



Employee Recruitment and Evaluation Processes

Filling Faculty and High-Level Staff Positions at Rural
Community Colleges

Community College Executive Forum

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1) Executive Overview

Key Observations	Human resources (HR) administrators at all profiled institutions delineate position responsibilities, minimum job qualifications, and application steps in job postings for faculty and high-level staff positions. Administrators at Institution B also include a close date for each job posting. The HR team at Institution D only includes close dates when facing an urgent deadline to fill a position. Additionally, profiled institutions typically do not include salary information within job postings for faculty or high-level staff positions, as salaries depend largely on each applicant's educational background and work experience. In one exception, administrators at Institution B include salary ranges in job postings for high-level staff positions, but not faculty openings. Profiled institutions publish job postings on a wide range of portals, with institutional websites and HigherEdJobs.com being the most commonly used portals. HR administrators at all profiled institutions publish faculty and high-level staff job postings on their institutional website's job board. Administrators at Institution B, Institution D, and Institution E publish job postings on HigherEdJobs.com. Contacts at these institutions note that posting on HigherEdJobs.com is effective for securing non-locally based applicants for faculty and high-level staff positions. HR administrators at profiled institutions publish job postings on CareerBuilder.com and in local newspapers with decreasing frequency. HR teams at profiled institutions coordinate and train search committees for faculty and high-level staff positions, but search committees lead interviews. HR administrators at Institution C, Institution D, and Institution E offer guidance to search committees regarding interview question preparation. These administrators recommend changes to proposed interview questions and screen questions for any legal concerns. No profiled institution requires that an HR representative be present during interviews for faculty or high-level staff positions. However, HR administrators at Institution B, Institution C, and Institution D prefer that an HR administrator be present. Institution C and Institution D are the only two profiled institutions that reimburse all non-locally based faculty and high-level staff candidates for travel costs associated with on-campus interviews. Contacts at Institution D note that a generous candidate reimbursement policy signals to applicants that the institution invests in all of its employees. Institution B only reimburses vice presidential and presidential candidates for travel costs. Institution E offers full reimbursement to candidates who accept a job offer or who interview but do not receive an offer, but does not reimburse candidates who decline an offer of employment.
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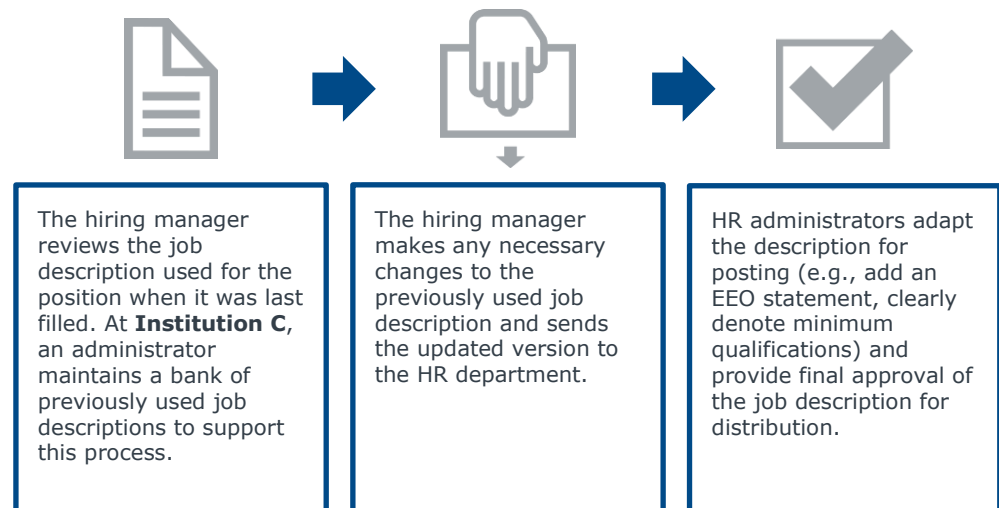
2) Securing Applications

Job Descriptions and Postings

Human Resources (HR) Staff Members Collaborate with Departments to Write Effective Job Descriptions

At all five profiled institutions, HR administrators collaborate with the hiring manager (i.e., the individual who will supervise the new hire) to craft an accurate and thorough job description.

