Introduction

Adams State College is committed to building diversity of its faculty and staff by supporting recruitment, applicant review, and hiring policies and practices. Through these efforts, Adams State College can continue to meet the needs of its increasingly diverse campus community.

Adams State College's commitment to diversity is also reflected in the Board of Trustee's *Diversity Action Plan* which states in part, "The College will enhance the diversity of the campus community through the recruitment and retention of historically under-represented diverse populations."

The faculty and administrative search procedure manual specifies procedures that are used for recruitment, selection, and faculty appointments for tenure-track faculty, executive, administrative, and other positions that represent similar levels of responsibility. Administrative positions with a lower level of responsibility may utilize a separate process, also outlined in this document.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance to those most directly involved in the search process, i.e. President or designate, Department Chair, Search Committee Chair, Search Committee, Staff Support, and the Office of Equal Opportunity.

The guidelines in this manual are designed to create consistency in the process and to meet most contingencies. In those instances when they may appear inappropriate, discussion and modification are always possible. One must remember that the search process is a tool used to achieve the goal of finding, hiring, and retaining employees who contribute to the College's mission.
Chapter One

I. Search Responsibilities – Full-Time Tenure Track Faculty

President or Designate Responsibilities

1. Oversees the hiring process to ensure compliance with policies/procedures.

2. Makes determination if vacancy is to be filled.

3. Oversees, in conjunction with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, the vacancy announcement, position description, terms of appointment, and any special considerations.

4. Meets with candidates during campus visits. Exchanges perspectives of candidates with search committee chair, department chair, and search committee. A consensus candidate is selected with approval of the president or designate.

5. Meets with Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity to review the search procedure and the selected candidate.

6. Issues a letter to the selected candidate offering the position and outlining the terms of the appointment.

7. When the selected candidate confirms his/her acceptance of the job offer, the President or designate approves the appointment by affixing his/her signature and sending the contract to the appointee.

8. The President of the college submits the name of the appointee-elect to the Board of Trustees.

Department Chair Responsibilities

1. Submits request to fill vacancy to the President or designate.

2. In conjunction with appropriate division staff, search committee chair, and the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, approves the vacancy announcement, position description, qualifications, terms of appointment,
special considerations and approved Personnel Contract Recommendation to the President or designate.

3. With the approval of the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, appoints a search committee chair and in conjunction with the search committee chair submits the names of the search committee, ensuring diversity.

4. May serve as search committee chair.

5. Meets with final candidates during campus visits. Exchanges perspective on candidates with the search committee and the hiring authority.

6. Consults with the President or designate on consensus candidate.

Search Committee Chair Responsibilities

1. With approval of department chair, drafts a vacancy announcement, position description, qualifications, terms of appointment, and special considerations.

2. In conjunction with department chair, selects the members of the search committee, ensuring diversity (minimum of three members).

3. Responsible for knowing, following, and advising the search committee on the procedures to be used during the search and ensuring that the search is conducted fairly and efficiently. Establish a timetable for the search.

4. Schedule orientation with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity for the first meeting of the search committee.

5. Distributes the Search Committee Code of Ethics form (see Appendix A).

6. In conjunction with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, develops a rating evaluation form.

7. Develops a recruitment and advertising plan with the search committee.

8. Oversees the receipt of all applications to determine if they are complete. May notify applicants who do not meet the minimum qualifications.
9. Directs the use of telephone interviews and other screening processes.

10. Directs reference checks, including preparation of Candidate Release forms. (Appendix B)

11. Guide’s the committee in the submission of final candidates

12. Arranges travel accommodations (through staff support) for each candidate to be interviewed on campus and arranges itinerary, which includes a public interview and demonstration of teaching.

13. Participates in interview process and hosts candidates while on campus.

14. Following the campus visit, exchange perspectives on the candidates with the search committee, department chair and hiring authority.

15. Handles all communication from the committee throughout the search process. The chair will be responsible for ensuring that all steps are completed in a timely fashion and communication lines are kept open. A commitment to the goals of diversity and excellence are crucial.

Search Committee

1. The role of the search committee is to evaluate and recommend candidates to fill positions. The committee is an advisory body empowered to assess applicants and report those assessments to the hiring authority.

2. Search committee members should have a legitimate interest in the selection process. Every effort should be made to balance the search committee with members of underrepresented groups. Search committee members may include individuals outside of the department based on their area of expertise to ensure diversity. In some instances students, or individuals outside the campus community, may be appointed to ensure diversity or for a position requiring a specific area of expertise.

3. Sign’s and adheres to the Code of Ethics form (appendix C).

4. Attends initial orientation meeting with Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
5. May have assisted in writing the position description.

