

## Search and Interview Committee Guidelines

Search and Interview committees play a vital role in recruiting, evaluating, and recommending the most qualified candidates for employment at the University. Committee members are often the first University employees that a candidate will meet. Each member has an opportunity to represent the University as a welcoming community while carrying out the search in accordance with university policies and procedures.

At any point in the process, the Office Human Resources Management is available to answer questions and discuss specific situations, offer recommendations and provide in-service training. Please contact the EEO/Employee Relations Manager at 601-877-6188.

### Composition of the Search or Interview Committee

The hiring manager may appoint either the search committee chair who is charged with selecting the committee members, or both the chair and the remaining members of the committee. The structure of committees will vary among departments, offices, schools and colleges, depending upon the position to be filled. The composition of a committee is key to a broad search and the committee should:

- Include individuals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise.
- Include individuals with knowledge of the substantive area and the technical expertise to effectively evaluate candidates' qualifications.
- Include appropriate stakeholders such as peers of the new hire, supervisors, and those with similar positions.

### Committee Membership

A Search Committee can be used for coaches or executive-level positions. An Interview committee can be used for all positions and should only consist of 3-5 members.

A committee member cannot serve on a committee when he/she is also an applicant for the position. If a search committee member is well acquainted with or has a conflict of interest regarding an applicant, the member must:

- Notify the chair and the committee of the nature of the relationship; and
- Recuse him/herself from the entire committee if unable to perform an objective and equitable review of all candidates; or
- Recuse him/herself from the evaluation and interview of only the known applicant, with the agreement of the chair and committee

*Any questions regarding specific conflict situations should be directed to the EEO/Employee Relations Manager. For roles and responsibilities or committee members, refer to the **Search and Interview Committee Toolkit**.*

## Interviews

**Important:** If uncertainties arise, before scheduling candidates for interview, interview questions can be submitted to the EEO/Employee Relations Manager for review. Once the committee chair or hiring manager has received approval, the committee may go through as many rounds of interviews as necessary to identify the selected candidate. It is important, however, to be consistent during the interview rounds.

All members of the committee should participate in all interviews to ensure fair and consistent evaluation of each applicant. Prior to conducting any interview, all committee members should discuss the objective(s) of the interview and the main topics or areas to be covered during the interview. Interview questions must be related to the job and essential to determining the candidate's qualifications for the position.

Committees should develop a core set of questions for all applicants that will elicit sufficient information to make an evaluation of the candidates' qualifications and allow an equitable comparison of the candidates. To ensure fairness, the interview experience should be consistent, providing the same opportunities to each candidate.

In addition, committee members should review the Search and Interview Committee Toolkit to be aware of questions that are unlawful and should not be asked during the interview. Everyone participating in the interview process should be made aware of inappropriate topics and questions. Also, please bear in mind that the same questions that are inappropriate or unlawful during a formal interview are also inappropriate and unlawful in a social or less formal interview session with an applicant.

## Recommendation of Final Candidates

1. **Important:** Create a file- either electronic or paper- to store all the forms and documentation used as part of the process and submit to the EEO/Employee Relations Manager in HRM. This documentation must be kept on file for a minimum of 3 years. This documentation will be used to support the hiring decision should it later be challenged, such as through a discrimination claim. You only want to keep the official documentation, such as screening matrix, interview evaluations, reference checks and selection documentation. Handwritten notes from the interview, for instance, can be discarded as the relevant information is provided on the interview evaluation.
2. Refer to the Hiring Process on the HRM Employment Resources page.

**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Search Committee Packet  
And  
Confidentiality Statement**

I, the undersigned, understand that all information gathered in the preparation of my participation for any Alcorn State University Search Committee, is ***strictly confidential*** upon knowledge or receipt of any personnel material, including all application materials, resumes, personal documents, wage information, or employee scoring pertaining to interviews or candidate selection and/or placement.

I further acknowledge that, I solely, am responsible for all documents given to me by the Office of Human Resources Management. Each item must be considered confidential and returned to HR upon completion of the interviewing process.

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand all instructions of the Search Committee Packet and interview compliance training by the Office of Human Resources. I have also been told where to find hiring practices according to Alcorn State University policy on their website, as another resource.

I further understand that this completed acknowledgement form will become a permanent part of my Official Personnel File, housed in the Office of Human Resource Management. My signature on this acknowledgement form does not modify my employment relations with my employer. However, any contradiction/breach to this agree may result in discipline or immediate termination of the search committee member.

I agree with the Training Acknowledgement stated above. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree (initials)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Human Resources Only	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 300px; height: 150px; margin: 10px;"></div>	HR Trainer: _____
	Search Position: _____