



Title: SPA Recruitment and Selection Policy

Purpose: The University of North Carolina at Asheville's merit-based recruitment and selection plan establishes uniform and consistent standards for the recruitment and selection of employees that assist the university in meeting its goals and obligations under the NC Office of State Personnel policies and applicable state and federal laws. The process is designed to identify, attract, and select candidates from the most qualified applicants.

Scope: The Employment Policy covers applicants applying for UNC Asheville's SPA (Subject to the Personnel Act) permanent positions, the university administration and the hiring officials participating in the recruitment and selection process.

Definitions:

SPA Staff – Employees who are members of the state government workforce subject to the State Personnel Act. Individuals receiving initial appointments in state government must first serve a probationary or trainee appointment before being eligible for a permanent appointment. Types of SPA appointments include:

- **Full-Time Permanent:** A forty (40) hour per week position for a nine to twelve month assignment.
- **Part-Time Permanent:** A position that is for 20 hours or more but less than forty hours per week for a nine to twelve month assignment.
- **Time Limited:** A position that is either full-time or part-time and has been created for a short duration that is not to exceed a three-year period.

Political Affiliation & Political Influence - For the purposes of this policy, political affiliation is the membership in, participation in, or support of a particular political party, group or candidate. Political influence occurs when political affiliation impacts the decision to hire or not to hire and the selection decision was not based on fair and valid selection criteria.

Qualifications - includes training, experience, competencies and knowledge, skills and abilities.

Most qualified candidates - Individuals determined to be substantially more qualified than other applicants based on fair and relevant selection criteria.

State government workforce – those employees who are subject to Articles 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13 & 14 of G.S. 126. This does not include employees of the legislative and judicial branches, the public school and community college systems or other employees that are exempt from these Articles of the State Personnel Act.

Hiring Manager – the department or unit head who will be supervising the position.

Hiring Officials – employees and search committee members who participate in the recruitment and selection process.

Policy: UNC Asheville strives to find the best available person for an open position from among the most qualified individuals. The University of North Carolina at Asheville is an equal opportunity employer and seeks its workforce through a systematic recruitment and

selection process. The University prohibits the use of discriminatory practices in employment, and it adheres to the rules and regulations of the Office of State Personnel for employees subject to the State Personnel Act (SPA), and to state and federal laws.

The Chancellor, Human Resources Director, Vice Chancellors, Associate Vice Chancellors, Assistant Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors and Department Heads, as well as managers and supervisors, accept responsibility for ensuring that all hiring practices are applied consistently and equitably, thereby demonstrating commitment to and support of the merit-based recruitment and selection plan. The recruitment and selection process shall be consistently applied to promote open and fair competition, a non-discriminatory process, and the hiring of a diverse workforce. Employment shall be offered based upon the job-related qualifications of applicants for employment using fair and valid selection criteria. Preferential treatment will not be given to any individual based on undue influence, including political affiliation or political influence.

The University of North Carolina at Asheville encourages employment of disabled individuals who meet essential position requirements. The University will not discriminate against students, applicants or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation¹, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, political affiliation or any other legally protected status with respect to the terms, conditions or privileges of University-sponsored activities, employment, or the use of facilities. Please refer to the University EEO Policy to view the statement in its entirety.

The Chancellor has delegated the coordination of the University's employment practices and processes for SPA employees to the Director of Human Resources, while giving the institution's department heads the authority to interview and recommend the most qualified candidate for the position in accordance with the University's [Recruitment and Selection Guidelines](#). Details of the selection and approval process are available on UNC Asheville's Employment Services website. Creating new positions, filling vacant positions, internal promotions, or salary adjustments can only be done with the approval of the Chancellor or the Chancellor's designee. The Chancellor authorizes the Director of Human Resources to issue procedures to implement this policy. Exceptions to normal hiring practices in relation to qualifications and salary are subject to the approval of the Office of State Personnel.

