



# Hiring Toolkit

A Guide for  
Hiring Managers  
and  
Search Committees



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# Introduction

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The hiring process consists of identifying the vacancy and evaluating the need, revising the job description as necessary, selecting a search committee, advertising the vacant position, reviewing, and screening applicants, conducting interviews, selecting the successful candidate, and finalizing the recruitment process.

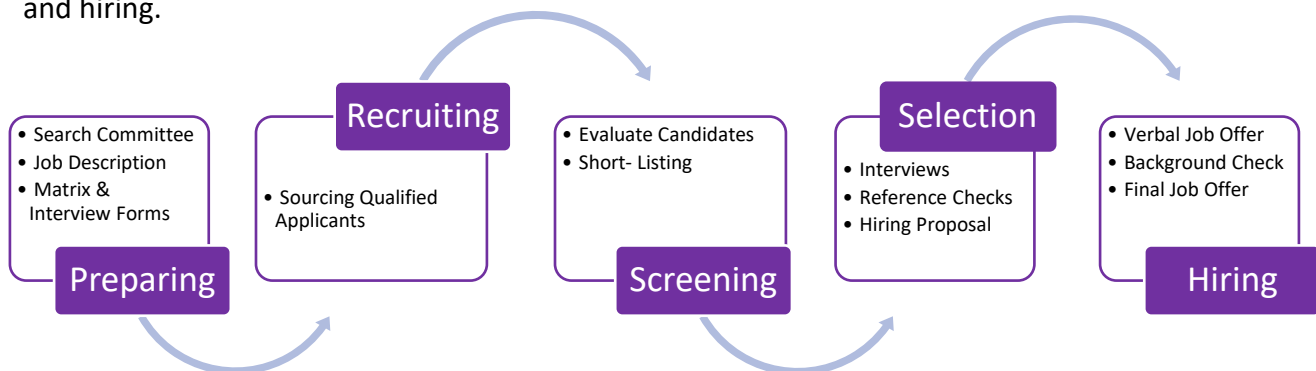
This Hiring Toolkit is intended to assist search committee members and hiring managers with the ever-important task of making hiring decisions which further strengthen Stephen F. Austin State University’s (SFA) ability to enhance and enrich student experiences. Use these tips to get the most out of this guide:

- Use the links (identified as underlined, purple text) within this guide to explore additional resources
- Search for the PeopleAdmin  logo for links to guides on navigating SFA’s current talent management system
- A great companion resource is the Checklist for Recruiting, Interviewing & Hiring, which acts as a road map to ensure no steps are overlooked (see Appendix A)

Reach out to SFA Human Resources with questions or concerns  
[hr@sfasu.edu](mailto:hr@sfasu.edu)      (936) 468-2304      <https://www.sfasu.edu/hr>

## Hiring process overview

The hiring process can be broken down into five main areas: preparing, recruiting, screening, selection and hiring.



Within each of these areas are processes to follow for different types of hires to ensure compliance; this guide assists with clarifying how to best navigate each step.

## Why it matters: Compliance and Equal Employment Opportunity

SFA is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer and Educator, meaning all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, race, creed, color, age, national origin, religion, disability status, or any other protected categories, classes, or characteristics, as required by law. Legal compliance aside, SFA remains committed to supporting its community members who come to our institution from across the state and around the world and bring a variety of perspectives and experiences.

### Employment law

During the selection process, the importance of treating all applicants fairly and consistently cannot be

#### **EEO Statement**

Stephen F. Austin State University, an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer and Educator, is committed to excellence. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, race, creed, color, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability as required by law.

overstated. All individuals involved in the hiring process should be familiar with these core employment laws and adhere to them in each step of the hiring process.

## Core Employment Laws

<b>Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII)</b>	<b>Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)</b>
Prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin	Prohibits employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities <i>Employers must make "reasonable accommodations" for the applicant and employee</i>
<b>Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)</b>	<b>Pregnancy Discrimination Act</b>
Prohibits employment discrimination against individuals who are 40 years of age or older	Prohibits employment discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions
<b>Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)</b>	<b>Equal Pay Act</b>
Prohibits employment discrimination based on past, present, or future active or reserve military service	Prohibits gender-based wage discrimination against men and women who perform substantially equal work in the same establishment
<b>Texas Commission on Human Rights Act (TCHRA)</b>	
Protects employees from discrimination, retaliation, or harassment in the hiring, termination, terms, privileges, and conditions of employment	
<b>UTS Policy 197</b>	
<p>An institution shall not compel, require, induce, or solicit any person to provide a DEI statement or give preferential consideration to any person based on the provision of a DEI statement.</p> <p>A "DEI statement" is a written or oral statement of a person's commitment to (1) furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity and/or sexual orientation or (2) promoting differential treatment of or providing special benefits to individuals based on their identification as a member of one or more of these classifications.</p> <p>Preferential consideration to any person" who provides a DEI statement means treating one person more favorably than another, in any respect, because of their inclusion or provision of a DEI statement expressing a preferred viewpoint in materials they provide to the institution.</p> <p>An institution shall not give preference on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin to an applicant for employment, an employee, or a participant in any function of the institution.</p> <p>To "give preference on the basis of" an attribute means to treat one person more favorably than another, in any respect, because of that attribute.</p>	

## Prohibited Topics

There are numerous laws and judicial rulings pertaining to employment, so it is the best practice to simply avoid some topics during any employment activity. Some of the primary topics to avoid asking about include, but are not limited to, those listed below:

- Age
- Arrest record or criminal history
- Citizenship, ancestry, or birthplace
- Credit history or financial situation
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) statement
- Gender or sexual orientation
- Marital status, childcare, or pregnancy
- Medical history or genetic information
- Organizational membership or other affiliations (professional memberships are appropriate)
- Physical or mental disabilities
- Political affiliations or activity
- Race, ethnicity, or native language
- Religious affiliations or church membership
- Unrelated training or education

Human Resources (HR) is an excellent resource for questions regarding employment law compliance. The HR team works with hiring managers and search committees to offer guidance, as well as reviewing selection documents for compliance.

## Preparing to post a position

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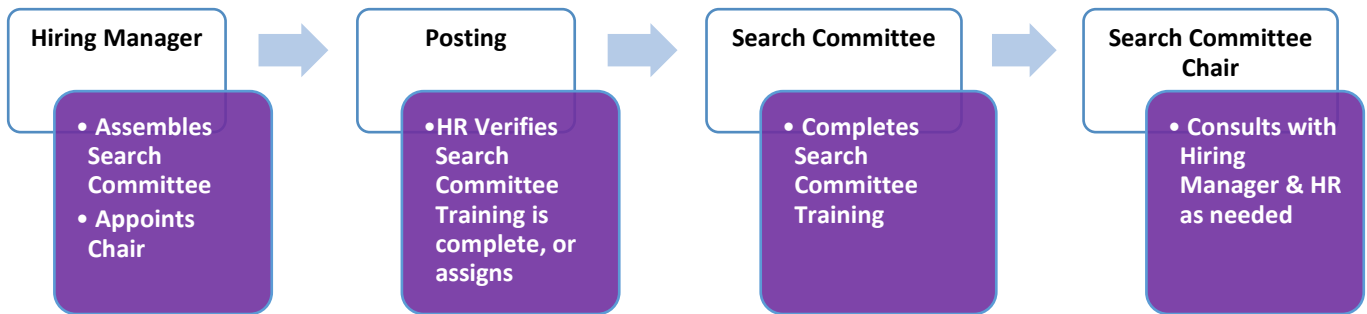
Vacancies can occur due to the need to replace an employee or the creation of a new position. Before posting a position, there are several steps that need to be taken:



Investing time and effort into these tasks before posting the position increases chances of a successful search and prevents unnecessary delays in hiring.

