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

Welcome & Objectives

- Discuss the importance of developing a diverse and inclusive environment.
- Understand bias obstacles inherent in social selection situations.
- Discuss best practices for maximizing inclusion and minimizing bias.
- Discuss what it means for your search.

Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of:
- race
- color
- religion
- sex
- sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression
- national origin
- citizenship status
- age
- disability
- genetic information or
- veteran’s status
Equal Employment Opportunity vs. 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 recruit people of color, women, veterans, and persons with a disability

Affirmative Action

Affirmative Action Employer:
- More than just "recruiting": TV workforce planning
- Proactive actions to create and demonstrate our priorities
- Annually establishes goals when number of women, minorities, etc. employed (utilization) are lower than availability in all faculty and staff job groups
- Not right, not quotas
- Good faith effort
- Federal law prohibits preferential selection based on gender or race
- Current AA Plan identifies underutilization of women and minorities in various departments/job categories

Where UMS Stands

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<th>Female</th>
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Institutional data as of November 2020
Implementation

- Invitation to applicants to self-identify when they apply for a position
- EC collects data regarding composition of the applicant pool
- Faculty and staff on search committees can hold self-potential candidates and encourage them to apply
- Appoint search committees that reflect gender, racial, and other types of diversity
- Send announcements to HBCUs and other institutions that have a strong history of sending Latinos, Native Americans, other persons of color
- Contact women and persons of color who have received significant grants or professional recognition and ask for names of promising diverse scholars

Ways to Actively Recruit

- Generate a pool vs. tapping a pool
- Create a standing committee that identifies women or minority candidates
- Introduce yourself to graduate students giving presentations — invite them to visit Maine or give them your card
- Establish relationships = better retention
- Speak with diverse recent hires and see how they were successfully recruited
- Keep a future candidate file

Diversity

- Diversity = the presence of difference
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
Inclusive Environment

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
- Institutional values include
  - Inclusion is supported by senior administration
  - Barriers to inclusion are identified and dismantled
  - Unnecessary hierarchies are discouraged

Why is diversity important?

- Changes in enrollment
- Enriches thinking and learning environment
- 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 (Wong, 2006)
- Levels of critical analysis of decisions and alternatives are higher in groups exposed to minority viewpoints (Geen et al., 2008, 2009)
Implicit Bias vs. Stereotypes

- 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.

Implicit Bias

Rooted in the unconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection.

Brian Bond, from Implicit Bias 2007

Implicit Bias

- Implicit biases are pervasive and robust. (Green, Smith et al., 2017)

- Everyone processes them, even people who swear to impartiality.

- Biases do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances that we would endorse. (Green & Libby, 2004; Greenwald & Kranzler, 2008; Kang et al., 2012)
Implicit Bias

- Individuals who "whiten" resumes get more interviews and are more than twice as likely to get callbacks than candidates that reveal their race (Jong, 2016).
- 35% of black applicants received callbacks from "whitened" resumes compared to only 10% with no change.
- 21% of Asian applicants received callbacks from "whitened" resumes compared to only 11.5% with no change.
- 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.

Curriculum Vitae: Biased CVs with gendered names resulted in more recommendations of males for male candidates.

Search committees tend to favor Blas over Asians 2:1 among university psychology professors.

(Examples: H. Jones, B. Smith 1990)
Implicit Bias

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

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 getting hired were "statistically zero."

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

Implicit & Status Quo Bias

The relationship between implicit bias and actual hiring decisions, according to the study of applicants for university teaching positions:

- Being the only woman highlights how different she is from the norm
- Having your differences made salient can also lead to inferences of incompetence
Implicit & Status Quo Bias

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

- The odds of hiring a woman were 78.14x 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

Combating Bias

- Implicit biases are malleable and can be unlearned and replaced with new mental associations (Jas, 2009; Decades, 2002; Decades, 2012)
- Seek out information on implicit bias (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/)
- Gagleitl — Identify and consciously acknowledge real group and individual differences
- Routinely check thought processes and decisions for bias

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
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 candidates
- Document all decisions and the job-related reasons for them

Topic Issues

Questions that cannot be asked:


Important that search committees as well as others who may interact with candidates are familiar with guidelines.

Example: Applicant starts talking about family/Applicant says it's difficult to get out of house because of [FAMILY]

- 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

Maine HRC Pre-Employment Inquiry Guide

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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 qualifications, job-related, non-discriminatory reasons for selection - and why other applicants were not selected.
- University requires search files to be maintained for three years - search chair's responsibility.
- Do not say "English is their second language, or had heavy accent," rather say something like, "applicant's oral communication skills were weak and had difficulty understanding questions."
- Committee notes should document why an applicant did or did not meet the criteria for the position.
- E-mail exchanges are also part of the search file and must be maintained. Care should be taken when sending emails regarding the process and candidates.

Interview Notes

- Doodling notes and/or snide comments made during any portion of the search become part of the official file and are discoverable.
  - Example: Looking them short, husky, bald or fat, slim, blue eyes.
- Certain comments can lead a reviewer to wrong impression of the process.
  - Examples:
    - "young, junior researcher" when intent is "entry level" or "recent graduate"
    - "energetic, vitality, youthful" - better to say "enthusiastic, engaged, interested"
Reference Checks

- May raise prohibited topics.
- Information not relevant to the position should not be shared with the committee.
- Potential to obtain information that is not relevant to the position.
- 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.

Disability/Accommodation Questions

- Applicant has visible disability and you are not sure if they will need an accommodation - do not ask.
- If applicant discloses a disability - do not ask for additional information.
- Applicant requests an accommodation - it may be understated - don’t question.
- Applicant may state they are hard of hearing or has another need - needs accommodation in application process.
- If a candidate requests an accommodation either in the interview process or in performing the responsibilities of the position - call the Office of Equal Opportunity.
- Accommodations should never be a part of the negotiation process, any accommodation will be addressed or handled after the offer.

Resources

- Human Resources Partner, 207.581.5581
- Equal Opportunity Office, 207.581.1290 or equal.opportunity@maine.edu
- Faculty Recruitment Handbook
Additional Resources at RISING TIDE CENTER

Before you participate in a search committee, take time to review the resources linked below to help your department achieve critical diversity and inclusion goals.

RISING: Promoting and Facilitating Faculty Diversity and Excellence – This video, available on YouTube, offers relevant strategies for identifying and overcoming biases that impact faculty search and evaluation processes.

STRIDE: Faculty Recruitment for Diversity and Excellence (PPT)

STRIDE Faculty Search Resources (PDF)

Faculty Selection: Reducing the Impact of Bias at Every Stage (PDF)

ANY QUESTIONS?

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