

## ACHA Guidelines

# Guidelines for Hiring Health Promotion Professionals in Higher Education

## Third Edition

The *Guidelines for Hiring Health Promotion Professionals in Higher Education (Guidelines for Hiring)* provides recommendations for planning an equitable process to help institutions recruit and hire experienced candidates for health promotion positions. Understanding that hiring practices and policies differ across institutions, this document provides recommendations that can be applied based on each institution's individual circumstances.

Professionals who hire or conduct searches for health promotion positions, such as those in health services, student affairs, human resources, or other units, can use this document to recruit the most successful person for the role. The *Guidelines for Hiring* outlines factors used to assess an institution's hiring needs, considerations for working with human resources (HR), strategies for recruiting experienced candidates, and recommendations for an effective interview and selection process. These guidelines will position those hiring for health promotion roles to select the candidate who will best implement processes that support campus health and well-being.

## Equity and Inclusion

Equity and Diversity are priorities of the ACHA. The language in this section may be challenging, however, the writers have included and encourage readers to visit the Resources section of this document to learn more.

The majority of institutions of higher education in the United States trace their roots to white supremacist ideologies and principles of marginalization and discrimination based on race, gender, religion, class, and ableism, among other identity variables. In this context, white supremacist ideologies refer to the idea that institutions were developed by white men, for white men (Karabel, 2005; Muses, Ledesma & Parker, 2015). Throughout history, minority serving institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Tribal Colleges and Universities were developed to decrease barriers to higher education. However, even those are traced to racist practices as it “reflects Whites’ historical unwillingness to accommodate students of color within their own higher education systems, [and a] readiness to help establish separate institutions for students of color that maintained a

racially segregated postsecondary education system” (Muses, Ledesma & Parker, 2015, p. 49).

Though the purpose of this document is not to review the history of higher education, it is critical to acknowledge the role that discrimination and racism have had within these institutions for not only students but also for employees and employers (Harper, 2017). While there have been efforts to address and account for these origins, much work remains to combat systemic racism in higher education and remove biases in hiring processes and workplace environments. Thus, institutions must ensure they are recruiting, hiring, and retaining diverse college health professionals.

The college student population is more diverse than ever, with students representing various identities. To effectively support the well-being of this changing student demographic, health promotion departments must be intentional about recruiting from a diverse applicant pool that reflects the student population (Akande et al., 2011). Before starting the process, hiring managers must think through and plan for an equitable hiring process. This exercise may involve identifying and addressing systemic oppression that exists in hiring practices. Examples of this oppression may include the way qualifications or experience are listed in job descriptions or expectations of perfectionism when reviewing resumes and cover letters. By leading with equity and working to dismantle these oppressive systems, hiring managers can develop a more inclusive recruitment and hiring process that best meets the needs of the student population.

When recruiting and hiring a health promotion professional, it is also important to identify, advance, and prioritize a precise definition of diversity throughout the process. Many institutions have established justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion definitions and goals, and the hiring process should be in alignment with these goals.

If the institution does not have an established definition of or goals for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, it may be necessary to create one. While race and ethnicity are key components of institutions’ understandings of diversity, it can also include age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, geographical representation, mental or

physical ability status, political beliefs, and religion, among several other social identities (Kring, 2018).

For more information or support, review the justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion articles in the resources section.

## Vision for the Position

Successful hiring processes start with a clear vision for the position that is based on the needs of the department or institution. This vision will inform the type of position for which to hire and experience required to address the community's needs.

## Assessing the Institution's Needs and Assets

Building a successful unit requires an understanding of the community's needs and assets as well as the vision for campus health and well-being. To do so, a hiring manager may review relevant sources of data, such as institutional surveys or assessments, that highlight priority areas. The short and intermediate plans for addressing these needs can help inform the knowledge and skills required for the position. Through this process it is also important to consider the identities of current staff members and whether they are reflective of the campus demographics. Identifying and addressing gaps in representation may help health promotion units better meet the needs of the

student population. Questions to consider through this process are:

- What skills will complete the team?
- Are there priority topics that the team will need to address now or in the foreseeable future?
- Is the work focused on specific health topics, strategy work, or a combination of both?
- What identities are missing among staff that are represented in the population the department serves?

Prior to the hiring process it is also important to decide where in the organization this position will be situated so it can be successful. The forthcoming *Organizational Structures for Health Promotion in Higher Education* document is another helpful tool that managers can use to plan where to hire certain positions and how to build a team within existing or emerging organizational structures.

## Types of Positions

Having a clear understanding of the vision for campus well-being and the needs and assets within the community can help hiring managers determine the type of position needed. This information can inform the position level, years of experience required, responsibilities, and whether the position will focus on general health promotion processes or certain topics or initiatives.

Table 1: Position Types

Position Level	Potential Position Titles	Experience (degree/school and number of years)	Distinguishing Responsibilities
Entry-Level	Program Coordinator Health Promotion Specialist Health Educator Health Education Coordinator Wellness Coordinator Assistant Director	Bachelor's Degree required Master's Degree preferred 1-2 years of related work or internship/practicum experience	Participation in coalitions Advising peer education groups or student organizations Designing, implementing, and facilitating campus-wide programming Supervising students
Mid-Level**	Wellness Coordinator Health Promotion Specialist Senior Health Promotion Specialist Assistant Director Associate Director Health Promotion Manager	Bachelor's Degree required Master's Degree preferred 3-5 years of related work experience or internship/practicum experience	Coalition building Supporting strategic planning efforts Informing administrative policies or decisions Supervising students and staff
Senior-Level**	Health Promotion Manager Director of Health Promotion Director of Health Services Executive Director Associate Director Assistant Director Program Director	Master's Degree required Doctorate preferred 5+ years of related work experience	Leading visioning and strategic planning efforts Advocating for resources Creating coalitions across campus Supervising staff

\*\*A one-person office will likely have similar position titles, required experience, and responsibilities of a mid or senior-level professional

Depending on the health promotion department's structure, there may be opportunities to hire entry-, mid-, or senior-level positions. Some institutions have a one-person health promotion department and the experience required and responsibilities for these individuals may overlap with that of mid- and senior-level positions. Review Table 1: Position Types for more information on the potential differences between entry-, mid-, and senior-level positions to inform the type of position to recruit. See Appendix B for sample job descriptions for each of these position levels.

Depending on the institution and its needs, there may be additional distinguishing responsibilities for mid- and senior-level positions, while other institutions may have similar responsibilities of entry- and mid-level positions. Responsibilities and amount of autonomy outlined for each professional level will also depend on the size and scope of the department and the work required on each campus. At an institution that has a one-person health promotion department, a professional in a senior-level position may need to provide both senior-level work such as strategic planning and entry-level work such as direct services. In a larger health promotion department, the senior-level positions may not engage in the direct services offered and instead focus on advocacy for the department with the institution's senior leadership. There may also be more hierarchical structures in larger departments where mid- and senior-level professionals have more autonomy and oversight over their work than entry-level professionals. Additionally, new positions or positions that report to professionals in other fields require a higher level of skill, as the employee must sometimes independently create new systems and processes.

There may also be differences across institutions in terms of title or required experience due to precedent or HR policies. For example, the title or required experience for a mid-level position at one institution may be the same as an entry-level position at another. Similarly, each institution will vary in how they quantify related coursework, internship, and practicum experiences when assessing previous work experience. To better understand these parameters, hiring managers should work with their HR departments to review policies related to position titles and relevant work experience. This process may require hiring managers to advocate for the ways in which graduate work, internships, or practicum opportunities can equip an individual with skills for the current position.

In addition to the experience required for the role, it is also important to consider whether the institution will benefit from having generalists who can support several initiatives, professionals focused on specific topic areas, or a combination of both. Some health promotion

departments may address multiple health and well-being topics, which may require a generalist position, while others focus on specific topics, which may require knowledge and skills in those topic areas. Other units engage in more strategy work or a combination of topic-focused and strategy. Regardless of whether someone is a generalist, focuses on a specific topic, or engages in more strategy work, relevant skills to look for include: experience with needs assessments, program planning and evaluation, curriculum development, advocacy, connecting students to appropriate resources, and facilitating culture change. In addition to these skills, topic-specific roles may require an understanding of best practices related to that area of focus. Depending on the topic (e.g., alcohol and other drugs, recovery programs or community, sexual violence, mental health, sexual health, etc.) it may be appropriate to look for experience and comfort talking about and navigating political conversations around those topics. When considering the type of position, it is also important to consider other tasks and responsibilities and the relevant skills required to fulfill those duties. For example, if the position is responsible for social marketing and material design, then it may be important to look for someone with experience in health communication and graphic design.

