

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

Search Committee Briefing: Implicit Bias, Diversity, and Inclusive Hiring Practices

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Objectives

- Discuss commitment to developing a diverse team and inclusive environment
- Understand bias obstacles inherent in social selection situations
- Discuss best practices for maximizing inclusion and minimizing bias
- Review what it means for your search

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Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of:

• race	• national origin
• color	• citizenship status
• religion	• age
• sex	• disability
• sexual orientation	• genetic information or
• transgender status	• veteran's status
• gender expression	

Source: Board of Trustees Policy 401

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Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action

- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**
 - Prohibits discrimination based on protected groups
- **Affirmative Action (AA)**
 - Additional proactive measures to help ensure equal employment opportunities
 - Good faith efforts to diversity our workforce

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Affirmative Action

As an Affirmative Action employer, we commit to:

- Engage in purposeful workforce planning
- Engage in practices that create and demonstrate our priorities
- Annually establishes goals when number of underrepresented groups are lower than the availability in the labor market



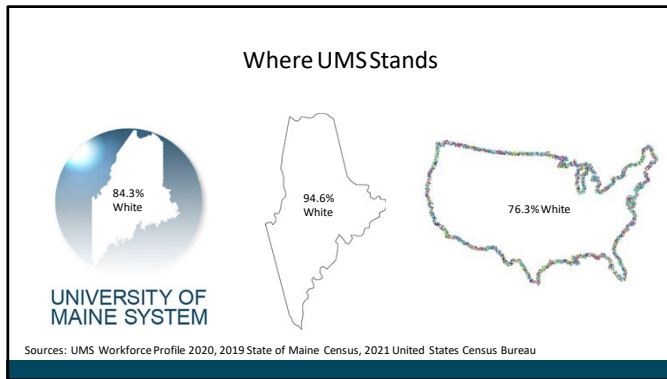
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Affirmative Action

- Not rigid, not quotas
- Good faith effort
- Federal law prohibits preferential selection based on gender or race
- Our current plan identifies gaps in employment of gender, race, disability and veteran status in various departments/job categories

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Implementation

- Invitation to applicants to self-identify when they apply for a position
- EO collects data regarding composition of the applicant pool
- HR Partner can consult and share information about any gaps in recruitment goals vs. actual candidate data in general terms

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Implementation Strategies

- Faculty and staff on search committees can/should call potential candidates and encourage them to apply
What does your network look like?
- Appoint search committees that reflect gender, racial, and other types of diversity
Articulate an individual's value to the committee, avoid tokenism
- Send announcements to HBCUs and other institutions that have a strong history of serving historically underrepresented groups
- Contact individuals who have received significant grants or professional recognition and ask for names of promising diverse scholars

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Ways to
Actively
Recruit:
Generating a
Pool vs.
Tapping a
Pool

- Create a standing committee that identifies women or diverse candidates
- Promote Maine and the university at every opportunity
- Pre-hire connections/relationships = better retention
- Speak with recent hires and see how they were successfully recruited
- Keep a candidate file for future or anticipated openings

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Diversity =

*the presence of
difference*

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The Importance of Being
Authentic



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Diversity Iceberg



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Inclusion

An inclusive institution:

- Involves and empowers its members
- Recognizes the inherent worth of all
- Values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds and ways of living of its members
- Promotes and sustains a sense of belonging



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What factors create an inclusive environment?

- Everyone is treated with respect and dignity –everyone is valued
- Policies regarding equity are in place
- Faculty and staff are representative of local community and welcoming of underrepresented groups
- Institution values inclusion
 - Inclusion is supported and demonstrated by senior administration
 - Institutional barriers to inclusion are identified and dismantled
 - Unnecessary hierarchies are discouraged

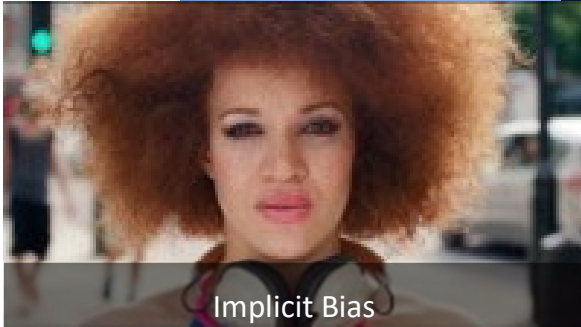
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Why is diversity important?

- Changes in enrollment
- Leads to higher retention rates for faculty, staff and students
- Preparing our students for success in the international world and global economy by developing cultural competence
- Diverse working groups are more productive, creative, and innovative (Herring, 2009)
- Level of critical analysis of decisions and alternatives are higher in groups exposed to minority viewpoints (Sommers et al., 2006; Antonio et al., 2004)
- Groups of diverse problem solvers outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers (Hong & Page, 2004, PNAS).



