

California State University, East Bay  
Office of Academic Affairs

*Tenure-Track Search Process Guidelines*  
2021 – 2022

**Before the Search Convenes:**

**Diversity Best Practice: All departments convening a search should have proactive hiring pipelines established to reach diverse candidates. This requires intentional relationships with doctoral institutions beyond just an email invite to apply.**

**Stage One: Elect The Committee**

- **Elect a Search Committee of Tenured/Tenure-track Faculty, during the Spring Semester** (CBA 12.22.a. "Each department or equivalent unit shall elect a peer review committee of tenured employees for the purpose of reviewing and recommending individuals for probationary appointments. At the discretion of the President and upon request of the department these peer review committees may also include probationary employees.")
  - Submit the results of the election/committee member names to the College Dean's office. The College Dean will approve and the position announcement details can be loaded into PageUp in "New Job." You will need a position PS# (requested from HR) to enter the position announcement (see below for instructions).

**Diversity Best Practice: if possible include individuals from underrepresented groups on your search committee; provide a good gender balance.**

**Diversity Best Practice: Search committee members should partner with Human Resources to receive up-to-date training on legal hiring practices. Search committee members should be familiar with the issues of non-discrimination, implicit bias, and understand why equity, diversity and inclusion are important at East Bay.**

**Diversity Best Practice: if possible include a search committee member who has done research, community service or taught classes that emphasize equity, diversity and inclusion.**

**Diversity Best Practice: all search committee members should take the CSU online search training modules available in CSULearn under "Searches and Recruitments"**

**Stage Two: Required Orientation and Trainings – due to changing conditions, it is most likely that search committee training will be conducted by Zoom or video.**

- Tenure-Track Search Committee Orientation
- Training/orientation session on PageUp

- Implicit bias training, starting in Fall 2021, to be provided by UDO/DELO and is required of all parties in the search process (committee, chair, dean).

### **Stage Three: Develop the Position Announcement and Faculty Recruitment Plan**

#### **Position Announcement – Prepare the information for a position announcement using the template for FULL-TIME TENURE-TRACK**

Carefully choose the required qualifications and criteria for selection:

- Flexible vs. rigid requirements advisable (preferred vs. required, should vs. must). The requirements listed as “must have” will be applied to every applicant.
- Prioritize selection criteria (assign relative value). Make sure the priorities are apparent in the position description.

Note: Broad rather than highly specialized announcements usually attract more diverse candidates.

Requiring a Diversity Statement is highly recommended.

#### **Request a Position PS# from Human Resources (HR)**

You will need a position PS# (requested from HR) to enter the position announcement in PageUp. To request a position PS#, contact the appropriate HR Manager based on the College of the position:

College of Business and Economics - Ed Park  
College of Science - Stefanie Broughton  
College of Education and Allied Studies - Stefanie Broughton  
College Letters, Arts, and Social Studies - Kristine Fagundes  
University Libraries - Geraldine Torbik

The following information is needed to request a PS#:

1. Department
2. Job location (you can give the department office address)
3. Job code: 2360 for tenure-track positions (grade 3 for assistant professor, grade 4 for associate professor)
4. Job start date: Fall 2022
5. Full time
6. Reports to: department chair’s name

#### **Enter the Position Announcement and Job Details in PageUp**

PageUp login can be found at: <https://www.csueastbay.edu/oa> → Policies and Procedures → Forms, Documents and Miscellaneous → PageUp

Go to “Jobs” and click on “New Job.”

**IMPORTANT:** The following information should be entered to set-up the position and access for search committee members in PageUp:

1. Internal Team: Select the appropriate Department
2. Recruitment Process: Select “EB-Faculty Tenure-Track”
3. Application Form: Select “EB-Faculty Tenure Track Application Form”
4. Job Code/Employee Classification: Enter “2360” for “Instr Fac AY”
5. Salary Range/Grade:
  - a. Grade 3 – Assistant Professor
  - b. Grade 4 – Associate Professor
6. CSU Working Title: “Assistant Professor of DEPARTMENT, (Specialty),  
*e.g.*: Assistant Professor of Management (Operations)
7. Campus: “East Bay” (should already be defaulted from job template)
8. Division: “Academic Affairs” (should already be defaulted from template)
9. College/Program: Select the appropriate college
10. Department: Select the appropriate department
11. Requisition Number: leave blanks
12. Positions: defaulted to 1. Select the Type: “New”
13. Auxiliary Recruitment: “No”
14. Reason: “New Position”
15. Work Type: “Instructional Faculty-Tenured/Tenure-Track”
16. Hiring Type: “Probationary”
17. Job Status: “Regular”
18. Time Basis: “Full Time”
19. CSU Campus: “California State University, East Bay”
20. Complete the Job Details with requirements of the position announcement
21. Posting Type: “Open Recruitment”
22. Review Begin Date: select a date, *if desired*, is not required
23. Posting Location: “East Bay”