### **In-Person, Hybrid, and Remote Positions**

In addition to considering how the position fits within the broader structure of the health promotion unit, hiring managers, along with human resources, must also decide the requirements for being on campus. Some universities have adopted more flexible work arrangements, allowing for some positions to be hybrid (a mix of working on campus and remote) or moving entire departments or divisions to remote work.

When deciding the work arrangements for the position, hiring managers should first consult with the HR department to understand the policies around remote work. If the institution allows for flexible work arrangements, consider the type of work to be completed and how students are utilizing the services. For example, while there may be a push to have student-facing staff be on campus, it would be good to assess whether students prefer to interact with those services in person or virtually and outline the work arrangements accordingly. Other considerations for flexible work arrangements could include whether someone could work or be on site for non-standard hours, especially if that arrangement better aligns with work-life harmony or alleviates commuting challenges.

## Working with Human Resources

Human resources departments vary by institution and are responsible for developing, implementing, and enforcing policies and procedures for recruiting and hiring professionals. Hiring managers should consult with their HR managers or representatives to clarify their institution's expectations. Engaging HR teams early in the process will help minimize any barriers or delays in finding the best candidate for the position. HR can be a helpful partner in providing both required and suggested language to ensure the development of a clear job description that not only reflects departmental needs but follows institutional guidelines. Requirements for what to include or exclude in job descriptions may vary by institution.

When working with HR, it is also important to determine if the position is considered essential. In any given crisis, certain professional staff are deemed essential and may be required to be in attendance on campus regardless of the institution's decision for students or other staff. HR will be able to help determine whether the position is deemed essential and the requirements associated with that demarcation. These requirements should be included in the job description so that it is clear to the candidates

Cultivating strong relationships with HR can be beneficial when advocating for departmental needs. As such, there are key opportunities for engaging with HR when assessing the needs of the department, developing the position proposal, crafting the job description, and finalizing the recruitment strategy.

## Attracting Skilled and Experienced Candidates

To attract experienced candidates, it is important to align the scope of the position with the training and qualifications that will enable both the candidate and the position to be successful. Below are suggestions for degrees and certifications that could help a hiring manager find the best candidate for the position and salary and fringe benefits packages to attract the best candidates.

### Training and Qualifications

Health promotion in higher education is an inherently interdisciplinary field, thus degrees and certifications in a variety of disciplines could be appropriate for a health promotion position. As hiring managers consider the qualifications to include in job descriptions, it is also important to consider relevant previous work experience. The ACHA Guidelines: *Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education* is a tool that hiring

managers and search committees can use to evaluate whether a candidate will be successful in the position.

When outlining skills and experience required for a position, often through minimum and preferred experience, it is important to consider how it might impact the types of candidates that apply. Although these standards present an increased likelihood of identifying experienced candidates, they may also discourage strong and diverse candidates with a variety of professional and academic backgrounds from applying. Some candidates may not have had access to opportunities to build certain skills; therefore, it might be helpful to limit the required experience and more explicitly state the preferred experience for someone to be successful in the role.

### Degrees

A public health degree ensures that an applicant understands the complex, population-level work required for college health promotion. Within this vast field, specialties that focus on the social and behavioral sciences or health education could provide an applicant with the most direct background knowledge to help them succeed in a health promotion role (Association of Schools of Public Health [ASPPH], 2006). Many schools of public health offer degrees such as a Master's in Public Health (MPH), Master of Science (MSc), a Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH), or a Master of Education (MEd) in health education. For more information on these degree programs, the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) provide lists of accredited public health schools and programs (ASPPH, 2006; CEPH, n.d.).

Individuals may also choose to pursue a doctoral degree such as a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), or a Doctor of Education (EdD) in addition to an MPH or related degree. While some roles may benefit from, or an institution may prefer, a doctoral degree, a master's degree typically prepares individuals for many health promotion positions.

While education and training that primarily prepares individuals to work one-on-one with individuals, such as counseling, nutrition support, nursing, wellness coaching, etc., are valuable, they may not provide the skills necessary to support health promotion processes that advance population health and well-being.

If an applicant does not have a public health degree that focuses on health promotion, health education, or a related discipline, they may have practical or professional experience, such as a graduate assistantship or a previous position that would prepare them for a health promotion role. To screen for these skills and experience, it is important to write broad job descriptions that welcome

transferable skills and experience and will not cause an applicant to be unintentionally excluded based solely on their degree. When reviewing applicant materials, it is important to look for relevant experience that could prepare them for the position.

**Certifications**

Certifications can emphasize specific skill sets. Though

the role may benefit from certain skills or experience, setting it as a requirement could limit the applicant pool or unintentionally exclude experienced candidates. Indicating certifications under the preferred experience section can indicate to the applicant what skills will allow the candidate to be successful in the position. There are many certification options; a few population-level approaches are highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2: Certifications

Certification	Topic Area	Organization	Application Requirements	Cost	CE Required for Recertification
Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES)	Health Education	National Commission for Health Education Credentialing	Yes—academic coursework and exam	One time exam & yearly fee	75 credits required every five years
Certified in Public Health (CPH)	Public Health	National Board of Public Health Examiners	Yes—academic coursework and exam	One time exam and yearly fee	50 credits over two years
Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES)	Health Education	National Commission for Health Education Credentialing	Yes—academic coursework, experience in the field and exam	One time exam and yearly fee	30 out of the required 75 credits must be MCHES credits every five years

If an institution determines that a specific certification is necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the role, it is important to consider how they will support the individual in maintaining that certification. There should be a plan for how the institution will provide financial support for fees, courses, exams, continuing education, etc., in addition to time to complete or maintain the certification requirements. Many certifications require application fees which may include exams, funding for annual renewals, and continuing education credits, offered at national conferences. If the institution cannot support the certification financially, consider clearly communicating this limitation.

At times, a candidate may have a certification that will not be official until they complete their degree or receive the results of their exam. In addition, knowing that an applicant qualifies for a certification is meaningful even if it is not obtained. This could mean that the candidate has the training and background necessary to take a qualifying test but may not have the funds for the certification process.

Although health promotion prioritizes population-level approaches, some campuses may identify a need for a

practitioner to meet individually with students or have experience in a particular topic as part of the institution’s larger health promotion strategy. In addition to the outlined population-level certifications in Table 2, an institution may prioritize candidates with topic- or skill-specific certifications (e.g., motivational interviewing, recovery coach training, wellness coaching, etc.). When reviewing these certifications, it is important to consider the accrediting body and criteria required for the certification and how it connects with the campus’ needs.

**Salary and Fringe Benefits Packages**

Candidates are likely to be interested and have questions about the salary and benefits. Having a competitive salary and benefits package will increase the chances of attracting skilled and experienced candidates. It is imperative to conduct industry research to ensure that the institution is offering a competitive, equitable, and fiscally responsible salary. To determine the position salary, hiring managers should first consult with their institution’s HR department to learn about campus-specific salary requirements. They can also reference peer and aspirational schools for a point of comparison and

leverage the information to advocate for a higher salary. Depending on the candidate, hiring managers should take into account potential adjustments to salary due to cost-of-living differences for someone who may be joining the institution from another geographical area.

Often, salary is not the only factor a candidate considers when choosing a position. Higher education offers competitive fringe benefits that may attract candidates. Whether a candidate has previously worked in higher education or in another setting, it might be a good strategy to highlight the additional benefits the institution offers.

Hiring managers may want to highlight the following benefits during the recruitment and interview process. This list is not comprehensive and may vary by institution.