6. Assists search committee chair with a recruitment strategy plan.

7. Assists search committee chair in establishing time table.

8. Screens applications to ensure requested documents are received. Utilizing the rating instrument, evaluates applicants qualifications.

9. May assist in conducting telephone screening interviews.

10. May assist in conducting reference checks.

11. May assist search committee chair with travel accommodations, interviewing schedules, preparation of letters, etc. when requested.

12. Participates in interviewing and observation of candidates in different settings.

13. The search committee submits recommendations of up to three (3) candidates in ranked order to the President or designate.

Staff Support

1. Staff support will normally be provided by an individual on the support staff of the search committee chair or department chair.

2. Although not a voting member of the committee, the staff support person may at the discretion of the search committee chair attend meetings and as such will be held to the same expectations of confidentiality as voting members. The staff support will sign and adhere to the Code of Ethics Form.

3. Staff support will develop and maintain candidate files, forward correspondence and maintain records.

4. Assist with schedule of meetings, interviews and travel.

5. May provide administrative support in other areas as directed by the committee chair, including the taking of notes at meetings.
Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity

1. Reviews and approves the draft position description for a vacant position.

2. Reviews membership of search committee for appropriate diversity.

3. Conducts search committee orientations for tenure-track positions and relevant administrative positions.

4. Reviews all applicant files before and after selection by the search committee.

5. Reviews and approves the rating form to be utilized by the search committee.

6. Serves as the contact person for the conflict of interest matters and renders recommendations for referrals including the Provost.

7. May attend search committee meetings when necessary.

8. Assists in establishing a time table for the search process.

9. Maintains appropriate records of search.

10. Reviews and approves final candidate to be selected.
II. Search Responsibilities (Administrative/Professional positions) with higher levels of responsibility

Search responsibilities are the same as tenure-track faculty with the following exceptions (*The search committee may elect to utilize the same procedure utilized for tenure track faculty):

President or Designate

1. The President may delegate authority to additional officers.

2. The Department Chair may be replaced by a Division Director.

3. Search Committee Chair - no change.

Search Committee

1. The search committee will submit the names of up to five (5) qualified candidates to the President or designate for review, interview and final discussion.

2. Staff Support - no change.

3. Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity - no change.

*The following additional procedure is utilized for those positions. All full-time position vacancies not to be filled internally should be announced widely for a minimum of fifteen (15) days. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity will maintain an updated advertising list used for this purpose. The search committee may add additional sources to the advertising list. If an administrative/professional position is to be filled internally, other than through a reassignment, the notice of vacancy will be widely circulated through e-mail and the Human Resources website.
III. Search Responsibilities – Administrative and Administrative Support positions with lower levels of responsibilities (*The search committee may elect to utilize the same procedure utilized for higher level administrators.)

1. Division director determines when a vacancy exists that will be filled (the division director serves as the hiring authority).

2. Direct supervisor of vacant position submits to division director a draft announcement of position, including a position description, qualifications, terms of appointment and any special considerations.

3. Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity will review the job announcement and position description.

4. All full-time position vacancies not filled internally should be advertised widely for a minimum of 15 days. If the position is to be filled internally, other than through reassignment, the vacancy notice will be widely circulated through e-mail and the Human Resources website.

5. The direct supervisor will form a screening committee with two other employees who have a legitimate interest in the selection process.

   • The direct supervisor will be a voting member of the committee.
   • Individuals outside of the department or from the community may be selected for the committee.
   • Subordinates of the vacant position may be selected for the committee.

6. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity will conduct an orientation with the screening committee.

7. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity will review all applications upon receipt and prior to making final recommendations.

8. The screening committee will develop a rating form with the assistance of the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity.
9. The screening committee will conduct, as needed, telephone interviews and final in-person interviews (utilizing the Interview Narrative form).

10. Rating forms will be completed, including reasons why a candidate was not selected.

11. Reference checks will be conducted by the screening committee.

12. The screening committee will submit to the President or designate the names of up to three recommended candidates in ranked order.

13. The Division Director consults with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity regarding the recruitment process and recommended candidates. The approved selection is forwarded to the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

14. The supervisor of the position contacts the selected candidates with an offer of employment.
Chapter Two
Recruitment (Full-time faculty)
(Higher level administrative)

Step One: Position authorization, position description and position announcement.

The first step in the search process is to authorize the position to be filled. The department chair or office administrator makes a request to fill a vacant position to the hiring authority. Once approved, the department chair or office administrator appoints a search committee chair and together they appoint a search committee comprised of three (3) individuals. The search committee must be approved by the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and must be reflective of the diversity of the campus community.

