



## **SEARCH, SCREENING AND HIRING PROCEDURES**

For Full-time Faculty, Administrative and Professional/Technical Positions

### **Philosophy and Strategic Framework**

Santa Fe College's mission, values, goals and priority initiatives collectively define its role in a rapidly changing environment during this 21st century. The institution's response to change should be timely, effective and efficient.

The college values open access, academic excellence, and cultural and ethnic diversity. The college's workforce is the primary means through which its mission, values, goals and priority initiatives are translated into actions that facilitate student learning and success. The college's workforce is also its single greatest asset and its most significant capital investment.

In order to ensure the college's long-term effectiveness and credibility in facilitating student learning and success, the work force is required to respond to opportunities resulting from change as we strive to fulfill institutional mission through commitment to open access, excellence and diversity. Therefore, among the college's most important initiatives and strategic decisions are the continual development of current staff and selection of new staff.

The framework used in selecting the most appropriate candidate for a position shall necessarily extend beyond academic credentials, experiences, and basic position descriptions. Desirable candidates should possess the following essential qualities:

- Commitment to college mission and values and to college goals and priority initiatives.
- Commitment to carry out the mission and goals of the unit.
- Shared accountability for student learning and success.
- Ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively in a diverse college environment.
- Capability of making appropriate use of technology in performing duties.
- Commitment to support new initiatives and to assist in the facilitation of change.
- Ability and qualifications to serve in more than one discipline or unit.
- Willingness to serve at various sites and times in the college district.
- Commitment to continual growth and development.
- Commitment to teaching students of open door access.
- A passion for their subject matter.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

Santa Fe College is a non-discrimination employer committed to multicultural diversity within our college through equal opportunity and equal access. The framework for the process of selecting new members for the college's workforce is fundamentally based on college policies and procedures, which include the SF Strategic Plan and the SF Employment Accountability Plan; the requirements of accrediting agencies; and all applicable federal and state laws.

In this regard, all persons possessing minimum job classifications, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, religion, age, disability, sex, pregnancy status, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, political opinions or affiliations, or veteran status, must be provided an equal opportunity to compete for employment.

### **Public Records Laws**

All materials associated with committee meetings, interviews, and applicant information are subject to the public records laws of Florida. Committee members must understand this requirement and their role in the process. Pursuant to the public records laws, anything that is used in the search, screening and hiring process for reviewing, scoring or interviewing,

can be requested by the public. Certain personal notes need not be shared except by subpoena or court order. Only the committee chair maintains an official file of the process, which the committee chair submits to HR at the end of the process, including any copies of applications, which the committee chair submits to HR at the end of the process. The Human Resources department is the official contact for all inquiries regarding the process and is the records custodian of all documents related to the process. All questions regarding the search, screening and hiring process, including requests for information, should be directed to the Recruitment and Retention Specialist or the Coordinator of Human Resources.

## **The Search Process**

### *Posting and Advertising*

- The department head should request that a position be posted by the submission of a completed "Request for Posting" form that requires approval from budget signature authority up through the division Vice President.
- Human Resources, in collaboration with the administrative leadership of the department, will prepare the position announcement, which shall include or reflect:
  - o Clearly defined criteria that are objective in nature and directly related to duties and responsibilities of the position.
  - o Information regarding required application materials that must be submitted, including cover letter, resume, copies of transcripts, professional references, starting date, and closing date (or a statement that the position will remain open until filled).
  - o The college's commitment to equal employment opportunity and right to extend deadlines or to withdraw position postings.
- Human Resources and the administrative leadership of the department, within the context of institutional guidelines, shall collaboratively develop research-based advertisement, recruitment and search strategies designed to attract a diverse pool of applicants.
- Diligent recruitment efforts must be conducted in order to ensure interested and qualified individuals have sufficient opportunity to apply and to generate a candidate pool with an ample number of qualified applicants that includes women and minorities.
- The pool for administrative, faculty and professional/technical positions will be monitored, to the extent possible, to determine the representation of women and minorities. If deemed necessary, the search will be extended as recommended by the administrative leadership of the department.
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- Positions are usually advertised on the college's website, the campus job board located in the Alan J. Robertson Administration building, and/or other appropriate locations based on the type of position.

