HIRING PROCESS &
SCREENING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The process and procedures for the screening and selection of applicants for full-time positions at South Puget Sound Community College is set by the College. Recognizing the importance of the services provided by the college, the hiring of competent, highly qualified and effective administrative staff and faculty is a primary goal. The processes stated in this guide are established in compliance with applicable laws on non-discrimination, generally accepted professional personnel practices, collective bargaining agreements and internal college values and policies to ensure the selection of highly qualified individuals and to promote diversity.

The appointing authority works collaboratively with the Human Resource Office to review and update position descriptions, develop recruitment strategies, and schedule the screening committee orientation meeting to start the process. The appointing authority is the individual lawfully appointed to appoint, transfer, layoff, reduce, dismiss, suspend or demote employees. At South Puget Sound Community College this is generally a member of the president's executive team or the president. **WAC 357-01-025**

The College Budget Office is required to review all full-time Personnel Action Forms (PAF) to verify the correct budget and funding source for each position prior to submitting the request to Human Resources.

---

**Table of Contents**

1. Declaring a Vacancy  
2. Responsibilities of the Human Resources Office  
3. Responsibilities of the Chairperson and Committee Members  
4. Screening Committee Composition  
5. Role of the Screening Committee  
6. Minimum Qualifications  
7. Internal Candidates  
8. Confidentiality, Professionalism, Ethics and Conflict of Interest  
9. Interviews  
10. Recommendation of Finalists  
11. Responsibility for Notification to Candidates  
12. Reference Checking  
13. Inquiries from Applicants  

Revised 6/16/15
1.0 DECLARING A VACANCY

FACULTY POSITIONS
Full-time faculty vacancies for the next academic year should occur as early in the fall quarter as possible, and preferably no later than November 30 of the preceding year. Full-time faculty vacancies are determined by the vice president for instruction and the president based upon, but not limited to, such criteria as contribution of the position to the curricular offerings, enrollment trends, current staffing patterns, retirements, resignations, attrition, and the financial resources available. The screening process is initiated when the vice president, with approval from the president, authorizes a Personnel Action form or PAF (available on the HR website) to the HR office once all applicable signatures are obtained. Such forms should be received in the HR Office by January 1 of each year for recruitments that will be completed and the positions will be offered by March 31 of each year.

ADMINISTRATIVE/EXEMPT POSITIONS
Administrative/exempt professional vacancies are determined by the president and the Executive Team. The decision to fill a vacant or create a new administrative/exempt professional position is based on workload requirements, budgetary considerations, and the overall administrative needs of the college. The Human Resource office should be consulted prior to approval to review the proposed job description and determine the appropriate type of position based upon the duties. Position vacancies are initiated when the president and the respective vice president authorize a Personnel Action Form or PAF (available on the HR website) to the HR office once all applicable signatures are obtained.

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS
Classified vacancies are determined by the direct supervisor or vice president in consultation with HR. The decision to fill a vacant or create a new classified position is based on workload requirements, budgetary considerations, and the overall administrative needs of the college. The HR office should be consulted prior to approval to review the proposed job description and determine the appropriate classification based upon the duties. Position vacancies are initiated when the appropriate vice president authorizes a Personnel Action form or PAF (available on the HR website) to the HR office once all applicable signatures are obtained.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE
It is the responsibility of the Chief Human Resource Officer or designee to provide guidance and technical assistance to the committee in regard to fair employment practices, affirmative action, the college’s commitment to diversity, and other related areas. Interview questions developed by the screening committee should be reviewed by HR prior to the interviews. This process helps the committee to understand the legal groundwork for screening and interviewing and to develop good questions.

The HR Office is responsible for approving the job description, developing the job announcement, advertising the position, maintaining applicant records, coordinating the committee activities with the committee chair, coordinating all correspondence and communication with the candidates, and scheduling interviews. The available position will be advertised regionally as well as in appropriate agencies and organizations.
3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHAIRPERSON AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Screening Committee Chairperson manages the work of the committee and consults closely with HR throughout the recruitment and selection process. The Chairperson advises the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee about committee activities, requests assistance for responding to inquiries and complaints, and facilitates the interviews. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that all information about the screening and selection process is kept in absolute confidence.