The search committee chair, the search committee and director of the office of equal opportunity will develop a current position description. The position description will be reviewed by the hiring authority. With continuing positions, a full and accurate position description may already exist which needs little, if any, modification. Care must be taken to ensure that the description is currently accurate and understandable. Clear examples of the desired work to be performed should be provided. For administrative positions the descriptions should be developed in conjunction with the human resources department.

A vacancy announcement with both required and preferred qualifications is prepared (see Appendix D). Care must be taken to use language which will be inclusive so that the applicant pool will be as diverse as possible, consistent with the position’s responsibilities. Also, it is important that the announcement clearly distinguishes between the required and preferred qualifications.

The search committee chair and committee must also determine the term of the position and any special conditions for the position.

A determination is made by the department chair or office administrator if there will be an internal recruitment (within the campus community) rather than an external search. Some of the issues to be considered are the number of qualified internal applicants, need for specific expertise or credentials only found utilizing an external search, diversity, and budget considerations. If it is decided to do an internal recruitment, a separate procedure will be utilized (see Appendix E).
Step Two: Planning – Developing a Timetable

The timeliness of the search process will be enhanced by advance planning. The search committee should carefully consider a timetable to conduct a search. An example is provided below.

Faculty Position Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Date</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Search authorization approved by hiring authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chair and search committee appointed. Position description and job announcement developed; personnel contract recommendation prepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Search committee orientation with director of equal opportunity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertisement/recruitment proposal approved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deadline set for receipt of applications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation sheets prepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First screening of candidate submittals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Second screening – including telephone interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third screening – committee prepares short list for campus visits and final interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus visits – tour – interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback from interested parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approval by hiring authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job offer made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A search has a progression of steps. Scheduling these steps alongside the academic calendar for faculty searches can help the efficiency of the process.

**Step Three: Recruiting Qualified Candidates**

Each job search presents an opportunity to enhance the diversity of the faculty and staff. It is the collective responsibility of the search committee to do everything within reason to recruit the broadest segment of qualified individuals. It is also the committee’s responsibility to conduct a search that is a positive reflection of the college. Ongoing contact with candidates and nominees regarding search progression, supplying additional information about the position and department, college and community, and prompt attention to candidate questions or concerns are all important recruitment activities beyond the announcement phase of the search.

In addition to developing an effective advertisement, the following methods of recruitment and networking should be considered, primarily for faculty positions.

- Contact prior faculty with announcements.
- Faculty provide announcements to alma maters.
- Notify community of openings.
- Utilize the college “grow your own” policy.
- Recruit through the Foundation and Board of Trustees.
- Network with selected alumni and interested parties.
- Contact specific organizations (professional, minority) where there is a special relationship.
- Utilize a list of agencies to advertise outside of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Take vacancy announcements to conferences and network.
- Promote our Hispanic Serving Institution designation.
- Promote our area and culture.
- Utilize contacts with institutions in neighboring states.
- Utilize informal networks.

Effective recruitment is vital to the search process. Well-written advertisements should help to cut down on applications from persons unqualified for the position and encourage applications from those who are qualified. All advertisements should describe the job and include preferred qualifications. For examples of advertisements (see Appendix F). The recruitment process will be monitored and approved by the director of the office of equal opportunity.
Chapter Three
Screening

Step One: Receiving and responding to candidates

All recruitment periods should include a closing date, or at least a date that indicates when we will begin reviewing applications. An initial screening log is utilized (see Appendix G) to serve as a checklist for all requested materials from the candidate.

All candidates are to be notified in writing of receipt and status of their initial application within ten (10) days after receipt, including any request for additional information.

Step Two: First Screening

The purpose of this screening is to determine if the candidates meet the minimum qualifications listed in the announcement and position description. Also, the first screening serves to eliminate candidates who have not submitted required application materials (see rejection letter – Appendix H).

All required documents, including the candidate release form – Appendix (I) - will be reviewed by at least two members of the search committee. If candidates have not submitted all the required documents by the specified date, further consideration should cease. There may be circumstances when the search committee may request additional documents or allow additional time.

If not already developed, the candidate evaluation or rating form should be prepared. (See Appendix J). It is essential that the job criteria include both preferred and acceptable ratings. Also, there must be a section that lists the candidate’s strengths and weaknesses.

Step Three: Second Screening

The second screening should be more qualitative than the first screening. During the second screening, the search committee will utilize the candidate evaluation/rating form. In order to ensure that evaluations are not influenced by other committee members, there should be no discussion of candidates during the rating process. The criteria must be based on the position description. Only those
criteria that can be assessed through documentation can be rated. Criteria based on information obtained during personal interviews can be rated later.

