

Conducting a Diverse Faculty Search

Adapted from the University of Wisconsin, University of Nebraska, & Rice University

"Diversity is not the objective. It is a means to facilitate our achieving the critical objective: innovation" - NSF

1) Why diversify the faculty?

- Students progress by being exposed to a greater diversity of ideas, and by receiving input from individuals like themselves, as well as from individuals that are unlike them. When students are exposed to a diversity of opinions and outlooks, they will be better prepared to succeed in a diverse world with a global economy (Brown, 1998; Collins & Kritsonis, 2006)
- The faculty composition should match the diversity of the student body so that all students are provided with role models, and are instilled with the knowledge that they too can succeed in their career goals. Importantly, the most accurate predictor of subsequent success for female undergraduates is the percentage of women among faculty members at their college (Trower & Chait, 2002). Male students taught and advised by female faculty members are more likely to view women as coequal colleagues
- Women faculty should be at the same proportion as female students in their respective fields to provide advising on career goals and to offer advice on requirements for success in a given field. In some fields, sub-disciplines may be favored by female students over male students. Therefore, the numbers of women faculty in a department must meet the needs of these students as well as students in other sub-disciplines
- The greater the diversity of the faculty, the broader the range of coverage in course offerings. Additionally, students will be exposed to different types of teaching and learning methods. Studies have shown that women use active and collaborative learning techniques more often than men (Umbach, 2006), are more committed to teaching (Fairweather, 1996), and have a greater repertoire of teaching techniques than men (Finkelstein et al., 1998; Harlow, 2003; Pascarella et al., 2001). Additional research found that women faculty interact with students more than their male counterparts, and engage students in higher order cognitive activities more frequently than men (Umbach, 2006)
- Experience with a diverse faculty, who provide a diversity of curricula and teaching methods results in students who are: more complex thinkers, confident in handling cultural differences, and likely to seek to remedy inequities (Hurtado et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1997). Students at the University of Michigan who experienced greater diversity had higher academic confidence, and social skills; and multiple diversity experiences appear to have synergistic effects on the development of self (Nelson Laird, 2005)

2) Diversify the job search criteria

- Develop a broad definition of the position and the desired scholarship, experience, and disciplinary background. Narrowly defined searches may tend to exclude women or minorities because of pipeline issues. Narrowly defined searches may also limit your ability to consider candidates with a different profile who, nonetheless, qualify for your

position. Be clear about what is really “required” and what is “preferred.” If appropriate, use “preferred” instead of “required,” “should” instead of “must,” etc. when describing qualifications and developing criteria.

- Consider including “experience working with/teaching diverse groups/diverse students” in your job qualifications and advertisements

3) Take stock of assumptions about the search

- Previous search committee chairs report that the following assumptions may hamper efforts to recruit a diverse and excellent pool of candidates. Some potential responses include:
 - “We shouldn’t have to convince a person to be a candidate.”
In fact, many of the finalists in searches across campuses—for positions as diverse as assistant professor, provost, and president—had to be convinced to apply. Some candidates may think their credentials don’t fit, that they are too junior, or that they don’t want to live in Maine. Talk to prospective candidates and ask them to let the committee evaluate their credentials. Remind them that without knowing who will be in the pool, you can’t predict how any given candidate will compare and ask them to postpone making judgments themselves until a later time in the process. Once they are in the pool, either side can always decide that the fit isn’t a good one, but if candidates don’t enter the pool, the committee loses the opportunity to consider them. Another argument to use with junior candidates is that the application process will provide valuable experience even if their application is unsuccessful in this search. Remind them that going through the process will make them more comfortable and knowledgeable when the job of their dreams comes along. Individual attention and persistence pay off—there are many examples from other searches of “reluctant” candidates who needed to be coaxed into the pool and turned out to be stellar finalists
 - “Excellent candidates need the same credentials as the person leaving the position.”
There are many examples of highly successful people who have taken nontraditional career routes. Some of our best faculty were recruited when they had less than the typical amount of postdoctoral experience, were employed at teaching colleges, had taken a break from their careers, or were working in the private sector or in government positions. At the national level, it is interesting to note that none of the five female deans of colleges of engineering in the U.S. were department chairs before becoming deans, and they are all highly successful deans. Think outside the box and recruit from unusual sources. You can always eliminate candidates from the pool later.