24. Advertising Summary: Enter the details of the position that will appear as a summary on the CSU East Bay Careers site
25. Advertising text: the complete position announcement details – please complete the position announcement template
26. Search Committee Chair: Name of the search committee chair
27. Search Committee Members: Click “Add Search Committee Member”
28. Reports to Supervisor Name: enter the name of the **College Dean**
29. Administrative Support: Name of the administrative assistant who will oversee the search (Dept. or College Admin)
30. Hiring Administrator: enter the name of the **Department Chair**
31. Approval Process: Select “EB-Faculty Tenure Track Job Approval” and enter the names of the appropriate approvers: Dept. Chair and Dean’s office designee (Dean or Associate Dean)
32. HR/Faculty Affairs Representative: enter “Karen Ling”
33. Recruitment Status: Select “Pending Approval”

Required Documents – the following documents/information are required for a complete application:

1. Cover letter that details areas of interest
2. Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume
3. Email information for three Confidential Letters of Recommendation – Three (3) confidential letters of recommendation are required for each applicant that is invited for on-campus interviews. PageUp handles collection of these letters.

Optional Documents – the following are optional (specify in position announcement):

1. Diversity statement
2. Please upload any supporting documents required for this position
3. Portfolio
4. Other supporting documents

**Diversity Best Practice: Be as broad as you can with your qualifications, so that you attract a solid pool of candidates. The intent is to welcome applicants in, rather than exclude them.**

**Diversity Best Practice: The California Gender Recognition Act encourages the use of gender neutral and inclusive language. Use language that is welcoming and collaborative**

wherever possible; What do you like about working at East Bay? Can that quality be worked into your ad?

**Diversity Best Practice: IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, meet with the DELO to review your search prior to launch.**

### **Upload the required documents for the position announcement**

In the “Documents” tab at the top of the Job Card, please upload:

1. **Faculty Recruitment Plan (FRP)** - which includes a recruitment timeline, the application screening criteria, and proposed phone/video interview questions and ratings protocol, etc.

See: <http://www.csueastbay.edu/oaa/files/docs/policies-and-procedures/frptt.pdf>

2. **Review Faculty & Student Composition Data (accessible from Institutional Research)** [https://data.csueastbay.edu/#/apr/program\\_data/program\\_enrollment](https://data.csueastbay.edu/#/apr/program_data/program_enrollment) and [https://data.csueastbay.edu/#/apr/program\\_data/faculty\\_diversity](https://data.csueastbay.edu/#/apr/program_data/faculty_diversity)

**Please upload the file in PDF format** and title the document appropriately, as other documents will be uploaded in this section throughout the process.

**Diversity Best Practice: Academic Affairs places ads for all positions in the Chronicle of Higher Education online on a continual basis. For some positions, ads will be placed in Hispanics in Higher Education, The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, and Higher Ed Jobs; all other ads are the responsibility of Departments/Colleges and should be thoughtfully targeted to associations or publications that will reach the most diverse pools relevant to your department’s discipline.**

**Diversity Best Practice: If an ad is sent to institutions designated as Hispanic Servicing, or Historical Black or universities that have programs where underrepresented individuals are graduate candidates, it is more effective to have established relationships with key stakeholders within the institution. This requires intentional outreach prior to the position announcement. Use your own networks and professional associations; be proactive in recruiting.**

**Diversity Best Practice: All department colleagues should let people know at conferences and other gatherings that we have openings and that they are empowered to encourage candidates to apply; use personal networks.**

**Diversity Best Practice: It is highly encouraged that search committees meet with the DELO prior to submitting their ads.**

### **Stage Four: Submit the Position Announcement for the Required Approvals**

Once the position announcement and FRP are ready for review and approval, the position will automatically be routed to the first approver in the chain

(Department Chair) and once they approve, PageUp will automatically notify the next approver.