It is at this time that the telephone screening interview can be utilized. A telephone interview guide, including appropriate sample questions, is provided in Appendix (K).

At the end of the second screening, candidates should be ranked in order of qualifications.

**Step Four: Third Screening**

The search committee will recommend a minimum of three unranked qualified candidates, for faculty and administrative positions, to the hiring authority. The hiring authority will recommend who will be invited for a campus interview. Careful consideration should be extended to include qualified women and minority candidates in the pool of finalists. The search committee must include the strengths and weaknesses of candidates submitted to the hiring authority.

Every effort should be made to notify each candidate of the status of his/her application throughout the search process. If it is clear that the candidate does not meet minimum qualifications, issue a letter to avoid unnecessary duress and thank the applicant for their interest in the position (see Appendix L). The applicant who may not qualify for one position may qualify for another in the future, and we want to be professional in the manner we treat them. Also, e-mail is not confidential, nor an appropriate way to notify candidates of the status of their application.

*Note on confidentiality
When search committee members reach a consensus on the finalists, special care should be taken to safeguard confidentiality and to protect the names of the candidates.

**Step Five: Reference Checks**

The Candidate Release forms (Appendix M) are to be completed, signed, and returned by all candidates before conducting reference checks, or employment verifications. The candidate release forms will be on-line and submitted by candidates with other required documentation.
Background checks may be required for some positions. Please see the attached background check policy (Appendix N).

Reference checks are a very important part of the screening process and may provide legitimate reasons to hire or not hire a candidate. Reference checks should be done by at least one member of the search committee. Beyond verifying information on the candidates' application, reference checks can clarify, corroborate, and assess abilities, skills, personal fit, and other qualifications of the candidate. References should be checked only for finalists in the search.

The search committee must utilize the reference check form (Appendix O). It is important to check recent references and individuals who have observed the candidate's work. References may not be restricted to those individuals listed by the candidate. You may inquire from a listed reference the name of someone else who can add a perspective about the candidate. If questionable verbal information is received, check with other references to either validate or discount the information. There may be occasions when information received from references may warrant consultation with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity or the Human Resources Director.

All other candidates who, while meeting the minimum qualifications would not be considered for the positions in question, should be issued a rejection letter (Appendix P).
Chapter Four
Interview Process Overview

There are several different types of interviews. We will be utilizing three; the screening telephone interview, the formal campus interview, and the informal interview during the campus visit or "12 hour interview". Informal interviewing may also take place during conferences or workshops.

Candidates have a right to expect that applications will be judged against stated measures, normally the requirements of the job, position description, and position qualifications. The personal interview should be designed to assure not only that all candidates are treated equitably, but that they perceive they have been so treated.

The atmosphere surrounding the interview process should encourage candidates and interviewers alike to explore the competencies of the other.

Through the interview process, the following information can be obtained:
1. The candidate's communication skills, personality traits, thinking habits, and motivation;
2. Extent of candidate's interest in position;
3. Information that may not otherwise be obtained;
4. A candidate's academic, research or administrative abilities and interests;
5. The candidates' reactions, attitudes, or philosophy towards issues;
6. Perspectives on diversity and the candidate's ability to work with persons of different backgrounds, ethnicities, and other diverse populations;
7. Assessment of questions asked by candidate;
8. Insights to how candidate would adapt to a rural setting and our campus environment;
9. Other.
General Guidelines

Prior to any interviews, the search committee must become familiar with the candidate’s education, experience, and letter of interest. The candidate’s evaluation rating form should have been partially completed prior to any interview.

Interview guides are provided in the appendix for the three types of interviews. Also included are lists of appropriate and inappropriate or illegal questions. Please follow each guide carefully to ensure consistency and to avoid any violation of law or policies.

The following are some general guidelines in conducting any interview.

- plan the interview process
- interviews should have a basic structure i.e.; introduction, body and conclusion
- carefully develop questions from the preferred qualifications
- all questions should be behavior and performance oriented and legal
- review candidates reference checks
- be prepared to respond to and anticipate candidate’s questions
- carefully document interview on the appropriate form (interview narrative form)
- conduct a thoughtful debriefing by the search committee after each interview
- be mindful during the informal interview process of inappropriate questions and responses

Telephone screening interviews

Telephone screening interviews are a critical step in the candidacy screening process. Candidates should be provided with sufficient notice to prepare and make arrangements for the interview and should be provided with a brief description of the process.

