Faculty Recruitment Workshop for Diversity and Excellence

ADVANCE Program at the University of Michigan
Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence

The Power of Diversity to Enhance Excellence is Recognized at The University of Michigan and Beyond
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STRIDE’s Approach to Faculty Recruitment

- The U-M ADVANCE Program began in 2002 to address faculty diversity and excellence.
- The STRIDE Committee, launched in 2002, has involved dozens of senior faculty members from across campus. Their mission:
  - To examine the research literature, and to think about how it applies to faculty searches;
  - To identify Michigan-specific strategies for effective searches;
  - To communicate these strategies to colleagues on search committees.
STRIDE’s Approach to Faculty Recruitment

- This Faculty Recruitment Workshop: our best ideas for how to recruit for diversity and excellence across every stage in the search process.
- STRIDE has delivered more than 80 campus-wide faculty recruitment workshops to more than 2000 faculty -- an important resource for our campus-wide DEI effort.
- STRIDE materials have been copied by many of our premier competitors in the search for excellent faculty.
- STRIDE members have visited dozens of campuses worldwide to help launch local versions of this approach to recruiting.

STRIDE’s Approach to Recruiting for Diversity and Excellence is Widely Emulated
Changing Faculty Composition

• We are recruiting an increasingly diverse faculty -- but we have more work to do.
  – We’ve made more progress on gender diversity than on racial/ethnic diversity.
  – We are an historically white university, and many of our fields are still dominated by one gender. Where do we want to be in 10 years?
Overview

• Why diversity and excellence go hand-in-hand
• What research can tell us about improving the search process
• How to apply these strategies to stages in the search process
  – Getting great applications from the best applicants
  – Achieving excellence and diversity in the short list
  – Managing the visit
  – Choosing and attracting the candidate
• Conclusion

Why Do We Need to Recruit a Diverse Faculty in Order to Attain Excellence?

• A diverse faculty can provide positive role models and mentors for our diverse student body.

• Pursuing underrepresented diversity provides access to talent we currently lack.

• Socially and intellectually diverse teams make better decisions.
  – Racially diverse juries deliberated more thoughtfully about an African American defendant.
  – Gender-diverse offices in a professional services firm generated more revenue.

  STRIDE Recommended Literature can be accessed via http://advance.umich.edu/stride-literature/

Carrell, Page, & West (2009), Dennehy & Dasgupta (2017), Ellison & Mullin (2014),
Recruiting and Decision-making

• Selecting the right new colleagues is difficult!
  - How do we predict, on the basis of meager evidence, who will contribute the most over 20 or 30 years?
  - How do we compare candidates in very different specialties, or at different stages of their careers?

• Experts are especially subject to fallacies
  - Illusions of validity, skill, and confidence
  - Anchoring/focusing effects
  - The narrative fallacy

• Recruiting matters. We should do it in a scholarly way.

Schemas: One Way to Think Fast

• Schemas are expectations (or stereotypes).
• They allow rapid, but sometimes inaccurate, processing of information.
• They often conflict with consciously held or “explicit” attitudes.
• They can change based on experience and exposure.

The Implicit Association Test:
One way to explore the effects of your own schemas.

Take it at: implicit.harvard.edu

Schemas and Unconscious Biases

- Explicit discrimination can often be recognized, but…

- Research shows that we all – regardless of the social group we belong to – have unconscious biases: we perceive and treat people differently based on social groups they belong to. We invoke different schemas.

- Research also suggests ways to overcome these biases and improve decision making.


What Increases the Use of Schemas?

- Stress from competing tasks
- Time pressure
- Ambiguity/incomplete information

…and schemas can influence decision making.

Schema Example: Race in Hiring

- White applicants receive 50% more callbacks for interviews.
- Black applicants need 8 more years of experience to reach parity.

