

Hiring Process FAQs

Q. I am hiring a non-exempt employee, what do I need to know?

A. Non-exempt positions must be advertised for 7 calendar days; no external advertising is required. We recommend having at least 2 people on the search committee (committee chair + 1) to avoid bias.

Q. I am hiring an exempt employee, what do I need to know?

A. Exempt positions must be advertised for 30 calendar days with a required national advertisement on higheredjobs.com (placed by HR). Best practice is at least 3 committee members (committee chair +2) however your dept/college may require more. All interview candidates must be approved by the Department Head/Director. An approval email must be triggered on the jobs website, this will send an email from the system with the applicant's documents attached and the approver simply replies to the email (the reply will go to the committee chair) with their response. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to update the jobs website when approval has been received.

Q. I am conducting a faculty search, what do I need to know?

A. Please see Section 400: Faculty Policies (Faculty Code) <https://hr.usu.edu/policies/>

Q. What is the difference between the advertised salary and the budgeted salary?

A. The advertised salary is how you wish to advertise the salary to applicants. If a specific amount is listed in the advertised salary the department is held to that amount and cannot go above or below, otherwise it is considered false advertising. If there is room for negotiation the salary should be advertised as Minimum \$XX, XXX or Commensurate with experience. Budgeted salary is an internal field that is not viewable to applicants where the department can list a range or other budget notes.

Q. Can I hire an employee at a different FTE than what was advertised?

A. No, if you listed a specific FTE the employee must be hired at the same FTE advertised. If there are options regarding FTE, please specify the range in the job advertisement. Positions cannot be evaluated to change FTE until after the employee was worked for 3 months.

Q. What do I need to do to close out my job?

A. It is the department's responsibility to ensure the job is updated and closed out properly. Please update your job as you go along in the search to ensure applicants hear back on their application in a timely manner. Each applicant must be updated to show where they were de-selected and have a disposition code (reason for non-selection) listed. Updating the job status to Filled is critical as this status update is what will pull the job from the website and prevent further applications and also notify HR that the position has been filled. Instructions for closing out your job can be found in the Hiring Toolkit at http://hr.usu.edu/employment/resources/hiring_toolkit.

Q. What is the different between the De-selected Called/Manual Email and De-selected Auto Email option?

A. De-selected Called/Manual Email indicates that the applicant has been de-selected and the department wishes to either call or draft a manual email outside of the system to the candidate notifying them of the update. De-selected Auto Email will send an email from the system right after that option is selected notifying the candidate that we appreciate their time and wish them the best but they will not be moving forward in the search. Only select this option when you are sure you will not be considering this candidate further as the email is sent automatically.

Q. What should I do if I have a Dual Career Assistance (DCA) or Reduction in Force (RIF) candidate apply for my position?

A. Please call HR as soon as the candidate applies to verify eligibility and clarify any questions you may have. Our goal is to keep the DCA/RIF process and regular hiring process separate. Please review the candidate's materials and if the candidate meets the minimum qualifications of the position a priority interview should be extended. The candidate should be interviewed before reviewing any other applications if possible and evaluated based on their own merit and qualifications. Please see Policy 385 for more information <https://hr.usu.edu/files/policies/385.pdf>.

Application Review, Interviews, and Reference Checks

Q. When can I start reviewing applications and scheduling interviews?

A. The committee can review applications as they are received. The committee cannot move forward in the search or schedule interviews until after the review date listed on the job advertisement.

Q. Do I have to conduct interviews for all applicants in the same format?

A. As an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer all applicants must be interviewed in the same format (e.g. in-person, Skype, phone, etc). If you have any questions, please contact Human Resources.

Q. How should unsolicited reference information (either phone call or personal conversation) be handled?

A. Information should be accepted, with thanks. We want as much valid information as possible to make an informed employment decision. The individual who receives the information should just take notes on the information given and submit it to the search committee. The person receiving the information should inquire as to the relationship the individual has with the candidate (i.e., colleague, friend, relative, ex-relative, etc.) and ask for a way to contact the reference for additional information or verification. Negative references must be corroborated by another reference; as positive references should be corroborated.