The purpose of the telephone interview is to eliminate unqualified candidates and identify candidates you want to pursue. Certain rules of uniformity should be followed; the same questions asked of all candidates, the same information about the process, and the same members of the search committee should participate in the interviews.
For efficiency and professional presentation, one member of the search committee may be designated as the lead interviewer. The lead interviewer greets the candidate, explains the logistics, introduces the other members present and assures that the agenda of the interview is accomplished.

During the interview each member actively listens to the responses of the candidates. In the last portion of the telephone interview, the candidate is invited to ask questions. At the conclusion of the interview, give the candidate some indication of the time frame for moving the search to the next step and a commitment to communicate the decision in a timely manner. Finally, immediately following the interview, the search committee members who are present should discuss the candidate. When all candidates have been interviewed by telephone, the full search committee should meet and prioritize the candidates. Candidates will be notified immediately if they will no longer be pursued. For the step by step procedure, including questions, please refer to the telephone interview guide in the Appendix (Q).

Informal Interview (12 hour interview)

This normally refers to the time period when candidates visit the campus for their final formal interview, meetings with the department chair, hiring authority, teaching demonstration and meetings with interested parties (i.e. 12 hour interview – time spent on campus).

This can be a valuable process for the candidate and the search committee. During this informal process the candidate is made aware of the distinctive characteristics of the college and the community. It is common practice for one or more persons on the search committee to meet the candidate at the airport, take him or her to the motel, and eat one or more meals together. At these informal meetings, the candidate and host(s) tend to have unstructured conversations. Hobbies, activities, interests, travel, questions about the community, even employment opportunities for a spouse or partner are all potential topics for light conversation. For the host there should be no attempt to pry into matters that deal with areas that are not related to the candidate’s suitability for the position, particularly where the candidate might perceive discrimination.

Those informal discussions are an opportunity for the candidate to learn about the college and community, but also an opportunity for the search committee to learn about the candidate on a more personal level. For the step by step procedure in dealing with this informal interview see Appendix (R).
Formal Interview

The formal interview is a major event in the search process requiring appropriate planning to ensure that the outcome is a success. After the interview and campus visit has been scheduled, send the candidate written confirmation including the agenda for the visit, college catalogue, strategic plan, organizational chart, information from the chamber of commerce, and any other relevant materials.

The search committee already has verified the qualifications of candidates and has assurances from the candidate and references about competencies, skills, knowledge, and personality traits.

The search committee should decide in advance which questions will be asked and by whom. It is beneficial to have an outline prepared of the areas to be covered by the search committee. When a candidate’s answer is particularly interesting, the matter may be pursued at greater depth. The areas to be explained and questions must relate to the position description. At the completion of the interview the candidate evaluation forms should be completed, in private, by each committee member and then the forms are to be discussed as a committee, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates. For a more detailed procedure including specific questions please refer to Appendix (S).

Colloquium/Demonstration/Seminar

Prospective faculty members will conduct a colloquium or teach a class. The colloquium should be attended by all interested parties, and the class session should be observed by members of the search committee and evaluated by members of the search committee and students.
Chapter Five
EEO and Legal Issues

I. Conflict of interest - Search committee members shall be required to sign the Search Committee Code of Ethics form (appendix) to prevent potential conflict of interest situations. Search committee members should not be related by kinship, personal relationship, or be engaged in business ventures with persons who may apply for the vacant position. Persons who are known adversaries of potential applicants likewise should not be members of the search committee. It is incumbent and required that a search committee member disclose to the search committee chair any possible conflict of interest. The search committee chair must discuss any possible conflict of interest with the Director of OEO.

II. Pre-employment inquiries - No questions should be directed to any candidate concerning race, color, religion, national origin, age or disability. Such questions frequently bear no demonstrable relationship to the job applicant’s ability or qualification as an employee and, consequently, serve no lawful purpose. Only information that is necessary to assess an applicant’s competence or qualification for a job should be asked at the pre-hire stage. Information on such matters as marital status, number and age of children, and other matters that may be necessary for insurance, reporting requirements, or other business purposes, can be obtained after a person is hired.

A. Subjective qualities
Motivation, ambition, interest in the job, willingness to accept directions, attitude toward related instruction, maturity, personality, ability to communicate, as well as subjective qualities such as neatness are generally permissible subjects of pre-employment inquiries.

B. Consistency
It is clear, however, that to the extent that a pre-employment inquiry is valid, it should be made with respect to all interviewees. The failure to conduct job interviews in a consistent, standardized manner from one applicant to the next may result in a change of discrimination.

C. Chilling effect
Inquiries that would tend to have a chilling effect on minority employment because they are based on criteria that operate to disqualify women and minorities at a higher rate and non-minorities. (e.g., questions relating to
intentions to have children, credit ratings, military discharge and arrest records are suspect and require a demonstration of job-relatedness.