UNC Asheville's Recruitment and Selection Policy must be approved by the North Carolina State Personnel Commission. Once approved, a campus-wide email will announce the policy's approval and the policy will be available on the University's policy website and the Employment Services website. Paper copies will be available in the Human Resources Office.

Pre-Recruitment Activities

Prior to posting a vacancy, the department must determine, through the Vice Chancellor, the funding source(s) and availability of funds followed by senior staff approval. Details on the process to submit a request to recruit for a position are available in the *Recruitment and Selection Guidelines*. The process includes creating or updating the job description

¹ UNC Asheville acknowledges and understands that the category of sexual orientation is not a protected category under federal or state law and therefore cannot be grieved beyond campus level.

as needed and preparing the job posting, including identification of advertisement sources.

Posting Requirements

The recruitment and selection process will be consistently applied, non-discriminatory and promote open and fair competition and the hiring of a diverse workforce. The Affirmative Action Officer reviews and approves the vacancy posting plan. Each permanent position to be filled shall be posted for not less than five working days. The vacancies may be posted “Internal to Agency” (i.e. to be filled from within the University) or “External to Agency” (i.e. open to applicants both within UNCA and state government as well as outside the state government workforce).

Vacancies for SPA permanent positions will be posted on the University’s web-based job posting system. Any vacancies to be filled internal and external to the state government workforce will also be listed on the Office of State Personnel website and with the Employment Security Commission as required by the Office of State Personnel (State Personnel Manual, Section 2).

Vacancy announcements will include:

- For Graded Classes – the position number, classification title, salary grade and range, essential functions, knowledge, skills, abilities, minimum training and experience, and any vacancy-specific qualifications as determined by the University in accordance with 25 NCAC 01H .0635(c), the application period including the closing date, and the appropriate contact information.
- For Banded Classes – the position number, banded class title, banded class salary range or recruitment range corresponding to the competencies and duties, salary grade equivalence, essential functions, competencies, minimum training and experience, vacancy-specific qualifications as determined by the University in accordance with 25 NCAC 01H .0635(c), the application period including the closing date, and the appropriate contact information.

Additional minimum qualifications may be specified by the hiring manager on the vacancy announcement based on a documented business need for the additional requirements. In addition, the department manager may identify preferred qualifications relevant to successful performance of the position’s duties. Qualifications include training, experience, competencies and knowledge, skills and abilities. The department manager is responsible for ensuring that any vacancy-specific qualifications that are added to the state’s minimum qualifications bear a logical and job-related relationship to the minimum requirements.

If there is a specific salary limitation because of budget restrictions or equity considerations, the announcement should include a separate recruitment range which specifies the maximum salary that will be offered.

Applicant Responsibilities

Candidates for a posted vacant position must complete and submit an online application for the position within the posting period. Applications that are not complete will not be

considered. A complete employment application, which must be submitted electronically on UNC Asheville's Online Employment System, must identify and contain:

- Complete information on education and all work experience, including dates and, if part-time, number of hours worked per week,
- Complete personal information, including nepotism information and information about criminal convictions, and
- Requested references and attachments such as cover letter and/or resume'.

Once the application is complete, the applicant will receive a confirmation number. The applicant can check his or her application status online.

Qualifying Applicants

The Employment Manager or designated Human Resources staff will screen all applications for a specific vacancy, then:

1. Qualifies the applicants into three categories: a) most qualified, b) qualified, or c) did not meet minimum qualifications.
2. Also reviews the applications to identify applicants with priority status, then
3. Notifies the department that the applications are available for review.

The Search Committee Chair then coordinates screening applications and selects candidates to be interviewed from among the most qualified applicants. As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, only "essential" job functions can be used to select or reject a candidate. If no applicants clearly exceed the minimum qualifications, the search committee chair may consider the existing applicants to be the most qualified applicant pool. If the quality of applications is deemed insufficient, the search committee chair may choose to re-advertise the position.

The employee or applicant must possess at least the minimum qualifications specified in the vacancy announcement. This requirement applies in new appointments, promotions, demotions or reassignments, transfers, redeployments and reinstatements.