- “People from Group X don’t make good teachers/administrators/faculty members, etc.”

We all make assumptions about people based on the university granting their degree, the part of the country or world they come from, and their ethnicity or gender. Encourage your committee members to recognize this and avoid making assumptions. Your pool will only be hurt by comments such as, “People from the South never adjust to Maine’s weather,” “We never recruit well from urban areas,” or “There are no women [in a given field].”

4) Diversify the search committee

- Have at least 5 members total
 - Name 1 chair, 1 co-chair (1 of the chairs should ideally be in or have knowledge regarding the research area being targeted)
 - Include 2-5 faculty in, or knowledgeable about, the targeted research area
 - Include at least one non-department member as part of the committee
 - Diversify the committee, to the degree possible, by race, gender, culture, research, teaching, other perspectives, etc. *(Note: women and minorities are often asked to do significantly more service than majority males, so it is important to keep track of their service load, free them from less significant service tasks, and/or compensate them in other ways)*
 - Designate one committee member as the “diversity designee.” This faculty member will monitor the search process for fairness

5) Recruit actively in diverse locations and with diverse methods

- Faculty searches identified as “active” are those in which faculty identify candidates early in their Ph.D. studies and maintain a relationship until these candidates go on the market. This strategy is considered more effective than a “passive” search, where the faculty wait for candidates to apply to an advertised opening

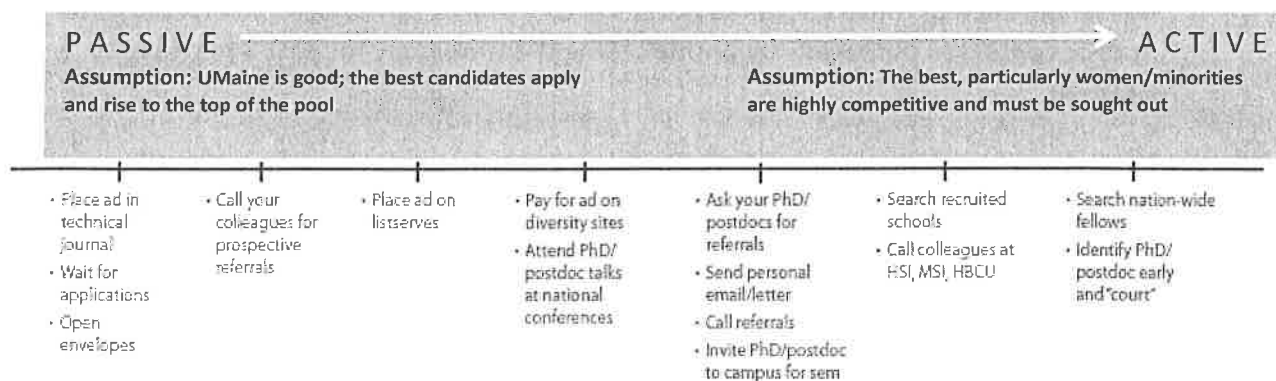


Table 1: Faculty Search Continuum - HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution); MSI (Minority Serving Institution); HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities)

- During a typical search, faculty ask for recommendations from their colleagues at other universities. As these conversations occur, the faculty should specifically ask for female and ethnic minority candidates who may be qualified for the position
 - An especially effective practice to identify candidates is for faculty to attend Ph.D. and postdoctoral scholar presentations at national meetings and continually watch for potential faculty candidates. Early relationships with rising scholars increase the chances that these scholars will apply
 - Be aware of which institutions produce the most PhDs for particular groups and work to create networks with colleagues at these institutions and send job announcements. For example, in 2006, the NSF reported that:
 - African American PhD top-producing institutions include Nova Southeastern University, Howard, University of Michigan, Ohio State, and the University of Maryland
 - Asian American PhD top-producing institutions include UC-Berkeley, UCLA, Stanford, MIT, and Harvard
 - Latino PhD top-producing institutions include the University of Texas at Austin, University of Puerto Rico, UC-Berkeley, Carlos Abizu University, and UCLA
 - Native American PhD top-producing institutions include the Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, University of Oklahoma-Norman, Penn State, UCLA, and the University of Washington