## Search committee

A search committee, or hiring committee, allows for the evaluation of applicants through the lens of different perspectives. This collaboration leads to the objective selection of the most qualified candidate for a position. After obtaining appropriate approval for filling a position vacancy, the hiring manager assembles a search committee and appoints a chair to coordinate the committee.



### Search Committee Member Requirements & Expectations

- Has *no interest in applying* for the posted position
- Available for the *entirety* of the expected search timeline
- Equal picture of ALL candidates
- Willing to *actively participate* in each phase of the process
- Able to fulfill *time commitment* requirements
- Understands *differences* strengthens the committee
- Treats all search-related information as *confidential*
- Refrains from discussing committee matters with non-members
- Declares possible conflict of interest that arise (such as nepotism)
- Completes [Search Committee Training](#) before commencing duties



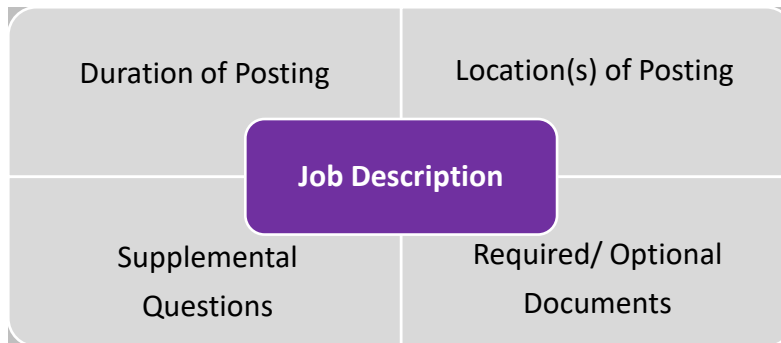
An *odd number* of members should be appointed, with a minimum of three. Once the Search Committee is established, attention should be turned to the job posting.

 Use the PeopleAdmin guide to [add search committee members](#) to a Job Posting.

## Job posting

There are several elements of a job posting the search committee must consider. Job posting templates are housed on the SFA PeopleAdmin site.

### Elements of a Job Posting



 Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [create a job posting](#).

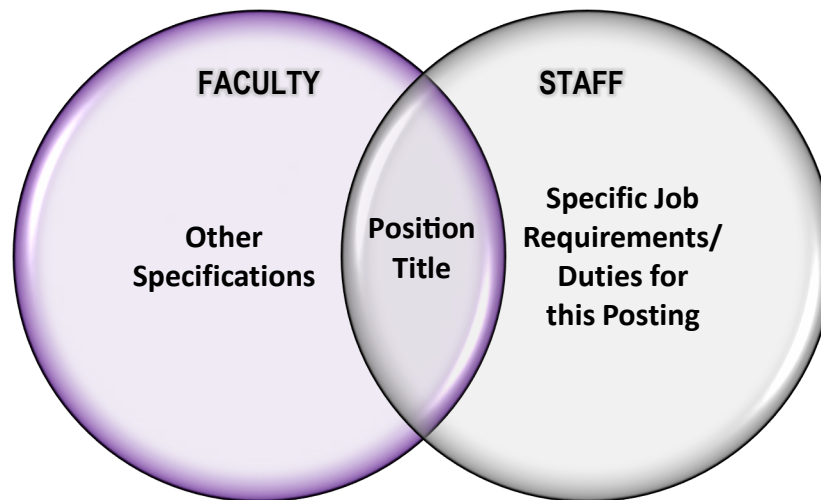
## Job Description

Job descriptions provide an overview of a position's responsibilities and outline the qualifications and skills required to perform the job effectively. HR maintains all existing job descriptions on the SFA PeopleAdmin site. If the position is newly created, or in the rare instance where a job description does not exist for the position, reach out to HR for assistance. To learn more about the process for creating a job position and description, visit the [Compensation & Classification](#) area of the SFA HR website.

The job description may only be edited in the fields outlined below.



## Editable Job Posting Fields



- Position Title may be updated to add appropriate department, or area of teaching, for any job posting. Contact [hrcompensation@sfasu.edu](mailto:hrcompensation@sfasu.edu) for assistance.
- Faculty- use the “Other Specifications” field to communicate additional preferences or information regarding faculty positions.
- Staff- “Specific Job Requirements/Duties for this Posting” field may be used to further expand on duties or outline additional requirements or preferences for staff positions.
- Student/Graduate- “Preferred Qualifications” field may be used to share desired qualifications for student assistant or graduate assistant positions.

If no changes are needed, proceed to determine remaining job posting details.

## Job Posting Duration

Positions will be published for a minimum of five (5) business days, if they are required to be posted. It is, however, at the discretion of the hiring manager to exceed minimum posting requirements, which are outlined in the table below:

## Job Posting Duration Requirements

Required – 5 Days (Five Business Days)	Optional (Not required to be posted)
<b>Faculty</b> (Exempt)	Faculty, Adjunct (Exempt)
<b>Staff</b> (Exempt)	Faculty, Visiting (Exempt)
<b>Staff &amp; Temporary</b> (Non-Exempt)	Graduate Assistant (Exempt)
<b>Student Assistant</b> (Non-Exempt)	Casual
<b>INTERNAL</b> Postings will be published for 5 business days.	

Job postings will remain open until filled, until the application deadline has expired, or upon request by the hiring department to close the posting.

## Job Posting Location

In addition to determining the appropriate duration of posting, the search committee should determine if it is appropriate to advertise the position beyond the automatic posting sites, which include:

- [Careers at SFA](#)
- [WorkinTexas.com](#), the official State of Texas employment board

Job postings can also be published to [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) and [HigherEdJobs.com](#) by selecting the option during posting creation. All faculty searches are required to be posted to The Chronicle. While posting to these websites is free of charge, departments must budget for and use their own funds to cover the costs of additional advertising, if desired. External online postings must contain all elements of the original posting, including the EEO statement. If the posting contains additional content, or is a print ad, approval from SFA University Marketing Communications ([UMC](#)) is required. Another excellent source of free advertising opportunities is through official SFA social media channels. Contact the UMC [social media team](#) to learn more about harnessing the power of social media to recruit talent. All SFA social media posts must be reviewed and approved by UMC.

## Other Advertising Sources

In keeping with SFA's commitment to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, it may be appropriate to utilize other advertising resources to conduct a broad initial search to increase the applicant pool. The list of advertising sources list below includes several such recruitment resources and HR can provide additional options upon request:

- Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, [hercjobs.org](http://hercjobs.org)
- Hire A Hero, [hireahero.org](http://hireahero.org)
- Inside Higher Ed, [insidehighered.com](http://insidehighered.com)
- Latinos in Higher Ed, [latinosinhighered.com](http://latinosinhighered.com)
- LinkedIn.com
- Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education, [tabphe.org](http://tabphe.org)
- Women In Higher Education, [wihe.com](http://wihe.com)

After determining the appropriate posting duration and location, the committee should determine the need for adding supplemental questions.