Duties of the Chair include:

- Ensure collaboration and confidentiality during the process.
- Convene the committee for the initial orientation and planning meeting, prior to position closing date.
- Collaborate with HR and committee members to create screening guide, establish a timeline for application screening, schedule interviews, and do reference checks.
- Collaborate with committee to develop interview questions, and if applicable, scenarios, tours, and format for interviews.
- Facilitate interview sessions (welcome, introduce the committee, explain process to candidate, etc.)
- Make written recommendation from committee to president and/or respective VP for candidates selected to move forward for a second interview.
- Collect all notes or committee documents from the recruitment process and forward them to HR.
- Pending second interview outcome w/president and vice president’s and follow up meetings as necessary

The overall responsibility of the committee and of each committee member is to be fully knowledgeable of the information in this guide. This will provide a fair and consistent procedure to assess the qualifications and traits of candidates and identify finalists for recommendation to the president or appropriate appointing authority. All employees on the screening committee, in addition to representing their constituency groups, are to represent the college, students, and the students’ needs. In that regard, the committee is to develop written job-related screening criteria, rate or screen the candidates, conduct further assessment such as reference checks, interview the top candidates, and recommend finalists with accompanying supporting documents.

4.0 SCREENING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Once a vacancy has been determined, the president, vice president, or hiring manager will create a screening committee for the vacancy. Employees are appointed to the screening committee to ensure the following:

- Representation by those who would serve as colleagues of the position
- Representation by those who would serve in the role of supervisor of the position
- When applicable, representation by those who provide support or who would be supervised by the position
- Representation of the campus diversity including ethnic and gender balance
- Classified positions need a classified committee member and faculty need a faculty member

All members should be chosen for their expertise, knowledge, and sound judgment to develop job related criteria in accordance with fair employment standards, college goals, and the special qualifications required of the position.
5.0 THE ROLE OF THE SCREENING COMMITTEE

The screening committee will meet in advance of the position closing date to receive initial guidelines and training from HR. This includes information regarding confidentiality, creating a screening guide, and establishing the hiring and interview timeline.

1. The committee meets to develop a timeline for screening applications and to choose tentative interview dates and times
2. The committee works collaboratively to develop a screening guide for reviewing and identifying qualified finalists
3. The committee will set a time frame to submit interview questions
4. Determine and coordinate any additional needs such as a scenario, open forums for Q & A, a teaching demonstration, or computer software exercise

Candidate Selection and Screening Criteria

Using the job announcement and supplemental questions, if applicable, the committee will determine the screening or application review criteria, weigh the criteria, and develop interview questions. It is the task of the committee to create an effective tool to assist in screening the applicants based on the criteria for the position.

Qualities which may enhance the candidate’s ability to empower or serve as a role model for students, faculty, and staff are important. Look for reasons to screen in candidates not screen out candidates and be as inclusive as possible. The HR office will help you create your screening tool and coordinate the committee members’ evaluations of the applicants.

If a screening instrument is used for faculty positions, the following common elements may be considered:

1. Education
2. Scholarship
3. Teaching experience in both the primary subject as well as interdisciplinary or developmental areas that may be required or desired
4. Specific experience in the discipline or subject matter
5. Experience and sensitivity in relation to diverse populations
6. Experience in various modes of instructional delivery, such as the web
7. Curriculum planning and development
8. Where applicable, other relevant work experience for vocational certification requirements or added value
9. Experience in working with various learning styles and abilities
10. Knowledge or experience with student assessment
11. Knowledge or experience with student advising

If a screening instrument is used for administrative/exempt positions, the following criteria may be considered for exempt positions:

1. Education
2. Scholarly background
3. Knowledge and experience in areas of supervision, fiscal, program, and/or planning
4. Specific knowledge and experience in the technical areas of the job
5. Communication and interpersonal skills
6. Multicultural and other diversity experience
7. Organizational and leadership activities
If a screening instrument is used for classified positions, the following criteria should be considered:

1. Questions based on job analysis of the position
2. Questions based on competencies needed to successfully perform the duties and responsibilities of the position
3. Communication and interpersonal skills
4. Responses to supplemental questions

Each committee will screen the applicants according to the established review criteria and submit their scores or top candidates to the HR office. The HR office will compile all of the committee members' scores/evaluations into an averaged list and send it by email to the committee. There will be veteran's preference given to any vets that apply, with a 10% increase to their average scores. The committee then determines which candidates they would like to interview, and the chairperson notifies HR of the candidates chosen for an interview. HR will schedule the interviews and send the interview schedule to the group once the interviews are confirmed.

6.0 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The minimum qualifications must be met by all candidates. The HR office will screen the applications for minimum submission requirements (college application, resume, cover letter, supplemental questions, transcripts, etc.) and degree requirements, if requested by the chair. All applications will be made available to the committee. The chair and the screening committee will be given access to review all applications to ensure they meet the minimum qualifications.