- Other than seeking information from colleagues, you can proactively seek out potential women and ethnic minority candidates by asking UMaine Ph.D. and postdoctoral scholars for names of their friends and colleagues. A departmental staff member can also do an internet search for fellowship holders such as the Mellon Mays Fellows, NSF (National Science Foundation), NIH (National Institutes of Health), GEM (National Consortium for Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering and Science), AGEP (Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate), IGERT (Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship), and the Sloan Foundation. Staff could also search highly sought after schools for postdoctoral scholars and Ph.D. students in your discipline. Each of these identified potential candidates can be sent a personal letter and/or contacted personally by phone asking them to apply for your open faculty position

- Most fields also have resources – list-serves, email groups – that can help you broaden your applicant pool by identifying potential women and ethnic minority candidates. The Office of Equal Opportunity has a list of potential advertising venues: <http://www.umaine.edu/eo/hiring-recruitment/recruiting-resources/>
 The University of Utah also has a helpful list of these organizations at: <http://diversity.utah.edu/faculty/advertising>

- Are there female and/or ethnic minority-focused listservs and organizations where you can post your faculty ad? Female and/or ethnic minority colleagues in your discipline can also lead you to targeted resources through which you can publicize your ad

6) Strive for a diverse pool

- Strive to increase the number of underrepresented women and minorities in your applicant pool. Researchers have shown that gender assumptions are more likely to negatively influence evaluation of women when they represent a small proportion (less than 25%) of the pool of candidates (Heilman, 1980)

7) Have the conversation

- Research has shown that by simply having a conversation about implicit bias and the ways it may manifest itself in evaluation of candidates may ameliorate much of the bias: “Experimental studies show that greater awareness of discrepancies between the ideals of impartiality and actual performance, together with strong internal motivations to respond without prejudice, effectively reduce prejudicial behavior” (Devine et al., 2002)
- Research also shows that all of us - both women and men, no matter how egalitarian or well-intentioned - inadvertently behave in ways that can let implicit biases creep into an evaluation process
- Both men and women have biases developed from their life experiences and cultural histories. Being aware of these biases is the first step to preventing their negative impact on faculty search processes
- A few good resources for starting these conversations with the search committee:
 - genderbiasbingo.com
- Interested in learning about your own implicit biases? Visit Harvard University’s Project Implicit and take the online Implicit Association Test:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo/selectatest.html>

5) Evaluate the candidates

- Before the committee begins receiving applications, the Chair should lead a conversation with the committee members on criteria they want considered when reviewing the applications. It is important the criteria be broad and not just publications, research grants, and letters of recommendation. Other considerations can be: experience with teaching, mentoring graduate and undergraduate students (including mentoring students who have been underrepresented in the discipline), community outreach, fit with the department, self-presentation.

- Developing evaluation criteria prior to evaluating candidates and applying them consistently to all applicants helps to reinforce the fairness of the process and diminish any implicit biases (Fine & Handelsman, 2006). Research shows that differing standards are sometimes used to evaluate male and female applicants and that when criteria are not clearly articulated and agreed upon before reviewing candidates, evaluators may alter or emphasize criteria that favor candidates from well-represented demographic groups (Biernat and Fuegen, 2001; Fine & Handelsman, 2006)

6) Re-examine biases before reading letters of reference

- An analysis of 624 letters of recommendation for 8 assistant professor positions at a U.S. university found that women candidates were repeatedly described with communal terms (e.g., affectionate, warm, kind, nurturing) whereas men candidates were described in more agentic terms (e.g., ambitious, dominant, self-confident). When examined in light of hiring decisions for these positions, a negative relationship between these communal descriptions and hireability ratings was present (Madera et al., 2009).
- A detailed study of letters of recommendation for applicants to a U.S. medical faculty found that letters written for women differed in specific ways from those written for men. The differences encompassed length, absence of expected features of such letters for women, the presence of more statements that were “doubt raisers” (a category that can include “apparent commendation”), and mention of terms related to higher status more frequently for men. Further, the use of possessive phrases in these letters tended to portray women as teachers and students and men as researchers and professionals (Trix & Psenka, 2003)
- In an academic psychology study of curriculum vitae altered to be “male” or “female” applicants, both men and women reviewers were more likely to vote to hire putative male job applicants than putative female job applicants, even with an identical record. Further, the reviewers (both male and female) reported that the male job applicants had adequate qualifications compared the female applicants (Steinpreis et al., 1999)
- An examination of the peer review process for postdoctoral fellowships in Sweden — often noted for its leadership in providing equal opportunities for men and women — found that evaluations of female applicants were harsher than those for male applicants. The study demonstrated that female applicants received lower average scores than male applicants on all criteria. However, examination of the applications indicated that male and female applicants displayed similar records of productivity. The exception to this pattern was for female applicants who had a direct connection to a reviewer, in which case these applicants were rated similar to the male applicants (Wenneras & Wold, 1997)

