
From: Bernadine Chuck Fong <fongbernadine@fhda.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 11:17 PM
To: foothill
Cc: centralservices
Subject: An Open Letter to our Faculty Search Committees

I am sending some of my thoughts on the search process when you begin final rounds of interviews. This is the frontend of the tenure process where my last letter on tenure was the bookend. Please take a moment to read this memo as we begin the final step of this very important process.

The strength and success of Foothill College's academic programs and its commitment to excellence rests on the quality of the faculty, which includes both instructional and non-instructional faculty. A Foothill faculty member is committed to our equity agenda and stimulating and nurturing the intellectual needs of students. Our aspiration is to develop a community of extraordinary people who will be influential in the academic development of all those whose lives we touch, particularly those who are experiencing college for the first time. As a result, Foothill's faculty search and selection process is comprehensive and rigorous. It emphasizes the skills and attributes which we believe make for masterful teachers, librarians, and counselors. Members of the Foothill faculty are selected for their innovation and enthusiasm for teaching or counseling and love of students as well as for their academic training and achievements. Faculty selection is based on teaching demonstrations or comparable non-teaching experience, interviews, and professional ability as well as potential and creativity and deep commitment and convincing demonstration of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Candidates for employment should be screened not only on the basis of their qualifications and experience, but also on how **excited** you and the committee are about the individual? If you thought the candidate might take another job elsewhere before we completed our process, would you feel panicky? Just selecting someone "who can do the job" is not good enough, nor is it what we want for the standards we have set for ourselves.

A thorough reference check can be more revealing than interviews, or even teaching demonstrations. We are not hiring a candidate to be a good interviewer so how well a candidate interviews may tell us very little about the true strengths and weaknesses of the applicant.

Before any candidate is recommended for a final interview, you must feel very excited about the person and the possibilities they will bring to our faculty. We do not want to "settle for just anyone who can do the job." A finalist should exceed our expectations or have the potential to do so. We must be open to professional growth and development, and potential is as important as experience, per se.

When you get to the final round (with me) the Selection Committee becomes yourself, the appropriate VP, the EO representative, the Dean of Institutional Equity, and any other Search Committee members who would like to participate (but please try to keep to a small number):

1. be sure to schedule interview times on my calendar (already reserved for this purpose) and above-mentioned people as soon as possible, even before your first round of interviews, then work backwards from the position review date
2. schedule 45 minutes for each final interview PLUS 15 minutes before the very first interview so I can meet with the selection committee and review the EO data, etc.
3. there should be at least 2 candidates forwarded for final interviews (and they must be two that you are genuinely excited about). If you have only one candidate to forward, you must give me the rationale why the final pool is not larger prior to scheduling final interviews.

Best regards,

Bernadine

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