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 2300 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.
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?

Introduction
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.
  – Firms with gender-diverse leadership are more likely to outperform others. The same holds true for ethnic/cultural diversity.

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
  - The narrative fallacy

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

Schemas: One Way to Think Fast

• Schemas are expectations (or stereotypes).
  - Allow rapid, but sometimes inaccurate, processing of information.

• 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.
Schemas: One Way to Think Fast

• Schemas 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

Research 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
• Lack of critical mass (solo status)

…and schemas can influence decision making.

Schema Example: Race and Gender in Hiring

- Male post-doc candidates rated as more competent and hireable than female candidates.
- White and Asian post-doctoral candidates rated as more competent and hireable than Black and Latinx candidates.

Similar patterns for other social identity groups

Immigrant Status

Sexual Orientation

Application packages differ only in name

Wang Li (Lily)
José Rodriguez
Bradley Miller


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.

Correll et al. (2007).
Institutional Bias

We privilege candidates from particular institutions

- Hiring individuals from just a select few institutions is common.
- A recent study shows that scientific productivity of early-career faculty is most closely linked to where they work, not where they trained.


Subfield Bias:
Prestige = “Center” of the Field

What is seen as the center/prestigious?

Single Discipline ↔ Interdisciplinary
Theoretical ↔ Applied
Quantitative ↔ Qualitative
Biological ↔ Behavioral
Paper Archive ↔ Digital Archive
Western World ↔ Eastern World

What’s the “Center” of Your Field?

Use the diagram to place subfields found at the center of your discipline and those at the periphery.

– might consider: methods, topics, time period, geographical area, theoretical vs. applied, sources, etc.

Note the subfields that have more diverse faculty.

Subfield Bias Affects Diversity

- There is often more diversity outside of the center.
- Those working on the margins know the scholarship in the center as well.
- They may advance the field with new directions, approaches and ideas.

The search committee needs to understand that these scholars:

– May publish in specialized journals
– May have few who can evaluate their work (for hire, for tenure/promotion)
– May not see themselves in narrow job ads
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.

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

“Small” differences in treatment and opportunities accumulate.

Discuss Your Ideas With the Person Next to You

How might schemas or accumulation of advantage/disadvantage influence your 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.
  - Bring early career scholars to campus before you search, e.g. in your seminar series.
- Ensure diversity: widen your pool to those thriving at other institutions.
- Don’t rely on candidate’s mentors to explain the application process & components. Explain what you need.

See yellow handout.
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.”
Recruit from Diverse Subfields

- Consider areas that are expanding, attracting junior and more diverse colleagues
  - e.g., sustainability

- UC system examined hiring outcomes
  - At every stage of the process, including offers and acceptances, representation of women and URMs increased when coupling was used in the posting.
  - e.g., “labor and women’s history”

Diversity Statements

- Require diversity statements: opportunity for all applicants to discuss their potential for (or record of) contributing to diversity, equity & inclusion in higher ed. through their scholarship, teaching and/or service (e.g., teaching and mentoring students from diverse backgrounds)

- Could be a separate statement or integrated into existing components

- Feedback from some U-M 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.

Stacy et al. (2018).
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 post-doc programs)

• In recent years at U-M, 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.

Stage 1: Getting Great Applications From the Best Applicants and
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 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.

Stewart & Valian (2018).

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

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

Applications Short List Visit Decision

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

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

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 White applicants:
- Standout adjectives

Letters for Black applicants:
- (mere) competence


U-M Examples

- Hedge and Irrelevancies: "She is a top-notch (and female!) researcher of her age group...[She] is also humble."

- Irrelevancies: "...his dad was a prolific book writer in the [another U-M] department."

- Hedge: "...is at the top of the minority graduate students that I have experienced"

- 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. "

see goldenrod handout
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.**


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**Perceptions of Instructors**

This data was gathered from 14 million reviews on RateMyProfessor.com

You can explore the data on your own at http://benschmidt.org/profGender/

Storage et al. (2016).
Classroom Authority (U-M examples)

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…”

Chesler & Young (2007).

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?

ASA Statement on Student Evaluations of Teaching (2019).
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

- Ask the candidates whom they would like to meet.
- 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.
- 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.

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

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?
What the Candidate Thinks…

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

What the Candidate Says…

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 race and immigration in higher education was very interesting. It made me wonder, where are you from?
What the Candidate Thinks…

Why is he asking me where I am from? OR Does he think I am not American? OR I feel like I am being told I don’t belong here.

What the Candidate Says…

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

- **Aim first** for an unranked list of candidates you would be most happy to hire.
  - Ranking cements positions before discussion takes place ("anchoring" or "focusing" effect).
  - Ranking fulfills the narrative fallacy and discounts intrinsic uncertainty.

- 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 and contextualize 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 U-M 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

![Diagram with relationships between Schemas and Stereotypes, Accumulation of Advantage or Disadvantage, Representation and Status, Evaluation Bias, and Differential Success Rates.]

**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.

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