### *Application Process*

- Applicants will submit required documents and other materials to Human Resources, where received items are logged and grouped by HR personnel.
- HR personnel will notify applicants as to whether all required items have been received, and note which items, if any, are needed to complete the application process. Correspondence with applicants will be noted on the applicant log.
- Files will be considered incomplete until all required items have been received. Once a file is complete, it is marked with a "C" and the date that indicates when the last item was received.
- Human Resources will record the ethnicity and gender of each applicant if applicant voluntarily provides such information.

- Unofficial transcripts will be accepted for review purposes only. Official transcripts must be on file before an offer of employment can be made.
- Email letters of recommendation will only be accepted if sent directly by the person making the recommendation or forwarded with email sender history that provides the means to verify authenticity of the letter. Emails must be followed by a signed hard copy of an official letter of recommendation.
- Copy of the job posting, minimum qualifications, position profile, and position responsibilities.

## **The Screening Process**

### *Establishing Screening Committees*

Screening committees - which shall be used for all permanent full-time administrative, professional/technical and faculty positions - serve a vital function in the college's search, screening and hiring process. The specific role and primary function of a screening committee are to act on behalf of the college to review and evaluate candidates' files using objective criteria based on information in the job posting; conduct interviews; and recommend for consideration, according to criteria in the charge, those applicants most appropriate for the position.

Screening committees range in size, with five (5) to seven (7) being the average number. An odd number, including the committee chair, is recommended in order to facilitate the ability to reach a majority decision. Committees should not consist of less than three (3) members, with five (5) being the preferred number. Faculty screening committees must include a faculty member from another instructional area.

The administrative leadership of the department will recommend screening committee members to Human Resources for approval based on the following equity considerations. There are three areas in which all committees must have equity in representation: age, gender and ethnicity.

- Age: Members must not all be of the same age group and should include younger and older representatives. Members must represent the varying ages of our employee base.
- Gender: There must be both male and female representation. An equitable ratio is recommended.
- Ethnicity: All committees must have minority representation. The goal is to match community and college student demographics as closely as possible. Therefore, when possible, each standard size committee should have two or more minorities, preferably Black and Hispanic, while larger committees will have more equitable representation. A minimum of one minority member is required for standard size committees. Larger committees should have equitable representation.

The intent of making certain these areas are fully represented is to ensure equitable consideration for candidates of all ages, races and genders.

The individuals selected shall be knowledgeable of college requirements for the position. They should also be aware of the college's commitment to ethnic diversity and how it impacts the unit to which the position is assigned.

### *Committee Appointment and Charge*

Screening committee membership and committee chair will be established by the administrative leadership of the department and sent to Human Resources for approval. Each committee member will be notified of his/her appointment and be provided with a charge from the administrative leadership. The charge should provide the criteria within which the committee will function and may include the following:

- Advisement of the requirement to participate in a comprehensive Human Resources orientation program.
- Guidelines for submitting recommendations. Recommendations shall not come in ranked order. It is recommended that the strengths of the candidates be included in the recommendation. The number of applicants to be recommended for consideration as most appropriate for the position (when possible, the number of applicants recommended for a position should be two (2) more than the number of approved hires for the position). See recommendations section on page 8 for additional information.
- The date by which recommendations should be submitted.
- Department dynamics in regards to diversity and department needs relating to specific qualifications and abilities.

### *Diversity*

The college has a strong commitment to enhancing diversity by promoting the recruitment of minorities. Minorities, both gender and ethnic, should always be given fair and equal consideration in the review process. Santa Fe's application requests information regarding gender and ethnicity, but it is strictly optional for the applicant to provide this information. While this makes it difficult to determine gender or race in the file review process, committee members should always consider the college's commitment to diversity and should make decisions accordingly. Diversity enhancement may mean different things to different departments. In some departments the need for diversity enhancements may be non-traditional minorities (example: nursing programs is a field where male students are being recruited and male faculty members are in the minority).

### *Veteran's Preference*

The interpretation of Veteran's Preference for the purpose of review and interview will be as follows:

- Candidates must request veteran's preference in writing, along with appropriate documentation, usually by way of the application or cover letter.
- Candidates must meet the minimum qualifications as posted.
- Candidates who meet the minimum requirements will be extended an opportunity to interview and shall be given fair consideration as given to all other interviewees.