Application packages differ only in name

- Jamal
- Greg

Similar patterns for other social identity groups

Gender | Immigrant Status | Sexual Orientation


Schema Example: Parental Status in Hiring

When evaluating equally qualified same-gender job applicants...

Mothers...
- were rated as less competent and less committed to paid work than nonmothers.
- were less likely to be recommended for hire, promotion, and management, and were offered lower starting salaries than nonmothers.

Fathers...
- were rated as more committed to paid work than nonfathers.
- were offered higher starting salaries than nonfathers.

Leadership Bias

Gender
- Classic study shows that women at head of table are identified as the leader only ½ as often as men.
- Masculine traits are associated with leadership, and yet women can be penalized for exhibiting them.

Race/ethnicity
- Asian/Asian-Americans (A/AA) are under-represented in leadership positions (including at UM).
- Stereotypes of Asians/Asian-Americans do not match stereotypes of leaders.

Accumulation of Advantage and Disadvantage

- Research reveals biases in evaluation (resume studies) and outcomes (e.g. awards, leadership).
- Because small advantages and disadvantages accrue, they can have significant impacts: “Mountains are molehills piled one on top of the other.” (Valian)
- Search committee members must decide how to weigh indicators that are the result of biased processes.
John and Yamila: Both Assistant Professors at the University of Professorial Dreams

| Teaching I | Assigned to small courses in his specialty. | Assigned to introductory level and required core courses. |
| Teaching II | Commands automatic respect of students; teaching evaluations are great. | Contends with disrespectful students; teaching evaluations are mixed. |
| Service | Appointed to departmental executive committee. | Appointed to many committees |
| Work-life balance | Partner is having a baby! | Having a baby(!) |

Years later…
Successfully promoted to Full Professors…
they achieved equal rank, but not equal standing

“Small” differences in treatment and opportunities accumulate.
Choosing Differently

• What if we could prevent schemas from distorting our evaluation of job-relevant criteria?

Data from 14,000 applicants
- Use of a screen increased the probability that a woman would advance from preliminary rounds by 50%.

Discuss Your Ideas With the Person Next to You

How might schemas or accumulation of advantage/disadvantage influence the search process?

Four Stages of the Search Process:
1. Getting great applications from the best applicants
2. Achieving excellence and diversity on the short list
3. Managing the visit
4. Choosing and attracting the candidate
Stage 1: Getting Great Applications From the Best Applicants and
Stage 2: Achieving Excellence and Diversity on the Short List

Take Continuous Steps to Develop the Applicant Pool

- You can't hire great faculty unless great candidates apply.
- Search is a verb; make your search active.
  - Some departments do continuous searching.
  - Engineering and LSA run NextProf; Ecology and Evolutionary Biology runs an Early Career Scientist Symposium.
  - Your unit can bring early career scholars to campus before you search, e.g. consider incorporating early career scholars in your seminar series.

- Ensure diversity: widen your pool to those thriving at other institutions.
Open Your Search – Define the Search as Broadly as Possible

Philosophy Department: Area of Specialization (AOS): Open. Area of Competence (AOC): Open. The Department is open to the possibility of interdisciplinary appointments.

Physics Department: …considering applications in all areas of physics represented in the department…

- Avoid over-specification; include as many areas as possible.
- Under-represented candidates often work at the intersection of disciplines.
- Use a single search committee for all positions. Practices may need to be modified to handle more applications.

Broadly Defined Searches Have Positive Impacts

"Open [broadly-defined] searches led to both a larger number of applicants AND a more diverse applicant pool. "

Change in outcomes for one UM department

- Female Applicants
- Female Hires
- LRM Hires (Male)

Before Open Searches (AY01 - AY04)

Using Open Searches (AY05 - AY09)
Develop Processes for Person-Specific Hiring

- Person-specific hiring: Consideration of a candidate who did not apply to a posted position. (Examples: some senior hires, dual career partners, special postdoc programs)
- In recent years at UM, the percentages of women and URM faculty hired have increased at the assistant professor level but decreased at the senior level.