Job Description Drafting Processes at Profiled Institutions



At **Institution A**, the dean of each department writes all job descriptions for faculty positions he/she oversees. The dean then sends the job description to the HR team for posting, but the description does not require HR approval.

Communicate Each Position's Responsibilities and Minimum Qualifications through the Job Posting

At **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E**, HR administrators or hiring managers always include information on a position's responsibilities, minimum qualifications, and application process within job postings. The minimum qualifications stated within the job posting serve as criteria for the first round of applicant screening at each institution (i.e., applicants will not move forward in the process if they do not meet the minimum qualifications).

Administrators at Institution B include a close date for each job posting, while the HR team at Institution D only includes close dates when facing an urgent deadline to fill a position. At Institution D, administrators occasionally note in postings that applicants who apply by a particular date will be given preference in the hiring process. At Institution E, administrators include the date on which applicants will first be given consideration within each job posting.

Sample Job Posting for a Faculty Position

Apply to Work at Alpha Community College

Job Title: Physics Faculty Member

Start Date: June 2018

Main Responsibilities:

- Conduct effective instruction in all areas of the curriculum
- Evaluate students in a timely manner and work within the institution's student information system
- Hold office hours and student advising sessions
- Participate in committee and department meetings to support institution-wide initiatives

Minimum Qualifications:

- Master's degree
- At least 20 credit hours in graduate level physics

Preferred Qualifications:

- One or more years of community college teaching experience
- A Master's of Science or PhD in Physics

Application Requirements: Please apply through the online application portal and provide...

- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Copies of Transcripts
- Copies of Applicable Licenses
- Two Reference Letters

EEO Statement: Alpha Community College is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment for all employees.

Administrators at Profiled Institutions Typically Do Not Include Salary Information within Job Postings

Because salary ranges for faculty and high-level staff positions depend largely on each applicant's education and employment experience, contacts at **Institution A**, **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** do not include salary ranges within job postings. In contrast, administrators at **Institution B** include salary ranges in job postings for high-level staff positions, but not faculty positions. Furthermore, HR administrators at Institution B send applicants a copy of the institution's faculty pay plan if applicants inquire about estimated salaries.

HR administrators at **Institution C** and **Institution E** provide faculty and high-level staff applicants with a salary range once they extend an offer to interview. This allows applicants to determine if they are still interested in the position given the salary range before they or the institution invest additional resources in the interview process.

Attract Underrepresented Applicants through Careful Composition of Job Postings and Diversity Statement

For more information on composing job descriptions and diversity statements, see **pages 23-27** of the Academic Affairs Forum study [Instilling Equity and Inclusion in Departmental Practices.](#)

As past EAB research has shown, job postings often serve as an applicant's first impression of the hiring institution. Yet many job postings within the higher-education sector fail to effectively communicate an institution's commitment to diversity. This failure can deter underrepresented minority candidates or individuals interested in working within a diverse environment from applying to work at the institution. To make job postings more inclusive, administrators can include information about the ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity of their student body. Administrators can also illustrate the importance of diversity to the institution by including diversity-related criteria within its application requirements (e.g., ask candidates to describe how they have engaged with diverse students within their cover letter).

Additionally, an effective diversity statement in a job posting can attract candidates who seek to be a part of an inclusive work environment. EAB research recommends that institutions move beyond boilerplate equal opportunity statements to indicate a sincere institutional commitment to celebrating diversity among both students and employees.

