

# MC ONLINE SEARCH COMMITTEE TRAINING - OVERVIEW

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# MC ONLINE SEARCH COMMITTEE TRAINING - OVERVIEW

## Search Committee Training Policy

Training for search committee members is required in order to:

- Ensure compliance with federal and state provisions and College policies
- Achieve an effective and efficient search process
- Ensure fair and consistent hiring practices
- Conduct fair and thorough reviews of applicants
- Ensure diverse applicant pools
- Provide a well-documented search process

In order to participate in the College search and selection process as a hiring manager, committee chair, or as a committee member, you must have completed the MC Online Search Committee Training within the last two years. Online Search Committee Training is valid for two years. Each time you complete the training, a reference to that dated version will be included in your history ("My Learning History"). Before you can serve on the hiring committee, the recruiter will run an MC Learns report to determine if you have completed the training within the last two years.

Individuals who are not employees of the College, but may have to interact with the selected candidate in some capacity, may be invited to participate in the search and selection process by the hiring manager or administrative official. In order for the external individual to participate in the process, the following steps are required:

- Administrative official or hiring manager must get an approval from the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM).
- HRSTM must provide the external individuals with a copy of the MC Online Search Committee Training Overview and certification form.
- External individuals must sign and return the form certifying that they have received and read the College's Online Search Committee Training Overview.

## Search Committee Training Overview: Introduction

This training overview covers policies and procedures for recruiting, selecting, and hiring employees at Montgomery College. The hiring process is divided into five major phases:

- Creating a requisition, posting a job announcement, and receiving applications
- Screening candidates
- Conducting interviews
- Making the hiring decision
- Completing the search process

The search committee primarily consists of the search committee chair and committee members (also referred to as *collaborators* in Taleo Applicant Tracking System). It is expected to be a diverse group, in terms of gender and ethnicity, and at least one or more people must be familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the vacant position. Committee members collaborate in searching for the best qualified candidate for the position.

The committee chair works closely with the hiring manager or administrative official in order to accomplish some of the committee's responsibilities. If the administrative official is absent, the hiring manager takes the responsibilities of the administrative official and vice versa. In addition, HRSTM and the hiring department

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provide guidance and support to the committee. Some of the responsibilities of a search committee and other stakeholders apply throughout the hiring process and other responsibilities apply in a sequential order, depending on the phase. The next section focuses on responsibilities that apply throughout the search process.

### Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM)

The HRSTM office is responsible for the following tasks throughout the hiring process:

- Provides guidance in using the Taleo Applicant Tracking system
- Provides guidance, advice, and strategies on an effective search process
- Ensures compliance to College policies

Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to promoting equal opportunity and fostering diversity among its students, faculty, and staff. A diverse and qualified workforce helps the College in its efforts to create an academic and campus climate that promotes access, equity, diversity, and achievement.

The HRSTM office is responsible for monitoring the recruitment, employment, and retention of a diverse workforce. It provides risk management guidance, and ensures equal access to employment opportunities for protected categories. The protected categories include age, race, gender, pregnancy, citizenship, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, disability status, and veteran status. The HRSTM office is also responsible for ensuring that recruitment procedures comply with federal provisions, state provisions, and College policies.

### Hiring Manager

The College is required to maintain documentation related to a search, according to state and federal guidelines, for a minimum of five years. Therefore, the hiring manager must ensure proper documentation throughout the search process. If the hiring manager is absent, the administrative official performs the duties that would be assigned to the hiring manager. During the absence of the administrative official, the hiring manager may perform the duties that would be assigned to the administrative official.

### Search Committee Chair

The committee chair is responsible for effectively moving the search along the agreed timeline. He or she:

- Coordinates/manages logistics
- Maintains communication between the hiring manager, administrative official, search committee, and/or HRSTM
- Ensures that the charge from the administrative official to the committee is carried out
- Convenes committee meetings
- Performs the duties of a committee member and other duties as assigned by the hiring manager, administrative official, or HRSTM

### Search Committee Members

Throughout the search process, search committee members serve as agents of Montgomery College. Their role is to participate and ensure the integrity and public trust of the search process. They are expected to attend committee meetings, participate in discussions, and perform other duties as assigned by the committee chair. When searching for qualified candidates, the committee members must:

- Make bias-free judgments and decisions
- Use objective language
- Use objective rating methods and evaluation criteria
- Develop job-related interview questions with benchmarks

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- Ensure all discussions are relevant to the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job
- Obtain authorization for all writing exercises, scenarios, teaching, and/or skills demonstrations

The information presented in the next five major sections is sequential, based on the timeline of the search process. Tasks or duties to be performed at each phase will be addressed by role: administrative official, hiring manager, committee chair, or committee member.

