

# Hiring for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Guidance Document

## Introduction

The vision of CSU Extension is to be highly valued for inclusive, impactful community engagement in support of our land grant university mission. One of our core values is “inclusive”. By being inclusive in both our programming and staffing, we can uncover new opportunities and maximize our value to Colorado communities.

This document serves to provide search committee members with tools needed to advance our vision and values when hiring staff. Although there are variations in how searches are run, guidelines around diversity & inclusion are presented for key points in a typical search process.

## General Considerations

- Because it is important to minimize bias in the search process, consider attending a bias-related training. CSU’s Office of Diversity offers trainings to address our [unconscious biases](#), and OEO has offered [diversity trainings for the search process](#) that may also be helpful.
- In particular, be wary of trying to find a person that mirrors the incumbent or oneself.
- Are we open to someone who might not fit our preconceived notions but who could contribute new perspectives to better serve our communities?

## Key Points in the Search Process

### 1. First Meeting of the Search Committee

- Send out and review CSU’s [Principles of Community](#).
- Watch and discuss the [Hiring for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#) video.

### 2. When Writing the Position Description

- Identify key demographic information for the service area of the position to include in the position description.
- Since only preferred and required can be considered/scored, it is essential to thoughtfully consider criteria related to diversity and inclusion.
- Consider custom or [pre-worded diversity statements](#) to include in the preferred or required criteria for the applicants.
- As suggested in the Hiring for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century video, such criteria may also include proven abilities to build relationships and communicate effectively with a diverse and inclusive set of stakeholders and placing importance on productivity while in the workforce even if there was a gap in employment.

### **3. Before Interviews**

- At the search committee chair's discretion, watch the Hiring for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century video again before Day 1 of the interviews.
- Local search committees are strongly encouraged to watch the video. Committee chairs can send it to them in advance of their interview day or watch it with them on their interview day. Carving out time to discuss the video with local search committees is also encouraged.
- When selecting interview questions, OEO asks us to ensure that none of them will have the effect of screening out or discouraging women, minorities, veterans, or individuals with disabilities (CSU OEO Search Manual: Faculty and Administrative Professional Hires, 8/2018).
- In general, selecting questions that will allow candidates to demonstrate their strengths and teach *us* new ways to consider providing services are encouraged.
- Consider questions specific to diversity & inclusion. With advance notice, the Equal Opportunity Coordinator on your search committee or OEO can approve interview questions that may not be on Extension's pre-approved list, such as the following:
  - a. Do the candidates have proven abilities to build relationships and communicate effectively with a diverse and inclusive set of stakeholders?
  - b. What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?
  - c. CSU Extension has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. How has your experience and background prepared you to be effective in this environment?
  - d. What efforts have you made or been involved with to foster diversity competence and understanding?
  - e. Describe a time when you interacted with a person from a background or culture that was different from yours. What did you do and how did you feel about it?
  - f. Provide an example that shows your competency and ability in interacting with people who have different values than you.
  - g. How have you demonstrated a commitment to diversity at work?  
(CSU University Advancement Recruitment and Selection Toolkit, 2020)

### **4. During Interviews**

- OEO advises us to ask all the candidates if they will need any special accommodations for their interviews. This is different from asking if the applicant has a disability—an individual can need an accommodation without necessarily having a disability. At no time may a candidate be asked if they have a disability or medical condition. Accommodations may be related to a person's disability or to their special dietary needs.
- When interviewing historically underrepresented candidates such as people of color, veterans, and people with disabilities, consider providing them with a chance to visit with others (i.e. people of color, veterans, and people with disabilities) at CSU or CSU Extension so they will not feel that they would be isolated if they accept a position here. OEO can help in arranging meetings with others on campus or in the larger community.

- Be aware of common personal biases in interviewing:
  - Making judgments too early in the process.
  - The halo effect—the last candidate was so bad that the present candidate looks exceptionally good.
  - The horn effect—opposite of the halo effect.
  - Personal similarity.
  - Verbal facility. (Verbal facility is the ability to speak well. Bias can apply when interviewing candidates who do not speak English as their first language or who may speak with an accent.)
  - False criteria. (False criteria is not using appropriate job related criteria to determine if someone is qualified for the position.)

(CSU OEO Search Manual: Faculty and Administrative Professional Hires, 8/2018).

### **Role of EO Coordinator**

- According to OEO, the primary responsibility of the Equal Opportunity Coordinator (EO Coordinator) is to ensure that the search process is conducted in a procedurally sound and ethical manner. The search procedures are designed to provide a framework for conducting a process that complies with all relevant laws and regulations and that allows the University to identify and hire individuals who contribute to the fulfillment of institutional goals, including that of enhancing diversity and inclusion. As the liaison between the OEO and the search committee, the EO Coordinator serves as a resource person and provides initial review and approval of the various search steps including all OEO approval points.
- EO Coordinators are expected to attend search committee meetings, specifically those where candidates are discussed and selection decisions are made. If possible, they should also attend the semifinalist interviews, the finalist interviews with the committee, and the open forum sessions for finalists. The EO Coordinator must maintain a balance: being a neutral observer and monitor of the process, yet actively involved either to prevent a committee from engaging in actions that are antithetical to the goals of equal opportunity and non-discrimination or to encourage a committee to be proactive in pursuing affirmative action goals (CSU OEO Search Manual: Faculty and Administrative Professional Hires, 8/2018). With advance notice, the Equal Opportunity Coordinator on your search committee can also approve interview questions that may not be listed on Extension's pre-approved list.

### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, the decision on who to hire at CSU Extension rests with the hiring authority based on the recommendation of the search committee. Search committees are encouraged to use the resources contained in this document to make a recommendation for the best possible candidate when considering our organization's vision and values.