## Supplemental Questions

When used correctly, supplemental questions can be an effective way to expedite the applicant screening process by automatically disqualifying those applicants not meeting the minimum education or experience requirements. Additionally, supplemental questions can collect information about preferred qualifications, assisting with completion of the screening matrix.



- Database of pre-existing questions from which to choose
- Submit custom questions for review by HR
- Applicant responses can be set as required or optional

*Remember:* Supplemental questions are not a substitute for interview questions.

## Optional & Required Documents

Postings can include a request for the applicant to upload documents in order to complete the application. These documents can be configured to be required or optional. Examples of documents include, but are not limited to:



Resume	Cover Letter	Letters of Recommendation
List of References	Transcripts	Certificates

*Remember:* Overly cumbersome requirements may discourage qualified candidates from completing an application. Focus on including requests for information *genuinely* pertinent to the position. DEI statements are not pertinent to the position.

## Reference Check Options

There are multiple ways to collect reference information from the applicant. PeopleAdmin options include: requiring letters of recommendation, requiring a list of references as an uploaded document, or requiring the information in a section on the application. PeopleAdmin can also conduct automated reference checks via email notification. It is recommended to use only one or two of these methods. Since applicants typically provide the same names when asked for references more than once, we want to avoid contacting references multiple times.

 Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [enable automatic reference checks](#) or on how to [require a letter of recommendation](#) from applicants.

## Submit the Job Posting

Once the job description has been reviewed, the job posting and any supplemental requirements determined, submit the job posting for approval in PeopleAdmin. Different postings have varying approval workflow queues, so it can take anywhere from one day to one week to view the job posted on the SFA Careers website. Monitor the status of the approval workflow in PeopleAdmin.



 Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [view a job posting](#).

## Screening matrix

In order to ensure a fair recruitment and selection process, the Search Committee must develop criteria which objectively evaluates each candidate against the hiring standards, while avoiding criteria

forbidden by employment law. The Applicant Screening Matrix (“Matrix”) is the form used to document the screening process.

The image shows a screenshot of the Applicant Screening Matrix form. The form is divided into two main sections: the left side for minimum requirements and the right side for preferred criteria. The left side includes sections for Education, Experience, and Additional information, with a grid for scoring. The right side includes a grid for scoring preferred criteria. Two callout boxes are present: one on the left side labeled 'Left side of form MINIMUM requirements' and one on the right side labeled 'Right Side of form PREFERRED criteria'.

## Creating an Effective Scoring System

In addition to screening applicants against the predetermined minimum qualifications, the Screening Matrix helps committee members impartially measure applicants against one another. While the screening matrix form must be used to document the screening process, it is at the discretion of the department/ search committee to determine what numerical scoring system to utilize. It may be appropriate to use a simple five-point system, whereas another position may merit a more complex scoring system where each criterion carries a different maximum score. Pictured below are a couple of simple scoring system samples.

### Scoring Scale Samples

1	2	3	4	5
Does not meet expectation		Meets Expectation		Exceeds Expectation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Very Weak	Weak	Well Below Average	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Outstanding

Regardless of the scoring system selected, it is crucial that the method be:

- appropriately and fully documented
- comparable for similar positions
- applied consistently and objectively to each applicant

The committee should establish the standards against which applicants will be rated using the most pertinent experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities listed within the job description-- the goal of the rating system is to predict the success of the applicant in the position.

## Creating the Applicant Screening Matrix

- **Minimum Requirements:** List the required education, qualifications, experience, etc. as listed in the Job Description in the Minimum Requirements Area.

	Minimum Requirements Directly from Job Description	Substitution Accepted Directly from Job Description	Preferred Criteria Directly from Job Description
Education			
Experience			
Additional		Education Substitute 2 yrs experience = 1 yr education	
Additional		Experience Substitute 1 yr education = 1 yr experience	

- **Substitution Accepted:** List substitutions accepted, as outlined in the job description. Learn more about substitutions by viewing the [SFA Substitution Philosophy](#).

Experience for Education: “Related experience may be substituted for required education” Every two years of experience directly related to the duties of the job, above and beyond the minimum experience requirement, can substitute for every one year of required education.

- Bachelor’s Degree- Eight (8) years of related experience
- Bachelor’s Degree- Associate’s Degree in Related Field AND Four (4) years related experience
- Master’s Degree- Four (4) years related experience, when applicable

Education for Experience: Additional education may be substituted for experience on a year-for-year basis, when applicable. This substitution is not common and only applicable when specifically noted on the position description.

- Four (4) years of required experience- Bachelor’s Degree
- Two (2) years of required experience- Master’s Degree
- Five (5) years of required experience- Ph.D.

- **Preferred Criteria:** Using the job description, select the MOST RELEVANT preferred qualifications, experience, education, or attributes. These should be measurable, not subjective, when possible. Below are lists of sample criteria on the Screening Matrix. It is best to steer away from criteria that cannot be accurately judged from an online application.

Include	Do Not Include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional years of experience</li> <li>• Additional education</li> <li>• Supervisory experience</li> <li>• Banner experience</li> <li>• Experience in programs such as Excel</li> <li>• Certifications</li> <li>• Quality of cover letter</li> <li>• Higher Ed experience</li> <li>• Specific information tailored to the job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to manage time effectively</li> <li>• Oral communication skills</li> <li>• Good team member</li> <li>• Ability to maintain interpersonal relationships</li> <li>• Ability to learn</li> <li>• Ability to lead</li> <li>• Knowledge of policies and procedures</li> <li>• Knowledge of best practices</li> <li>• DEI statement</li> </ul>

List the desired qualifications, education, experience, skills, etc. in the Preferred Criteria fields and remember to indicate the maximum score possible for each corresponding field.

List Preferred Criteria (Qualifications, Education, Experience, etc.)						
REMINDER: Indicate Maximum Score Possible for Each Preferred Criterion Field Used.						

If more Preferred Qualification fields are necessary, carry over to a second page. See [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#) for examples of a completed Screening Matrix.

**REQUIRED: \*Submit Applicant Screening Matrix to HR for review and approval.\***

**Please DO NOT  
screen applicants  
until the Matrix is  
approved by HR.**

- Submit the Applicant Screening Matrix to [hr@sfasu.edu](mailto:hr@sfasu.edu) with the Subject Line: “Matrix Approval-  
*Position Title*”.
- Allow for processing time of 1-2 business days

After submitting the blank matrix for approval, allow for a response time of 1-2 business days though HR representatives strive to complete the review as soon as possible.