D. Arrest and criminal records
Questions about arrests are extremely risky because arrests, unlike convictions, are not conclusive evidence that a crime was committed. Even if an offense alleged in an arrest recorded is related to the job in question, the employer must determine whether the applicant actually committed the alleged conduct before it can reject the applicant on the basis of the record.

E. Gender
Pre-employment inquiries as to gender, or asking an applicant to choose among, Mr., Mrs., Ms. as a title, may be made if done in good faith for a non discriminatory purpose; but inquiries that express, directly or indirectly, any limitations as to gender are unlawful unless based on a bona fide occupational qualification.

Questions concerning marital status, pregnancy, future child bearing plans, or number and age of children should be avoided. Such questions can be unlawful if used to deny or limit employment opportunities of female applicants.

F. Religion
Inquiries concerning an applicant’s availability to work during an employer’s scheduled work hours can have an exclusionary effect on the employment opportunities of persons with certain religious practices. These questions can be lawful if the inquiry does not have an exclusionary effect on applicants who need an accommodation for religious practices or the inquiry is justified by business necessity.

G. Age
There is no express prohibition against inquiring about a person’s age at the pre-employment stage. Inquiries about age cannot be made for discriminatory purposes. A person’s actual age will be ascertained after employment for purposes of calculating employee benefits.

A request for information such as, “date of birth,” on an application form is not, in itself unlawful. However, because such requests may tend to deter older applicants from applying, this practice may be problematic.
H. Disability
Inquiries about disabilities are allowed only after a conditional job offer has been made to the applicant.

You may ask about an applicant’s ability to perform the essential functions of the job.

Any questions regarding applicants with disabilities should be addressed to the Director of OEO.

I. Friends or relatives working for ASC
Information about friends or relatives working for the college is not relevant to the applicant’s competence. Requesting such information should only be done in an effort to address any potential conflict of interest or family supervision situation.

J. General rules of thumb
Only ask questions that pertain to the job description and the education/experience of the candidate. Do not try to gather “personal” information about a candidate. If a candidate discusses unsolicited information do not question them about it unless there is a job-related reason to do so.

Avoid any questions related to: age, ancestry, color, disability (mental or physical), gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, serious medical condition, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, and veteran status. Also, questions related to the candidate’s marital status or if they ever availed himself/herself of due process rights are not appropriate.
Chapter Six
Final Selection

The decision on which candidates to recommend for a final interview and campus visit should be made after careful and thorough consideration of all information, the assessments of each of the committee members, feedback from references, and informed dialogue among the committee members.

The tendency at this point (after a long search process) is to want to make a quick decision. It is common for committee members to promote their favorite candidate with the hope that others will agree. While advocating for a candidate is a key factor, weighing the evidence of the candidate’s strengths against the needs of the department and the opinions of the stakeholders are essential factors in the process.

A meeting of the search committee is convened to determine the final applicants.

Prior to the meeting as a whole, each committee member is directed to review the job description, their ratings and assessments of each candidate, reference checks and rank order the candidates.

At the beginning of each meeting, review the job description as a group.

Begin a dialogue about each candidate. Each committee member should present reasons for ranking and evaluating candidates. Prepare a brief summary for each candidate on their strengths and perceived weakness with sufficient evidence to support the recommendation. Utilize the ranking system to determine the finalists who will be invited to the campus.

Faculty positions
The search committee with the concurrence of the department chair will invite up to five candidates for campus interviews. Copies of the finalist files will be provided to the president or his/her designee and the Provost or his/her designee.

The chair of the search committee will coordinate the arrangements for the campus interviews. A schedule will be developed for each candidate’s visit to include an agenda of meetings with appropriate members of the campus community. This schedule shall be distributed well in advance of the candidates’ visit.
Following the campus visit the search committee will make a recommendation to the President or his/her designee, Provost and Department Chair. All parties will participate in an open dialogue about the candidates. The President or his/her designee and the Provost will determine the candidate for appointment. The President or his/her designee shall authorize the appointment of the candidate of choice.

The Department Chair will contact the candidate via telephone to determine the candidate’s interest in the position, answer any questions that the candidate might have and verbally offer the position to the candidate. Should the candidate verbally accept the appointment, the Provost or designee will issue an offer letter of employment to the candidate which formally sets forth the terms and conditions of the appointment. The offer letter shall request that the candidate formally accept the appointment by signifying such acceptance in writing within a reasonable time frame. The candidate shall be informed that all appointments are subject to passage of a background check and final approval by the Board of Trustees.