Provost's Office – after review and approval by the Provost's office, the position announcement will be published for applicants to submit applications.

#### **Stage Five: Screening Applications in PageUp**

Review each application using approved screening criteria, loaded in PageUp, assigning the appropriate rating per criteria

**Required:** the following information from the rating/scoring process must be done on a separate sheet and uploaded into the position/job card under “Documents:”

- a. Scoring by criteria (including diversity statement) for each applicant
- b. Scoring by each evaluator
- c. A summary or total of all scoring per applicant
- d. Any comments about the applicants by the search committee members

**Diversity Best Practice: Be sure that your grid scores each applicant on the potential they show for being able to work with a diverse student population—look for research, mentoring, teaching or other experience they have in this area. See APPENDIX B, Evaluating a Diversity Statement.**

**Diversity Best Practice: Think back on your past searches; list the attributes that you know would make a candidate successful in the position and in the department. Score the candidate strictly based upon those attributes.**

**Diversity Best Practice: The Office of Academic Affairs will check that you have done advertisements in the places indicated in your Recruitment Plan.**

#### **Stage Six: Obtain Approval to Conduct Phone/Video Interviews**

Designate the applicants selected for phone/video interviews by changing an Applicant's status to “Chair Review for Phone Interview” under a selected applicant's name.

Department Chair – after reviewing the screening/ranking the proposed applicants designated for phone/video interviews, to approve the list of applicants selected for phone/video interviews: Change the applicant's status to: “Dean Review for Phone Interview.” This can be done one-by-one (individual applicant) or bulk move (group of applicants). An automatic notification will be sent by PageUp to the Dean.

College Dean – after reviewing the screening/ranking the proposed applicants designated for phone/video interviews, to approve the list of applicants selected for phone/video

interviews: Change the applicant's status to: "Phone Interview Approved." This can be done one-by-one (individual applicant) or bulk move (group of applicants). An automatic notification will be sent by PageUp to the Search Committee.

After Dean's approval for phone/video interviews, search committee can conduct phone/video interviews. Change Applicant's Status to: "Invite for Phone/Video Interview." You may use PageUp's EVENT features or schedule using the usual way. Please refer to the PageUp Guide for use of EVENTS.

Note: all candidates must be interviewed using the same modality (phone or video). Interviews may not be recorded.

### **Stage Seven: Conduct Phone/Video Interviews Using Approved Questions**

Conduct phone/video interviews with the approved phone interview questions and ratings protocol – load scoring/ranking sheets into the position's "Documents" section.

Review/approvals cannot proceed without the committee's scores/rankings on each criteria and any notes/comments on the applicants' qualifications.

One of your scoring criteria for ALL candidates who receive a phone/video interview **MUST be a scoring of their written references (letters of recommendation).**

When the phone/video interview is completed for a particular applicant, you can change their status to: "Phone/Video Interview Successful" or "Phone/Video Interview Unsuccessful."

See **APPENDIX D** for A Guide to Interview Questions.

**Diversity Best Practice: All phone/video interviews must include a question that looks for the candidate's potential to teach and relate to a diverse student body. Think out of the box: what minority heroes/role models in your discipline have made an impression on you; how might you handle a difficult conversation about race, gender or sex in your classroom; how do you try to insure that your teaching is reaching all students**

**Diversity Best Practice: All candidates should have a response to a diversity statement prompt that illustrates their approach to culturally competent pedagogy.**

**Diversity Best Practice: You may use zoom or skype for your phone interviews ONLY IF all candidates agree to this.**

**Diversity Best Practice: Be warm and welcoming on the phone/video; don't rush; candidates will be trying to make an impression on you but you will also be making an impression on them**

**Diversity Best Practice: No conference interviews are permitted.**

## **Stage Eight: Obtain Approval for On-Campus/Zoom Interviews – Search Committee**

After all approved phone/video interviews and scoring/ranking of candidates have been conducted and the scores/rankings/comments have been uploaded to the position in PageUp, the Search Committee Chair should change an applicant's status to: "Chair Review for On-Campus Interview."

