

## INTERVIEWS

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### Role of Chair and Search Committee

After selecting applicants, the next step is to invite the prospective candidates for interviews on campus. During the interview process the chair should:

- Invite candidates to campus and ensure that the interview process is equitable for all candidates.
- Present finalists to the colleagues and /or the unit.
- Make sure the committee treats all candidates in the manner that we would want to be treated in the recruitment process.
- Ensure candidates are provided with appropriate information about UC Merced.
- Ensure that candidates feel welcomed—UC Merced’s reputation as an equitable and welcoming institution rests in large part with the search committee members’ treatment of candidates.
- Maintain communication with candidates, keeping them informed of the process and timelines.
- Respect unsuccessful applicant’s time by ensuring that they are notified of non-selection as soon as a firm decision is made.

The committee should:

- Help to make the process welcoming and inclusive for all candidates.
- Make candidates feel warmly welcomed.
- Use agreed upon evaluation criteria when reviewing finalists
- Maintain confidentiality as described in this document.

### Interview Best Practices

Remember that during the interview process the candidate is evaluating the search committee and the University, as well as being evaluated. Devise questions based on the job-related criteria by which the candidate will be evaluated. The committee should agree upon the questions and ask the same questions of all candidates, enabling comparative judgments to be made. General follow up or questions to provide clarification are okay. Avoid illegal and discriminatory questions.

Each candidate should be given the same access to information about the unit and the campus, and experience a similar introduction and interview process. For example, if one candidate is escorted or picked up from the airport by a search committee member, then all candidates should be. In addition, all candidates should be given the same opportunities to discuss and share their research and teaching experience in an appropriate environment. For example, applicants shall not be asked to teach a live class, as this is not a controlled student environment.

Information should be provided about dual career and family leave policies to ALL candidates.

### General Interview Guidelines

Interview questions assist in determining a candidate’s qualifications for a position and should be based on the position description, required qualifications and preferred qualifications. All candidates should be asked the same initial questions, with follow-up questions as needed to clarify the applicant’s experience or qualifications as related to the initial question.

Use the position description as a guide throughout the entire recruitment process.

It is unlawful to ask questions related to age, race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, physical disability, sex, marital status or sexual orientation. Do not inquire about economic status, medical condition, military service, or parenthood or childcare arrangements.

While it is important to help make the candidate feel comfortable, avoid even casual conversation that touches on inappropriate topics or inquiries that are illegal in an interview context. The candidate could misinterpret such discussions. This includes discussions that occur in social settings during the interviewing process.

See the Employment Inquiries Guide for further details.

**Discussing Work Life Issues**

If applicants ask questions early in the recruitment process about topics that could not be answered by interviewers (e.g., childcare provision or accommodation of religious holidays) refer them to the Academic Personnel website.

Do not ask follow-up questions or use this information in your evaluation. For the purpose of making it clear to a candidate to whom you are making an offer that there are programs or services available at UC Merced that may interest them, you could state something like: “UC Merced has programs to assist in partner employment, childcare, schooling and other family concerns. If any of these programs are of interest to you, let us know how we may be helpful.” Please refer the applicant to Academic Personnel.