### *Orientation and Commitment*

Human Resources provides a comprehensive orientation program for members of screening committee at the first meeting and will include the following topics for review, discussion and direction:

- strategic framework for selecting the most appropriate individual for a position
- federal and state laws regarding employment
- roles and responsibilities of the screening committee and screening committee chair
- the public records act
- applicable policies and procedures
- review of applicable SACS criteria
- mission, goals and objectives of the unit
- specifics of screening procedures development of assessment tools, file review, interviews, evaluation/validation of academic credentials, references and work experience, recommendations, communication, correspondence and applicant notification
- ethnic and gender composition of the unit to which the position is assigned
- job description and Standards of Performance
- hiring process
- roles and responsibilities of the administration

Every committee member must be committed to the process in order to ensure all members will attend meetings; review files; participate in committee activities, discussions and decisions; and, most importantly, be available for all interviews. Because each committee member represents areas of equity and brings his or her own expertise to the decision making process, it is essential that committee members realize the importance of making a full commitment to the process. If even one member is not able to participate in a committee-related activity, especially an interview, the activity should be rescheduled at a time when full participation can be realized.

### *File Review*

Committees must first establish an internal timeline for file review, interviews and recommendations based on guidelines they have been provided in the charge. They must then establish a procedure for file review and interviews, including the creation of interview questions.

Search committees determine the criteria by which files will be reviewed using the following guidelines:

- Is the file complete? (For review purposes, screening committees may use the discretion of its members to consider whether or not files are "complete" when all items as required in the posting have not been received, provided that essential items, like the resume, transcripts and application are on file; however, the committee must ensure that it applies this discretion equitably to all applicants).
- Does the applicant meet the minimum qualifications as posted?
- Has the applicant asked for veteran's preference by way of the application or cover letter?
- Does the applicant meet any preferred qualifications that were posted?
- Does the applicant enhance the diversity of the college/program?
- How much applicable experience does the applicant have?
- How closely does the applicant match the criteria as given in the charge?

The suggested process for review and evaluation of applicants' files may include the following.

- A profile screening tool is suggested using the criteria above and other pertinent areas as referenced in the job posting and committee charge. Quantitative scored documents are not recommended.
- Established weights or values for the different attributes that will be considered in the screening process.
- Each committee member should independently evaluate applicants' credentials.
- It is the committee's responsibility, in collaboration with the department head, to verify credentials, references and prior experience. It is suggested that an applicant's current employer only be contacted if a candidate is strongly being considered for employment, as the college does not want to place an applicant's current employment in jeopardy.
- Committee members must come to the Human Resources office to review files. All original documentation must remain in HR, but the committee chair may request that copies be made for necessary applicant information. Typically, one copy of the application package for the candidates to be interviewed is copied and provided to the committee chair for use by the committee.

### *Interviews/Questions*

Prior to interviewing applicants, the screening committee, in consultation with the department head, will compile a list of questions to be used for the formal interview. When developing interview questions, certain guidelines should be considered. Questions should

- remain professional in nature (no questions concerning personal information can be asked)
- be open-ended and conversational
- expand on the qualifications, experience and skills needed to do the job
- investigate the philosophy, values and motivations of the applicant
- be constructed to allow enough time for the candidate to share information and ask questions of the committee
- be uniformly and similarly asked of each candidate, although follow up discussions and questions may vary among candidates based on their responses to the core list of questions
- be approved by Human Resources in advance of the interview process.

In addition, a non-quantitative rating sheet may be constructed that lists various evaluative components of the interview process that contribute to the decision-making process. All members shall independently evaluate the candidates. If the administrative leadership chooses to attend interviews they must be consistent and attend all interviews. Committee will determine the strengths of each candidate and make a recommendation of applicants considered most appropriate for the position. The committee chair will compile the results based on the discussion and committee consensus to be forwarded to the administrative leadership of the department or will meet with the administrative leadership to discuss recommendations.

#### *Interview Format, Scheduling and Expenses*

The format varies by department and is at the discretion of the committee. The process may consist of more than a question/answer format depending on the position. For example:

- **Faculty:** Writing, lecture, test, or syllabus samples may be required. An actual teaching demonstration may be included (this may involve other members of the department outside of the screening committee).
- **Administrators:** A presentation or forum may be required.
- **Professional/Technical:** A presentation or the execution of practical skills required to do the job may be required.

\*Any items collected from applicant during interview process should be forwarded to Human Resources for application file.

Committee members establish scheduled times to conduct interviews. As a general rule, members should allow two to three minutes per question with a five-minute introduction, five-minute wrap-up session and time for the candidate to ask questions. Committees should allow breaks between candidate interviews for the purpose of review and discussion.

