

Oregon State University Hiring Philosophy and Principles

Oregon State University Hiring Philosophy: “The individuals comprising our extended university community are the source of our creativity, reputation, and vitality” (OSU mission statement). Every position at OSU is critical to our ability to achieve our shared institutional objectives. Each time we hire a staff member, administrator, faculty member or student employee, we are given a chance to enhance this community and to demonstrate our university’s values of accountability, diversity, respect, and responsibility. We do this by using fair, legal, inclusive, and effective hiring practices that support and comply with OSU policy and procedures in a way that is mindful of climate, culture and diversity, and by affirming the unique qualities of each individual throughout the hiring process.

Principles that guide our hiring practices

- **Maintain confidentiality:** Keep search committee deliberations, applicant information, and applicant identities confidential. Search committee members offer a wide array of perspectives to each search and selection process. They are expected to work together to bring these perspectives to consensus by ultimately producing a list of finalists that each member of the committee can support. When a committee member reveals selective details of the search committee’s thinking and discussion as they work towards that outcome, s/he may misrepresent the committee or damage the reputations of committee members and applicants. Similarly, an applicant can be irrevocably damaged by premature announcement of her/his candidacy for the position you intend to fill. Maintaining strict confidentiality in every search is a “must” for the hiring units, the candidates, the appointees, and the University’s reputation.
- **Use best practices in search and selection:** Years of research and practical experience support the strategies you will use during; active recruitment, inclusive screening, behavioral interviewing by a panel, follow-up questioning, behavioral reference checking, timely applicant communication, and awareness of unintentional bias are just a few of the techniques used in student, staff, faculty and administrative searches. These techniques comply with relevant laws, rules, regulations, and contractual obligations, and align with the University’s mission and vision as a diverse public land, sea, space, and sun-grant institution.
- **Recognize and avoid or counteract bias:** Present-day research demonstrates that unintentional bias, even on the part of open-minded, well-intentioned decision-makers, unfairly disadvantages qualified applicants. All of us have biases and stereotyped thinking that we use to make sense of the world around us, but we are largely unaware of them. When you acknowledge the likelihood of your own unconscious biases, and commit to addressing them, you reduce the chances that someone will be harmed by bias in your search process.
- **Treat people fairly and respectfully:** Most people consider three factors when they decide whether they have received fair treatment:
 - Was the outcome fair?
 - Was the process fair?
 - Were they treated respectfully?

A fair search is open, well-documented, and uses clear and relevant screening criteria. The hiring department keeps applicants informed about their status in the search in a timely manner, seeks to make them comfortable and at ease with each stage of the process, and makes good faith attempts to accommodate their individual needs. Applicants know that they have received full consideration. The outcome makes sense and the reasons for the outcome are congruent with the established criteria.

- **Value diversity:** “We value diversity because it enhances our education and because it provides tools to be culturally respectful, professionally competent and civically responsible” (Oregon State University Mission Statement). We seek to build an organizational culture that allows each individual to enter, participate and thrive without being hindered by her/his identity status. Our success as a 21st century land grant institution depends on whether we can sustain such an organization. Each search provides an opportunity to demonstrate and enhance

this culture, by the way we work together and by whom we hire.

- **Represent the university with integrity:** As public employees, when we interact with someone, we do so on behalf of the University, the state, and the people of Oregon. We are accountable both for the public trust and for the reputation of our institution. Remember that colleagues, applicants and stakeholders may form lifelong opinions about the entire institution based on one contact with a single individual. Make sure each of your interactions reflect the mission, integrity, and humanity of our public university.
- **Hire the best-qualified applicant:** The ultimate goal of every search is to hire the most highly qualified candidate. To accomplish this, we adhere to well-developed and relevant screening criteria, concentrate on applicants' strengths before identifying their weaknesses, look for transferable skills, consider diverse viewpoints, and make sure that we have the best information available from which to make a fair and unbiased decision.