Q. Can we contact other references?

A. We suggest that if there are individuals not listed as references that would give valuable information, contact the candidate(s) to inform them of the committee's intention to communicate with other references. The candidate then has the opportunity to 1) contact those references to let them know of

the impending call, 2) explain the reason for the omission as a reference, or 3) withdraw from consideration.

Q. Can the committee ask different questions of the interviewees?

A. A structured interview protocol is highly recommended to prevent any appearance of discrimination. Each interviewee should have a similar interview procedure; meet with the same people, have the same logistical arrangements, be asked the same questions, etc. If one candidate's answer necessitates a follow-up question, that question does not need to be asked of other candidates. Also, answer any questions that the interviewee asks of the committee.

Q. What is the difference between a "Search" committee and a "Selection" committee?

A. Both "search" and "selection" committees evaluate each of the applications submitted for the position and they determine acceptable interviewees. The separation between the two definitions is distinct. A Search committee forwards the names of acceptable candidates (either ranked or unranked, as the Department Head decides) to the Department Head or Dean/Vice President who then makes the hiring decision. On the other hand, a Selection committee and the Department Head make a joint hiring selection.

Q. Who can be a member of a Hiring Committee?

A. The administrator needs to consider the efficacy of each prospective member's contribution to the committee. A potential committee member should be selected for the candid and thoughtful perspective he/she can bring. Students, non-USU employees, the exiting employee, etc. can certainly be included if those individuals are capable of ascertaining minimum and preferred qualifications. Each committee member's vote will have equal value. Diversity in gender and ethnicity among the committee members is preferred.

Q. Can other individuals see the applications?

A. We want any qualified individual to feel comfortable about applying for a position at Utah State University. We believe that respecting the privacy of those individuals is paramount. Hiring committees are given a charge of confidentiality. Individuals who are not official members of hiring committees should not have access to any pre-interview information. The administrator who selects the committee makes the final decision on the composition of the committee. However, additional committee members can be added/removed at the administrator's discretion. Often, colleagues and staff are asked for input to evaluate those who have been chosen as finalists for positions. At that time, interviewee information can be made available to others.

Q. Can a hiring committee interview without the entire committee?

A. The recommendation is that a majority of committee members be present; and that the missing member(s) is given appropriate notes. The missing member does not have to abstain from voting.

Q. How can networking be utilized in soliciting applications?

A. Collegial networking is a proven method of increasing the applicant pool. However, caution must be used in informing a prospective candidate about a job opening. Please do not use phrases which might

lead an applicant to believe he/she has an advantage over other applicants. Phrases like the following would be appropriate: "A position is available at Utah State University in your area of expertise for which you may want to become an applicant. I would be happy to provide you with the job description or website information." Also, this is a great opportunity to "sell" Utah State University as a great employer.

International Hiring

Q. What questions can you ask a "foreign national" candidate?

A. The applications for foreign nationals must be evaluated exactly the same as for all other candidates. Interviewees should all (U.S. citizens included) be asked a question such as "If you are offered this position, will you be able to get employment authorization?" The only time that discrimination against a "foreign national" is lawful, is if there are two equally well qualified finalists: one is a U.S. citizen and the other is a foreign national. An offer can be made to the U.S. citizen without prejudice.

Q. How can you tell if a candidate can get work authorization?

A. Search committees should (and can, lawfully) ask interviewees if they have current U. S. work authorization. If the individual answers, "Yes," you may ask what visa the individual has. Usually, individuals finishing their PhDs in the United States have an F-1 visa. Often, individuals with J visas are required to return to their home country for a minimum of two years prior to accepting U.S. employment (sometimes the two-year home stay is waived). An H (specialty) visa is temporary in nature (maximum of six [6] years at a time).

Q. What is the cost to get an H visa?

A. The Human Resources Office is able to assist departments that need to get a sponsorship (H) visa for their prospective employees. An H visa will cost the department \$1425 for a single individual; \$1715 for an employee with dependents. The federal approval process is currently taking approximately 4 to 8 months. However, "premium processing" (a decision is made within a 15-day period) is available for an additional \$1225.

Q. Will an H visa suffice for a tenure-track position?

A. An H visa is only a bridge for a tenure-track position. A foreign national must apply for "permanent resident" status within the initial 18 months of employment. USU currently is not prepared to handle "permanent resident – green card" petitions. There are immigration attorneys who can assist in that process.