Upon receipt of the written acceptance of the offer, a Personnel Contract Recommendation (PCR) form will be prepared by the Department Chair and forwarded to the Provost for signature. The PCR shall be transmitted to the Vice President, Office of Administration and Finance (or designee) where funding shall be approved and a contract prepared.

The president or his/her designee shall then submit the name of the appointee-elect to the Trustees for final approval.

With trustee approval of the appointment, the search procedure is complete.

The chair of the search committee shall prepare a brief final disposition report to include; evaluation rating forms, interview notes, reference information, all other written notes and evidence. The chair of the search committee will affix his/her signature attesting to his/her compliance with all Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action procedures, as well as the criteria set forth in the Search Procedures Manual, and forward the report to the Provost for signature. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity will receive the signed report, all records, forms and notes as well as all applicant files. They will be stored by the Office of Equal Opportunity for two (2) years.
Chapter Seven
Identifying and Recruiting Diverse Candidates

Traditionally underrepresented groups are often eliminated during the initial screening process, particularly when the search committee relies on numerical rankings.

Contextualizing the job description and the desired qualifications expands the conversation about how a candidate could demonstrate the desired attributes and satisfy the experience qualifications for the position.

The search committee should look for evidence of contributions in areas outside of their known or acknowledged spheres. For example, diverse candidates may take a different career path than majority candidates. The search committee may want to include in these applicants in their pool of candidates. Examples are individuals who have distinguished themselves in business, government, industry, community agencies and the military as well as the traditional career path.

At the same time the search committee should be mindful that the search process must be “open,” that is race as an example, may not be used in consideration of a candidate, but a candidate cannot be eliminated solely on the basis of race or gender.

While the impetus for diversity hiring must come from the department chair and search committee chair, the members of the search committee should be open to consideration of all candidates, including those whose professional profile diverges from that of the traditional applicant pool.

The following is a list of various steps to increase diversity recruitment:

- Clearly articulate to the search committee the college’s commitment to diversity.
- Create a search committee that is enthusiastic about and committed to diversity.
- Create a search committee with minority membership if possible.
- The search committee should work closely and under the guidance of the Director of OEO.
• The Director of OEO should establish and cultivate relationships with local and national minority organizations.
• Distribute position announcements to minority organizations.
• Contact by letter, phone or e-mail former minority faculty and administrators about job openings.
• Utilize alumni contacts in recruitment.
• Ask current faculty to contact their alma maters.
• Provide information to students and their parents about vacant positions.
• Network with the local community on recruitment needs.
• Consider internal candidates and the development of promotion from within.
• Utilize advertising sources in addition to the Chronicle on Higher Education.
• Promote our area and culture, particularly our designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution.
• Recruit through the Foundation and the Board of Trustees.
• The vacancy announcement should contain language such as “The department is seeking an individual who is able to work with diverse students or colleagues, or who has experience with a variety of teaching methods.”
• Provide opportunities for candidates to meet with diverse faculty, staff and students during campus visits.
• Provide information on community based cultural, political, social and religious organizations upon request.
• Develop a mentoring program for faculty and staff.
• Create a “pipe-line” program to encourage students who have graduated from ASC to return after several years at another institution.
• Initiate partnerships with other institutions such as historically black colleges, Hispanic Serving Institutions and Native American Institutions to attract graduates for our positions.
Chapter Eight
Odds and Ends

Tips for forming search committees
Consider the following in forming the search committee.

- Form a committee large enough to represent a diversity of opinion.
- Attempt to form a committee that reflects diversity by race, ethnicity, national origin, age and sex.
- Look for people with good judgment.
- Look for people who know about people.
- Look for someone with integrity and an independent view.
- Someone who is loyal to ASC.
- Someone who is a stake holder (faculty member from department with recruitment).
- Look for new faces (not the same people).
- Include some members with search committee experience.
- Include someone with interviewing and assessment experience.
- Include students, retirees and community figures. (Retirees often have a sense of balance and detached wisdom).

Family/Partner issues
During the campus visits with candidates particularly during informal periods, you can anticipate dealing with spouse/partner/family issues. In some cases a candidate may not divulge their marital/partner/family status. The candidate’s spouse or partner can play a key role in the decision to accept a job offer.

As part of the recruitment process, it is important to be positive and present the advantages of the position, including a possible move to the area. (The advantages are also presented to the partner.) This is an opportunity to discuss the attributes of the San Luis Valley and answer questions from the candidate and partner.

In the event that the issue of employment for the spouse/partner is brought up, be careful not to make any commitments, or on the other hand, be too negative. You may offer assistance in providing information about resources that can be accessed, about employment at the college, and in the area. You can communicate the
interest of spouse/partner employment inquiries with appropriate college administrators.