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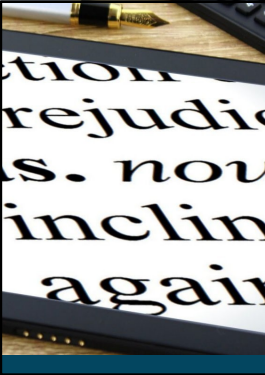
What is implicit bias?

•Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner

•These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control



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Characteristics of Implicit Bias

- Implicit biases are pervasive and robust (Nosek, Smith et al., 2007)
- Everyone processes them, even people who swear to impartiality (Rachinski, Johnson, Wistrich, & Guthrie, 2009)
- Biases do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances that we would endorse (Graham & Lowery, 2004; Greenwald & Kriemon, 2006; Kang et al., 2012)


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Implicit Bias & Identical Resumes

(Tilcsik, 2011)



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Implicit Bias

Individuals who "whiten" resumes get more interviews and are more than twice as likely to get call backs than candidates that reveal their race (Kang, DeCelles, Tilcsik, & Jun, 2016).

Employer callbacks for resumes that were whitened fared much better in the application pile than those that included ethnic information, even though the qualifications listed were identical.

Employers claiming to be pro-diversity discriminated against resumes with racial references just as much as employers who didn't mention diversity at all in their job ads.

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Implicit Bias

Female applicants perceived as mothers were judged significantly less competent and committed, worthy of 7% less starting salary, and were held to more stringent hiring standards, e.g. higher test scores.

Source: Correll, Bernard, Paik (2007),
Am J Sociology



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Implicit Bias

Interviewers' verbal and nonverbal actions may affect the performance of interviewees.

What does your environment say about your department, division or campus?



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Status Quo Bias

The April 2016 Harvard Business Review featured a study of a university's hiring decisions that concluded that where an applicant is the only woman in a pool of finalists, the odds of her being hired were "statistically zero." (Johnson, Hekman & Chan, 2016)

This was consistent regardless of the size of the finalist pool and excluded all searches where there were no women or "minority" applicants.



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Why does being the only woman in a pool of finalists matter?

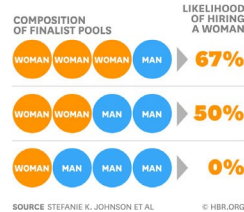
It highlights how different she is from the norm.

Deviating from the norm can be risky for decision makers, as people tend to ostracize people who are different from the group.

Having your differences made salient can also lead to inferences of incompetence.

The Relationship Between Finalist Pools and Actual Hiring Decisions

According to one study of 598 finalists for university teaching positions.



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Implicit & Status Quo Bias

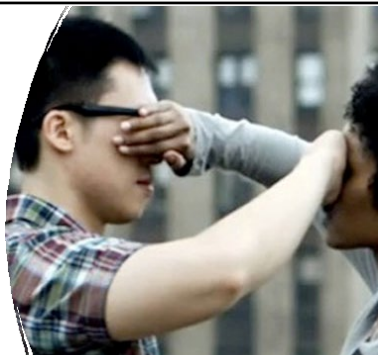
When there were two "minorities" or women in the pool of finalists, the status quo changes, resulting in a significantly increased chance that a "minority" or woman would be hired.

- The odds of hiring a woman were 79.14x greater if there were at least two women in the finalist pool
- The odds of hiring a "minority" were 193.72x greater if there were at least two "minority" candidates

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Combating Bias

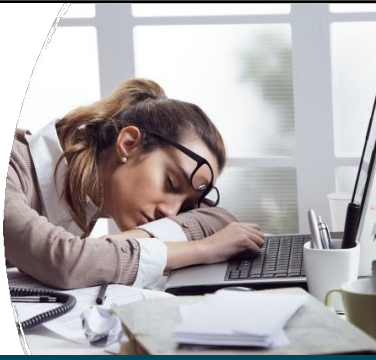
- Implicit biases are malleable and can be unlearned and replaced with new mental associations (Blair, 2002; Blair, Ma, & Lenton, 2002; Dasgupta, 2013)
- Seek out information on implicit bias (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>)
- "I don't see color."- Identify and consciously acknowledge real group and individual differences
- Routinely check thought processes and decisions for bias



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Combating Bias

- Review applications individually - avoid reviewing as a committee as a whole
- Review materials when you are not overly tired or feeling rushed
- Focus on job-related criteria - tendency for bias decreases as more job relevant information is provided



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Practical Tips and Strategies



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Search Committee Responsibilities

- Select job posting locations that maximize outreach to qualified diverse populations
- Make transparent and remind ourselves of natural inclination toward implicit bias
- Be conscious of status quo bias
- Apply evaluation criteria consistently
- Conduct reference checks consistently
- Avoid social media exploration of candidate
- Document all decisions and the job-related reasons for them



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Topic Issues

- Questions that can/cannot be asked
- <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/laws-guidance/employment/pre-employment>
- Important that search committee as well as others who may interact with candidates are familiar with guidelines.