- Also be cognizant of **letter reader** biases (Did we overrate men and under rate women based on the gender of letter-writers?)
- Look at the candidates' work history: Avoiding weighing "actual work" for women and weighing "potential" for men

7) Choose candidates for campus visit

- Be sure to allocate focused and undistracted time to evaluate each application carefully. Time and attention were shown to be important in a study in which subjects read a depiction of work behavior (designed to be similar) for a male or female police officer and then rated performance (Martell, 1991). The results demonstrated that the subjects whose attention was distracted by additional tasks or who were under time pressure evaluated men more favorably than women. When subjects focused only on the performance ratings without distraction, the sex bias was diminished (Martell, 1991)
- When considering the on-campus interviewees, if at all possible, strive to invite two or more female and/or ethnic minority candidates. Do not assume women and ethnic minorities cannot be convinced to relocate to Maine.

8) Conduct the on-campus interviews

- From the time you call the candidate and invite them to campus, their impression of UMaine becomes personal and etched in their memory. The search committee should consider and plan this highly personal, interactive campus visit, which must respond to the needs and interests of the candidate and highlight the many strengths of UMaine. When scheduling the on-campus visit, be as flexible as possible with the dates to best accommodate the candidate
- Begin by designating a faculty member as the host for the candidate. Have this designated person pick them up at the airport (or arrange for a car), serve as a guide during the visit, and assign individual(s) to (a) host each meal and (b) walk them between individual/group interviews
- Most candidates like to receive an agenda with the names of people they will be meeting. This information allows them time to prepare and feel confident for the visit. Ask them, before you plan the complete agenda, if there are any groups or individuals they would like to meet while on campus. Some candidates would appreciate the opportunity to meet with women, faculty of color, undergraduate and/or graduate students, or others. Before their visit, send the agenda, any requested information, and general campus information to allow time for them to review the materials in advance. Include information such as:
 - Agenda for the visit

- UMaine information
 - Rising Tide Center Work Life policies brochure - these brochures can be used as a way for the candidate to ask questions or seek information on work-life balance
 - Information on relevant UMaine Institutes and Centers (emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities readily available at UMaine – an important piece for women and faculty of color; Hurtado & Sharkness, 2008)
 - Department information
 - Maine and Bangor-area information (arts, drama, sports)
 - Cost of living
- Think strategically about what you send. Don't just send a big packet because you can get the information
- If there is interest from the candidate, you can also provide information on faculty support programs; however, these materials may be more appropriate at the offer stage of this process
 - New Faculty Orientation
 - Unit Mentoring Program
 - Center for Teaching Excellence & Assessment
 - Faculty Development Center
 - Office of Sponsored Programs & Research
 - Tenure Clock Extension Policy
 - Alternatives to Teaching Policy
 - Other Types of Leaves Available (Sabbatical, Medical, Family)
 - Copy of unit promotion and tenure guidelines
 - Before the campus interviews, it is very important for the search committee to develop a list of questions, then divide the questions among the faculty. This strategy ensures that candidates aren't asked the same questions repeatedly and allows people to ask each of the candidates the same questions providing a better basis for comparison. A standard set of questions also provides common information about all the candidates, which makes comparison easier.
 - Structured interviews tend to limit the influence of biases and stereotypes. When looking at ethnic minorities and the impact on how the interview is structured, researchers found more structured interviews limit the influence of biases (Huffcutt & Roth, 1998; King et al., 2006). Some other implicit biases to watch for:
 - We like people who are like us. When people are like us, a similarity effect can be present. The similarity can be in research area, personal interests, common identity in-group cues (same school, same state, same sports fans), or even people who were trained in the same field as us or who do research similar to us. There is also a matching phenomenon – people even date and marry individuals who look similar to themselves