- **Professional development:** funding for continuing education and development can save professionals out-of-pocket costs and shows an employer's commitment to continual learning. Professional development opportunities may include:
  - **Conferences, webinars, and other training:** employees may attend sessions to maintain certifications, connect with other colleagues, or gain additional skills.
  - **Tuition remission and course fee waivers:** institutions may allow employees to take courses related to their job responsibilities without paying tuition. This can attract candidates who want to advance their education while maintaining employment.
  - **Teaching opportunities:** some institutions offer the opportunity for classroom teaching. Supporting professionals in this way can help them develop a new skill set and offer a different way to interact with students.
- **Paid time off:** highlighting generous leave policies can help candidates know that an institution values their taking time away from the office.
- **Flexible work arrangements:** the ability to work from home, shift workday schedules, or use flex time can help candidates minimize a commute, balance personal responsibilities, and feel that their time is valued. Flex time may include hours worked in the evening or on the weekend that can be used for time off at a later date.
- **Health care:** coverage may include medical, mental health, dental, and vision benefits. Some institutions may also offer coverage or discounts for gym memberships, massage therapy, and other health benefits.
- **Local partnerships:** many institutions partner with local entities to offer access or discounts to unique opportunities such as entertainment, tourist-attractions, and dining options.
- **Commuter benefits/transportation funding:** an institution may offer subsidized or pre-tax deductions for public transportation fares, shuttle services, or carpool benefits.
- **Facilities:** access and benefits related to on-campus facilities such as library resources or the recreation center, and whether access extends to family members, will vary by institution.
- **Dining plans:** faculty and staff may have access to free or discounted meal plans at different campus dining facilities.
- **Athletic events:** some institutions offer free or discounted admission to campus athletic events.
- **Tuition or tuition reimbursement for family members:** family members may be able to take free classes at the institution or be reimbursed for classes taken at comparable institutions.
- **Technology:** departments may be able to offer employees access to a laptop, tablet, mobile phone, specific software, or other technology so they are better equipped to fulfill their responsibilities.
- **Relocation funding:** institutions may offer financial assistance for relocation-related expenses or provide free or discounted temporary housing. Some may also offer assistance finding housing and getting settled in a new city.
- **Family and extended leave:** some institutions offer family and extended leave beyond what is required by law.
- **Help a partner/spouse find a job:** to attract candidates who may need to relocate, some institutions offer assistance to help the candidate's partner or spouse find a new local job.
- **Childcare:** faculty and staff may receive preferential treatment for on-campus childcare or access to other local childcare facilities. Some institutions also offer support for finding childcare.
- **Life insurance:** institutions may offer life insurance at a discounted group rate.
- **Long-term care insurance:** institutions may offer long-term care at a discounted group rate.
- **Unions:** certain positions may have the option to join a union that protects or advocates for staff.

- **Retirement:** retirement options may include pensions or alternative retirement plans. It is helpful to highlight whether the institution offers matching contributions and the amount of time required to be vested in the institution. Some institutions offer additional options that allow employees to have money taken directly from their paychecks and invested outside of a pension or retirement plan.

## The Hiring Process

To begin the hiring process, the institution must first identify a hiring manager who will oversee the process to recruit, review, interview, and select the candidate for the position. This individual may be the direct supervisor or another who directly or indirectly works with the position. Often, the hiring manager identifies others to serve on a search committee to help with the hiring process.

Search committee members should include individuals within and outside of the health promotion department and health services, as they can offer different perspectives about each applicant. It is also important to have a variety of identities represented on the search committee. When identifying colleagues to partner with for a search, avoid tokenism. Tapping a small group of individuals to serve as representatives for those in their social identity groups when hiring can be perceived as performative, creating an impression of inclusiveness. It may feel natural to constantly choose the same committee members, but consider how someone from a historically minoritized social identity may be tapped to serve as the “diversity representative” for several committees across campus.

The search committee serves an important role in helping the hiring manager review applications, interview candidates, and provide recommendations on the best candidate for the role. The committee roles may be informed by HR policies and practices, so it is important to clearly articulate the group’s charge when inviting colleagues to join. Beyond the search committee, it is a good idea to think about other campus partners who will work with this position and invite them to be part of the interview process.

During the initial stages of the hiring process, it is ideal to determine the decision-making procedure. Some questions to consider include:

- Whose vote will carry the most weight? The search committee or the people who will be working directly with the candidate?
- Will the hiring manager have the final say?
- Will the search committee present one final recommended candidate? A ranked list? Or a list of anyone who could be successful in the position?

Throughout the hiring process, it is also important to be mindful of implicit biases that may influence hiring decisions. All individuals involved, including hiring managers, should engage in a constant process of self-reflection and self-critique, challenging assumptions they may have that might prioritize certain candidates based on their social identities. Beyond acknowledging implicit biases, hiring managers should engage in efforts to mitigate the extent to which those biases influence their hiring decisions. A strategy for doing so is to situate the goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion into the institutional goals, which can inform how to guide the recruitment process (Bensimon, 2004).

## Position Descriptions

Position announcements can influence the applicants’ first impression of the department and institution. The position description sends a message as to what type of role the institution is hiring, the skill sets required, and insight into the cultural context of the organization. Appendix B: Job Descriptions offers tips for considering the type of position, information to include, and sample job descriptions. Strong candidates will likely search for additional information and apply to multiple positions. Though hiring managers may not have flexibility over certain aspects of the announcements (e.g., titles, where to advertise, etc.), they should consider drafting a job description that provides as much detail as possible. Including an application review date on the position announcement can alert applicants of the hiring timeline, but the hiring manager and search committee may choose to review and collect additional applications beyond the review start date. The following are elements to consider when drafting a position announcement:

- **Include the departmental, mission, vision, and values:** This information provides the applicant with context about how the department engages in health promotion work. If the department has not developed a mission, vision, and values, consider including those of the institution.
- **Describe how the department engages in work to advance equity.** Most institutions include a statement about being an equal opportunity employer. While important, it does not indicate how equity is prioritized or operationalized within the health promotion department. Including a statement about how the role will add to existing equity measures highlights the importance of the work and the plans for it to continue.

- **Indicate the seniority level of the role.** Including information about the position's reporting structure, location within the organization, and management responsibilities may inform whether a candidate applies for the position and which skills and experiences they highlight in their application materials
- **Include only necessary skills in the minimum or required experience section of the position description.** Minimum or required experience can be used as a screening tool to ensure the department is hiring a candidate with the appropriate experience. However, having too many may limit the search in ways that could eliminate great candidates who do not meet a very specific requirement. Consider limiting the minimum experience to what HR requires and little else.
- **Use the preferred experience section to describe an experienced candidate.** The preferred experience section indicates to applicants the specific skills or knowledge the hiring manager and search committee are looking for in the candidate. Applicants can review the list and adapt their application materials to demonstrate how their previous work aligns with the preferred experience for the role. Including these criteria in preferred experience provides flexibility for those individuals who may have transferable skills that apply to the role.
- **Clearly describe how individual-level interventions differ from clinical services.** Health promotion strategies leverage community and individual level strategies, which may include the provision of direct services (e.g., wellness coaching, HIV testing counseling, etc.). When describing direct services responsibilities of the role, job descriptions should indicate the ways in which they are distinct from and complement other clinical services provided within the health organization.
- **Indicate whether the position requires experience in specific health topics or health promotion processes.** As indicated in the section "Types of Positions," departments and units should look for candidates that will address their needs. Job descriptions should indicate whether the position is intended to be a specialist with experience in a specific health topic or a generalist who has experience with health promotion processes.

- **Ensure language is inclusive of different identities.** Whether describing how the position will support the campus community or describing benefits offered by the institution to the person in the role, it is important to use inclusive language. For example, avoid using heteronormative, gendered, and ableist language that further marginalizes certain identities.

In creating the job description and throughout the hiring process, it is also important to be mindful of language used to describe health promotion work. Often, certain terms are used interchangeably but have a different meaning. When deciding on language, hiring managers should be mindful of what each term means, how it relates to the position responsibilities, and what the terminology communicates to potential applicants.

**Recommended:**

- **Health Promotion:** "health promotion is a process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health" (World Health Organization [WHO], 1986). Health promotion professionals utilize skills such as needs and assets assessments, community and coalition building, intervention design, strategic planning, and evaluation to cultivate systemic change towards more health promoting environments.