Qualifications necessary to perform successfully may be attained in a variety of combinations. Reasonable substitutions of formal training and job-related experience, one for the other, may be made. The Office of State Personnel will make the final determination as to whether the employee or applicant meets the minimum qualifications in questionable selection situations.

Search Committees

For each vacancy posting, the hiring department will identify search committee members and appoint a chair (typically the hiring manager is the search committee chair for SPA positions). Assistance in this process is available from Human Resources. Using a combination of training sessions and printed materials, the Human Resources Department will provide ongoing training for supervisors and search committee members on conducting searches, effective interview techniques and legal compliance guidelines. Department Heads and Vice Chancellors will be responsible for ensuring the recruitment and selection process is followed in their respective divisions. All participants in the process will maintain the confidentiality of the material they review.

Employment/Re-employment Priorities

Priority for vacant positions shall be given in accordance with State and University policy. Those receiving priority considerations include:

- Employees separated from exempt policy-making/confidential positions or exempt managerial positions for reasons other than just cause,
- Employees separated from exempt managerial positions as a result of a violation of G.S. 126-14.2,
- Employees notified of or separated by reduction in force
- Employees returning from workers' compensation leave,
- Career State employees seeking promotions,
- Eligible veterans.

Advisory note: Complete details on employment priority considerations are available in the NC State Personnel Manual, Section 2.

Selection of Candidates

The candidate chosen to fill a vacant position will be selected from among the most qualified applicants, which includes applicants with re-employment priority. The search committee will utilize selection tools that are objective and based on job-related knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies. Any selection tool(s) will be consistently applied to all persons in the final pool of most qualified applicants. The search committee chair obtains approval from the department head to proceed with the next steps in the hiring process for the selected candidate.

The search committee chair is responsible for documenting the selection process and justifying the hiring recommendation. Human Resources staff will be available for guidance and assistance to the search committee. Human Resources staff will review the selection documentation to ensure employment/re-employment priorities have been followed. Human Resources qualifies the candidate and determines the starting salary for which the candidate is eligible. Consideration will be given to the candidate's qualifications, campus equity and budgeted salary. Human Resources then notifies the Search Committee Chair in writing concerning the final steps to offer the position to the chosen candidate. The department will be given approval to make a verbal job offer pending background and credential checks and Office of State Personnel approval.

UNC Asheville's Human Resources Department sends a timely written notification to all candidates not selected for a posted SPA vacancy. Applicants can also check the status of their applications online.

Reference Verification

Hiring supervisors are responsible for verifying the validity of applicant information. References must be checked prior to requesting Human Resources' approval of a new hire or transfer.

References include work experiences claimed by the applicant that influence a hiring decision or might reasonably be expected to have a bearing on the individual's employment within the university. Reference information should be secured from the most relevant work experience, any long period of employment, last employment, and any employment followed by lengthy unemployment.

References by telephone are acceptable and must be documented. References are confidential and should be maintained in the employee's personnel file located in Human Resources.

Verification of Credentials and Criminal Background Checks

The University will inform applicants in writing at the time of selection that the appointment is conditional pending verification of credentials and completion of the background check. Human Resources will be responsible for verifying the highest level degree and initiating the criminal background check. If applicable, findings of falsification and options for disciplinary action are communicated to the hiring supervisor.

Credentials must be verified for a new employee within 90 days of initial employment and prior to granting the employee permanent or time-limited permanent status. When falsified credentials are discovered prior to employment, the applicant must be disqualified from consideration. If discovered after employment, the following will apply:

- Falsification of required credentials (i.e. false or misleading information provided by the applicant in order to meet position qualifications) will result in immediate dismissal under the personal conduct guidelines of the SPA Disciplinary Policy.
- Falsification of other credentials (i.e. false or misleading information provided by the employee or concealed employment history or other required information significantly related to job responsibilities, but not used to meet minimum qualifications) will result in dismissal, demotion, reduction in pay, or written warning. Disciplinary action must consider sensitivity of the employee's position, effect of the false information on the hiring decision, and effect of the false information in determining starting pay, and the advantage gained by the employee in subsequent promotion and salary increases. Job performance should not be considered in such cases, nor can decisions be made on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or political affiliation.