The following documents should also be uploaded into the Job Card in the "Documents" section:

1. Summary of the locations from which the applicants will be traveling and estimated travel and lodging costs (one document/file titled: "**Travel Costs for On-Campus Interviews**"), if applicable.
2. Proposed on-campus interview questions (titled: "**Proposed On-Campus/Zoom Interview Questions**")
3. Proposed on-campus Rating Protocol (titled: "**Proposed On-Campus/Zoom Rating Protocol**")
4. Proposed on-campus interview schedule (titled: "**Proposed On-Campus/Zoom Interview Schedule**")
5. Ratings for the Phone/Video Interviews (by criteria, evaluator, and summary), (titled: "**Phone/Video Scores**")

Department Chair – review the proposed list of applicants selected for on-campus interviews and uploaded documents. To approve: change an applicant's status to: "Dean Review for On-Campus Interview."

College Dean – review the proposed list of applicants selected for on-campus interviews and uploaded documents. Prior to approving the list of applicants selected for on-campus interviews, the Dean MUST schedule a meeting with the DELO (Christina Chin-Newman/UDO (Kimberly Baker-Flowers) to review the candidates proposed for on-campus interviews. Approval of the candidates in PageUp will signify the Dean has met with the DELO/UDO, who have approved of the list of candidates for on-campus interview. To approve: change an applicant's status to: "Provost's Office Review for On-Campus Interview."

Provost's Office Review – after approval by the Provost's office, notification will be sent to the Search Committee, and the applicant status will be changed to: "On-Campus Interview Approved."

Search Committee can now conduct the On-Campus/Zoom Interviews. See APPENDIX D for A Guide to Interview Questions.

Candidates should be advised that one verbal reference check will be conducted prior to any offer being made.

Scoring should be done on a spreadsheet and uploaded into “Documents.” See APPENDIX C for a sample template.

### **Stage Nine: Submit Final Recommendation for Tenure-Track Hire**

Upload a memo to the Department Chair from Search Committee Chair making a recommendation and indicate in the memo that all members of the Search Committee agree with this recommendation. Address strengths/weaknesses of each candidate and sources of evidence used. Change the recommended applicant’s status to: “Verbal Reference Check Requested.”

**VERBAL Reference Check** – Before proceeding with an informal offer request, a reference check must be conducted by Department Chair, Associate Dean, or Dean; they must speak to **at least one** of the **current** references: a professor, supervisor, or department chair at the candidate’s current place of employment.

Reference Check results should be uploaded into PageUp under the applicant’s file “Add Document” (Applicant Card).

Department Chair – Assuming the verbal reference check is positive, upload a memo to the position’s (Job Card) “Documents” section to Dean from Department Chair concurring or dissenting with Search Committee recommendation. Department Chair must include a recommended years’ credit toward tenure, if applicable, moving/relocation funds if applicable, and start-up costs. Change the applicant status to: “Verbal Reference Check Successful.”

College Dean – upload a memo to the Provost from College Dean with the hiring recommendation. To launch the Offer Card in PageUp, change applicant status to “Prepare Offer Details” and complete the Offer Card with: a recommended salary range and a request for years’ credit toward tenure, if applicable; moving/relocation expenses, if applicable; release time, if applicable; and start-up funds. Change the applicant’s status to: “Informal Offer Requested.” A notification will be sent automatically to the Provost’s Office for review.

### **Stage Ten: Informal Offer, Background Check, Formal Offer, and Acknowledgement**

- (1) After Provost’s Office approval, College Dean to make conditional offer to the selected candidate within the approved parameters.
- (2) After acceptance of the informal offer, change the applicant’s status to “Informal Offer Accepted.” The system will then order the required background check (after Accurate Background integration is completed).
- (3) Once the background check is completed and clears, the formal offer letter and summary of benefits will be sent to the candidate.
- (4) After formal acceptance is received, the College will be notified, and should coordinate with the Department about any messages they wish to send to the applicants. The search will then be closed.

**End Notes**

Cal State East Bay gratefully acknowledges the work of Sacramento State's Office of Faculty Advancement whose "Faculty Recruitment Guide," helped shape some of this document.

CSU Records Retention Requirements for ***Recruitment Records***: (HR Technical Letter, Oct 13, 2004):  
*Typical documents*: Applications, resumes, reference checks, writing samples, advertising records, rating sheets, etc. *Minimum Retention Period*: Three years after close of recruitment.