7.0 INTERNAL CANDIDATES

If internal candidates possess the experience, skills, and abilities required of the position, the college highly encourages you to interview these candidates. Promotional opportunities at the college are important and we encourage you to recognize our staff and faculty for the experience and skills they bring to our students. Classified positions must follow internal processes established in the bargaining agreement.

8.0 CONFIDENTIALITY, PROFESSIONALISM, ETHICS, and CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The committee will be given access to original application materials and electronic copies. The materials must be safeguarded and treated with confidentiality. Printing of the applications is prohibited, but you are more than welcome to view the hard copies in the HR office. Please work with HR to schedule times to view the applications in the conference room.

This may seem fundamental, but each committee member must act in the highest manner of professionalism. Committee members must feel free to express their opinions within the committee structure while maintaining the confidential nature of the committee's work with non-committee colleagues. It is assumed that each committee member, while retaining a special perspective, will make every effort to operate objectively and will leave bias and partisan loyalty out of his/her search efforts. Each member is expected to perform in a professional and confidential manner at all times regarding the committee work. It is assumed that all members serving on the committee accept the responsibility to be professional, fair, and ethical.
9.0 INTERVIEWS
There is no set number of candidates to interview but keep in mind that the committee must submit a list of acceptable finalists to the president or appointing authority. We seek a diverse pool of candidates and recommend that you be as inclusive as possible.

The committee should not arbitrarily set a fixed number to interview. Too many candidates who look good on paper do not interview well; likewise, other candidates with a more modest track record become leading candidates after an interview is granted.

First interviews may be conducted in-person, by telephone, or by video conference such as Skype, Face Time, etc. The HR Office is able to secure a room with the required equipment. Second or final interviews should be conducted in-person.

The format for interviews may vary depending on the position and committee members and can include teaching demonstrations, scenario questions, computer skill tests, etc. and will be determined and coordinated by the committee.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION OF FINALISTS
After the first interviews are conducted, the committee will make a recommendation in writing to the president or appointing authority which lists those candidates determined to be acceptable by the committee. The recommendation should include each candidate's strengths and challenges, as determined by the committee. There is no maximum number of candidates to be recommended, but you must recommend a minimum of two candidates for the position.

The final pool of candidates must be sufficient in number (recommendation of more than one candidate is required) to give the president or appointing authority a broad choice of diversity and the ability to accommodate potential candidate withdrawals, weak references, inadequate final interviews, etc. in considering the final decision.

11.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR NOTIFICATION TO CANDIDATES
Written notification to all candidates not chosen for interviews, and interviewees not chosen for second interviews, is the responsibility of the HR office. Personal notification to all unsuccessful interviewed candidates at the second or third interview levels is the responsibility of the committee chairperson, especially for internal candidates. The chairperson is usually the best person to give applicants the best feedback on their interviewing skills and required job experience for their particular position.

12.0 REFERENCE CHECKING
The use of reference and background checking is essential in the screening process. This step will occur after the final recommendations have been made to the president and/or vice president on the top candidates only. The chairperson will establish the reference check process and notify the HR office. We recommend that the hiring manager or supervisor conduct the reference checks if possible, but committee members can conduct them as well. A standard form will be developed with questions and a standard to judge the responses.
13.0 INQUIRIES FROM APPLICANTS

It is common for applicants to ask questions of committee members or the human resources office staff as to reasons why they did not succeed in a particular phase of the process. Any committee member receiving such an inquiry from a job applicant should be courteous and recommend that the applicant contact the committee chairperson or human resources.

14.0 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

South Puget Sound Community College is an equal opportunity employer. The concept of equal opportunity is nondiscriminatory in the hiring process against any job applicant on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability; or whether a disabled or Vietnam era veteran.

Affirmative action goes further in establishing a plan for the college to actively seek and employ persons of classes that are under-represented in various job classes when comparing the college workforce with appropriate labor market data. These protected classes include people of color, people with disabilities, people over the age of 40, veterans of the Vietnam era and disabled veterans and females for those positions under-represented by females.

The college will make every effort to eliminate barriers to equal opportunity encountered by these protected group members and improve employment opportunities available to under-represented groups. In this effort, the college’s policy statement of affirmative action states, “The college will continue to recruit, hire, train, promote and improve opportunities for individuals in all job classifications based solely upon their qualifications and ability or potential ability to carry out the duties of the job, and shall consider race; color; creed; religion; national origin; gender; marital status; age, mental, physical or sensory disability; or whether a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam eras only when such is a bona fide occupational qualification as reviewed and approved by the Human Rights Commission or any other agency with similar jurisdiction.”

While the college is extremely conscientious of diversity, it should be noted that all candidates will receive fair and equitable treatment and will not be discriminated against in the employment process.