- Verbal and nonverbal cues. If interviewer does a lot of talking and there is less silence, applicant is often liked more (Cascio & Aguinis, 1998). Smiling and nodding, attentiveness, and smaller interpersonal distance all increase comfort and interest, and potentially indirectly increases performance in an interview
 - Nervous interactions. Research indicates that Whites are often nervous in interactions with Blacks. Moreover, there can be a cross-race reliance on nonverbal cues. This research reveals that there is a great deal of mistrust, misperceptions, and miscommunication that continue to occur between the races (Dovidio, 2001). We are more likely to have awkward interpersonal behaviors if there is bias
 - Appearance bias. Appearance bias can also exist, particularly with regard to an individual's perceived attractiveness, weight (obesity), or age. As Cascio and Aguinis (1998) stated: "The interview is sometimes a search for negative information." Appearance bias can be present, albeit unconsciously, as a search for negative information
 - Stereotypes of a "good applicant." We all have stereotypes of what a "good applicant" looks like, how they act, and what sort of background that they have. If the applicant does not fit the stereotype, it can result in an implicit bias against that applicant
 - Contrast effects. If person interviewed before or after is good/bad, it makes a difference. If the first interview is not very strong, the second candidate can look much better in comparison. This is true even if the second candidate would not have been seen as positively if he/she stood alone
 - Shifting standards. Research reveals that stereotypes seem to prompt lower minimum standards for women (i.e., getting them into the pool) but prompt higher confirmatory standards (i.e., actually hiring them) than for men (Biernat & Fuegen, 2001)
- Remind the entire faculty for each visit to NOT ask impermissible questions (see the list at: <http://umaine.edu/hr/files/2012/09/InterviewGuide2.pdf>)
 - It is understandable the faculty want to know about family, spouses, partners, and children, but questions about these topics are inappropriate and potentially illegal. You should not initiate discussion of areas that are otherwise impermissible. But, if the candidate brings up these subjects, feel free to discuss the issues openly with them at that time. Being asked about family issues before an offer is made yields resentment on the part of the candidate, as they may feel these questions are irrelevant to the hiring decision and illegal (University of Michigan ADVANCE)

- The campus interview is your opportunity to “put your best foot forward” and leave a lasting impression on the candidates, whether you hire them or not. The interview schedule may include:
 - Department faculty – these can be individual meetings or small group meetings
 - Faculty outside the department who may be doing similar research or with whom the candidate might want to collaborate
 - Other non-departmental faculty members as appropriate
 - Graduate students, post-docs – often as a group
 - Undergraduates – often as a group
 - Meetings that resonate with a candidate’s commitment to diversity, if the candidate wishes

9) Evaluate finalists

- The committee (or full department, if that is how the decision is reached) should meet as soon as possible upon the completion of campus interviews. If the committee decided on a standard set of questions and developed a Rating Sheet, use this information to gauge each candidate’s potential
- If any of the committee members know of an impact from bias that showed up during the campus visit, they should share this information at a minimum with the Committee Chair, and possibly the entire committee

10) Offer the position

- The department chair and search committee chair should decide who will inform the candidates and in what time frame. The department chair should have gathered information during the campus visits to be able to move quickly to finalize the offer package. The department chair should have very clear idea of what the candidate needs to accept the offer, where they are in their search process, and any personal commitments that might influence their decision
- Many young scholars are selecting their first position *for more than the reputation of a university, start up package, and salary*. They are looking at how their entire life fits at UMaine and in Maine, in general
- If the candidate needs partner placement, the chair can work with their college’s Dean, the Provost, and the Rising Tide Center; this issue is critical for most young academics. As soon as any faculty member recognizes there is a partner involved in the recruitment, they should contact their department chair so there is time to resolve placement and/or services to help place the partner