Campus visits
The chair of the search committee will coordinate the arrangements for the campus visit, including interviews. A schedule is developed for each candidate to include an agenda of meetings with the appropriate members of the campus community. The candidate should know in advance who they will be meeting. The schedule will be distributed well in advance of the candidate’s visit. The visits should be planned with the needs of the candidate in mind.

At this point, the committee should have a good sense of each candidate’s knowledge and ability to do the job. The committee’s judgments have been based primarily on telephone interviews and references. There are still questions about the candidate that you will only be able to discern following the final, in-person interview, and in depth discussion. The candidate’s will have an opportunity to look at the position, school locale and ask questions. It will also provide an opportunity for the committee to view such factors as the candidates’ institutional chemistry, personal traits, and acceptability to colleagues. In other words, the “Fit.”

Candidates will have an opportunity to ask questions, (What do these people want? Would this be a good move for me? What are the risks here? What would it be like to work with these people? Finally do I want this job?).

To rank or not to rank?
Following the telephone interviews, the search committee should discuss the candidates and cite evidence of where the candidate meets, exceed, or falls short of the desired qualifications and personal attributes. Always make judgments utilizing the position description as a measure. It is appropriate to rank candidates utilizing the approved Ranking Evaluation form. Ranking is needed to narrow the field of candidates by making comparisons. Move the outstanding candidates to the next level; the on-campus interview.

After the completion of the on-campus interviews, the search committee will prepare a commentary on each of the candidates without any ranking. Candidates presented to the hiring authority should all be well qualified. The written commentaries should include a brief but compelling case for each candidate. The use of the Finalist Summary form is recommended. (Appendix )
Ranking may constrain the hiring authority’s choice at this stage, and he or she is accountable for the appointment. Another problem with ranking is that it tends to force the evidence and distort a report. The search committee spends more time justifying the order of rank than on what each candidate presents as a choice.

**Failed search**
The search committee should not settle on a candidate that does not meet their requirements. The search committee must uphold the credibility and integrity of the search.

Some of the reasons for declaring a failed search include:
- No qualified candidates applied for the position.
- The integrity of the process was compromised by a breach of confidentiality or use of inappropriate strategies.
- No acceptable candidates emerged from the process.
- The search committee would not reach consensus on the candidate to recommend.
- The hiring authority was dissatisfied with the finalist.
- The requirements for the job changed during the course of the search.
- The finalist turned down the job offer and none of the other candidates was acceptable.

The search committee chair with the concurrence of the search committee can declare a failed search. Also, under specific circumstances, the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity can declare a failed search.

Now, regardless of the reasons, the reality is that the position is still vacant. The department chair and search committee chair must determine the course of action.

**Options include:**
1. Re-start the search process immediately with the same search committee.
2. Re-start with another search committee.
3. The search committee may recommend an individual to fill the position temporarily. Delay the formal search for one year.
4. Do not fill the position. Utilize current staff to perform the duties of the vacant position.

If there is a new search, then review the job description again and review the previous process. Revise the job description if necessary.
**Search post mortem**

At the conclusion of the search process, the search committee chair will reconvene the search committee to discuss the search. What went well, where did they encounter problems, what could be done differently to improve the process, and the results. The meeting should be recorded and the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity may attend as facilitator.

If it was a failed search, a committee does not want to repeat the same steps with the same results. Now is the time to discuss openly whatever mistakes were made and not repeat them.

The notes from the meeting will be included in the documentation provided to the Director of OEO.

**Confidentiality**

As noted previously, all search committee members will sign a Search Committee Code of Ethics, which includes a pledge to maintain absolute confidentiality.

Matters of confidentiality may prove troublesome for some members of the search committee. The ethic of academe is one of free and open discussion. On other campus committees, members are expected to report back to colleagues on the committee’s doings. Members of the department where the position is being filled may believe that they should be kept informed about the candidates and future colleagues. They may feel that they are the best qualified to assess the qualifications of the candidates.

Confidentiality is discussed at the first meeting of the search committee with the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity.

An essence of good recruitment and human resources practice is that candidates know the extent to which the privacy of the applicants is protected.

Candidates assume that their candidacy will be held in confidence until the point that they become a finalist and agree to participate in the final interview. This is a vow that must be kept. If it is broken, it can undermine the candidate’s standing in their current position, and the pool of candidates will fall apart.

A breach of confidentiality on campus can lead to hurtful gossip and rumor and be particularly damaging to real and potential internal candidates.
Members of the search committee have a duty to one another to have an open and free discussion of the candidates, but the conversation must be privileged.