

## SCREENING COMMITTEE GENERAL INFORMATION

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a part of this critical process. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for guiding your Screening Committee through the sequence required to select finalists who represent the background, training, education and experience that are most applicable to this position.

### **I. Equal Employment Opportunity**

Marin Community College District is an Equal Opportunity employer that provides each and every job applicant and candidate a fair and objective assessment of their skills.

“Equal employment opportunity” means that all qualified individuals have a full and fair opportunity to compete for hiring and promotion, and to enjoy the benefits of employment with Marin Community College District. The District is committed to the spirit and implementation of Equal Employment Opportunity at all levels and in all job categories. Ensuring Equal Employment Opportunity also involves creation of an environment which fosters cooperation, acceptance, democracy, and free expression of ideas and is welcoming to men and women, persons with disabilities, and individuals from all ethnic and other groups protected from discrimination.

During the screening and selection process, the Human Resources department designee will serve the Committee as the Equal Employment Opportunity representative. Each member of the Screening Committee is responsible for assuring that their candidate assessments and conduct of the screening, interview and selection process comply with the District’s commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity.

During the screening process, Committee members will be reminded that the criteria used to screen and select candidates at each stage of the process consists only of the job-related knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) that are required to successfully enter into this particular position.

Our selection process is designed to ensure that meaningful consideration is given to the extent to which candidates demonstrate sensitivity to, and understanding of, the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, and ethnic backgrounds of community college students, particularly for faculty and administrative selections.

The same set of standards are used to assess and rate each of the candidates. These standards are designed to be non-biased and to assure that no individual or group of individuals are adversely impacted during this process.

### **II. Confidentiality**

All matters pertaining to our applicant and candidate pools, application materials, rating forms and other paperwork, communications, deliberation, and decisions made as part of the screening and selection process, both during and following its conclusion, are treated as highly confidential by all.

### **III. Role of Human Resources Representative**

The Office of Human Resources will designate a staff member to each Screening Committee to serve as Equal Employment Opportunity monitor, logistical coordinator, and technical resource to assist in the Committee screening and selection process. The Human Resources representative may also chair the Committee proceedings, and provide other services such as screening of application materials.

### **IV. Full Participation by Committee Members**

Screening Committee members are required to fully participate in all phases of the Committee process. Most critical to the process is the screening and interview phase, that includes Committee deliberations and the selection of finalists. Absence from any of the interviews will disqualify a Committee member from participation in the remainder of the selection process since the absence would have resulted in an incomplete assessment of candidates.

**V. Committee Member Non-Bias**

Individuals who serve on Screening Committees shall be fair and objective throughout each phase of the process. To this end, Committee members who believe that they cannot objectively and impartially assess and rate the performance of any candidate, must consult with the Human Resources representative following disclosure of the candidate's names.

Individuals who serve as members of Screening Committees cannot also serve as business or personal references for any candidates.

**VI. Pre-determination of Rating Criteria and Selection Information**

The Human Resources Representative will assure that all phases of the selection process set-up will be completed prior to disclosing the names and/or application materials of any candidate. The selection process includes the following:

- Committee orientation and preliminary discussion,
- Prioritization, weighting, and finalization of KSAs and rating criteria to be used;
- Criteria rating forms and scales;
- Development of interview questions and skill demonstrations with Key Response Elements (see information below); and
- All other determinations related to the criteria to be used in the interview and selection process.

**VII. Interview Questions**

The Screening Committee, with the assistance of the Human Resources representative, will develop a standard set of interview questions that will be asked of each candidate. Committee members will participate in the development of interview questions that are designed to elicit discussion with, and as much information as possible from, the interviewees on the various KSAs being tested at this phase of the screening process.

Interview questions, preferably open-ended in their design, will have all of the following characteristics:

- a. Job-related: questions will be based on the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the position, as identified in the job posting and as clarified by Committee discussion with the department administrator or designee. Interview questions will not include references to race, sex, national origin, marital status, childcare issues, arrest and/or conviction information, friends and/or relatives working in or associated with the District, or any other topic that subjects the interview and selection process to noncompliance with Equal Employment Opportunity policy and procedures.
- b. Free of bias: questions will not favorably or unfavorably focus on any one individual or group of individuals, and will provide an equal, fair and objective opportunity for candidates to respond
- c. Free of adverse impact: questions will not be designed to adversely impact the opportunities of any individual or group of individuals to succeed
- d. Include "Key Response Elements" (KREs): Committee members will pre-determine the specific, job-related knowledge, skills and/or abilities that are pertinent in a successful response to each interview question. The Human Resources representative will guide Committee members in the development of the "KREs" for each of the standard interview questions.

Because the interview process is designed to provide Equal Opportunity to all, follow-up questions are fair and effective only when they are asked for clarification or elaboration. Committee members must be cautious in order to avoid follow-up questions that result in unfair advantage or disadvantage to any candidate.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Human Resources representative will provide the Screening Committee with technical information regarding the use of essential functions to determine candidate qualifications.