*All documents will be retained in the PageUp system, CHRS Recruiting.*

Academic Affairs  
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## APPENDIX A

### PageUp Applicant Statuses for Tenure-Track Faculty Search

1. New Application	32. Informal Offer Accepted
2. Search Committee Review	33. Informal Offer Declined
3. Search Committee Review Successful	34. Background Check In Progress
4. Search Committee Review Unsuccessful	35. Background Check Unsuccessful
5. Chair Review for Phone Interview	36. Offer Revised
6. Dean Review for Phone Interview	37. Online Formal Offer Extended
7. Phone Interview Approved	38. Online Formal Offer Accepted
8. Invite for Phone/Video Interview	39. Online Formal Offer Accepted/Form Complete
9. Phone/Video Interview Event Accepted	40. Online Formal Offer Declined
10. Phone/Video Interview Event Declined	41. Removed
11. EVENT - Invite for Phone/Video Interview	42. Withdrawn
12. EVENT - Phone/Video Interview Event Accepted	43. Ineligible
13. EVENT - Phone/Video Interview Event Declined	44. Incomplete
14. Phone/Video Interview Unsuccessful	45. Submitted
15. Phone/Video Interview Successful	46. Removed
16. Chair Review for On-Campus Interview	
17. Dean Review for On-Campus Interview	
18. Diversity Review for On-Campus Interview	
19. Provost's Office Review for On-Campus Interview	
20. On-Campus Interview Approved	
21. On-Campus Interview Invite	
22. On-Campus Invite Accepted	
23. On-Campus Interview Declined	
24. On-Campus Interview Successful	
25. On Campus Interview Unsuccessful	
26. Verbal Reference Check Requested	
27. Verbal Reference Check Successful	
28. Verbal Reference Check Unsuccessful	
29. Prepare Offer Details	
30. Informal Offer Requested	
31. Informal Offer Approved	

## APPENDIX B

### Evaluating a Diversity Statement

The purpose of using a diversity statement in the faculty search process is to allow candidates to identify professional skills, experience, and/or willingness to engage in activities that advance our campus's equity, diversity, and inclusion goals. Such statements or criterion should include past efforts, if applicable, and future plans.

In evaluating diversity statements and/or diversity criterion, search committees should be looking for statements that indicate:

- Demonstrated experience with or stated willingness to:
  - o develop and incorporate effective teaching strategies for a diverse group of learners;
  - o create an equitable and inclusive learning environment to support all student success; and/or
  - o apply teaching techniques that meet the needs of students from groups that are underrepresented in the field of instruction;
  
- Evidence of assisting the professional advancement of individuals in underrepresented groups in the candidate's field; and/or
  
- Prior experience in or stated interest in recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students for the purpose of increasing diversity and equal opportunity.

Diversity statements should be considered as part of the overall or comprehensive review process.

#### SAMPLE RUBRIC FOR EVALUATING DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

	1	2	3	4
Effective teaching strategies for a diverse group of learners	Teaching strategies are vague AND generalized	Teaching strategies are vague OR generalized	Teaching strategies are specific OR inclusive	Teaching strategies are specific AND inclusive
Create an equitable and inclusive learning environment to support all student success	Pedagogy fails to incorporate contemporary approaches AND serves only a small group of learners	Pedagogy fails to incorporate contemporary approaches OR serves only a small group of learners	Pedagogy incorporates contemporary approaches OR serves a diverse group of learners	Pedagogy incorporates contemporary approaches AND serves a diverse group of learners
Apply teaching techniques that meet the needs of students from groups that are underrepresented in the field of instruction	Teaching techniques are vague AND not inclusive	Teaching techniques are vague OR not inclusive	Teaching techniques are specific OR inclusive	Teaching techniques are specific AND inclusive
Evidence of assisting the professional advancement of individuals in underrepresented groups in the candidate's field	Evidence is vague AND generalized	Evidence is vague OR generalized	Evidence is specific OR inclusive	Evidence is specific AND inclusive
Recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students for the purpose of increasing diversity and equal opportunity	Efforts are vague AND do not demonstrate an increase	Efforts are vague OR do not demonstrate an increase	Efforts are specific OR demonstrate an increase	Efforts are specific AND demonstrate an increase



**APPENDIX D**  
**SENSITIVE TOPICS:**  
**WHAT NOT TO ASK, or IF YOU MUST—HOW TO ASK IT**

**Nationality**

Certainly, you want to be sure that a candidate can legally work for you, but it's important to be careful how you ask. These questions address citizenship, language and other touchy subjects.

1. **What you can't ask:** Are you a U.S. citizen?

Although this seems like the simplest and most direct way to find out if an interviewee is legally able to work for your company, it's hands-off. Rather than inquiring about citizenship, question whether or not the candidate is authorized for work.