Advertising Job Openings

Institutional Websites, HigherEdJobs.com, and Indeed.com Are the Most Popular Locations for Job Postings among Profiled Institutions

Administrators at all five profiled institutions publish job postings on their institutional website as a first step in the job advertisement process. In addition, profiled institutions most commonly use HigherEdJobs.com and Indeed.com for job advertisements. For vice presidential positions, administrators at profiled institutions often place advertisements in The Chronicle of Higher Education. At three profiled institutions, the HR team recently stopped publishing job postings on CareerBuilder.com, citing a failure to secure a sufficient number of quality applications from the portal. To secure applications for hard-to-fill or highly technical positions, many HR administrators publish job postings within industry-specific publications. Additionally, most HR teams post job postings on institutional social media pages to reach a wider audience (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). The graphic below describes these platforms in further detail.

Frequently Used Job Posting Locations for Faculty and High-Level Staff Recruitment at Profiled Institutions



Institutional Websites

Administrators at all profiled institutions publish job postings on their institutional websites. The HR teams at **Institution D** and **Institution E** utilize application management software for their institution's job portals (e.g., Cornerstone, PeopleAdmin).



HigherEdJobs.com

Administrators at **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** publish job postings on HigherEdJobs.com. Contacts at each institution note that the portal typically attracts an acceptable number of non-local applicants for faculty positions.



Indeed.com

Administrators at **Institution B** publish faculty and high-level staff position job postings on Indeed.com. Contacts report that Indeed.com proves fairly inexpensive and is effective at securing applications. Indeed.com occasionally republishes job postings from institutional websites and local workforce development job boards. **Institution D** and **Institution E** have both received applications through this free advertising.



USA Today Job Platform

The HR team at **Institution E** utilizes the USA Today Job platform for faculty and high-level staff positions. Contacts note that the platform is particularly effective at securing applicants who are not actively looking for new employment.



The Chronicle of Higher Education

Administrators at **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** post some faculty and high-level staff positions on the Chronicle of Higher Education's job board. Contacts note that this platform can be expensive, but is helpful for securing applicants for vice president or highly specialized faculty positions (e.g., physics faculty).



Local Workforce Development Job Boards

At **Institution D**, the HR office publishes all new faculty and high-level staff job postings on the state's workforce development division. Similarly, administrators at **Institution B** alert the local unemployment office of new job postings.



Industry-Specific Publications

For some faculty positions, administrators at **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** send job postings to industry-specific publications. Contacts note that these publications often secure applications for hard-to-fill faculty positions (i.e., nursing, STEM subjects).



Social Media Platforms

Administrators at **Institution A**, **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** publish job postings on Facebook through institutional accounts. Faculty and staff members often share these postings through their personal accounts. Recently, HR administrators at Institution E have begun to publish job postings on their personal LinkedIn accounts.



Job Elephant

The HR director at **Institution C** sends all job postings to Job Elephant, a third-party vendor. Job Elephant provides a list of job advertisement options for each posting using historical data on which portals have been effective for similar positions in the past. The HR director then selects advertisements for each position.



Local Newspapers

Institution B, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** occasionally post faculty and high-level staff job postings in local newspapers. However, contacts report that they do not receive many applications through these advertisements.

Ask Applicants Where They Discovered the Job Opening to Assess the Success of Each Advertising Platform

Applications for faculty and high-level staff positions at **Institution A**, **Institution B**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** include a field for applicants to state where they first heard about the job opening. Using this information, HR administrators track which advertisements spur the greatest number of applicants, the most qualified applicants, and/or the most diverse applicant pool.

HR administrators at Institution B use this information to determine job advertisement spending. An HR administrator studies old applications to determine which advertisements were particularly effective at securing applications for similar job openings in the past. The administrator then makes recommendations for future job postings.