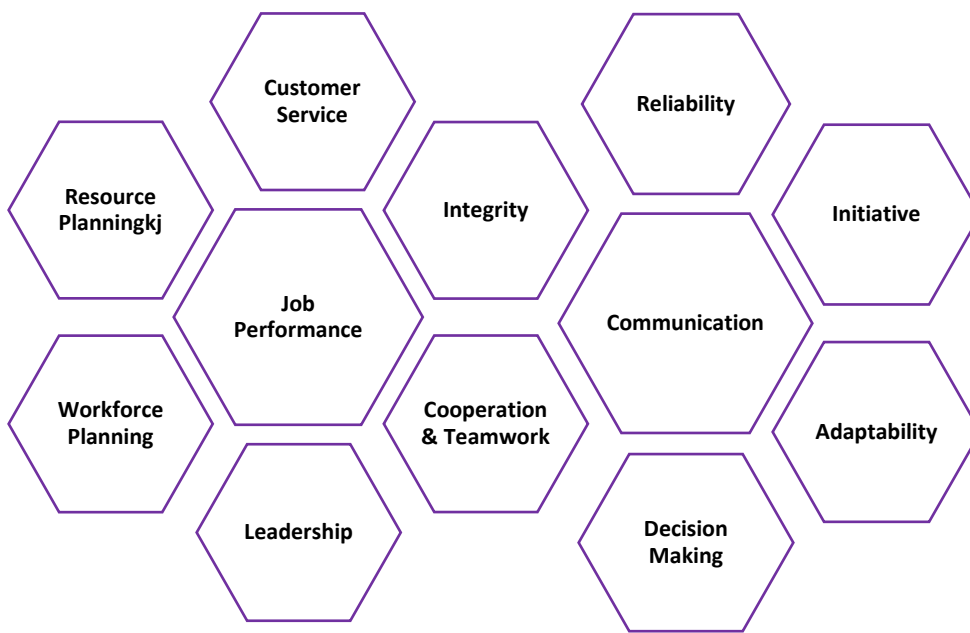
#### Tips for Speedy Approval of Screening Matrix Form

- ✓ Every job posting requires a Screening Matrix.
- ✓ Each Screening Matrix must be approved by HR before use.
- ✓ Adhere to Employment Law requirements.
- ✓ Obtain minimum & preferred qualifications directly from the job posting.
- ✓ Ensure all criteria pertains directly to the job.

Once HR approval is received for the Applicant Screening Matrix, the search committee can begin to develop interview questions.

## Interview questions

SFA uses a structured interview process, meaning that each applicant interviewed for a position is asked the same set of core questions. The Search Committee develops these questions based on the essential job functions and required knowledge, skills and abilities which align with the performance factors pictured below.





SFA encourages committees to develop behavior- based interview questions, since research indicates that past patterns of behavior have proven to be a relatively predictable indicator of future behavior.

Behavioral interview questions allow interviewers to gain a deeper understanding of an applicant. These questions prompt a candidate to provide specific examples of their skills, experiences, and competencies. For ideas, view [Sample Interview Questions](#) on the SFA HR website. Before developing interview questions, all search committee members should review the prohibited content listed in [Appendix D, Questions and Topics to Avoid During a Job Interview](#). Once the committee decides upon interview questions, the chair is responsible for documenting the proposed interview questions on the [Interview Evaluation Form \(Appendix E\)](#) and submitting to HR for review, before interviews take place.

- Document proposed interview questions in the “Interview Question” field
- Indicate the maximum points available per question
- Review the list of prohibited Interview Questions
- Ensure that interview questions adhere to [Employment Law](#) requirements
- Submit to [hr@sfasu.edu](mailto:hr@sfasu.edu) with the Subject Line: “Interview Questions Approval- *Position Title*”
- Allow for processing time of 1-2 business days

The form is titled "Interview Evaluation" and features the SFA logo. It includes a "Candidate Name:" field and a "Committee Member Name:" field. A "Score Values" legend is located in the top right corner, defining five performance levels: 1. Poor (Does not meet expectations), 2. Below Average, 3. Satisfactory, 4. Above Average, and 5. Outstanding (Meets Expectations Exceeds Expectation). The main body of the form is a table with three columns: "Interview Question", "Response/ Notes", and "Candidate Score". The table has 10 rows for individual questions and a "Subtotal:" row at the bottom. At the very bottom, there is a line for "HR Approval (Interview Questions)".

**Please DO NOT  
conduct interviews  
until questions  
approved by HR.**

After HR approves the Interview Questions, the search committee focuses on recruiting qualified applicants and reviewing applications.

# Recruiting

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For SFA employees, especially hiring managers and search committee members, each public interaction is a potential recruitment opportunity. Expanding and diversifying professional networks can help cast a wide net when a vacancy occurs on campus. Below are additional methods of proactive recruitment:

## Methods for proactive recruitment

Job Fairs	Conferences & Seminars	Networking Events
Community & Sporting Events	Social Media through SFA UMC	Volunteer Opportunities

## Bias Awareness

In preparation for screening applicants, hiring managers and committee members should make a good-faith effort to learn more about identifying and interrupting bias or rating errors that could negatively impact the hiring process. Biases can be subconscious or implicit; they are perceptions which drive our decisions and behaviors. Eliminating prejudice, inclinations or preferences during the hiring process firstly requires the development of self-awareness regarding our predispositions. The College and University Professional Association for Human Resources ([CUPA-HR](#)) identifies some common biases (errors) in the hiring process in the chart below:

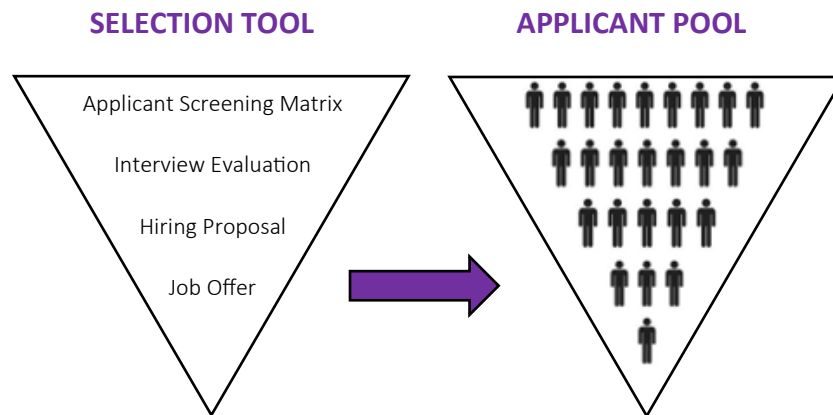
NAME OF ERROR	DESCRIPTION
Halo effect	The tendency to rate a person high on all factors even though the person was outstanding on only one factor
Horns effect	The opposite of the halo effect
Central tendency	The inability to rate all or most applicants anywhere but in the middle
Similar to me	The tendency to rate higher those people who look, act, or have a background most like the interviewer
First impression	Making the hiring decision within the first few minutes of the interview, instead of evaluating all the information from the full interview

Providing a fair and equitable opportunity for employment to each applicant requires that all hiring decisions be free from the impact of implicit bias. There are numerous studies and reports on methods for identifying and eliminating bias and everyone involved in the hiring process should take action to prevent such errors.

## SCREENING

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Begin the screening process by using the HR-approved Application Selection Matrix to evaluate each online application that meets the minimum qualifications.