**Not Recommended:**

- **Health Promotions:** Organizations that engage in evidence-informed health promoting processes use the term "health promotion." Adding an "s" to "promotion" implies that the department's primary responsibility is engaging in marketing activities or distributing promotional items as opposed to working towards systemic change.
- **Marketing:** While marketing often focuses on consumers and advertising, social marketing is a skill that many health promotion professionals may utilize to influence or encourage behavior change. It is important to distinguish social marketing as a tool that is required for certain positions from advertising a specific service.
- **Health Education:** Health education, which focuses on providing individuals knowledge and skills related to specific health topics, is a tool or strategy used within health promotion. Job descriptions should make a distinction between these roles by explicitly outlining responsibilities that reflect health promotion work, even if the institution requires the position title to be "health educator."

Regardless of institutional requirements, hiring managers should aim to be as explicit as possible with language for job descriptions to help interested candidates make



informed decisions about applying to health promotion positions. In addition to providing an overview of the general role or function of the position, explicitly describing the duties and responsibilities in detail can be helpful for prospective candidates.

Once the job description is approved and ready to distribute, hiring managers should develop a recruitment strategy that ensures a diverse candidate pool, prioritizing those with the desired skills for the position. Confering with HR colleagues can help hiring managers determine how much flexibility they have in distributing the job description.

Table 3: Strategies for Advertising Open Positions

Strategy	Examples	Advantages	Disadvantages
Professional Conferences/Annual Meetings	American College Health Association (ACHA) NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA) American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) American Public Health Association (APHA)	Share details of the position with interested applicants Generate interest in the position through in-person conversations Meet informally to discuss the position with potential applicants or colleagues	Typically attended by those who are currently in the field and have the resources to attend, may miss strong applicants without access to this resource
Job Boards	ACHA Career Center NASPA Chronicle of Higher Education HigherEd Jobs National Commission for Health Education Credentialing	Applicants who are actively searching for employment will likely consult job boards	There may be a cost to post Some require fees to access, potentially limiting the diversity of the applicant pool
Social Media Outlets	There are a variety of platforms that can be used to publicize the position to target audiences	Allows for posting to pages that represent diverse groups	Not all applicants use social media The posting may reach individuals beyond the target audience
Word of Mouth	Emails, phone calls, etc.	Less need for formal language than could be required by HR	May limit reach to those who are already connected to the field This might benefit people with more privilege, who have access to certain networks of professionals
Listservs	Run by organizations such as ACHA, ACPA, NASPA, SOPHE, APHA	Wide viewing audience Ability for the announcement to be forwarded to those not on the listserv	May limit reach to those who are already connected to the field
Local sources	Newspapers, local job listings, alumni networks, public health outlets	Applicants are likely familiar with the community	Could produce a very limited applicant pool

## **Where to Advertise**

To maintain an equitable search process that maximizes the number of potential applicants, position descriptions should be posted in a variety of places. Table 3 includes examples of posting strategies with advantages and disadvantages of each. To recruit an adequate number of experienced applicants that represent diverse populations, it is important to use multiple posting strategies and prioritize those that reach the most broad and diverse populations.

To attract a diverse applicant pool, hiring managers may also identify spaces (virtual and in-person) that attract candidates of certain identities and backgrounds, such as specific mentorship groups or listservs. A more direct approach could be to intentionally invite candidates from historically black colleges and universities, minority serving institutions, and community colleges to apply for the position. This approach can help minimize the barriers of applicants being connected to the field or aware of particular job-related resources. It also demonstrates the institution's desire for diversity.

In addition to the strategies outlined in Table 3, some institutions may utilize recruitment companies. When choosing a company, consider the types of applicants they have recruited for similar positions, and their strategy for identifying individuals to determine if their approach is in alignment with the equity and diversity goals for the hiring process.

After the position announcement has been created and posted, applicants will submit their materials to be considered for the position. Depending on the HR policies, position announcements may need to be posted for a set amount of time or in specific locations before the search committee or hiring manager can begin reviewing applications.

## **Collecting and Reviewing Applicant Materials**

While it is standard practice to ask applicants to submit a resume and cover letter for the position, an institution's HR policies may require the applicant to submit a certain number of professional references or letters of recommendation. Depending on the position responsibilities, an institution can ask an applicant to submit a writing sample or to answer a specific prompt. While these additional materials will allow the search committee to better assess and screen an applicant's experience, having too many requirements may limit the applicants who are able to apply.

The system for reviewing applications will vary across institutions or departments; however, it is important to ensure the review process is equitable. At some

institutions, HR screens applicants to ensure they meet the minimum experience, while at others the hiring manager or search committee takes on that role. Generally, applicants who do not meet the minimum criteria are not considered for the position.

While HR or the hiring manager may complete the initial review of applications, involving the search committee early will create a more fair process and will increase their investment in the search process. To do so, the hiring manager may have members of the search committee review the screened applications and rate them based on a set of criteria, including the minimum and preferred experience outlined in the job description. Developing a rubric is helpful for creating a fair and standardized approach for reviewing applications across all those involved in the process. Appendix A: Additional Resources provides some tools for creating a rubric that prioritizes equity and inclusion in the hiring process. Often, applicants are penalized for having small errors in their application materials. It is important to recognize that those standards are a result of oppressive systems and should be carefully addressed through the review process. Having an objective way to evaluate applicants helps to remove some bias in the hiring process. Another strategy for creating a more equitable review process could be to de-identify application materials to minimize implicit biases based on the applicant's name or relationship to the hiring manager or search committee.

The screening process may involve more than one person reviewing each set of materials to offer multiple perspectives on the applicant. For preferred experience, institutions may create rank scores or offer additional consideration for applicants who meet all the preferred criteria. The goal at each step of the review process is to reduce the number of applicants by advancing those who are the most likely to fulfill the position responsibilities. After reviewing all applications, the hiring manager can compile numeric rankings for a more objective view of the applicant. They can also host a meeting with the search committee to discuss any discrepancies in the numeric rankings or perspectives on applicants.

When planning the interview process, it is also helpful to have a plan for the number of candidates to interview. If an institution requires a minimum number of candidates or has limited funding for in-person interviews, the hiring manager can be intentional about screening and eliminating applicants early in the hiring process.

Table 4: Types of Interviews

Interview Type	Interviewer(s)	Goal	Advantages	Disadvantages
Phone	Hiring Manager Human Resources Small Search Committee	Screen the candidate to determine if they are qualified for the position	Cost-effective Minimal time commitment Chance for candidate to ask questions	Limited time for questions Lack of connection without seeing faces
Virtual ( <i>ex: Skype, Zoom</i> )	Hiring Manager Health Promotion Department Search Committee	To have several people evaluate the candidate to determine if they may have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the position	Allows for panel interview Additional time for questions Opportunity to assess body language May be more feasible for candidates living internationally or those with medical concerns that limit travel Cost-effective for institution	More challenging to show campus spaces Issues with technology
Half/Full Day ( <i>in person or virtual</i> )	Hiring Manager Health Promotion Department Search Committee Campus Partners Students	To have several key campus partners evaluate the candidate to determine if they have the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the position Evaluate the candidate's potential contribution to the institution Determine if the candidate's experience complements the institution and department's needs and assets	Allows for multiple interview formats ( <i>ex: presentation, one-on-one, group, informal meal</i> ) Allows for more constituents to meet the candidate Can include a candidate presentation or mock meeting facilitation Cost-effective for institution if done virtually	Costly if done in-person Requires coordination of interviewers Additional time commitment May be taxing on candidate
In-person	Hiring Manager Health Promotion Department Search Committee Campus Partners Students	To evaluate the candidate's knowledge, skills, and ability to interact with others and to provide a more intimate feel of the campus, office, colleagues, etc.	Opportunity to show the candidate campus and office space Provides a chance for more informal interview time over meals Candidate is able to observe campus climate and culture	Travel, meal, and lodging costs Additional time commitment with an extended visit Transportation concerns ( <i>ex: airport commute</i> )

## **Interview Plan and Process**

To continue prioritizing diversity and equity in the hiring process, hiring managers should ensure a welcoming environment throughout the interview process. Although interviews are an opportunity to learn more about candidates' experiences and qualifications, they also help candidates learn more about the institution to make an informed decision about whether to join the team. It is important to demonstrate the department's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) throughout the candidate's interview experience. There are several strategies that can be utilized to make the interview more equitable, thereby demonstrating DEI as a priority for the institution and department:

- For an in-person interview, consider whether the process and interview locations are accessible to persons of all abilities and identities and whether any candidate would feel welcome in all aspects of the interview. Consider the length of the interview and how to build in breaks to allow applicants to take care of their needs. Hiring managers may also ask the candidate what they will need in preparation for the interview, whether that is dietary restrictions or other specific accommodations.
- Include the institution's diversity and equity goals along with any interview materials to show the candidate how the institution is operationalizing efforts to be inclusive.
- Include interview questions that exemplify the department's focus on equity and challenge the candidate to describe their prioritization on justice, equity, and diversity issues.
- Include campus partners in the interview who represent the diverse populations with whom the candidate will work if hired.
- Share with the candidate how diversity, equity, and inclusion shape the department's health promotion work.
- Highlight practices used to onboard or transition new team members to the department and institution.