For more information on recruiting diverse applicants for faculty positions, see **pages 9-16** of the Academic Affairs Forum study **[Instilling Equity and Inclusion in Departmental Practices.](#)**

Profiled Institutions Struggle to Diversify their Applicant Pools

HR administrators at **Institution B**, **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** are actively working to increase the diversity of their applicant pools. The HR directors at Institution C and Institution D reach out to career services administrators at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to advertise job positions and increase the diversity of their applicant pools. For faculty positions, the HR director at Institution C also reaches out to administrators or graduate students at HBCUs within the subject of the faculty position. Contacts note that these efforts have not led to a significant increase in the diversity of their applicant pools.

The HR teams at profiled institutions also purchase advertisements in minority-targeted publications. Administrators at Institution D occasionally post job openings in *Hispanic Outlook*, and administrators at Institution E purchase advertisements within an email sent to minority-targeted audiences through HigherEdJobs.com. At Institution E, the HR team occasionally sends job posting fliers to local minority groups. Contacts report that this strategy has not yet resulted in diverse applications, but does help build relationships with community members.

The HR director at Institution D intends to begin sending faculty and high-level staff job postings to the NAACP for advertisement through the organization's job boards. In doing so, the HR director hopes to signal to applicants that the institution values diversity.

Profiled Institutions Do Not Budget a Specific Dollar Amount for Job Opening Advertisement

At each profiled institution, the director of HR determines the quantity of advertising spend for each job opening. However, profiled institutions have no formalized process or specified dollar amount that informs advertising spending. Rather, the director considers the seniority of the role, the expected level of difficulty to fill the role, and the geographic range of the search when determining how much to spend on job advertisements. Administrators at **Institution C** and **Institution E** typically post advertisements for two weeks. If the HR director at each institution deems the application pool insufficient in size after two weeks, administrators may extend the advertisements and thus spend additional advertising funds. This flexible system allows the institutions to adapt to the size and quality of the applicant pool.

Estimated Advertisement Spend Per Faculty and High-Level Staff Position at Profiled Institutions

Institution	Type of Position	Dollars Spent Per Position
Institution E	Faculty and High-Level Staff	\$400-\$700
Institution B	Easy-To-Fill Faculty, Mid-Level Staff	\$200-\$600
	Hard-To-Fill Faculty, Vice Presidents	\$500-\$1,000
Institution D	Faculty and High-Level Staff	\$500-\$1,200
Institution C	Faculty and High-Level Staff	\$1,000-\$1,500

3) Evaluating Applicants

Initial Applicant Evaluation

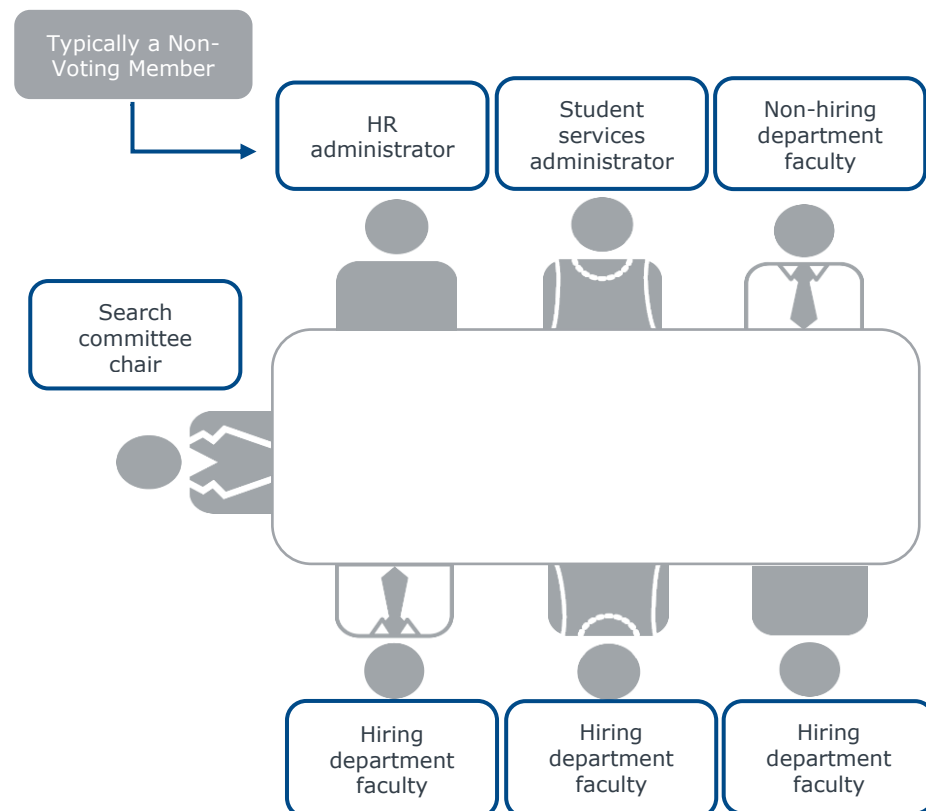
When Possible, Profiled Institutions Form Diverse Search Committees to Limit Implicit Bias