### Prohibited Screening: Social Media Searches

Those involved in hiring should not investigate or attempt to research social media profile(s) of applicants. A person's social media content is oftentimes rife with protected information. Online content can be largely irrelevant to the probability of success in a position; make decisions based upon information gleaned from the official hiring process.

#### Applicant Screening Matrix

The search committee chair should distribute the HR-approved matrix to search committee members.

- Each search committee member completes a matrix
- List only those applicants with a status of "Under Review by Department/Committee" in PeopleAdmin

- Do not list applicants with a status of “System Det Does not meet Minimum Qualifications”



Under Review by Department/Committee



System Det Does Not Meet Minimum Qualifications

- Use only the application and other online application documents to rate the applicants

**Minimum Requirements**

The left side of the matrix is used to screen for basic qualifications by selecting “Y” or “N” to indicate yes or no.

**Application Complete-** Did applicant provide all required information? Did applicant provide all required documents? Are required documents correct (not blank)?

**Education-** Does applicant meet the minimum education requirements? Remember to check for applicable substitutions. *Do not take into consideration education exceeding the minimum requirements in this field.*

**Experience-** Does applicant meet the minimum experience requirements? Remember to check for applicable substitutions. *Do not take into consideration experience exceeding the minimum requirements in this field.*

Experience Substituted for Education 2 years related experience= 1 year education		Education Substituted for Experience 1 year related education= 1 year experience	
Education Requirement	Equivalent Experience	Experience Requirement	Equivalent Education
High School Diploma/ GED	None		
Bachelor’s Degree	Eight (8) years of related experience	Four (4) years of related experience	Bachelor’s Degree
	Associate’s Degree in Related Field AND Four (4) years related experience		
Master’s Degree	Four (4) years related experience, <i>when applicable</i>	Two (2) years of related experience	Master’s Degree
Ph.D., or other profession-specific advanced degrees	None	Five (5) years of related experience	Ph.D.

**Minimum Requirement Custom Field #1 & 2-** Use these fields to indicate adherence to any additional requirements. Leave blank if not applicable.

**Meets Min Req**

If an applicant meets all minimum qualifications, select “Y” in the “Meets Min Req” field.

If an applicant did NOT meet all minimum qualifications, select “N”. No further documentation is required on the Matrix for this applicant. Update their status in PeopleAdmin; they are not eligible to move forward in the selection process.

## State Requirements

The Texas Government Code requires state agencies to provide employment preferences to certain individuals. As a state university, SFA affords employment preference to military and former foster youth in accordance with state law. Mark Y or N as appropriate on the screening matrix based upon the information the applicant provided regarding military or foster youth status. It is not necessary for the search committee to request proof of qualification; HR will request required documents after offer.

## Military Employment Preference

SFA recognizes the value current and former military members, their spouses and children bring to the workplace. Visit [Benefits of Hiring Veterans](#) to learn more. Pursuant to [Chapter 657](#) of the Texas Government Code, military employment preference is provided to veterans, including veterans with disabilities, veterans' surviving spouses who have not remarried, orphans of veterans who were killed on active duty, spouses of members of the United States armed forces or Texas National Guard serving on active duty, and spouses of veterans if the spouse is the primary source of income for the household and the veteran has a total disability rating based either on having a service-connected disability with a disability rating of at least 70 percent or on individual unemployability.

Individuals who qualify for military employment preference are entitled to a preference in employment with or appointment to the university over other applicants for the same positions who do not have greater qualifications. Eligible applicants who meet the minimum qualifications for a position will be shown preference in multiple aspects of the hiring process:

## Interviews

- Interviewing 6 OR FEWER total candidates: 1 needs to be a qualified military.
- Interviewing MORE than 6 total candidates: 20% need to be qualified military.
- A phone/zoom interview will meet the criteria for an interview if it is part of the normal process for all candidates in consideration.
- If there are no military employment preference applicants in the qualified applicant pool, this guideline does not apply.

### Employment Decisions

Preference is given to a finalist that is equivalent to the other candidates in terms of experience and education, in the following order of priority:

1. veteran with a disability;
2. veteran;
3. a spouse of a member of the United States armed forces or Texas National Guard serving on active duty or a spouse of a veteran if the spouse is the primary source of income for the household and the veteran has a total disability rating based either on having a service-connected disability based either on having a service-connected disability with a disability

- rating of at least 70 percent or on individual unemployability;
- 4. a veteran’s surviving spouse who has not remarried; and
- 5. orphan of a veteran killed while on active duty.

## Former Foster Child Employment Preference

SFA grants employment preference to former foster children, pursuant to [Chapter 672](#) of the Texas Government Code. This means an individual, aged 25 or younger, who was under the permanent managing conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services on the day preceding the individual's 18th birthday is entitled to a preference in employment over other applicants for the same position who do not have a greater qualification.

Remember, in order to be eligible for either employment preference, an individual must meet minimum qualifications for the position. Contact HR for more information on employment preferences.

### Preferred Criteria

At this point, each committee member should have a clear picture of which applicants meet the minimum qualifications of the position, and can move on to rate each qualified applicant using preferred criteria.

Key:			Does Applicant meet Minimum Requirements?							State Req		List Preferred Criteria (Education, Experience, Skills, etc.)						Comprehensive Screening Score					
Do Not Modify Criteria in Section	Modify Section Criteria, as Needed	HR Approval Required Before Proceeding	Application Complete	Education	Experience				Meets Min Req	Veteran	Former Foster Child												
Submit to HR Before Screening Applicants						Based on Posting	Based on Posting		Y/N	Y/N	Y/N											Y/N	
Applicant Name												REMINDER: Indicate MAXIMUM SCORE POSSIBLE for each Preferred Criterion field in use.											

### Evaluating Candidates

Using the pre-approved criteria fields and scoring system, rate each listed applicant and tally the scores in the Total “Screening Score” column. Once each committee member has used the Applicant Screening Matrix to rate each applicant, the committee should meet to determine which applicants will move on to the next phase. There are a few important things to remember when selecting applicants to interview:

- Applicants MUST meet minimum requirements to be considered for a position
  - Degree in a “related field” must be verified with the job description and a justification provided for the relatedness of the degree. This also applies to the substitution

statement if related experience and/or related degree is used to meet minimum requirements.

- Qualified veterans and former foster children should be included in the interview pool
- It is not necessary to interview all qualified candidates, but as with all employment decisions, selections should be clearly justifiable
- After determining which applicants will be interviewed, be sure to update the workflow state of unqualified or eliminated candidates in PeopleAdmin. These applicants will receive an automated email notification regarding the change in status.



Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [update applicant dispositions](#).

## Search Summary Form

Once the search committee selects the top applicants they wish to interview, the committee chair should gather each member's Applicant Screening Matrix form and tabulate total score and record important notes on the Search Summary Form (See [Appendix F](#)).

