews.

Interview Best Practices

The following are best practices for search committee chairs to utilize during the interview process.

In-Person Interview

Preparing for an interview:

1. As soon as a date and time for the interview has been established, send a calendar invite to the search committee with the date, time and location of the interview.
2. Send a confirmation email and/or calendar invite to the candidate with the date and time of the interview, location of the interview, and who to ask upon arrival. Also include the position description as an attachment in the email or calendar invite.
3. Print out the interview questions for the applicant so that they can both see and hear the questions being asked during the interview.

Logistics:

1. Provide the candidate with contact information for the chair of the committee in case the candidate needs to reschedule or if they have any questions.

Etiquette:

1. Ask for clarification on proper pronunciation of name (if needed).
2. If the interview is going to involve physical activity or some other nontraditional interview style, make sure to remind the candidate what attire would be suitable for the interview or if there are additional items they need to bring (portfolio etc.).
3. At the close of the interview, make sure to thank the candidate for their time and let them know they will be contacted either by phone or email with the outcome of the interview.
4. Committee members must not discuss a start date or share any information, during or after the interview, that could imply an offer or selection.

Special Accommodations:

1. Will the candidate need any special accommodations?

Zoom Interview

Preparing for an interview:

1. As soon as a date and time for the interview has been established, send a calendar invite to the search committee with the date, time and Zoom interview link.
2. Send a confirmation email and/or calendar invite to the candidate with the date and time of the interview and include the Zoom interview link. Also include the position description as an attachment in the email or calendar invite.
3. Make sure the search committee has copies of the interview questions, and all members know which questions they are asking.
4. One person from the search committee should arrive at least 15 minutes early for the Zoom interview and establish a waiting room, unless this is a standard setting on your zoom.
5. That member should oversee allowing people into the Zoom meeting room.
6. Once all members of the search committee have been added to the Zoom meeting room, ensure everyone is ready and has everything they need. Then allow the candidate into the Zoom meeting room.
7. One member of the committee needs to oversee copying and pasting the interview questions into the chat as soon as the questions are asked.

Etiquette:

1. All search committee members should have video capabilities when the interview is taking place.
2. If you need to go off video during the interview for a brief amount of time, excuse yourself.
3. Make sure you are muted if you are not speaking. Unmute when it is your turn to ask a question or speak.
4. Have a well-lit, professional background visible for Zoom interviews. You can blur the background or have a background theme selected if desired.

Please contact your HR representative if you have additional questions or if you believe there is an issue with a search, including process concerns or potential bias.

LaReesa Solis-Myers
530-898-5389
lsolis-myers@csuchico.edu

Additional Links and Information

- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Recruitment and Selection Guidelines
- Department of Fair Employment and Housing Fact Sheet
- AB 168 – Effective January 1, 2018