All five profiled institutions create search committees to evaluate faculty and high-level staff applicants. These search committees typically include four to eight individuals in total. Each committee includes a search committee chair, who is usually the hiring manager for the role. The HR departments at **Institution B**, **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** encourage hiring managers to diversify search committees when possible.

Institution B requires that each search committee include three individuals who are not employees of the hiring department. The HR department established this policy to diversify the academic backgrounds of committee members. Institution D does not enforce a formal policy guiding the composition of search committees, but does informally ask that search committee chairs balance the committee in terms of gender and areas of expertise.

Contacts at Institution E note that search committee chairs often select search committee members from the same department and demographic backgrounds similar to their own. HR administrators worry that these tendencies often result in an insufficiently diverse search committee. The institution is considering changes to its policy regarding the composition of search committees to mitigate this concern.

Sample Search Committee for Faculty Position





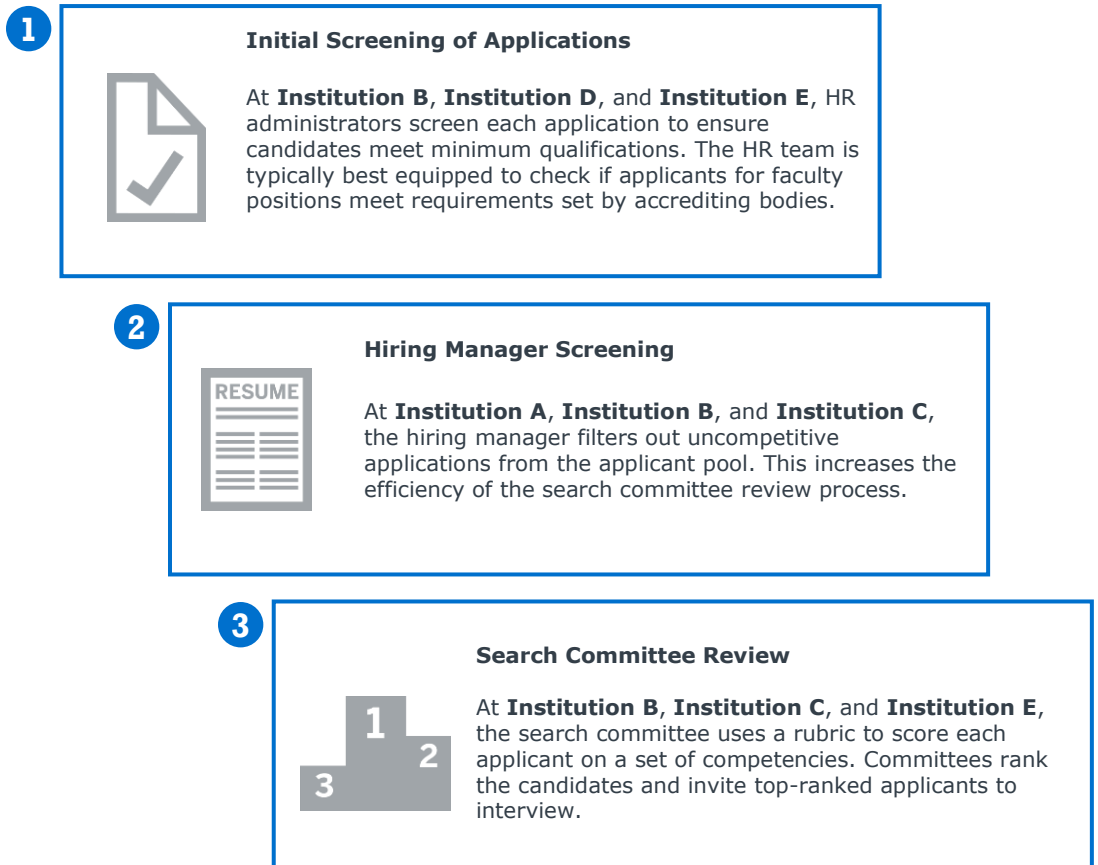
A Collective Bargaining Agreement Governs the Composition of Search Committees for Faculty Positions at *Institution C*