See a list of suggested questions in Appendix C. The interview is a crucial part of the hiring process, both for the institution and the applicant.

Thoughtful design of the interview process will help hiring managers and the search committee effectively evaluate candidates. Typically, candidates go through multiple screening steps, such as an initial phone interview; a virtual interview with the hiring manager, the search committee, or team members; and an in-person

interview, sometimes taking place over the course of a half or full day. The structure and process will be dependent on the responsibilities of the position, HR policies at the institution, the hiring budget, and logistics of the applicants.

Options for types of interviews, as well as advantages and disadvantages of each, are outlined in Table 4. The types of interviews can be combined and sequenced in any way that allows the hiring manager and search committee to select the best candidate for the role, while also considering their HR requirements, budgets, logistics, etc. Typically, phone and virtual interviews, which require less time and resources, precede in-person or all-day interviews, which require more time and resources. It is also common for more applicants to go through the less intensive phone or virtual interview, while only a few candidates will be invited for an in-person or all-day interview. This structure allows the hiring manager, search committee, and campus partners to be involved in multiple ways and provide different perspectives when evaluating the candidates. Alternatively, if there are a limited number of strong candidates or an abbreviated timeline, the hiring manager may choose to order the interview steps differently. There may also be situations where the number of strong candidates exceeds the budget for an in-person all-day interview. To allow all the top candidates to be considered, the hiring manager may choose to do these interviews virtually instead.

Reflecting on the job description, hiring managers should structure the interview process in a way that facilitates candidates' ability to showcase their experiences related to the outlined requirements of the position. These positions may require supervision, collaboration, student advising, and presentation or teaching skills. Appendix C: Interview Questions offers tips for selecting and evaluating interview questions and responses as well as sample interview questions. Matching elements of the interview process to these specific job requirements is important to inform who the search committee and hiring manager recommend as the best candidate for the position. To be more inclusive, hiring managers may choose to share potential interview questions with the candidates ahead of time. This practice allows candidates to provide appropriate examples for how their prior work experience could apply to the current role or how they would handle the potential scenario.

While most interviews include standard questions, adding scenarios allows the candidate to demonstrate their level of experience in problem solving and navigating similar situations. Asking the candidate to present or facilitate a discussion on a particular topic can highlight their creativity, public speaking, facilitation, and research skills.

To gather additional perspectives on the candidate's skills and experiences, consider including additional constituents, such as those who will work closely with this position, in the interview process. These constituents could include colleagues from across campus, students, and supervisees. When inviting others to participate in the interview process, it is important to set expectations around keeping the candidate's information confidential, as the candidate may not have informed their institution that they are seeking other opportunities.

To accommodate both institutions and candidates, virtual interviews are becoming increasingly common. Virtual interviews can be conducted as an individual meeting or can be structured as a half or whole day interview where various campus constituents are invited to ask the candidate questions. Having the technology to conduct remote interviews allows institutions to be creative in how to structure these interviews, including offering a campus tour and creating informal interview opportunities.

While there are common practices for structuring an interview process, it is important to create one that is fair and inclusive and positions the institution to hire the candidate who best meets their needs. Colleagues and students attending the interview may be offered an opportunity to submit their impressions and thoughts about the candidate through verbal feedback or a form. If forms are used, consider including a rubric or ranking tool to assess candidates based on desired skills and experience outlined by the hiring manager and search committee. Feedback about the candidate, whether through discussion or written comments, should be kept confidential to protect the opinions of those involved in the hiring process. All this information is compiled and reviewed to make recommendations on the top candidates.

## **Reference Check**

Many institutions require applicants to submit a list of professional references who can reflect on the applicant's previous work experience. Talking with these references can offer a different perspective of the individual that may not have been obvious during the interview. The references can also share feedback on how well the individual works with others or how they showed leadership in their department.

Reference checks may be conducted via phone or email. Regardless of the modality, it is helpful to have a set of questions ready that will provide more insight about the candidate. While applicants may be asked to provide the names of references early in the application process, hiring managers or HR professionals typically reach out to the references when the candidate has advanced to be one of the finalists for the position. The process for reference

checks varies by institution, with some conducting them prior to making final decisions and others doing it after the final decision. If someone outside of HR, such as the hiring manager, does the reference check, it is important that the individual works with HR to understand what questions are appropriate and allowed to be asked.

## **Final Decisions**

After the interview process is complete and the search committee has collected feedback from all the parties who interviewed the candidates, they will be able to identify a finalist and make a recommendation to the hiring manager about whom to hire. It is best to consult with the institution's HR department to determine who is responsible for making the final hiring decision and offer to the selected candidate. In many cases, the hiring manager or HR professional will call or email the finalist with an offer, followed by a formal offer outlining a review of the position, salary, benefits, and a deadline for accepting the position. It is also possible that the institution requires a background check, so the initial offer is considered provisional pending the results of the background check.

As a finalist makes their decision, they may reach out with additional questions or ask to negotiate the salary and benefits package. It is important to continue the partnership with HR through this process as they may be able to share more information about the maximum possible salary and the institution's ability to offer additional benefits such as time off, moving costs, tuition reimbursement, etc.

It is best to wait for the finalist to formally accept the position before informing other candidates that the position has been filled, in case the finalist decides not to accept the position. Depending on the institution's HR policies, if there are two qualified candidates and the initial offer is turned down, they may be able to offer the position to the other candidate. If no other candidates have been deemed a good fit for the position, the search may fail and the hiring process would begin again.

## **Appendix A: Additional Resources**

While this publication provides recommendations and strategies for building a health promotion team, supplemental resources to review include:

### **ACHA Resources**

- Supervision Guidelines for Health Promotion Professionals in Higher Education [coming soon]
- Organizational Structures for Health Promotion in Higher Education [coming soon]
- [Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education](#)
- [Framework for a Comprehensive College Health Program](#)
- [Healthy Campus Framework](#)

### **Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Resources**

- [Guide to Diversifying Faculty Searches, Brown Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity](#)
- [Subjectivity, Rubrics, and Critical Pedagogy](#)
- [Systemic Racism in Higher Education](#)
- [The Skillful Use of Higher Education to Protect White Supremacy](#)
- [The Gender Binary is a Tool of White Supremacy](#)
- [Disability Philanthropy Forum: Intersections Between Racism and Ableism](#)

### **Other Resources**

- [AAAHC Accreditation Standards](#)
- [CAS Standards for Health Promotion](#) (ACHA members can access these standards at no cost at [https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Resources/Topics/CAS\\_Standards.aspx](https://www.acha.org/ACHA/Resources/Topics/CAS_Standards.aspx))

## **Appendix B: Job Descriptions**

### **Using this Resource**

Each department and institution is unique in how they hire for health promotion positions. The job descriptions outlined in this Appendix offer a framework to start with and are not intended to be prescriptive. Hiring managers will need to work with their HR department, search committee, and department to develop the job description that best aligns with the needs, policies, and future directions for the health promotion work within the campus community.

The job descriptions detailed below provide examples of entry-level, mid-level, office of one, and director-level positions that serve students. Depending on the institution's needs, hiring managers may adapt one of these job descriptions to reflect different target audiences or create a combination of one or two descriptions.