### PHASE 1: Creating a Requisition, Posting a Job Announcement, and Receiving Applications

#### Hiring Manager

##### Creating a Requisition

A hiring manager or recruiter may create a requisition in Taleo to begin the formal process for recruiting and filling a vacant position. Once the requisition has been approved, a human resources specialist (recruiter) works with the hiring manager and/or search committee chair to finalize the job announcement and pre-screening questions. Pre-screening questions are used to assist the hiring manager in finding candidates who meet the minimum requirements for the position. The recruiter works with the hiring department to create a list of questions that each applicant will be required to answer. Responses to these questions are used to eliminate applicants who do not satisfy the minimum requirements for the job.

##### Posting a Job Announcement

The recruiter posts the job announcement on the College's internal and/or external career web pages. He or she also considers any additional advertisement resources for the job vacancy as identified by the hiring manager.

##### Receiving Applications

Applicants express their interest in a vacant position by completing an online application and answering the pre-screening questions prior to the closing date. After the closing date, the recruiter notifies the search committee chair that the applicant pool is available for their review.

#### Administrative Official

The administrative official approves a requisition created by the hiring manager or recruiter in Taleo. The administrative official is also responsible for identifying a chair of the search committee as well as committee members. The administrative official ensures that the committee is representative of gender and ethnic diversity.

Another critical responsibility of the administrative official is having a conversation with the search committee members regarding their roles and responsibilities. The conversation should include the following:

- Discussing the importance of confidentiality
- Setting parameters (for example, reviewing the timeline for the hiring process, including the anticipated start date of the new employee)
- Communicating expectations
- Reviewing the format for preparing recommendations
- Sharing the timeline for deliverables such as submitting the Affirmative Action Recruitment and Selection Report (AARSR) and supporting documentation
- Answering questions from committee members and other stakeholders

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In addition, the administrative official reviews with the search committee members the importance of the following:

- Fair treatment of applicants
- Consistency during the search process
- Careful evaluation of applicants
- Bias-free search process

## Search Committee

Search committee members are responsible for completing a screening grid, rating methodology, and interview questions with benchmarks. The recruiter develops the screening grid and sends it to search committee members. The recruiter develops a screening grid based on the requirements and preferences outlined in the job announcement. The screening grid enables the committee to determine a candidate's eligibility for interview. Below is an example of a screening grid.

[illegible]

The first screening tool that must be developed is an Applicant Screening Grid. As the example above shows, the scale used on a screening grid to rate candidates is defined as follows:

**Q:** Qualified  
**P:** Possibly qualified  
**N:** Not qualified

The Applicant Screening Grid helps committee members to identify applicants who do not meet, meet, or exceed the minimum qualifications. When the screening process is completed, the search committee chair and committee members prepare a summary of their findings. The summary reflects a candidate's strengths

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and weaknesses based on the screening grid and supporting documents. The committee proceeds by selecting candidates for interview, drawing from the group that met or exceeded minimum qualifications. A second screening tool consists of interview questions and benchmarks. Interview questions should be objective, job-related, and focused on the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the essential functions, duties, and responsibilities of the job.

Benchmarks provide a frame of reference or standard for assessing the candidate's responses objectively and consistently. Benchmarks should be specific, measurable, and job-related. Candidate responses should, at minimum, match or exceed the benchmarks.

Below is an example of an interview question and benchmarks for a supervisory position.

### **Interview Question:**

Think of a time when you had a miscommunication with a subordinate or colleague. Tell me how you handled that.

### **Benchmarks:**

Responses to the interview question should be evaluated in terms of the following factors:

- Explanation of the task or challenge
- Steps taken to seek a solution
- Explanation of the outcome

During interviews, search committee members take notes about a candidate's responses to interview questions. Upon completion of the interview, committee members compare their notes with benchmarks to evaluate the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.

### **Writing/Skills Demonstrations/Exercises:**

An additional tool available to search committee members, if applicable, is a writing exercise, scenario, teaching or skills demonstration. If used, the tool must be pre-approved by the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management.

Requests for approval must include the following:

- Position title
- Position number
- Instructions to be given to the candidates
- Benchmarks for evaluation
- Time allotted for the exercise

Candidates should be notified (before the interview) that there will be a writing exercise or demonstration as a component of the interview process. The disability access statement should be included.

For disability-related accommodations, please call **240-567-5353** or submit your request by e-mail to [HRSTM@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:HRSTM@montgomerycollege.edu) at least two weeks in advance.

## PHASE 2: Screening Candidates and Completing the Screening Grid

### **Search Committee Members**

Committee members complete the screening grid in collaboration with the committee chair. Moving forward, search committee members work with the screening grid to review the application and other submitted

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materials, and to determine if the applicants meet the minimum requirements. Committee members enter candidate's qualifications (Required or Preferred) in the proper column on the screening grid.