The collective bargaining unit at **Institution C** negotiated a policy concerning the composition of faculty search committees with the HR department. The agreement states that faculty search committees will include a dean or assistant dean, three faculty members, and, when possible, one adjunct faculty member. A representative from HR sits on the search committee as a non-voting member.

HR Administrators Coordinate the Initial Applicant Review Process at Most Profiled Institutions

The HR department takes ownership of the initial applicant review process at most profiled institutions. However, HR administrators do not determine which candidates to bring in for interviews alone. Rather, they typically filter out candidates who do not meet minimum qualifications and then guide the search committee through a review process that evaluates the remaining candidates across equal criteria that are mapped onto critical competencies for the role.

Interview Screening Processes at Profiled Institutions



The Frequency of First-Round Phone Interviews Depends on the Size and Geographic Breadth of the Applicant Pool

Contacts at **Institution B** report that search committees typically conduct phone interviews for searches with a large pool of qualified applicants (i.e., eight to 15 candidates). For presidential or vice presidential positions, the committee conducts phone interviews with 10 to 12 candidates before inviting three to four candidates to campus for in-person interviews. Recently, the HR department has begun to record phone interviews to accommodate search committee members who are unable to participate live.

Search committees at **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** only conduct phone interviews when conducting multiple rounds of in-person interviews is prohibited by cost. When candidates do not live locally, the search committees may conduct a first-round phone or video interview before inviting applicants to campus. If Institution D faces an urgent deadline to fill a vacant position, search committees may conduct phone interviews to expedite the interview process.

HR Administrators Often Prepare Search Committees to Conduct In-Person Interviews

Before final-round interviews, HR administrators at **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** offer guidance to search committees regarding interview question preparation. At Institution E, the HR team asks committee chairs to send them proposed interview questions. HR administrators then offer edits to these questions to improve search committees' ability to evaluate applicants based on their answers. Administrators also verify the legality of each question.

Profiled Institutions Do Not Require the Presence of a HR Representative during Interviews

The HR team at **Institution B** strongly encourages search committees to invite an HR representative to interviews. HR administrators at **Institution C** and **Institution D** participate in interviews as time allows.

HR administrators do not typically sit-in on interviews at **Institution A** and **Institution E**.

For information on implicit bias training, see **page 19** of the Academic Affairs Forum study [Instilling Equity and Inclusion in Departmental Practices](#).

At Institution D, search committees develop interview questions that evaluate an applicant's fit for the position, fit within the department, and commitment to the mission of the institution. HR administrators train the search committee on the importance of diversity within the institution's workforce.

At Institution C, HR administrators lead search committees in designating questions that will be asked of all applicants. The HR administrators pull from a bank of interview questions used by search committees in the past to inform the question selection process.

At **Institution A**, the hiring manager works directly with the HR department to develop interview questions for each faculty and high-level staff position.