The division in which the position exists is responsible for all expenses associated with the interview process. If the division deems that there are sufficient funds available to reimburse for travel expenses, the same level of reimbursement must be provided for all candidates being interviewed. The college does not have funding for sign-on bonuses or relocation expenses.

#### Recommendations

Guidelines for recommendations should have been provided in the charge. See Committee Charge and Appointment on page 4 for more information.

Recommendations for vice president positions and all other positions that report to the president shall be submitted to the president. For all other administrative and faculty position, recommendations will be submitted to the vice president.

Recommendations for professional and technical positions shall be submitted as directed by the vice president.

- Prior to submitting recommendations, the following must be performed:
- Confirmation and validation of academic credentials, references and experience
- Assessment of the impact on the ethnic and gender composition of the unit
- Discussion with each recommended applicant that addresses the appropriate attributes identified in the SF Strategic Framework, job expectations, performance expectations, and the process/criteria for continuance in the position.

It may be necessary for other administrators to interview applicants.

If the committee deems that they are not able to recommend the appropriate number of candidates, as defined in the charge, or does not deem any of the applicants appropriate for recommendation, or if none of the candidates recommended by the search committee are deemed acceptable for offer by the administrative leadership, then the screening committee will be reconvened for further discussion that may result in additional instructions or a revised charge from the administrative leadership. This may result in a return to the applicant pool, extension of the search or re-posting of the position. If acceptable candidates are not available within the remaining pool, appropriate justification should be provided to the administrative leadership who can then request that the search be re-opened. If a clearly preferred candidate is not selected, the administrative leadership will dialog with the committee before a final decision is made.

### **The Hiring Process**

Recommendations for appointments and beginning salaries are made to the Human Resources' Officer. Offers of employment and appointments are made by the Human Resources' Officer, subject to approval by the President or his designee, the District Board of Trustees, the provisions of law, relevant rules of the State Board of Education and Board policy.

#### *Administrators and Faculty Positions*

The administrative leadership shall interview each recommended administrative and faculty applicant. For positions that do not report directly to the president, the vice president will discuss final selection with the president prior to submitting the Request to Offer and Appoint Form to Human Resources for salary and credential review. Official offers of employment are prepared and extended by the Human Resources Office.

#### *Professional/Technical Positions*

The administrator to whom recommendations are submitted shall interview each applicant and make a recommendation to the next level administrator. A Request to Offer and Appoint Form is submitted to Human Resources for salary and credential review. Official offers of employment are prepared and extended by the Human Resources Office.

#### *Notifications*

Prior to the president making a recommendation to the Board, the vice president or administrative leader shall convey final hiring decisions confidentially to members of the screening committee and other administrative personnel.

Human Resources will notify all applicants once the position has been offered and accepted. Questions or inquiries from candidates that were not selected or recommended should be referred to Human Resources for response. Because applicants are notified at the end of the offer process, recommendations and final decisions must be kept confidential until all candidates receive notification. This is especially important when there are internal applicants.

## **Search Summary**

The chair of the screening committee is responsible for recording the process and providing a summary such as the one below to Human Resources to provide a permanent record of the process used with all applicants. It should include basic information, such as

- the names of the committee members
- a copy of the rating sheet or profile used to review the files
- a list of the candidates interviewed and an overview of what separated them from the pool
- a copy of the interview questions and format
- the names of the candidates recommended and rationale
- any other pertinent information regarding the process

This information is essential in responding to questions from applicants that were not selected or for defending our process against discrimination claims.

Santa Fe College (SF) is committed to maintaining a work and educational environment that embraces diversity and where no member of the college community is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or subject to discrimination in any college program or activity based on: their race, ethnicity, national origin, color, religion, age, disability, sex, pregnancy status, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic information, political opinions or affiliations, or veteran status. This commitment applies to employees, volunteers, students, and, to the extent possible, to third parties, applicants for admission, applicants for employment, and the general public.

Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies or concerns about discrimination or harassment, including concerns about sexual harassment or sexual violence under Title IX, should be directed to:

Lara Zwillig, Equity Officer and Title IX Coordinator  
3000 NW 83rd Street, R-Annex, Room 113, Gainesville, Florida 32606  
352-395-5950  
equity.officer@sfcollge.edu



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