### **Determining the Type of Position**

Before developing the job description, it is important to identify the type of position to hire. The hiring manager or those advocating for the hiring process must determine if the position will be a generalist or topic-specific, as well as position-level, as these factors will inform the job description. For example, a topic-specific job description could include information about knowledge the candidate may be expected to have or obtain. The position level will inform the types of responsibilities and knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the candidate.

The job descriptions included below outline generalist roles for four different position levels: entry-level, mid-level, office of one, and director. While there may be overlap between some position levels (e.g., director and office of one or entry- and mid-level), there are a few key distinctions.

#### ***Director vs. Office of One***

Director level roles usually focus on big picture strategy and work with other administrators to advocate for health or well-being on behalf of the department. They primarily supervise professional staff who implement health promotion processes and services. Those who serve as "offices of one" also engage in strategy and advocacy work, but they may also lead health promotion processes and services at the institution. Because they are the only professional staff member within the department, they are more likely to supervise students, not professional staff.

#### ***Entry- vs. Mid-Level***

Individuals in entry-level positions often have a few years or less of experience working in health promotion in higher education and often focus on efforts such as workshops and trainings. Entry-level roles typically do not engage in much strategy or advocacy work. These individuals may supervise undergraduate students.

Mid-level roles usually require several years of experience working in the field and often engage in a mix of efforts such as workshops and trainings, as well as strategy and advocacy work. These individuals may supervise graduate students or newer professionals.

#### ***Additional Information to Include***

In addition to the position summary, job responsibilities, knowledge, skills, abilities, and minimum and preferred experience, hiring managers should also consider adding additional information about the institution or department to the job description.

It is common to include the institution's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA) statement, which outlines non-discrimination policies. This statement provides insight into the institution's values and approach related to non-discrimination. Job descriptions could also include background about the institution, such as the mission, campus priorities, whether it is public or private, urban or rural, research-focused or liberal arts, etc. It might also be helpful to include the department's mission, vision, and values so applicants have a sense of the department's priorities and approach to health promotion work.

## **Job Descriptions**

### ***Entry-Level***

**Position Summary:** Under the direction and supervision of the director of health promotion, this individual will work with their team to develop, implement, coordinate, and evaluate a comprehensive health promotion program. They will contribute to the team in developing evidence-informed strategies for enhancing student health and well-being.

### **Job Responsibilities:**

- Assists with planning, implementation, and evaluation of theory-based and evidence-informed health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services
- Collaborates with key stakeholders on and off campus to contribute to a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to health for students
- Practices cultural humility and incorporate social justice concepts and principles into health promotion processes
- May supervise undergraduate or graduate students
- Reports on health promotion processes to other staff
- Supports the development, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services based on campus needs and priorities
- Participates intentionally with other health promotion team members
- Maintains a collaborative relationship with appropriate departments and offices across campus
- Supports campus policies that advance and promote health and well-being
- Participates in coalition building

Actively participates in professional organizations. Examples can include attend and present at regional and national conferences, serve on committees, etc

### **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Demonstrated knowledge of:
  - How to incorporate health promotion in the context of higher education
  - Environmental and policy change activities and strategies
  - How to design and implement health promotion programs on a variety of key health issues based on needs assessment results
  - Evidence-informed health promotion programs/initiatives
  - Coalition building strategies
  - ACHA Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education (SPHPHE) and other relevant campus resources
  - Health promotion, behavior change, and population-based theories and models
  - Collaboration with and incorporation of underrepresented and historically marginalized diverse populations into health promotion processes
  - Quantitative and qualitative research skills (e.g., research design, survey development, environmental assessment, focus group design and facilitation, data analysis and interpretation, etc.)
- Demonstrated application of:
  - Social justice and cultural humility practices
  - Working collaboratively with teams



- Proficiency in:
  - Written, oral, and interpersonal communication skills
  - Handling multiple projects simultaneously, managing time efficiently, and prioritizing tasks
  - Analyzing health-related professional literature relevant to college students and assessing its applicability and utility for effectiveness on a particular campus
  - Gathering, compiling, and synthesizing information to develop health promotion initiatives and educational materials for specific populations of students including students involved in Greek Life; athletes; first generation students; international students; students who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color; transfer students; non-residential students; non-traditional students; and students with economic hardship

**Minimum experience:**

- Bachelor's degree in public health, health promotion, health education, or related field.
- Demonstrated experience with cultural humility and social justice practices.

**Preferred experience:**

- Master's degree in public health, health promotion, health education, or related field
- Involvement in health promotion or related field
- Experience supervising students
- Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) or Certified in Public Health (CPH) or CHES/CPH eligible
- Active participation in professional organizations
- Experience working in higher education
- Experience conducting literature reviews, needs assessments, and program evaluations; experience interpreting findings and developing plans to programmatically and strategically respond to the findings
- Experience working on coalitions or collaborating with individuals and organizations

### ***Mid-Level***

**Position Summary:** Under the direction and supervision of the director of health promotion, this individual will provide expertise to their team in the development, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of a comprehensive health promotion program. They will assist with the leadership of the department and support the team in developing evidence-informed strategies for enhancing student health and well-being.

#### **Job Responsibilities:**

- Oversees the planning, implementation, and evaluation of theory-based and evidence-informed health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services
- Collaborates with key stakeholders on and off campus to develop a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to health for students
- Practices cultural humility and incorporate social justice concepts and principles into health promotion processes
- Supervises undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or professional staff
- Develops reports to present to upper-level administration
- Takes a leadership role in the development and implementation of evidence-based health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services based on campus needs and priorities
- Participates intentionally with other health promotion team members, providing guidance and leadership when necessary
- Maintains a collaborative relationship with appropriate departments and offices across campus
- Develops, implements, and advocates for campus policies that advance and promote health and well-being
- Participates in coalition building
- Leads the development and implementation of campus-wide assessments to determine health needs, assets, and priorities
- Conducts evaluation of health initiatives and population-level strategies to assess shifts in behavior change or health outcomes
- Actively participates in professional organizations in a leadership capacity. Examples can include presenting at regional and national conferences, serving on committees, and producing publications

#### **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Demonstrated knowledge of how to:
  - Incorporate health promotion in the context of higher education
  - Develop and implement environmental and policy change activities and strategies
  - Design and implement health promotion programs on a variety of key health issues based on needs assessment results
- Demonstrated application of:
  - ACHA Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education (SPHPHE) and other relevant campus resources
  - Student development and learning theories and models
  - Health promotion, behavior change, and population-based theories and models
  - Fundamental principles of organizational development, environmental management, and cultural change
  - Evidence-informed health promotion programs/initiatives
  - Strategic planning processes

- Leadership abilities, which can include overseeing campus initiatives, representing a team in committees or coalitions, or leadership in professional organizations
- Collaboration and coalition building
- Social justice and cultural humility practices
- Collaboration with and incorporation of underrepresented and historically marginalized diverse populations into health promotion processes
- Proficiency in
  - Written, oral, and interpersonal communication
  - Quantitative and qualitative research (e.g., research design, survey development, environmental assessment, focus group design and facilitation, data analysis and interpretation, etc.)
  - Handling multiple projects simultaneously, managing time efficiently, and prioritizing tasks
  - Analyzing health-related professional literature relevant to college students and assessing its applicability and utility for effectiveness on a particular campus
  - Gathering, compiling, and synthesizing information to develop health promotion initiatives and educational materials for specific populations of students including students involved in Greek Life; athletes; first generation students; international students; students who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color, transfer student's; non-residential students; non-traditional students; and students with economic hardship
  - Supervisory skills to effectively manage student employees or volunteers

**Minimum experience:**

- Master's degree in public health, health promotion, health education, or related field
- Three years of progressive responsibility in health promotion or related field
- Demonstrated experience with cultural humility and social justice practices

**Preferred experience:**

- Five or more years of progressive responsibility in health promotion or related field
- Experience supervising student staff, graduate students, or other professionals
- Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) or Certified in Public Health (CPH) or CHES/CPH eligible
- Participation in research and professional writing, publications, and/or presentations
- Active participation in professional organizations in a leadership capacity
- Experience working in higher education
- Experience conducting literature reviews, needs assessments, and program evaluations; experience interpreting findings and developing plans to programmatically and strategically respond to the findings
- Experience working on coalitions or collaborating with individuals and organizations

## ***Office of One***

**Position Summary:** This position works with campus administrators to provide leadership and expertise in public health and health promotion with the aim to enhance overall student well-being and success. This position will implement a comprehensive health promotion program that prioritizes population-level initiatives that create healthy environments.