Search Committees Lead On-Campus Interviews at Profiled Institutions

Search committees at all profiled institutions strongly prefer to conduct at least one on-campus interview of final candidates for faculty and high-level staff positions before extending an offer of employment. At each institution, search committees lead the in-person interview of applicants. At **Institution D**, all search committee members must be present for in-person interviews. The search committee chair serves as the lead facilitator during the interview, but each committee member asks the applicant at least one question. At **Institution B**, the search committee collectively determines the format of the interviews for a given position. Committee members may take turns asking questions or an HR administrator may ask all the questions.

Search committees lead the interview process at **Institution A** and use a rubric to evaluate interviewees. The search committee often adapts the rubric from previous interview rubrics for similar roles.

Contacts at **Institution C**, **Institution D**, and **Institution E** report that the HR team works to schedule a half-day to a full-day of programming for faculty or high-level staff candidates. This allows candidates to gain familiarity with the campus and community. For example, at **Institution C**, faculty candidates may meet with the Chief Academic Officer or President in addition to their interview with the search committee. A high-level staff candidate may meet with the Chief Financial Officer, President, and search committee during the same interview day.

Candidate Evaluation Strategies at Profiled Institutions



Teaching Demonstration

Search committees at **Institution C** and **Institution D** ask each faculty candidate to conduct a teaching demonstration. The search committee provides candidates with a topic for the demonstration. Search committees evaluate candidates based on subject mastery and teaching ability.



Writing Sample

At **Institution A** and **Institution E**, search committees often ask faculty candidates to complete a writing exercise. The search committee uses the resulting writing sample to confirm writing skills that applicants state within their resumes.



Online Test

Institution E requires high-level staff candidates to take an online test to measure candidates' emotional intelligence and fit for the job. The institution uses Wonderlic for this service. The HR department only shares these test scores with the search committee chair.

Search Committees Typically Make Recommendations to Campus Leaders for Final Candidate Selection

At **Institution E**, the search committee puts forth viable candidates for the position after a qualitative discussion of each candidate's merits—the committee itself does not rank candidates. Instead, the vice president and HR department make a final decision concerning to whom to first extend an offer. Contacts stress that it is important to communicate this policy to search committee members prior to candidate evaluation. At **Institution A**, **Institution C**, and **Institution D**, the search committee recommends a candidate for each position. While the president of the institution maintains the right to make the final selection, the president typically selects the recommended candidate. At all profiled institutions, HR administrators conduct background and reference checks.

Administrators Weigh Educational Attainment and Employment Experience to Determine Salary Offers

The HR director at each profiled institution makes salary recommendations for faculty and high-level staff positions. At **Institution E**, the HR director makes a salary recommendation to the vice president who then sends the recommendation to the president for approval. At **Institution A**, the HR team, president, payroll office, vice president, and hiring manager all contribute to the discussion on salary setting. Before sending a salary recommendation to the president for approval, the HR director at **Institution D** works to elevate a recommended salary within the average range as much as possible to ensure faculty and high-level staff receive fair and attractive compensation. A faculty compensation committee and administrative compensation committee at **Institution B** lead the salary setting discussion for faculty and high-level staff roles, respectively. HR administrators and the hiring manager also contribute to the decision making process.

Key Factors Involved in Salary Setting

Faculty Positions

- 1 Educational attainment** is the most important factor in salary setting for faculty positions at profiled institutions. The HR director may use the salaries of current employees with similar educational backgrounds to guide the salary setting recommendation. A collective bargaining agreement may govern salary setting according to educational attainment.
- 2 Previous work experience** (e.g., community college teaching experience, experience in the subject field) plays a role in salary setting for faculty positions at most institutions.

High-Level Staff Positions

- 1 Previous work experience** is the most important factor in salary setting for high-level staff positions at profiled institutions.
- 2** Some profiled institutions consider a candidate's **current salary** and the **market rate** for the position when making salary decisions.
- 3 Educational attainment** and **unique institutional needs** may also be considered (e.g., upcoming reaccreditation may boost the salary for an expert on the process).