References

- Biernat, M., & Fuegen, K. (2001). Shifting standards and the evaluation of competence: Complexity in gender-based judgment and decision making. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 707–724.
- Brown, C. (1998). Campus diversity: Presidents as leaders. *College Student Affairs Journal, 18*, 84-94.
- Cascio, W. F., & Aguinis, H. (1998). *Applied psychology in human resource management*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Collins, C. J., & Kritsonis, W. A. (2006). National viewpoint: The importance of hiring a diverse faculty. *Doctoral Forum National Journal for Publishing and Mentoring Doctoral Student Research, 3*(1), 1-7.
- Devine, P., Plant, E., Amodio, D., Harmon-Jones, E., & Vance, S. (2002). The regulation of explicit and implicit race bias: The role of motivations to respond without prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 835-848.
- Dovidio, J. F. (2001). On the nature of contemporary prejudice: The third wave. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 829-849.
- Fairweather, J. S. (1996). *Faculty work and public trust: Restoring the value of teaching and public service in American academic life*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Fine, E., & Handelsman, J. (2006). *Reviewing applicants: Research on bias and assumptions*. University of Wisconsin System. Online: http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/initiatives/hiring/BiasBrochure_2ndEd.pdf
- Finkelstein, M. J., Seal R. K., & Schuster, J. H. (1998). *The new academic generation: A profession in transformation*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harlow, R. (2003). Race doesn't matter, but...:The effect of race on professors' experiences and emotion management in the undergraduate classroom. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 66*, 348-363.
- Heilman, M. E. (1980). The impact of situational factors on personnel decisions concerning women: Varying the sex composition of the applicant pool. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 26*, 386-396.
- Heilman, M. E., Wallen, A. S., Fuchs, D., & Tamkins, M. M. (2004). Penalties for success: Reactions to women who succeed at male gender-typed tasks. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*, 416–427.
- Huffcutt, A. I., & Roth, P. L. (1998). Racial group differences in employment interview evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83*, 179-189.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J., Clayton-Pedersen, A., & Allen, W. (1999). *Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving the climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education*. Washington, DC: George Washington University.
- Hurtado, S., & Sharkness, J. (2008, September/October). Scholarship is changing, and so must tenure review. *Academe Online*.
- King, E. B., Mendoza, S. A., Madera, J. M., Hebl, M. B., & Knight, J. L. (2006). What's in a name? A multiracial investigation of the role of occupational stereotypes in selection decisions. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 36*, 1145-1159.
- Madera, J. M., Hebl, M. R., & Martin, R. C. (2009). Gender and letters of recommendation for academia: Agentic

and communal differences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94, 1591-1599.

Martell, R. (1991). Sex bias at work: The effects of attention and memory demands on performance ratings of men and women. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 21, 1939-1960.

National Science Foundation. (2006). *US doctorates in the 20th century*. Arlington, VA: Author.

Nelson Laird, T. F. (2005). College students' experiences with diversity and their effects on academic self-confidence, social agency, and disposition toward critical thinking. *Research in Higher Education*, 46, 365-387.

Pascarella, E. T., Palmer, B., Moye, M., & Pierson, C. T. (2001) Do diversity experiences influence the development of critical thinking? *Journal of College Student Development*, 42, 257-271.

Smith, D. G., & Associates. (1997) *Diversity works: The emerging picture of how students benefit*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Steinpreis, R., Anders, R., & Ritzke, D. (1999). The impact of gender on the review of the curricula vitae of job applicants and tenure candidates: A national empirical study. *Sex Roles*, 41, 509-528.

Trix, F., & Psenka, C. (2003). Exploring the color of glass: Letters of recommendation for female and male medical faculty. *Discourse & Society* 14, 191-220.

Trower, C. A., & Chait, R. P. (2002). Faculty diversity – too little for too long. *Harvard Magazine*, Mar-Apr, 1-10.

Umbach, P. D. (2006). The contribution of faculty of color to undergraduate education. *Research in Higher Education*, 47, 317-345.

University of Michigan ADVANCE study of the science department. Positive and problematic practices in faculty recruitment. Online: http://www.umich.edu/~advproj/PositiveAndProblematic_RecruitmentPractices.pdf

Wenneras, C., & Wold, A. (1997). Nepotism and sexism in peer review. *Nature*, 387, 341-343.