*What to ask instead:* Are you authorized to work in the U.S.?

2. **What you can't ask:** What is your native tongue?

Finding out about a candidate's native language may seem like a good way to find out about their fluency, but you may offend applicants that are sensitive to common assumptions about their language. Additionally, as an employer, it's not your concern how the applicant attained fluency in a language — just that they are fluent.

*What to ask instead:* What languages do you read, speak or write fluently?

3. **What you can't ask:** How long have you lived here?

Familiarity with local culture may be important to the position, but it's important not to ask about a candidate's residency in the country or region directly. Rather, ask about their current situation, and they may volunteer information about their past along the way.

*What to ask instead:* What is your current address and phone number? Do you have any alternative locations where you can be reached?

**Religion**

Religion is a subject that should be treaded upon lightly at the office, and even more so in interviews. Protect yourself from overstepping the boundaries but still get the information you need with these questions.

1. **What you can't ask:** What religion do you practice?

You may want to know about religious practices to find out about weekend work schedules, but it's imperative that you refrain from asking directly about a candidate's beliefs. Instead, just ask directly when they're able to work, and there will be no confusion.

*What to ask instead:* What days are you available to work?

2. **What you can't ask:** Which religious holidays do you observe?

Again, scheduling is important, but don't risk stepping on toes to find out what you need to know. Simply confirm that your interviewee can work when you need them to.

*What to ask instead:* Are you able to work with our required schedule?

3. **What you can't ask:** Do you belong to a club or social organization?

This question is too revealing of political and religious affiliations and candidates are not required to share such information with potential employers. Additionally, this questions has little to no relation to a candidate's ability to do a job. For this question, it's important that the wording focuses on work.

*What to ask instead:* Are you a member of a professional or trade group that is relevant to our industry?

## Age

Maturity is essential for most positions, but it's important that you don't make assumptions about a candidate's maturity based on age. Alternately, you have to be careful about discrimination towards applicants nearing retirement. These questions will keep you in the clear.

1. **What you can't ask:** How old are you?

While it seems like a simple question, it's in fact quite loaded. Knowledge of an applicant's age can set you up for discrimination troubles down the road. To be safe, just ensure that the candidate is legally old enough to work for your firm.

*What to ask instead:* Are you over the age of 18?

2. **What you can't ask:** How much longer do you plan to work before you retire?

Again, asking this question opens up discrimination troubles. While you may not want to hire an older worker who will retire in a few years, you can't dismiss an applicant for this reason. Instead, see what the candidate's plans are for the future; they may plan to work for a number of years.

*What to ask instead:* What are your long-term career goals?

## Marital and Family Status

These questions primarily concern women with children, but they're applicable to everyone. Ensure that you don't make assumptions, and avoid embarrassing candidates by using the following questions.

1. **What you can't ask:** Is this your maiden name?

This question, like many others, may seem innocent and simple, but it's off-limits. A woman's marital status isn't something that's required to be shared with employers. Instead, verify whether or not she's gained experience using any other names.

*What to ask instead:* Have you worked or earned a degree under another name?

2. **What you can't ask:** Do you have kids?

This one is for positions in which the candidate may work with children. The added experience of children at home may be a bonus for you, but it's not an employer's place to ask about this. Rather, inquire about the candidate's experience, and they may volunteer this information to you anyway.

Suggestion: Don't ask this question.

3. **What you can't ask:** Who is your closest relative to notify in case of an emergency?

Although not especially offensive, this question makes assumptions about the candidate's personal life. They may not be close to relatives and instead prefer to list a friend or caretaker.

*What to ask instead:* In case of emergency, who should we notify?

4. **What you can't ask:** What do your parents do for a living?

Asking a candidate about their parents can reveal a lot, but it's not directly related to their future performance in a position. However, if you are trying to find out if your candidate's family has traditionally worked in your industry, this question is a good way to find out.

*What to ask instead:* Tell me how you became interested in being a professor.

5. **What you can't ask:** If you or your partner get pregnant, will you continue to work, and will you come back after maternity/paternity leave?

Ultimately, you want to invest your time in a candidate that will stick around, but you can't ask a woman or a man to share such plans, or lack thereof, with you.

*What to ask instead:* What are your long-term career goals?

## Gender

Once you've reached the interview stage, a candidate's gender is almost always clear. It is important, however, to ensure that you don't make assumptions about a person's gender or abilities based on this information.