### **Job Responsibilities:**

- Oversees the planning, implementation, and evaluation of theory-based and evidence-informed health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services
- Engages in or leads coalition building with key stakeholders on and off campus to develop a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to health for students
- Practices cultural humility and incorporates social justice concepts and principles into health promotion processes
- Supervises undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or administrative staff
- Develops reports and proposals; presents to colleagues and upper-level administration
- Responsible for the development and implementation of evidence-based health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services based on campus needs and priorities
- Maintains and cultivates a collaborative relationship with appropriate departments and offices across campus
- Develops, implements, and advocates for campus policies that advance and promote health and well-being
- Provides leadership and guidance on health promotion processes
- Responsible for the development and implementation of campus-wide assessments to determine health needs, assets, and priorities
- Conducts evaluation of health initiatives and population-level strategies to assess shifts in behavior change or health outcomes
- Actively participates in professional organizations in a leadership capacity. Examples can include presenting at regional and national conferences, serving on committees including leadership roles, mentoring students or staff, and producing publications
- Leads strategic planning efforts for health promotion processes at the institution

### **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Demonstrated knowledge of how to:
  - Incorporate health promotion in the context of higher education
  - Develop and implement environmental and policy change activities and strategies
  - Design and implement health promotion programs on a variety of key health issues based on needs assessment results
- Demonstrated application of:
  - ACHA Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education (SPHPHE) and other relevant campus resources
  - Student development and learning theories and models
  - Health promotion, behavior change, and population-based theories and models
  - Evidence-informed health promotion programs/initiatives
  - Fundamental principles of organizational development, environmental management, and cultural change
  - Evidence-informed health promotion programs/initiatives
  - Strategic planning processes

- Leadership abilities, which can include overseeing campus initiatives, representing a team in committees or coalitions, or leadership in professional organizations
- Collaboration and coalition building
- Social justice and cultural humility practices
- Collaboration with and incorporation of underrepresented and historically marginalized diverse populations into health promotion processes
- Proficiency in:
  - Written, oral, and interpersonal communication
  - Quantitative and qualitative research (e.g., research design, survey development, environmental assessment, focus group design and facilitation, data analysis and interpretation, etc.)
  - Handling multiple projects simultaneously, managing time efficiently, and prioritizing tasks
  - Analyzing health-related professional literature relevant to college students and assessing its applicability and utility for effectiveness on a particular campus
  - Gathering, compiling, and synthesizing information to develop health promotion initiatives and educational materials for specific populations of students including students involved in Greek letter organizations (sorority, fraternity, identity, academic); athletes; first generation students; international students; students who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color; transfer students; non-residential students; non-traditional students; and students with economic hardship
  - Supervisory skills to effectively manage student employees, graduate students, or volunteers

**Minimum experience:**

- Master's degree in public health, health promotion, health education, or related field.
- Three years of experience in health promotion or related field.
- Demonstrated experience with cultural humility and social justice practices.

**Preferred experience:**

- Five or more years of progressive responsibility in health promotion or related field.
- Experience supervising student staff, graduate students, or other professionals.
- Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) or Certified in Public Health (CPH) or CHES/CPH eligible.
- Participation in research and professional writing, publications, and/or presentations
- Active participation in professional organizations in a leadership capacity
- Experience working in higher education
- Experience conducting literature reviews, needs assessments, and program evaluations; experience interpreting findings and developing plans to programmatically and strategically respond to the findings
- Experience with supervision of students, volunteers, or staff
- Experience working on coalitions or collaborating with individuals and organizations

## **Director**

**Position Summary:** the director provides leadership and expertise in public health and health promotion, leading and developing a team that enhances overall student well-being and success. This position will lead the implementation of a comprehensive health promotion program that prioritizes population-level initiatives that create healthy environments.

### **Job Responsibilities:**

- Supervises the planning, implementation, and evaluation of theory-based and evidence-informed health promotion strategies, policies, programs, and services based on campus needs and priorities
- Engages in or leads coalition building with key stakeholders on and off campus to develop a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to health for students
- Practices cultural humility and incorporates social justice concepts and principles into health promotion strategy
- Supervises professional staff; supervision and development for staff, assesses progress on assignments; evaluates staff performance; develops professional and personal goals with staff.
- Provides leadership and guidance to health promotion team including vision, mission, goals, policies, and procedures of the department
- Advocates for health promotion processes with leadership and upper-level administration
- Establishes and maintains a collaborative relationship with departments and offices across campus
- Develops, implements, and advocates for campus policies that advance and promote health and well-being
- Supervises the development and implementation of campus-wide assessments to determine health needs, assets, and priorities
- Prioritizes comprehensive evaluation of health initiatives and population-level strategies to assess shifts in behavior change or health outcomes
- Supports and guides the health promotion team to actively participate in professional organizations; examples can include serving in leadership roles, presenting at regional and national conferences, serving on committees, and producing publications
- Leads health promotion strategic planning processes at the institution; effectively integrates health promotion processes, strategies, and goals into division-wide and campus-wide strategic plans

### **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Demonstrated knowledge of:
  - Higher education structure and policies
- Demonstrated application of:
  - Design and implementation of health promotion programs on a variety of key health issues based on needs assessment results
  - Student development and learning theories and models
  - Principles of organizational development, environmental management, and cultural change
  - Collaboration with and incorporation of underrepresented and historically marginalized diverse populations into health promotion processes
- Demonstrated skills in:
  - Applying the ACHA Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education (SPHPHE) and other relevant campus resources to health promotion work
  - Written, oral, and interpersonal communication
  - Quantitative and qualitative research (e.g., research design, survey development, environmental assessment, focus group design and facilitation, data analysis and interpretation, etc.)

- Leading multiple projects simultaneously, managing time efficiently, prioritizing tasks, and delegating projects
- Analyzing health-related professional literature relevant to college students and assessing its applicability and utility for effectiveness on a particular campus
- Gathering, compiling, and synthesizing information to develop health promotion initiatives and educational materials for specific populations of students including students involved in Greek Life; athletes; first generation students; international students; students who identify as Black, Brown, Indigenous, and People of Color; transfer students; non-residential students; non-traditional students; and students with economic hardship
- Effective management and supervision of professional staff including evaluation, goal setting, and providing professional development opportunities for staff
- Health promotion, behavior change, and population-based theories and models
- Guiding a team to develop evidence-informed health promotion programs/initiatives that meet the needs of a campus population
- Leading strategic planning processes
- Leadership abilities, which can include overseeing campus initiatives, representing health promotion team in committees or coalitions, or leadership in professional organizations
- Relationship building and collaboration and coalition building
- Incorporating health promotion processes in the context of higher education
- Environmental policy change activities and strategies
- Leadership and guidance for the health promotion team including vision, mission, goals, policies, and procedures of the department
- Team building and conflict resolution
- Social justice, inclusion, health equity, and culturally humble practices

**Minimum experience:**

- Master's degree in public health, health promotion, health education, or related field
- Five years of progressive responsibility in health promotion or related field
- Demonstrated experience with cultural humility and social justice practices
- Supervision or mentorship of a team or individuals

**Preferred experience:**

- Seven or more years of progressive responsibility in health promotion or related field
- Two years of mentorship or supervising professional staff  
Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) or Certified in Public Health (CPH) or (M)CHES/CPH eligible
- Participation in research and professional writing, publications, and/or presentations
- Active participation in professional organizations in a leadership capacity
- 2-4 years of experience working in higher education
- Actively participates in professional organizations in a leadership capacity; examples can include presenting at regional and national conferences, serving on committees, and producing publications
- Experience conducting literature reviews, needs assessments, and program evaluations; experience interpreting findings and developing plans to programmatically and strategically respond to the findings
- Experience leading coalitions or collaborating with individuals and organizations
- Doctoral degree in public health, education, or related field

## **Appendix C: Interview Questions**

### **Using this Resource**

The interview questions outlined in this resource are intended to provide a broad overview of the types of questions to ask a candidate based on the skills or information needed to make final hiring decisions. Consider the responsibilities of the position and what questions will elicit a response that will help the interviewers gauge the candidate's ability to fulfill those responsibilities. This list is not comprehensive; therefore, hiring managers and search committee members should determine which questions to ask to identify the most experienced candidates. Depending on the position responsibilities, it might be necessary to ask more specific questions, particularly for topic-specific positions.