The criminal background check is a UNC Asheville requirement for all new SPA employees and will be conducted in accordance with the University's *Background Checks for Employees* policy. A previous criminal conviction does not automatically disqualify one from employment by UNC Asheville. A candidate's eligibility will depend on a variety of factors, such as the nature of, and circumstances surrounding, the conviction; the time elapsed since conviction and the rehabilitation record; the actions and activities of the individual since the conviction, including the individual's subsequent work history; the truthfulness and completeness of the candidate's disclosure of the conviction, and any other relevant information.

Background checks will be used only to evaluate candidates/employees for employment purposes and will not be used to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or any other legally protected status.

Age Limitations

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) sets 14 as the minimum age for most non-agricultural types of work but limits the number of hours that may be worked for minors under age 16. It also prohibits minors under age 18 from working in any occupation that is deemed to be hazardous. Details of the Child Labor provisions in the FLSA are available at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/youthlabor/agerequirements.htm>)

Law Enforcement Officers must be at least 20 years of age.

There is no maximum age for employment.

Employment of Relatives (Nepotism)

Members of an immediate family shall not be employed within the university if such employment will result in one member supervising another member of the employee's immediate family, or if one member will occupy a position that has influence over another member's employment, promotion, salary administration or other related management or personnel considerations. Immediate family is defined in the university's *Nepotism Policy*.

Employment of Aliens

The University is permitted to hire only properly identified U.S. Citizens and aliens with proper work authorization from the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services.

Federal Military Selective Service Act

State law requires selected applicants to indicate if they are in compliance with the Federal Military Selective Service Act. An individual who fails to comply with the registration requirements is not eligible for employment at UNC Asheville.

Appeals Process

A state employee or applicant for initial State employment may complain directly through the Civil Rights Division of the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) if all the following conditions apply:

- the person alleging the violation applied for the position in question during the open application period;
- the person alleging the violation was not hired into the position in question;
- the person alleging the violation was among the pool of most qualified applicants;
- the successful applicant for the position was not among the pool of most qualified applicants; and
- the hiring decision was based upon political affiliation or political influence in violation of G.S. 126-14.2.

The complaining State employee or applicant must file the complaint with the Civil Rights Division of OAH within thirty (30) days after the complainant receives written notification that the position has been filled.

Advisory Note: This does not prohibit any applicant from the right to file a contested case issue under other aspects of G.S. 126. See UNC Asheville's *SPA Grievance Policy* for more details.

Documentation of Process

Human Resources will maintain documentation of the recruitment and selection process in order to document the decisions and to provide fact-based information for monitoring and evaluating recruitment and selection procedures. A file in a format useful and acceptable to the Office of State Personnel will be maintained for each selection or canceled vacancy event for a minimum of three years. The information maintained will include:

- job analysis conducted for the vacancy including any additional KSAs, competencies and/or selective criteria that resulted from job analysis
- vacancy job posting announcement
- recruitment sources
- selection tools and criteria
- priority re-employment inventory/register
- selection/decision log
- inventory of applicants as not qualified, qualified, and most qualified as appropriate
- recruitment and selection checklist
- referral record

Monitoring and Evaluation

Human Resources staff will periodically review process data to ensure the recruitment and selection activities are in compliance with the University's Affirmative Action Plan. An annual analysis is performed as part of the University's EEO Plan. Human Resources staff will also comply with the reporting and plan update requirements from the Office of State Personnel.

Procedures: The *Recruitment and Selection Guideline*, which outlines procedures for the employment process, is available on the Employment Services section of the Human Resources website: <http://www.unca.edu/hr/employment/spaempaemployment.html>.

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