- Recommendation: maintain a consistent and sound process.
  - Employ a transparent and standard procedure developed in advance.
  - Consider using a standing committee for initial review.
  - Be sure to discuss: further vetting, visits, standard to be met.
  - Do not allow time pressure to compromise the quality of your evaluation and deliberation.

Univ. Michigan Tenure Track Faculty 2016 Indicator Report.

Clearly Define and Communicate the Application Components

- Don’t rely on candidates’ mentors to explain the application process to them.

- Good, complete information is essential to the conduct of an effective search. Ask for what you need!
  - Provide a template or checklist describing all elements of the application.
  - For each element of application, indicate its intended audience. (This is especially important for broad searches.)
  - Let candidates know what future stages the process might have (e.g. in-person or skype interviews, requests for chapters or papers, teaching demonstration, etc.).
## Diversity Statements

- Diversity statement: opportunity for the applicant to discuss their potential for (or record of) contributing to diversity, equity & inclusion in higher ed (e.g. teaching and mentoring students from diverse backgrounds)
- Could be a separate statement or integrated into existing components
- Feedback from some UM units:
  - Excellent and diverse candidates with significant and broad commitments were identified and hired.
  - Statements raised awareness among search committee and department of the impact of applicant’s work.

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### Stage 1: Getting Great Applications From the Best Applicants

### Stage 2: Achieving Excellence and Diversity In the Applicant Short List
Strive to Mitigate Evaluation Biases

Every committee member should be aware of potential evaluation biases and work to counteract them.

- Discuss the research presented in this workshop.
- Discuss and define evaluation categories and criteria in advance.
- Read candidate dossiers carefully.
- Make **evidence of job-relevant qualifications** central to the candidate deliberations.
- **Avoid global evaluations** and summary rankings: acknowledge uncertainty and use systematic values at each stage.


Use Specific Job-Relevant Criteria that Value Diversity and Excellence at All Stages

Please indicate which of the following are true for you (check all that apply):
- Read candidate’s CV and statements (e.g., teaching)
- Read candidate’s scholarship
- Read candidate’s letters of recommendation
- Met with candidate
- Attended lunch or dinner with candidate
- Other (please explain):

Please rate the candidate on each of the following:
- Potential for (evidence of) scholarly impact in the classroom
- Potential for (evidence of) research productivity
- Potential for (evidence of) research funding
- Potential for (evidence of) collaboration
- Potential for (evidence of) contribution to departmental priorities
- Ability to make positive contribution to department’s climate
- Potential (demonstrated ability) to attract and mentor diverse graduate students
- Potential (demonstrated ability) to teach and mentor diverse undergraduates
- Potential (demonstrated ability) to be a conscientious university community member
- Potential for (evidence of) service to campus community

advance.umich.edu/resources/candidate-evaluation-tool.docx
Pros of letters of recommendation

- can point out strengths of candidate
- can identify candidate's role in shaping the direction of the project, identifying and working with collaborators, etc.
- can identify candidate accomplishments that do not easily fit on a CV (e.g. wrote key part of a successful proposal that the advisor submitted)

Cons of letters of recommendation

- letter writer's biases color what is (or is not) written
- may spend time on information that is irrelevant to the job and potentially harmful to the candidate
- sometimes are partly written by the candidates themselves

Consider Carefully How Letters of Recommendation Influence Your Decisions

Brief Exercise – Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are often considered a useful measure of a candidate's abilities and potential as assessed by people who know them best. Thinking about the qualities you would like to see in a candidate for an open position in your unit, circle the top 3 words/phrases that you would find most compelling/important in a letter of recommendation:

- hard-working
- outstanding
- pays attention to detail
- ground-breaking
- nice
- conscientious
- genius
- good colleague
- brilliant
- superstar
- excellent
- kind
- balances work and family
- grit
- creative
- perseverance
Schemas and Letters

