

Introduction

Search Committee Chair Roles and Responsibilities 2025-2026



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Search Chair Training Overview



This training sets expectations and provides resources to those serving as a Search Committee Chair at Kansas State University. As a result of this training, participants will:

- Learn the specific roles and responsibilities while chairing a search.
- Understand the importance of overseeing and maintaining fair and consistent practices for the recruitment, interview, and selection processes.
- Understand that confidentiality is the foundation of a credible search committee and a trustworthy search process.
- Understand the importance of creating a welcoming environment for all throughout the recruitment process.

Purpose of the Search Chair Training

Roles of the Search Committee Chair



The purpose of this training is to outline the roles and responsibilities of the search chair. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities help to ensure fair and consistent practices for the recruitment, interview and selection process.

Typically, the first person to be selected for the search committee is the chairperson, who is appointed by the hiring manager for the position. The search committee chair has a variety of responsibilities, which include the following:

The Search Committee Chair:

- Consults with the Talent Acquisition Strategic Partner to review the search process.
- Maintains the confidentiality of the search.
- Schedules, leads, and documents all search Committee meetings.
- Provides screening instructions to evaluate candidate materials and related guidance to search committee members.
- Serves as the liaison between search committee members and candidates.
- Ensures that all candidates with an interview preference are offered a first-level interview.
- Assesses and discusses with hiring manager and HR – Talent Acquisition Strategic Partner any conflict of interest issues. For example, candidates may perceive an unfair process when a member of the search committee

appears to be in a personal or business relationship with one of the candidates.

- Conducts or assists with reference checks.
- Submits a list of acceptable, unranked candidates to the hiring manager.
- Advises the hiring manager on finalists' strengths and areas of opportunities.
- Maintains a record of all search committee meetings.
- Works with HR Liaison to ensure that all search related documents are uploaded and that all candidate statuses are updated within the Applicant Tracking System (PageUp).

Responsibilities of the Search Committee Chair

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Search Committee Chair Responsibilities

As you previously learned, there are a variety of roles and responsibilities that a successful search committee chair has. Once a search chair is appointed, there are some recommended steps to ensure a successful search.

The search chair should initiate the following steps:

- Establish an initial search committee kick-off meeting where the hiring manager delivers the charge to the committee.
- Establish the ground rules, expectations, and the anticipated timeline for the search.
- Create a respectful and productive environment to discuss the search process and applicants being considered for the position.
- Ask the committee for ideas on where to advertise to attract candidates with a wide range of values and perspectives.
- Define how the committee will manage the overall search process to better serve the department and candidates.
- Ensure that the review of application materials occurs individually and that search committee members understand their responsibilities in order to progress in a timely manner.
- Ensure that all statements made about candidates are backed up by facts.
- Review the [Search Committee Resources](#) page and the [Hiring Guide](#) to ensure you are familiar with the hiring process at Kansas State University.
- Ensure each search committee member has completed the **REQUIRED** online training: [Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities](#).
- Encourage search committee members to share the position announcement with their professional networks or member associations and on their personal social media pages i.e., LinkedIn.

Establish:
Ground Rules
Expectations
Guidelines
Timeline
End Result

Importance of K-State's Principles of Community

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Commitment to K-State's Principles of Community

Kansas State University is committed to maintaining a [community](#) that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person and fosters the understanding and mutual respect for others. The university believes creating a culture of belonging among its many members strengthens the institution and stimulates creativity and the exchange of ideas.

The search committee chair is responsible for the conduct of the search and ensures the process is fair and consistent. The search chair sets the tone for the search, and demonstrates the value of fostering a culture of belonging. It is strongly recommended that the search chair has previous experience serving on search committees.

Selecting Search Committee Members



A university that is comprised of faculty and staff with a unique range of perspectives best prepares our students for future challenges and allows them to develop critical skillsets. When forming your search committee or interview panel consider asking yourself what perspectives and experiences are missing. Having a search committee with varying perspectives makes it less likely that the committee will overlook talented individuals with non-traditional experience. Actively working to hire the brightest and most innovative faculty and staff provides untold educational benefits for our students as well as the skills they need to succeed in a competitive workforce. When developing your outreach strategy to prospective candidates, consider available networks. For example, Women in STEM professional organizations.

Time to Share!

What other recruitment strategies have you used to attract talented individuals with a range of perspectives that we haven't covered?