Committee members are advised to recuse themselves from the process if the applicant is a relative or significant other. Furthermore, they are strongly advised not to search any applicant's name or information from the Internet (for example, Google and Facebook).

### Search Committee Chair

The search committee chair convenes committee members to discuss their screening grids. He or she ensures that the screening grid and the rating methodology are clearly explained and benchmarks are defined. If they are not clear, the screening grid and the rating methodology may appear to be arbitrary, subjective, or capricious and, therefore, unacceptable. At this time, the committee discusses who meets or exceeds the minimum requirements. The candidates are divided into three groups: qualified, possibly qualified, not qualified. Focus is then shifted to the qualified group, which is narrowed down to a subset of individuals to be invited for interview.

The search committee chair forwards the list of potential candidates for interview to the hiring manager for his or her approval. The hiring manager reviews the list for candidate diversity. Once the list is approved, the chair continues with the next step, which is to invite candidates for interview. To protect the integrity of the process, the committee chair contacts internal employees who submitted applications but were not selected for an interview. A candidate with a disability has the right to request and receive an accommodation.

## PHASE 3: Conducting Interviews and Evaluating Candidates for Hire

### Search Committee

Conducting interviews is perhaps the most important responsibility for committee members. Only objective, job-related questions, should be discussed, evaluated, and noted during the search process. To minimize interruptions and to ensure confidentiality, committee members should conduct interviews away from the work location. When all of the scheduled interviews are completed, the committee:

- Evaluates interviewees based on strengths and weaknesses
- Helps to prepare a written summary to submit to the hiring manager, which describes the process and evaluation of candidates. They also include notes about the candidate's responses to interview questions.

### Search Committee Chair

The next most crucial step is gathering and incorporating all of the necessary information into the Affirmative Action Recruitment and Selection Report (AARSR) for the hiring manager and for the administrative official's review and disposition. Notes must be objective and job-related. This could be challenging if the documentation has not been gathered or preserved as the events unfolded. The search committee chair reviews the summary prepared by the committee to make sure that it is complete and accurate. The following documentation is required to be included in the AARSR:

- Written summary of the search process
- Job announcement
- Candidate listing
- Rating methodology and screening grid
- Explanation for applicants who were not selected for interview
- Record of the schedule of interviews
- Interview questions and benchmarks

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- Strengths and weaknesses of interviewed applicants
- Supporting documentation (notes, any written or skills exercises/demonstrations, portfolios, if applicable)

### PHASE 4: Making the Hiring Decision

#### Hiring Manager

The hiring manager is responsible and accountable for ensuring that the search and selection process is fair and complies with federal provisions, state provisions, and College policies. The hiring manager's task is to review the summary report from the search committee chair and to determine if a second round of interviews would be appropriate. If not, the hiring manager makes the initial selection of a candidate based on the recommendations from the search committee. The hiring manager is responsible for completing the employment references. All employment reference checks must be obtained from people who have supervised the candidate within the last *five* years. Verbal reference requirements are as follows:

- For staff positions, three verbal references are required.

**Note:** If the candidate is internal, no verbal reference is required. There is the option of reviewing his or her performance evaluation instead of verbal references.

- For faculty positions, two verbal and three written references are required. Written references must be received within 60 days of hire.

#### Administrative Official

The administrative official is responsible for:

- Reviewing the final report as submitted by the hiring manager
- Providing the department's demographics
- Approving and signing the AARSR
- Submitting the AARSR report to HRSTM

### PHASE 5: Completing the Hiring Process and Making an Offer

Before any offer is made, the HRSTM office reviews the AARSR for compliance. If satisfied, HRSTM or the dean follows these steps in concluding the hiring process:

A. For staff positions, HRSTM:

1. Determine salary placement
2. Extend verbal offer
3. Determine the start date
4. Prepare and send offer letter
5. Request background check
6. Send non-selection letters or e-mails

B. For faculty positions:

1. The Dean
  - a. Determine salary placement
  - b. Extend verbal offer
  - c. Prepare and send offer letter, contract, and other materials



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d. Informs HRSTM that offer was made

2. HRSTM:

- a. Requests background check
- b. Sends additional materials to the new faculty member

### Contact Information for HELP:

- For computer-related problems: IT Service Desk, Ext. **77222**
- For applicant pool access issue: HRSTM, Ext. **75353**

Recruitment Team Members		Phone Extensions
Edesa Ashourian		77138
Erica Bailey		75448
Lauren Landau		74246
Pat Mason		75373
Roz Sanders		79180
Human Resources Internal Consultants		
Germantown		
Leslie Jones		79169
Rockville		
Carla Ammerman		75351
TP/SS		
Ashley Roberts		79147