Letters for men:
- Longer
- Repetition of standout adjectives (outstanding, excellent, etc.)
- More references to CV, publications, patients, colleagues

Letters for Whites:
- Standout adjectives

Letters for women:
- Shorter
- Use of “grindstone” adjectives (conscientious, meticulous, hard-working)
- More references to personal life
- More “doubt raisers” (hedges, faint praise, and irrelevancies)
  - “She is close to my wife”

Letters for Blacks:
- (mere) competence


U-M Examples

- Repeated standout adjectives: “He is an outstanding researcher…; outstanding teacher…; outstanding colleague.”
- Grindstone adjectives: “She is meticulous and conscientious as a mentor and scholar.”
- Hedges: “Of the three Indian ladies we have here this year, she is perhaps the best.”
- Faint Praise: “My overall impression is that when [she] is motivated she brings enormous talent and energy and is very productive.”
- Irrelevancies: “…an Afghan American and a practicing Muslim woman who wears a veil covering her head but not face.”
- Personal Life: “[She] is also a devoted wife and mother of two children who manages these responsibilities efficiently, so that she can achieve the scholarship she desires.”
In one study, a male instructor gave identical guest lectures to 8 sections of a communication course.

- In half of the sections, he referred to his partner as “Jennifer” and in other half as “Jason.”
- The “straight” instructor received 22% more positive comments than the “gay” instructor.
- The “gay” instructor received five times as many critical comments as the “straight” instructor.

Instructors who are members of minority groups may be perceived as less credible.

U-M ADVANCE study (2015) found URM faculty (especially women) reported more instances of students: expressing anger, showing disrespect, and challenging their expertise in and outside of the classroom.

“In a sense, I lack a kind of authority. There are certain students that I have to prove myself to. There are students who I think are not prepared to accept me as an authority on the subject matter, whether it’s because of my race or my politics.”

African American male professor

“...the first thing is to set the tone in the first class session that you are in charge. Don’t ever let that slip, because the moment you do, because you are a person of color, you will never regain that.”

African American female professor

Assessing the Teaching Record

• Don’t just skim!
• Track trajectories, evidence of reflection about pedagogy, curricular innovation, commitment to engage students of diverse backgrounds and a variety of levels
• Ask: how can this candidate broaden and reinforce your unit’s teaching mission?
Stage 3: Managing the Visit and
Stage 4: Making the Decision

We Want to See Job Candidates Show Us Their Very Best…

World records are not set in pools full of ice cold water nor on tracks filled with potholes. We should create an environment which elicits the best performance from all candidates.
Provide a Welcoming Environment

- Provide information well ahead of the visit regarding schedule, expectations, audience, Q&A culture, etc.
- Anticipate that the candidate may have particular needs around the visit (accessibility, diet, etc).
- Manage the visit – identify a host who can set the proper tone for each activity or event.
- Treat all applicants as valuable scholars and educators, not representatives of a social group.
- Try to avoid or mitigate the effects of solo status.

Encourage Circumstances That Will Allow You to See the Candidate at Their Best

- Ensure that all candidates meet a diverse set of people so that they are more likely to meet someone like them. Consider including graduate and undergraduate students.
- Ask the candidate whom s/he would like to meet.
- Provide a thoughtful introduction at the seminar, stressing candidate’s expertise. Work to maximize attendance.
- Give the candidate ample time to discuss past accomplishments and future vision.
- Consider altering undesirable cues in the environment.

Identify and Minimize Stereotype Threat Triggers

- Stereotype threat acts when a performer is at risk of confirming negative schemas: **Worry consumes cognitive resources.**

- Many studies show that stereotype threat causes underperformance.

- Removing threat reliably reveals true ability.

Stereotype Threats are Contingent: Different Environments Elicit Different Performances

- Questionnaire given before test “primes” for a particular identity.

- Greater effect on those who care the most.