**VIII. Skill Demonstrations**

Screening Committee members may determine that a practical demonstration of job-related skills would be an effective supplement to the interview process. The development of job-related skills demonstrations (e.g., mock presentation or teaching demonstration; or writing sample) will follow the same general principles as described above for interview questions. Skill demonstrations often referred to as “in-basket” tests or “practical exercises,” will have the following characteristics:

- a. Job-related: exercises will be based on the knowledge, skills and abilities required for the position, as identified in the job announcement and as clarified by Committee discussion with the department administrator or designee, when appropriate. Skill demonstration exercises will not include references to race, sex, national origin, medical information or disability, marital status, childcare issues, arrest and/or conviction information, friends and/or relatives working in or associated with the District, or any other topic that subjects the interview and selection process to noncompliance with Equal Employment Opportunity policy and procedures.
- b. Free of bias: exercises will not favorably or unfavorably focus on any one individual or group of individuals, and will provide an equal, fair and objective opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the specific job-related skills
- c. Free of adverse impact: exercises will not be designed to adversely impact the opportunities of any individual or group of individuals to succeed in the process
- d. Include “Key Response Elements” (KREs): Committee members will pre-determine the specific, job-related knowledge, skills and/or abilities that are pertinent to each practical exercise. The Human Resources (EEO) representative will guide Committee members in the development of “KREs” for the knowledge, skill and/or ability to be tested by each skill demonstration exercise.

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Human Resources representative will provide the Screening Committee with technical information regarding the use of essential functions to determine candidate qualifications.

**IX. Packaging and Retention of Committee Materials**

At the conclusion of the Committee process, the Human Resources representative will be responsible for reviewing Committee member rating forms to assure that they are complete and signed; forwarding finalists’ materials to the department administrator for final interviews; packaging all Committee materials, including copies of the job posting, Committee membership, rating forms and other documentation used, and all other written materials; and for assisting the department administrator with interview scheduling and other technical assistance as required.

The above-listed Screening Committee documentation, including candidate application materials, are the property of the District Office of Human Resources, and will be maintained in a confidential and sealed Human Resources department file for a minimum of two years prior to disposal, pursuant to District records retention policy. The two-year retention timeline will correspond to the statute of limitations imposed by the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for the filing of discrimination complaints by applicants and candidates, and will be modified should such agency limitations change.

**X. Candidate Notification**

The Office of Human Resources will be responsible for notifying all applicants and candidates of their status.

## **ATTENTION SCREENING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

The assessment and rating of job applicants and interviewees is challenging at best. However, the District commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity for all means that we assure respectful, sensitive, fair and objective treatment to every job applicant and candidate throughout our screening and selection processes.

In addition to the Screening Committee orientation that begins the selection process, the Office of Human Resources is available to guide you throughout your work, and talk with you concerning the active listening and objective assessment skills required to fairly score all of our candidates.

### **COMMON RATER ERRORS TO DISCUSS AND AVOID**

Screening Committee members must strive to avoid the following common errors that have occurred in some of our previous Committees. Some of these common errors include the following:

- **Contrast Effects:** the quality of candidates who are interviewed earlier in the process has sometimes produced an influence on the rating of candidates who follow. This effect has most often occurred when one candidate possesses a degree or type of experience, or a significant number of work years over and above what the Committee pre-determined for its selection criteria, and has occasionally served to inadvertently increase the qualifications for the position, because other candidates are judged to be “not as qualified.”
- **Halo Effects:** some raters hear good or bad news early in an interviewee response and tend to color all of the following responses with the same “halo,” regardless of their quality and applicability.
- **Order Effects:** interviewing candidates later in the interview day has sometimes resulted in judging that is different from the scoring of earlier-scheduled candidates. This may most likely be attributed to the repetition and strenuousness of the interview process, and the raters’ natural reaction to fatigue. In scheduling interview appointments, the Human Resources representative will consult with the Committee in order to avoid holding too many candidates on the same day, or appointments on the same day that are too closely or loosely scheduled.
- **Projection:** identifying with candidates who are similar to us in ethnicity, culture, appearance, education, lifestyle has resulted in projecting the success or failure of a candidate on the job, based on self-perception. Projection is often followed by prejudice that interferes with objective candidate assessment.
- **Rating Extremes:** using consistently high scores or low scores . Still other Committee members have rated all candidates using the mid-point on the scale!
- **Stereotyping:** using idealized perceptions of individuals, either positive or negative. Images that we are given of people in today’s media; previous negative or positive interactions, associations, and/or experiences that we may have had with an individual, or individuals from a certain group; and our own concepts of people can occasionally cloud judgment and prevent raters from actively listening and assessing each candidate as a unique individual. Stereotyping is often followed by prejudice that interferes with objective candidate assessment.

*Are there any other “rater errors” that you have observed on previous Screening Committees?*

**Thank you again for your valuable service as a member of this Committee.**