Some, But Not All, Profiled Institutions Reimburse Faculty and High-Level Staff Applicants for Travel Costs

Candidate reimbursement policies at profiled institutions depend on the HR departments' budget, state policies, and institutional goals.

Candidate Reimbursement Policies at Profiled Institutions

 No Reimbursement Institution A does not reimburse faculty or high-level candidates for travel, lodging, and/or meal costs associated with on-campus interviews.	 Reimbursement for Some Candidates Institution E offers full reimbursement to candidates who accept a job offer or who interview but do not receive an offer. The institution does not reimburse candidates who decline an offer. Institution B reimburses vice presidential and presidential candidates, but does not reimburse faculty candidates.	 Reimbursement for All Candidates Institution C and Institution D reimburse all faculty and high-level staff candidates for costs associated with on-campus interviews. The institutions do not typically reimburse locally based candidates.
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Profiled Institutions Typically Fill Faculty and High-Level Staff Positions within 30 to 60 Days of Posting

Contacts at all profiled institutions note that the length of a faculty and high-level staff position vacancy depends largely on the type of position. For example, some faculty positions (e.g., physics faculty, developmental English) can be particularly difficult to fill. The HR director at **Institution E** is currently working to change the institution's policy regarding search committees to decrease scheduling delays that occur when a large committee cannot find a time to hold interviews. The HR team set a goal to fill all vacant positions within 47 days of the first consideration date listed in each job posting. The first consideration date is typically 14 days after the original posting. In 2017, the HR team filled 86 percent of jobs in less than 47 days. The institution typically fills high-level staff positions within 30 days because the process involves fewer faculty members.

Institution D typically fills faculty and high-level staff positions within 60 days of the original posting. **Institution B** fills most faculty positions within 45-60 days while hard-to-fill faculty positions and high-level positions often take 90 to 120 days. Both **Institution A** and **Institution C** fill most faculty and high-level staff positions within 30 to 60 days from the job posting.

4) Research Methodology

Project Challenge	Leadership at a member institution approached the Forum with the following questions: • Through which channels do contacts advertise job postings? – Which channels, if any, have proven particularly effective in securing applicants? • How do contacts determine the advertising budget for each position? • Do contacts include projected salary ranges within job postings? • What additional recruitment strategies do contacts employ to fill faculty and high-level staff positions? • What recruitment strategies, if any, do contacts employ to attract diverse candidates? – What impact on the demographic makeup of applicant pools, if any, do contacts attribute to these recruiting strategies? • Which metrics or strategies do contact institutions employ to assess the success of recruitment strategies? • What is the screening process for faculty and high-level staff positions prior to on-campus interviews? • What is the on-campus interview process for candidates? – Who participates in each stage of the interview process? – Does the contact institution require a representative from HR to participate in all interviews? • What policies inform candidate reimbursement for travel and housing costs resulting from on-campus interviews? – What impact on applicants, if any, do contacts attribute to the candidate reimbursement policy? • What primary factors do contacts consider when determining starting salaries for new hires? • How long on average does it take contact institutions to fill a faculty or high-level staff position? – How does this average time vary among faculty positions and within high-level staff positions?
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Project Sources	The Forum consulted the following sources for this report: • EAB's internal and online research libraries (eab.com) • National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (http://nces.ed.gov/)
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Research Parameters

The Forum interviewed directors of HR or institutional effectiveness at small community colleges located in rural areas or small towns.

A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief

Institution	Region	Campus Setting	Approximate Enrollment
Institution A	South	Rural: Distant	3,000
Institution B	South	Town: Remote	2,000
Institution C	Midwest	Rural: Fringe	3,100
Institution D	Midwest	Town: Remote	3,000
Institution E	Mid-Atlantic	Rural: Fringe	3,100