Aronson et al. (1999), Keller (2007), Shih et al. (1999).
Show off Your Department as It Is or You Would Like It to Be, Not as It Once Was

Who belongs here?

Tell All Candidates About Dual-Career Support and Family-Friendly Policies

- Plan ahead: your unit should provide an information packet, detailing U-M and School/College policies, to all candidates.
- Be aware that dual-career support from the Provost’s Office is available to domestic partners of faculty recruits regardless of marital status or sexual identity.
- Department Chairs and Associate Deans request assistance through their Deans as part of the recruiting process.
- Support for dual careers enhances both recruitment and retention of all faculty.
Respect Candidate Privacy, and Consider Only Job-Relevant Criteria

- Interviews should aim to evaluate qualifications that are relevant to a faculty position – questions about matters that are not job-relevant (e.g., family status, sexual orientation) must not be asked by the search committee;

- Such questions are also often illegal: a chart of appropriate and inappropriate questions is available in your Handbook for Faculty Searches and Hiring;

- Exploring non-job-relevant criteria will confound your evaluation, and is also likely to drive away the candidate.

The Unintended Consequences of Personal Questions

Scenarios that follow are inspired by actual situations

ADVANCE interview study of faculty who turned down offers.
The university and my department are really supportive of dual careers. This is a friendly department where everyone helps one another out. U-M and Ann Arbor are so family friendly.

Do you have children or a husband who will be coming with you?

The Candidate Thinks…

“I am in the process of getting divorced from my wife.”
“I don’t have children, though I would like to, and I am not going to tell him that.”
“A senior male asked me if I was going to have children. Just like that. I said what I was trained to say: No.”

No.
I want her to know that we are accepting in our department and we’ve made a strong commitment to diversity.

Your analysis of racial discrimination in higher education was very interesting. It made me wonder, where are you from?

Why is he asking me where I am from? Does he think I am not a U.S. citizen? I feel like I am being told I don’t belong here.

I currently live in Los Angeles.
Stage 3: Managing the Visit and
Stage 4: Making the Decision

Gather Input Promptly

• Talks and interviews provide important evidence for making your decision.

• Without some care, it is easy to lose much of what you learn: details fade fast!

• We encourage prompt use of candidate evaluation tools after each visit.

• Gather and digest feedback throughout the process; use it to enrich and inform deliberations.
Postpone Global Rankings

• Do not request ranked lists.
  – This cements positions before discussion takes place (anchoring or focusing effect).
  – Ranking fulfills the narrative fallacy and discounts intrinsic uncertainty.

• Aim first for an unranked list of candidates you would be most happy to hire.

• Don’t focus on ‘fit’, but rather on fitting the criteria you identified at the start of the search.


Manage Full Faculty Discussions

• Use a transparent process.

• Consider opening with brief presentation from search committee on all candidates.

• Summarize evaluation materials for the faculty.

• Find ways to represent junior faculty views in the discussion.

• Decision making processes vary. Consider revising to improve the outcome.
After an Offer is Made…

After a candidate is chosen, aggressive recruiting can begin.

Now, all factors relevant to attracting the candidate to Ann Arbor and UM should be discussed.

Don’t Forget that Southeast Michigan is More Than Just Ann Arbor
Bottom Line: Unless We Take Action, the Cycle Reproduces Itself

- Schemas and Lack of critical mass
- Evaluation bias
- Lowered success rate
- Accumulation of disadvantage
- Underestimation of ability
- Stereotype threat

A Successful Search is Just the Beginning!

- **What Can We Do? Top Ten Best Practices**
  - **Build a culture of search excellence.** Reflect on your search and provide a report suggesting improved approaches for the future.
  - **Work with colleagues to create a culture in which new faculty will thrive, succeed, and choose to stay at U-M.**
  - **The ADVANCE Program** can help.
    
    [http://advance.umich.edu](http://advance.umich.edu)
    
    Phone: (734) 647-9359
    
    E-mail: advanceprogram@umich.edu