Competency Based Staffing and Staffing Principles
For the University of Maine System
Administrative Review Implementations

Many new and revised positions will need to be filled as the University of Maine System transforms administrative functions to meet the expectations set forth in the Board of Trustees January 2012 Goals and Actions. Successful implementation of resulting administrative redesigns and reorganizations will depend in large part on best-practice job design and selection of individuals who are well-suited to helping us achieve the goals of streamlined and efficient services, service excellence, and cost savings.

This document describes the competency based approach to filling positions and the principles that will guide selection of individuals to fill these positions, while at the same time minimizing disruption to current employees as much as possible.

What is Competency Based Hiring?

Competency based hiring is selecting employees for positions based on the knowledge, skills, and competencies that are associated with outstanding performance. Competencies are the behavioral characteristics, personal attributes, and individual aptitudes required to successfully perform in a position. Determining and assessing core competencies needed for successful performance is a critical addition to traditional approaches to filling positions that emphasize identifying candidates who demonstrated through prior experience and credentials the skills and technical qualifications but not necessarily the required behavioral characteristics to be successful.

Competencies for new and substantially revised administrative review impacted positions will be identified by the applicable department with the assistance of Human Resources and may include both position-specific and organizational competencies.

Competency Based Filling of Positions

UMS administrative leaders are committed to competency based filling of positions and to providing opportunities for continued employment and growth of current employees. The following general staffing principles will apply to filling positions in the new organizations:

1. The goal is to minimize disruption to current employees to the extent possible and to give interested employees opportunities to be considered when new positions will be filled through a search process.
2. Where new positions are determined to be identical or very similar to current positions and no positions will be eliminated, employees will be transferred to the new position without having to go through a competitive search, as long as they have the necessary competencies and/or can demonstrate that they will be able to develop competency in areas where there are current gaps (as determined by the appropriate supervisor).

3. Where administrators conclude that positions are new or substantially changed, they will develop position descriptions and competency requirements (with internal or external consultation) to ensure that those placed or hired in the positions are well suited to the needs of the position.

4. Assessments of current employees’ competencies will be made by current and new supervisors with the assistance of internal or external consultants as appropriate.

5. The University is committed to developing and educating current employees. Those with a close match to competencies but who may be lacking in some specific area will receive development opportunities and training or education to be able to succeed in new or revised positions.

6. Incumbent employees at all locations will have opportunities to be considered for new positions at any location. For example, if a position at campus/location A will be eliminated and a position will be created at campus/location B, the employee whose position is eliminated as well as other staff in the particular functional area will have the opportunity to apply for the position at campus/location B.

7. Searches for new positions will be limited to current functional area staff when the University determines it is likely there is an adequate pool of qualified applicants. If an internal search is not successful in identifying a well-qualified candidate, external searches will be conducted. When it does not appear likely that there is an adequate pool of well qualified applicants internally, the University will proceed directly with an external search for both internal and external candidates.

8. Searches will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements and University Services search and hiring procedures.