- Indicate the score granted by each committee member
- Tally the scores per applicant and indicate in "Total Score" column
- Indicate if committee selected applicant for interview
- Include any pertinent details in the "Notes" column



## Search Summary Form

Position Title: Administrative Assistant  
 Department: History Posting ID: F2022-088

Applicant Name	Veteran/ Foster	Applicant Matrix								Interview Evaluation								Notes		
		Chair	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6	Total Score	Interview?	Chair	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6		Total Score	Hired?
Jane Doe		16	18	14					48	N										
John Wick	Y																			Incomplete Application
Jada Smith		55	57	53					165	Y										
Julie Moore	Y	54	56	52					162	Y										
Joe Garcia		41	44	37					122	N										
Jasmine Wilde																				Did not meet experience requirements
Jun Ming		24	26	22					72	N										
Jamaal Williams	Y	30	48	44					122	Y										Veteran's Preference
Jeevesh Bashu		55	57	53					165	Y										
Jordan Saenz																				Did not meet education requirements
If applicable: Explain if top-ranked applicants not interviewed and/or low-ranked applicants interviewed.										Required: Explain why finalist was selected as best-qualified candidate.										
<p>Veterans preference granted to Jamaal Williams for interview.</p>																				
Search Committee Member Name & Position										Member 3:										
Chair:		Surfin Steve								Member 4:										
Member 1:		Britney S. Pearce								Member 5:										
Member 2:		Christopher Combs								Member 6:										

**Remember, it is required to provide justification for interviewee selection if:**

- High-ranked applicant is *not* selected for interview
- Low-ranked applicant *is* selected for interview

## Selection

### Interviews

During first contact with the applicant, it is recommended to disclose the salary range of the position, if known, to ensure continued interest. It may be appropriate to conduct preliminary interviews by phone or online, then move to in-person interviews. Inform candidates visiting campus of what to expect, the agenda, and instructions for arriving on campus, such as parking. Before interviews occur,

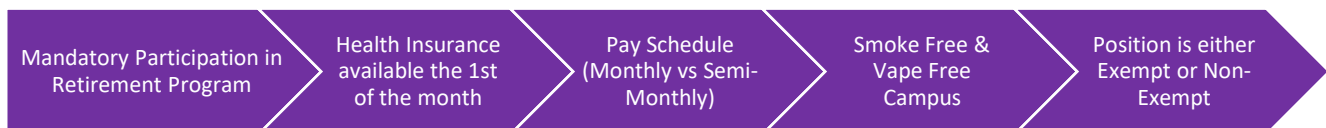


the search chair should ensure that each member reviews or is familiar with the job description and prohibited interview topics.

Using the HR-approved interview questions, follow these interview best practices:

- Make the candidate feel welcome and comfortable
- Structure each on-campus visit similarly in duration, location, etc.
- Ask the same core questions of each candidate
- Practice active listening and ask appropriate follow-up questions
- Disregard any information candidate provides dealing with topics which are prohibited
- Do not record any portion of interviews, including phone or zoom interviews
- Take notes during or immediately following the interview
- Allow time for questions from the candidate
- Remember the candidate is also evaluating SFA during all interactions

The purpose of each interview is to evaluate the candidate on their suitability for the position. Refrain from making comparisons of interviewees while interviews are ongoing. Inform the candidates of the estimated timeline for a hiring decision, as well as discussing the topics below:



Note taking during, or immediately following, interviews is an important responsibility of each interviewer. Be reminded that HR reviews hiring documents for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance. Also, as a state university, records can be subject to the [Texas Public Information Act](#), meaning records may be released for review by the public.

## The Final Evaluation

As soon as all interviews are conducted, the search committee should convene to discuss and compare interview notes and candidate ratings. It is now appropriate to compare the suitability of candidates against one another and select the top candidate(s). The committee chair should combine comprehensive interview scores and most pertinent notes from each committee member onto the “Interview Evaluation” portion of the [Search Summary Form](#). If you have an unsuccessful search, the

posting status will be changed to cancelled and all documents related to the search are uploaded in PeopleAdmin.

**Search Summary Form** Position Title: Administrative Assistant  
 Department: History Posting ID: F2022-088

Applicant Name	Applicant Status						Interview?	Interview Evaluation						Notes	
	Chair	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5		Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Total Score		
Alia Dine															
Alia Wark															Incomplete Application
Jada Smith							Y	98	97	96			291	Y	Selected
Jada Moore							Y								Unable to contact for interview
Jada Grant															Did not meet experience requirements
Isabelle White															
Alia Ming															
Abigail Williams							Y	96	92	90			278		Finalist #2 (No Higher-Ed experience)
Abigail Bonds							Y	86	89	91			266		Did not meet education requirements
Abigail Nance															

**Required: Explain why finalist was selected as best-qualified candidate.**  
 Jada worked at a university as an admin asst and performed very well during the interview, offering thoughtful answers.

Interview Evaluation										Total Score	Hired?	Notes
Chair	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6						
												Incomplete Application
98	97	96					291	Y				Selected
												Unable to contact for interview
												Did not meet experience requirements
96	92	90					278					Finalist #2 (No Higher-Ed experience)
86	89	91					266					Did not meet education requirements
<b>Required: Explain why finalist was selected as best-qualified candidate.</b>												
Jada worked at a university as an admin asst and performed very well during the interview, offering thoughtful answers.												

- Submit Search Summary Form with the hiring proposal documents
- HR uses this document to conduct the EEO compliance review

## Reference Checks

Reference Committee checks should be conducted on the top candidate(s) by the committee chair or designee(s). It is preferable that reference checks be conducted by the same person(s) via the same method. Reference checks must always be conducted at the same stage in the search for each candidate. In similar fashion to interviews, this process should be documented and the same core questions should be asked of each reference to ensure consistency.

Human Resources provides a standard [Form for Checking References](#) or a committee may submit their own proposed questions for HR approval.



The HR website contains other resources for tips on checking references, such as:

- Check everyone’s references at the same stage (ex. top candidates after interview)
- Attempt to check the same number/type of references for each candidate
- A previous supervisor is the preferred reference
- Document responses and details of conversations (time & date)
- As a courtesy, inform candidates that you will be checking references
- Applicant consent must be obtained before contacting current employer

*Remember: A Letter of Recommendation is not a substitute for conducting reference checks.*

## Salary Offer Planning

If it is anticipated that a finalist will require an offer that exceeds the salary grade midpoint, reach out to [hrcompensation@sfasu.edu](mailto:hrcompensation@sfasu.edu) as soon as possible to avoid a delay in the hiring proposal approval. It is not necessary to wait until the hiring proposal is submitted to request assistance from HR Compensation to conduct an exception salary review.

Once the final HR EEO compliance review is complete and compensation has been approved, the hiring proposal status is moved to “extend verbal offer.” The finalist will be contacted and informed the next step in the hiring process is a background check.

# Hiring

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**For Staff Positions Only** – If the position is being considered for telecommuting, HOP 03-217 (Telecommuting Arrangements for Staff Employees) states the department head and division head judge whether it may be performed from a remote location. All telecommuting arrangements require a formal agreement approved by the department head and president or designee. If work will be performed outside the State of Texas, prior approval by the VP for Finance and Administration is required.