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Maine Human Rights Commission Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide

ANCESTRY / NATIONAL ORIGIN	Whether applicant is a U.S. citizen. Whether applicant is legally eligible to work in or across permanently in the U.S. Language applicant speaks (if job related). Where long applicant has lived in this state or city. List of membership organizations applicant has ever belonged to in the position. U.S. military experience.	Nationality, foreign ancestry, descent, or birthplace of applicant or relatives. Applicant's native or primary language. Have applicant completed the ability to read, write, or speak a foreign language? How long applicant has lived in the U.S.
AGE	Whether applicant is under 18 years of age if so, applicant's age.	Other questions about date of birth or age. Dates of graduation from educational institutions. Questions asked only of a particular age group, e.g., asking only older applicants about health status.
RELIGION	Whether applicant is able to perform the essential functions of the job involving religious requirements, if place of worship, religious beliefs, or provided with reasonable accommodations for religious religious holidays observed. Use of religious institutions.	Whether applicant can work on a particular religious holiday. Religious affiliation of educational institutions.

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RACE		- Race of applicant or relatives. - Complexion or color of skin or eyes.
SEX/PREGNANCY	- Whether applicant has a spouse/significant other/partner that works for employer.	- Whether applicant is pregnant, has children, or plans to have children. - Marital status. - Questions asked only of one sex but not of the other, e.g., asking only women about childcare.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	- Whether applicant has a spouse/significant other/partner that works for employer.	- Whether orientation, gender identity, or gender expression of applicant. - Relationship between household members. - Marital status. - Name of spouse or significant other.
DISABILITY	- Whether applicant is able to perform the essential functions of the job, including attendance requirements, if provided with reasonable accommodations for disability-related reasons. For food handling positions, whether applicant has a listed infectious or communicable disease that is transmitted to others through the handling of food. For food handling positions, whether applicant has a listed infectious or communicable disease that is transmitted to others through the handling of food.	- Whether applicant has or has had any physical or mental impairments, disabilities, or health conditions. - Whether applicant has or has had an alcohol or drug addiction problem. - Whether applicant needs a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the job.

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What if the candidate raises the topic?

Applicants may raise topics that are not appropriate:

Example: Applicant starts talking about family; applicant says it's difficult to get out of house because of children.

- These are not relevant to the hiring decision – allow candidate to talk but do not ask follow-up questions or make comments
- **Do not** include in notes or deliberations
- Suggestions for redirecting the conversation:
 - I'm really interested in learning more about....
 - Let's talk some more about....



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Documentation

- HR will advise you about documentation required during the search process
- Goal of documentation is to establish the committee's consensus about legitimate, job-related, non-discriminatory reasons for selection
- University requires search files to be maintained for three years - search chair's responsibility
- E-mail exchanges are also part of the search file and must be maintained.
- Committee notes should document why an applicant did or did not meet the criteria for the position

REMEMBER: It's not the candidate who gets the job who challenges the search.

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Interview Notes

- Doodling notes and/or snide comments made during any portion of the search become part of the official file and are discoverable.
 - *Examples: Looking to retire, short, husky, bald, tall, slim, blue eyes, or the "Seven Dwarfs"*
- Certain comments can lead a reviewer to wrong impression of the process
 - *Example: Butter knife*
- Consider: "English is their second language, or had heavy accent"
 - *Alternative: "Applicant's oral communication skills were weak and they had difficulty understanding questions."*

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Reference Checks

- May raise prohibited topics.
- Potential to obtain information that is not relevant to the position = should NOT be shared.
- Important to know if there is anyone that the applicant does not want you to speak with.
- Social media/Google may inadvertently obtain information that is not relevant to the review.

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Disability/Accommodation Questions

- Applicant has visible disability and you are not sure if they will need an accommodation - do not ask
- If a candidate discloses a disability or requests an accommodation either in the interview process or in performing the responsibilities of the position—call the Office of Equal Opportunity:
ADA Coordinator, Amanda Paradis,
amanda.paradis@maine.edu, 207-581-1227
- Accommodations should never be a part of the negotiation process, any accommodation will be addressed or handled after the offer



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Resources


- Your campus HR Partner
- Office of Equal Opportunity, 207.581.1226 or equal.opportunity@maine.edu
- Additional resources provided through the Rising Tide Center legacy page: <https://umaine.edu/risingtide> under 'Resources' menu



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MAINE
Faculty Recruitment Handbook
A research-based guide for recruiting excellent faculty

Created in cooperation by the Office of Equal Opportunity, Human Resources, and the Rising Tide Center at the University of Maine

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