### **Selecting Questions and Evaluating Responses**

When selecting interview questions, the hiring manager and search committee members should also consider the types of questions asked at each step of the interview process. If the candidate goes through a phone, virtual, and in-person interview, then the initial interviews may focus on questions that provide a broader understanding of their experience to help screen applicants and identify those to invite to campus. The in-person questions may then focus on asking more in-depth questions about specific scenarios. It is also important to consider which questions to repeat at different interview stages as it might indicate to the candidate that it is important, and it allows all those involved in the interview process to hear the candidate's response. When choosing questions, it is important to review HR policies on what questions are legal and appropriate to ask.

As hiring managers and search committee members select the interview questions, it is also important to think about how to evaluate the responses to each question. Questions to consider include: Is there an ideal response? Does the response provide insight about the candidate's thought process or work style? What processes will help reduce bias when evaluating the response? How will the response to the question inform whether or not the candidate is considered for the position? Sometimes, departmental "fit" is a factor used to evaluate a candidate. This term has been used to identify individuals who share similar views, work styles, or perspectives to current team members and often serves as a way to exclude candidates. Instead, think about how the candidate will complement the rest of the team and how the existing environment and team can accommodate the individual.

### **Question Categories**

#### **Leadership:**

- Describe your leadership style. What components of your leadership are most essential, regardless of what team you are leading?
- Describe a time when you had to make a difficult decision that impacted other people. How did you deliver this information to the impacted people? Is there anything you would change about this process?
- Take us through your process for a time when you made a difficult decision? Who and how did you involve others?
- What is your vision for the department/institution?
- Describe a time when you had to advocate for resources.

#### **Supervision:**

- What do you need from your supervisor to be successful? What attributes in a supervisor do you look for?
- Describe a time when you felt supported by your supervisor. What about their approach contributed to your success?
- How do you supervise students/professionals to help them to be successful? As a supervisor, how do you help students/professionals be successful?
- Describe your ideal work environment.
- How do you communicate your expectations to those you supervise?



## **Skills**

- Health Promotion
  - Give an example of a comprehensive health promotion multi-level strategy that you have been involved with.
- Transferrable Skills
  - How would you apply the skills that you have acquired to this position?
  - What do you think you might need in order to fully acclimate to this position? What is your strategy to meet those needs and what can we provide?
- Strategic Planning and Goal Setting
  - Who and how do you involve others in developing a departmental strategic plan?
  - What is your approach to strategic planning? Who is involved? How do you measure whether or not it was successful?
  - How do you measure success in your work?
- Evidence-Informed
  - What is the importance of the phrase ‘evidence-informed’ for health promotion work?
  - Give an example of how you have (or how you would) built an evidence-informed health promotion strategy.
  - What sources of evidence have (or would) you use to inform your work within the field?
- Theories and Frameworks
  - Provide an example of a time when you have used theories or frameworks to guide your work?
  - How do you use theoretical, conceptual frameworks and lived experiences of self or others to build health promotion strategies?
- Communication/Intrapersonal
  - Please provide an example of a time when you made a mistake and how you took responsibility for it. How would you like for someone to take responsibility when they make a mistake that impacts you?
  - What are your professional goals and how does this position assist you in meeting them?
  - Describe your communication style.
- Collaboration/Interpersonal
  - How do you handle conflict? Can you please provide an example of a time you had conflict within the workplace and how you addressed or handled it?
  - Describe your experience building coalitions or working collaboratively with groups of people. What were the most important elements for success?
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
  - How would you advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion with colleagues who don’t understand its importance?
  - Tell me about a time when you advocated for diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.
  - How have you incorporated the viewpoints of underrepresented and historically marginalized populations in your work? Please provide an example.
  - How will you contribute to the institution’s efforts to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in a meaningful way? How have you approached this in your current (or last) job?

*For additional DEI questions please see [https://www.cobleskill.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/pdf/DEI\\_Interview\\_Questions.pdf](https://www.cobleskill.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/pdf/DEI_Interview_Questions.pdf).*

## **Glossary**

**Applicant:** Person who submits application materials for an open position.

**Campus community:** Students, staff, faculty, alumni, city/town community members, and others who learn, work, and contribute to the goals of an institution of higher education.

**Candidate:** Person being considered for an open position from the broader applicant pool. Typically, this person has made it through the initial screening stage prescribed by the institution's selection process.

**Environmental/Population-level approach:** An approach that focuses on changing organizations, policies, laws, and power structures. The approach's priority is not directly on individuals but on the systems that impact health. This could include policies that restrict behaviors that are detrimental to health or divert resources to establish practices to enhance health and well-being (McLeroy, Steckler, & Bibeau, 1988).

**Equity:** The process of removing avoidable barriers to someone achieving their potential. Some of these could include, but are not limited to, social, economic, demographic, cultural or geographic barriers (WHO, n.d.).

**Generalist:** As opposed to an individual who focuses on a specific health topic/issue/skill, a person who is a generalist has broad knowledge about health and well-being among university populations and has the requisite skills to understand the root contributors to those health issues, their interconnections, approaches to designing interventions and programs, and effectively evaluating those programs to facilitate ongoing improvement.

**Heteronormative:** "The assumption that heterosexuality is the standard for defining normal sexual behavior and that male–female differences and gender roles are the natural and immutable essentials in normal human relations. According to some social theorists, this assumption is fundamentally embedded in, and legitimizes, social and legal institutions that devalue, marginalize, and discriminate against people who deviate from its normative principle (e.g., gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgendered persons)" (American Psychological Association, 2020).

**Hiring manager:** Person within an organization responsible for hiring an individual to fill an open position. While there may be several individuals involved (e.g., search committee members, stakeholders, etc.), the hiring manager typically has the final say in who is selected to fill a position and often is either the successful candidate's supervisor or the department head in which the successful candidate will work.

**Implicit bias:** "Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves" (Staats, 2013).

**Inclusion/Inclusive:** "Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power" (Racial Equality Tools, n.d.).

**Individual level approach:** An approach that focuses on changes in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals. This level targets individuals, alone or as part of a family, class, or small social group (McLeroy, Steckler, & Bibeau, 1988).

**Marginalized:** Based on the definition from the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (n.d.), "marginalized populations are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions."

**Oppression/Systemic oppression:** "Oppression refers to a combination of prejudice and institutional power that creates a system that regularly and severely discriminates against some groups and benefits other groups... 'systems of oppression' helps us better identify inequity by calling attention to the historical and organized patterns of mistreatment" (Smithsonian, n.d.).

**Tokenism:** A symbolic or performative practice of recruiting or extending opportunities to a small number of underrepresented individuals to give a superficial appearance of equality or forced diversity. It is a practice that is both harmful to individuals and organizations in that it conceals lack of progress, sets the conditions to maintain the status quo, and negatively affects mental health among marginalized (Wijaya, 2020).

**Topic/Skill-focused:** A position that is focused on a specific health topic/issue or skill set. Similar to a generalist, this position also has the requisite skills to understand the root contributors to a specific health issue, approaches to designing interventions and programs, and effectively evaluating those programs to facilitate ongoing improvement.

**Tuition remission:** Tuition remission, sometimes also referred to as a tuition waiver, tuition reimbursement, or tuition reduction, is a program that provides employees with an opportunity to take classes at an institution with fully or partially waived tuition. Institutions may have different criteria for who qualifies for tuition remission and how much of the tuition is waived. Tuition remission is sometimes offered for employees, dependents, and spouses. Employees still may need to pay fees.

**Underrepresented:** People who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination This is revealed by an imbalance in the representation of different groups in common pursuits such as education, jobs, and housing, resulting in marginalization for some groups and individuals and not for others, relative to the number of individuals who are members of the population involved (Emory University, n.d.).

**Unions:** “A labor union is an organization that acts as an intermediary between its members and the business that employs them. The main purpose of labor unions is to give workers the power to negotiate for more favorable working conditions and other benefits through collective bargaining” (Utility Workers of America, n.d.)

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