The committee chair will document the reasoning for candidate selection on the search summary form and include in the hiring proposal. After the finalist is selected and reference checks are complete, the next steps are:

Faculty	Staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department Head Approval</li><li>• Dean Approval &amp; Extend Verbal Offer</li><li>• Provost issues Contract</li><li>• Candidate returns signed contract</li><li>• Hiring Proposal</li><li>• EEO Compliance Review</li><li>• Background Check</li><li>• EPAF</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department Head Approval</li><li>• Hiring Proposal</li><li>• EEO Compliance Review</li><li>• Verbal Job Offer</li><li>• Background Check</li><li>• EPAF</li><li>• Final Job Offer</li></ul>
Student Assistant	Graduate Assistant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department Head Approval</li><li>• Verbal Job Offer</li><li>• Hiring Proposal</li><li>• HR on-boarding checklist completed</li><li>• EPAF</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department Head Approval</li><li>• Send Background Check Form to HR</li><li>• Background Complete</li><li>• EPAF</li></ul>

## Hiring Proposal

The first step in the hiring process is creating the hiring proposal in PeopleAdmin. Prepare to upload the documents listed below with the hiring proposal to avoid approval delays.

## Documents to Upload with Hiring Proposal:



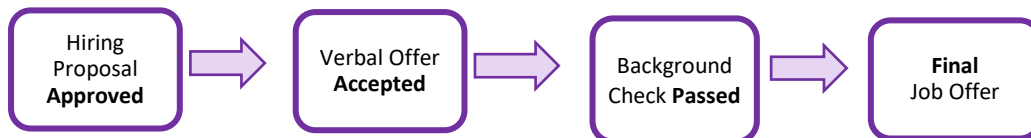
1. Search Summary Form
2. Interview Evaluation for each candidate interviewed
3. Reference check documentation
4. Applicant Screening Matrix from each committee member
5. Verification of minimum education requirements, if applicable
6. Any other documentation that contributed to finalist selection

A hiring proposal **cannot** be processed without these documents. Upload promptly to avoid a delay.

 Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [submit a hiring proposal](#).

Once the hiring proposal has been approved, the department may extend a “Verbal Offer”, which is a conditional employment offer requiring the successful completion of required screening. This offer explains that the candidate is being offered the position, pending the successful completion of hiring requirements.

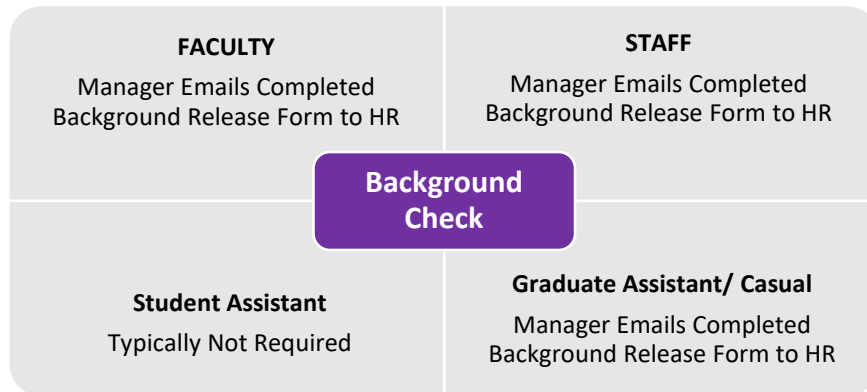
**Ensure the proposed salary amount is approved before making an offer to the candidate.**



## Background Check

A verbal offer is contingent upon results of a background check. If the candidate accepts the verbal offer, have them complete the [Background Check Consent Form](#) and submit to [hr@sfasu.edu](mailto:hr@sfasu.edu) with the Subject Line: “Background- *Applicant Name*”.

*Remember:* Stay in compliance with employment law- Do not allow a candidate to fill out a background check consent form until the hiring proposal is approved and Verbal Offer is accepted.



**About Background Checks:**

- Can take 2-4 weeks to complete, dependent upon locations the candidate has reside
- Typically completed within 3- 5 business days
- Checks for relevant criminal history only
- Does not include financial, education or work history information

University Police Department (UPD) conducts their own background screenings for law enforcement personnel which are more thorough in nature and include multiple facets beyond criminal history.

## Final Job Offer

After the background check is cleared, the final job offer may be extended to the candidate. Once the final job offer is accepted, all applicant workflow states should be updated in PeopleAdmin. This will prompt the system to send an automated email to notify applicants of the change in status. We recommend that interviewed candidates who were not selected be notified by phone that the position has been filled and thanked for their interest and effort.



 Use the PeopleAdmin quick guide for details on how to [update applicant dispositions](#).

## After hiring

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Human Resources will create all new hire EPAFs for faculty and staff positions. Departments will retain responsibility for creating new hire EPAFs for the following positions:

- Adjunct faculty
- Casual employees
- Non-paid external hires
- Student workers

- Graduate assistants

## EPAF (Electronic Personnel Action Form)

EPAF will not be approved until HR has received the required identification documents and acknowledgement of the completed on-boarding checklist. EPAFs should be completed and approved before the employee starts work. Start dates are from 1<sup>st</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>/month. Use the Ideal start date table below. A start date after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month is an exception and must receive approval. Use of these dates prevents extended wait times for benefit/health insurance eligibility for otherwise eligible employees and allows for new hires to start work at the beginning of a pay period. For additional information about how to submit an EPAF, visit [EPAF Resources](#).

Position Type	Ideal Start Date
Faculty, Graduate Assistant	Standard Academic Schedule
Salaried Staff	1 <sup>st</sup> of Month
Internal Transfers	1 <sup>st</sup> of Month
Hourly Staff	1 <sup>st</sup> or 16 <sup>th</sup> of Month
Student Assistant	1 <sup>st</sup> or 16 <sup>th</sup> of Month

An EPAF works to notify multiple departments regarding the needs of a new hire. Delays or failure to submit an EPAF in a timely manner may result in:

- Delay in employee pay
- Incorrect pay amount
- Delay in access to mySFA, email, and other important campus accounts
- Chargebacks to department for missed TRS contributions, etc., when applicable

## New Hire Instructions

New hires should visit Human Resources in Room 201 in the Austin Building to provide Employment Verification Eligibility [Form I-9 Document Requirements](#). HR will schedule new hires for benefits orientation, if eligible.

- HR cannot accept expired documents or identification
- HR cannot accept photocopies or photographs of documents or identification

- HR will schedule benefits orientation after the new hire is in the benefit enrollment system
- Contact [hr@sfasu.edu](mailto:hr@sfasu.edu) or 936.468.2304 for orientation dates and times
- If necessary, HR has alternative methods of verifying identification, such as: a Consortium of Schools, notarization or optional remote document examination.

**Remember: EPAFs cannot be approved until Form I-9 requirements are fulfilled.**

## Document Retention

As a state entity, SFA must adhere to [Texas Records Retention](#) requirements and be prepared to fulfill requests per the [Texas Public Information Act](#); maintain and preserve records in accordance with both.



## LISTS OF ACCEPTABLE DOCUMENTS

All documents containing an expiration date must be unexpired.

\* Documents extended by the issuing authority are considered unexpired.

Employees may present one selection from List A or a combination of one selection from List B and one selection from List C.