1. **What you can't ask:** How do you feel about supervising men/women?

This question, although it may seem like a valid concern, is not acceptable. The candidate may not have any issues working with the opposite or same sex, and you'll seem crass for even bringing it up.

*What to ask instead:* Tell me about your previous experience managing teams.

2. **What you can't ask:** What do you think of interoffice dating?

The practice of interoffice dating can be distracting, break up teams and cause a number of other problems in the workplace. But asking this question makes assumptions about the candidate's marital status and may even be interpreted as a come-on.

*What to ask instead:* Have you ever been disciplined for your behavior at work?

## **Health and Physical Abilities**

Your employees' health and abilities may be essential to getting the job done, but it's important to avoid assumptions and discrimination. Stick to these questions in order to avoid embarrassment and legal troubles.

1. **What you can't ask:** Do you smoke or drink?

As an employer, you probably want to avoid someone who has a drinking problem or will take multiple smoke breaks throughout the day. It's even a concern for insurance. Instead of asking about this directly, find out if they've had trouble with health policies in the past.

Suggestion: Don't ask this type of question but you may state that we have a completely smoke-free campus.

2. **What you can't ask:** Do you take drugs?

This question is just a simple confusion of terms. Your interviewee may think you're asking about prescription drugs, which is off-limits.

Suggestion: Don't ask this type of question

**What you can't ask:** How tall are you?

In a labor environment, height may be essential to the job, but this question is too personal. As with many of these questions, it's best just to ask directly about the candidate's ability to do what's required of them.

Suggestion: don't ask this type of question.

3. **What you can't ask:** How much do you weigh?

This highly personal question is embarrassing for most and is not necessarily relevant to a candidate's ability to do even a physical-labor job. Avoid making assumptions, and ask about abilities directly.

*What to ask instead:* Are you able to lift boxes weighing up to 50 pounds? Only ask if necessary.

4. **What you can't ask:** How many sick days did you take last year?

No one wants a flaky employee, but even the most dedicated workers get sick every now and then. Take a look at missed days as a whole to measure the candidate's commitment.

*What to say instead:* As faculty, as receive a very limited number of sick days each year; attendance at class is, of course, a very important part of this job.

5. **What you can't ask:** Do you have any disabilities?

Disabilities, whether they're physical or mental, may affect a candidate's ability to do the job, but it's critical that you avoid asking about them. Rather, find out if the applicant can handle doing what's required.

*What to ask instead:* Are you able to perform the specific duties of this position?

6. **What you can't ask:** Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations?

Again, gauging commitment is important, but illness isn't something that most people can help. The answer here is to make sure that the candidate can perform the job while avoiding questions about his or her physical abilities.

*Suggestion:* Don't ask this type of question.

## Miscellaneous

Avoid interviewing gaffes by sidestepping these questions about residence, legal troubles and military service.

1. **What you can't ask:** How far is your commute?

Although hiring employees who live close by may be convenient, you can't choose candidates based on their location. Find out about their availability instead.

*What to ask instead:* If scheduled for class, could you start work at 8 a.m.?

2. **What you can't ask:** Do you live nearby?

If your candidate lives outside the area, it may be necessary to have them move to your area. But again, you can't discriminate based on location. Rather, find out if the applicant is willing to move closer to the University.

*What to ask instead:* Are you willing to relocate?

3. **What you can't ask:** Have you ever been arrested?

In sensitive positions, like those that deal with money, you may want to find out about your candidate's legal fortitude. But ensure that you ask only directly about crimes that relate to your concern.

*What you can say instead:* All final candidates for positions at East Bay undergo a background check.

**What you can't ask:** Were you honorably discharged from the military?

A bad military record can be illuminating, but you can't ask about it. Instead, ask about the candidate's experience, and they may volunteer this information on their own.

*What to ask instead:* Tell me how your experience in the military might benefit our students.

**What you can't ask:** Are you a member of the National Guard or Reserves?

Losing an employee to military service can be disrupting, but it's critical that you don't discriminate based on assumptions of a candidate's upcoming military commitments. Find out what their plans are for the short term instead.

*What to ask instead:* Do you have any upcoming events that would require extensive time away from work?

Although we urge you to maintain a welcoming atmosphere for candidates both on the phone and in person NEVER BECOME SO INFORMAL as to ask inappropriate questions.