Confidentiality

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality



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Conflict of Interest

While serving on a search committee, it's important to avoid potential conflicts of interest. If a search committee member identifies a potential conflict of interest, they must promptly disclose it to you, the search chair. This includes any professional or personal relationship that a committee member may have with an applicant or the applicant's immediate family. You and the search committee member will determine a solution that is appropriate depending on the circumstances and the nature of the relationship with the applicant. The search committee member may recuse themselves from part or all of the search process as deemed appropriate given the circumstances. Each potential conflict should be evaluated individually. Should you as the chair determine that you have a conflict of interest please notify your [Talent Acquisition Strategic Partner](#) immediately to discuss next steps.

Confidentiality

The ultimate success of a search depends on the search committee's ability to conduct searches in an impartial, ethical, and professional manner. By serving on a search committee, you have access to confidential information provided by applicants who have expressed an interest in employment opportunities at K-State. This information should be treated with the utmost confidentiality during and after the search has concluded. A breach of confidentiality could damage the applicants' reputations and/or livelihoods, as well as reflect poorly on the search committee members and the university. If a search committee member creates a breach of confidentiality this may result in removal from the search committee and may impact eligibility to serve on future searches.

What does this mean?

As a search committee member, you must uphold the confidentiality of individuals who have expressed interest in applying for opportunities or who have applied for a position at K-State. It is your duty not to discuss identities of applicants, applicant ratings/rankings, number of applicants, the number to be interviewed, the quality and qualifications of applicants, any information regarding the committee's deliberation, statements made by any participants, or any other matters with anyone outside of the committee. Also, do not share any information used during the search process which includes search committee notes and candidate feedback survey results. This information and material can be shared and discussed with the hiring manager if they do not serve on the search committee or Talent Acquisition within Human Resources.

Independently conducting information searches on an applicant can cause qualified applicants to withdraw if they have concerns that the disclosure of their candidacy will jeopardize their current employment. Please work with your Talent Acquisition Strategic Partner if you have questions on when outreach and/or research may be appropriate.

Please review the Ethics and Confidentiality Commitment below:

1. As a member of the search committee and/or interview panel participant, I accept my responsibility, shared by my fellow committee members and interview panel participants, to protect the integrity of the institution, and that of all applicants and candidates for the position.
2. I acknowledge that only the Chair of the search committee is authorized to speak publicly on behalf of the university and the search committee and any media inquiries should be referred to the Division of Communications and Marketing.
3. I certify that I am not a candidate for any position of which I am serving as a search committee member and/or interview panel participant.
4. I agree to disclose promptly to the search chair any appearance of real or potential conflict of interest in a relationship between myself and an applicant candidate.
5. I acknowledge that information management is a crucial component of the search committee's work. Through this work, I will acquire access to a wide range of important and confidential information developed and received about applicants, candidates, and their employing institutions. Recognizing the treatment of such information gives rise to serious and potentially negative implications for all applicants and candidates, their current institutions, and Kansas State University's credibility, I pledge my commitment to the following principles, subject to any and all legal rights and responsibilities:
 - I will respect the absolute confidentiality of all applicants and candidates. I will not reveal the identity or any other information about applicants and candidates during the search or after the search process has concluded.

- I will be fair, honest, and responsible in my management of information germane to the search.
- I will guard against inaccuracies, carelessness, bias, and distortion made by either emphasis or omission of information.
- I will strive to treat issues impartially and handle controversial subjects fairly.
- I will give accurate and complete reports on candidates to the search committee chair or co-chairs, if called upon to make such reports.

6. I will place the best interests of the institution ahead of all special and personal interests, and I will, to the best of my ability, exercise common sense and good judgment in applying ethical principles to the search process.

7. I consider the letter and spirit of this statement to be a matter of personal responsibility.

I understand that a breach in confidentiality may warrant in my removal from the search committee and/or interview panel, which may impact my eligibility to serve on future searches or result in disciplinary action. I also understand that should I be removed from the search committee and/or interview panel; all terms of this statement remain applicable and binding.

Search Committee Chair Resources

Talent Acquisition Resources

Your [Talent Acquisition Strategic Partner](#) can assist in the following areas:

- Screen applications and only forward qualified applicants to the committee
- Attend search committee kick-off meeting
- Assist in the development of creating the position announcement

- Assist in the creation of a strategic advertising plan

[Search Committee Resources Page](#)

**Connect with your
Talent Acquisition
Strategic Partner
for assistance or
refer to the Search
Committee
Resource Page**

For additional guidance, please contact Talent Acquisition.

Phone: 785-532-6277

Email: KStateCareers@ksu.edu

Staff Directory: <http://www.k-state.edu/hr/about/staff.html>

PageUp Guides: <http://www.ksu.edu/hr/tools/managers/recruitment/ats/>

Social Media:



What information was most helpful?

Questions or comments?

How would you grade this session?



To record this training as complete, click "Next."
Your training record will be updated in HRIS within 48 hours.

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