**Examples of many of these documents appear in the Handbook for Employers (M-274).**

LIST A Documents that Establish Both Identity and Employment Authorization	OR	LIST B Documents that Establish Identity	AND	LIST C Documents that Establish Employment Authorization
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card</li> <li>2. Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (Form I-551)</li> <li>3. Foreign passport that contains a temporary I-551 stamp or temporary I-551 printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa</li> <li>4. Employment Authorization Document that contains a photograph (Form I-766)</li> <li>5. For an individual temporarily authorized to work for a specific employer because of his or her status or parole:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Foreign passport; and</li> <li>b. Form I-94 or Form I-94A that has the following:                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The same name as the passport; and</li> <li>(2) An endorsement of the individual's status or parole as long as that period of endorsement has not yet expired and the proposed employment is not in conflict with any restrictions or limitations identified on the form.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Passport from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) or the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) with Form I-94 or Form I-94A indicating nonimmigrant admission under the Compact of Free Association Between the United States and the FSM or RMI</li> </ol>	OR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Driver's license or ID card issued by a State or outlying possession of the United States provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address</li> <li>2. ID card issued by federal, state or local government agencies or entities, provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address</li> <li>3. School ID card with a photograph</li> <li>4. Voter's registration card</li> <li>5. U.S. Military card or draft record</li> <li>6. Military dependent's ID card</li> <li>7. U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner Card</li> <li>8. Native American tribal document</li> <li>9. Driver's license issued by a Canadian government authority</li> <li style="text-align: center;"><b>For persons under age 18 who are unable to present a document listed above:</b></li> <li>10. School record or report card</li> <li>11. Clinic, doctor, or hospital record</li> <li>12. Day-care or nursery school record</li> </ol>	AND	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Social Security Account Number card, unless the card includes one of the following restrictions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) NOT VALID FOR EMPLOYMENT</li> <li>(2) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH INS AUTHORIZATION</li> <li>(3) VALID FOR WORK ONLY WITH DHS AUTHORIZATION</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Certification of report of birth issued by the Department of State (Forms DS-1350, FS-545, FS-240)</li> <li>3. Original or certified copy of birth certificate issued by a State, county, municipal authority, or territory of the United States bearing an official seal</li> <li>4. Native American tribal document</li> <li>5. U.S. Citizen ID Card (Form I-197)</li> <li>6. Identification Card for Use of Resident Citizen in the United States (Form I-179)</li> <li>7. Employment authorization document issued by the Department of Homeland Security               <p style="margin-left: 20px;">For examples, see <a href="#">Section 7</a> and <a href="#">Section 13</a> of the M-274 on <a href="http://uscis.gov/i-9-central">uscis.gov/i-9-central</a>.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">The Form I-766, Employment Authorization Document, is a List A, <b>Item Number 4</b>, document, not a List C document.</p> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Acceptable Receipts</b></p> <p>May be presented in lieu of a document listed above for a temporary period.</p> <p>For receipt validity dates, see the M-274.</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receipt for a replacement of a lost, stolen, or damaged List A document.</li> <li>• Form I-94 issued to a lawful permanent resident that contains an I-551 stamp and a photograph of the individual.</li> <li>• Form I-94 with "RE" notation or refugee stamp issued to a refugee.</li> </ul>	OR	Receipt for a replacement of a lost, stolen, or damaged List B document.	AND	Receipt for a replacement of a lost, stolen, or damaged List C document.

\*Refer to the Employment Authorization Extensions page on [I-9 Central](#) for more information.

# APPENDIX A: Checklist for Recruiting, Interviewing & Hiring



## Checklist for Recruiting, Interviewing & Hiring Faculty & Staff

Position Title:			
Department:		Position ID:	

Date	Task
	Obtain appropriate approval to fill position
	Select Search Committee & appoint committee Chair
	Create & submit Job Posting in People Admin (Duration: 5 business days)
	Create Applicant Screening Matrix Criteria
	Develop Interview Questions
	Submit matrix and interview questions to HR for review & approval
	Complete Applicant Screening Matrix for each qualified applicant
	Meet to determine top candidates to interview
	Document Screening Matrix results on Search Summary Form
	Update disposition (workflow state) in PeopleAdmin for unqualified or rejected applicants
	Conduct interviews ( <i>phone, zoom or face to face, as decided</i> )
	Each committee member completes an Interview Evaluation form for each candidate
	Meet to select finalist(s)
	Complete Search Summary Form & submit to HR
	Complete reference checks for top candidates (can be done at any pre-determined stage)
	Gather all search committee documents to Upload with Hiring Proposal <i>(Screening Matrices, Interview Notes, Reference Checks, Search Summary, etc.)</i>
	<b>Faculty</b>
	<b>Staff</b>
	Obtain Department Head Approval
	Dean Approves & Extends Verbal Offer
	Provost issues Contract
	Signed Contract returned
	Create Hiring Proposal
	Submit Background Authorization to HR
	Obtain Department Head Approval
	Create Hiring Proposal
	Extend Verbal Job Offer
	Submit Background Authorization to HR
	Final Job Offer
	HR will create & submit EAPF for new faculty & staff (refer to page 30 of hiring toolkit)
	Update applicant disposition (workflow state) & ask HR to close posting
	Ensure new hire completes all HR requirements





# APPENDIX D: Questions & Topics to Avoid During a Job Interview

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## Questions and Topics to AVOID During a Job Interview



### QUESTIONS ON AGE

- How old are you?
- What year did you graduate high school? College?

### QUESTIONS ON DISABILITIES/HEALTH

- Do you have any medical/health problems?
- When was the last time you were in the hospital?
- What prior illnesses or accidents have you had?

### QUESTIONS ON GENDER/SEX

- Do you plan to get married?
- Do you plan to have children?
- Are you likely to quit if you get married or have children?
- How many children do you have?
- What kind of child-care arrangements do you have?
- Does your spouse expect you to be home to cook dinner?
- What will you do if your children get sick?
- Does your spouse live with you or contribute to your support?
- What sort of birth control do you use?
- Is your spouse from this area?
- Is your spouse likely to be transferred?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- Do you get along well with other women or men?
- Would you further diversity, equity, and inclusion based on sex or gender identity?

### QUESTIONS ON NATIONAL ORIGIN/RACE

- What language does your mother/father speak?
- Were you born in this country?
- Do you have people in the “old country?”
- That’s an unusual name – what nationality are you?
- How do you feel about having to work with members of a different race?
- Would a white (or person of color) supervisor create any difficulties for you?
- Would you promote different treatment of or provide special benefits to individuals based on their race, color, ethnicity, or national origin identification?

### QUESTIONS ON PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Can you provide a photograph of yourself?
- Do you own a home?
- Do you own a car?
- Do you have any debts or loans?
- How do you get to work?

### QUESTIONS ON RELIGION/POLITICAL BELIEFS

- What church are you a member of?
- Are you a member of a religious group?
- With what political party are you affiliated?
- Are you vaccinated?
- Who did you vote for in the most recent election?

\*This list is not all inclusive. Any questions regarding these topics **MUST** be avoided\*

# APPENDIX E: Interview Evaluation Form



## Interview Evaluation Form

<b>Candidate Name:</b>	
<b>Position &amp; Dept:</b>	

#	Interview Question	Response/ Notes	Maximum Score Possible	Score
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

<b>Total Interview Score:</b>		
<b>Additional Notes:</b>		
<b>Committee Member Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>

