

Best Practices for Virtual Recruiting – emphasis on interviewing

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, Emory University has also adapted to become more virtual to encourage physical distancing. With the change, there comes challenges that can make recruiting harder to navigate. This guide will walk you through some of the best practices and tools to make it easier for you and your interview committee.

How to Successfully Recruit Virtually

Prior to physical distancing, search committees have generally spent considerable amount of resources attending conferences to network and meet potential applicants. Now that most of these events have come to a temporary halt, don't let this stop you from connecting authentically with faculty candidates. You can still connect with candidates via conferences/events that have moved to a virtual format and through other professional networks and outreach.

In addition to outlining the rank and scope of the position, be sure to note in the job ad that the interview process is being conducted remotely.

Another effective way to connect with faculty candidates that will give them a fuller sense of Emory's intellectual culture and the activities of your department or program is to design a "virtual department tour" and/or post relevant events and YouTube recordings or previous panels / scholarly events on your Instagram or Facebook department accounts.

Enhancing Candidate Experience with Virtual Interviewing

Although many candidates and search committees are used to preliminary interviews being conducted via Skype and other virtual platforms, few have experienced the full recruitment process virtually. We want the process as close to the usual interview experience as possible and make recruitment meaningful for all involved.

Which Platform to Use

- **Zoom**
 - Available for all Emory employees
 - Easy to download for interviewee
 - Allows you to create a waiting room for the interviewee

Preparations Prior to the Interview

Send an email to the candidate including key information such as:

- Why the interview is happening virtually
- Let candidate know if you plan to record the interview
- Include agenda with timing and interviewers
- Meeting link and any required downloads/testing links
- Technical troubleshooting support email address/phone number

If your committee is scheduling the interview well in advance, have a confirmation email go out 24 hours prior to the interview.

Interview Day

Encourage your committee and faculty interviewers to log in 5-10 minutes prior to test the technology. Keep in mind that even though it is a virtual interview, the environment is still important.

- Your space should be quiet with adequate lighting
- Position your camera so that it is facing you directly at eye level
- Become familiar with basic functions, such as muting your microphone or turning your camera on/off
- Consider using headphones if there is a lot of background noise
- Have the job description and candidate CV / application pulled up or printed
- Dress the part

After the candidate has arrived, do a brief introduction, and ask the candidate if they have any questions before jumping in. During the interview:

- Provide overview of how the interview will be conducted. If the interview will be conducted by a committee or faculty pair, explain the format
- Make eye contact with the camera (not the screen)
- Your body language – don't forget to smile (naturally)
- Take notes using a pre-determined interview guide/evaluation form
- Be respectful of the candidates' time and other interviewer(s)
- Close out the interview with next steps

Recording an Interview

Digital formats do allow for recording an interview and sharing with other search committee members. However, you must have permissions from the candidate to record the session. Please do this prior in writing and/or make it the first acknowledgement statement after hitting record.

General Best Practices

- Encourage faculty to keep their Outlook calendar up to date to make scheduling interviews easier on the coordinator/team. Outlook will help you adjust for the time difference if your interview committee/candidate are in different geographical locations.
- Don't forget the human aspect while you are recruiting and interviewing.

Even though COVID-19 has expedited the need for organizations to go virtual in many aspects, with the development in technology, it is very likely that recruiting will adapt to this change for the long run. Investment now in making virtual interviews as productive as possible will almost assuredly be relevant for future searches.