



Beyond Diversity Committees: Reshaping Procedure and Culture for More Inclusive Hiring

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Agenda

- Background and Context
- Recommendations
- Future Considerations

Background and Context

Background

- Faculty Search Best Practices Task Force started in 2020
- Hiring practices not fully documented in one place
- Working within university's HR structure
- Focus on faculty search process
- General interest in the profession in integrating antiracism in libraries

Task Force Charge

- General recruitment and hiring process
- Compliance with WVU Talent and Culture's HR policies
- Committee composition, expectations, and duties
- Search committee trainings, resources, and guidelines, with attention on implicit bias and equity-minded evaluation
- Communication between search committee and candidates, as well as search committees and external stakeholders (e.g. the Libraries at large)

The Faculty Search Guide

- Iterative document
- Not meant to be prescriptive, but rather a set of recommendations to provide clarity, transparency, and consistency across searches
- Major sections: Before the Search, During the Search, and After the Search
- Describes relevant roles and responsibilities
- Developed sample rubrics and interview questions
- Does not address onboarding

Implementation

- Guide finalized in June 2021
- Presentations to internal stakeholders across time and context
- Target groups
 - Library Leadership Team
 - Library Faculty Assembly
 - Development Day

Working towards removing barriers

- Initially tried to document "best practices"
- Move to iterative documentation
- Acknowledge that people from minoritized groups will encounter barriers; our responsibility is to remove these barriers
- Diversity initiatives in academic libraries cannot be additive

Recommendations

General Recommendations

- Consistency within searches is key
- Critique rather than accept standard practices
- Share the job posting with the search committee early in the process
- Evaluate the candidate's qualification for the job rather than for "good fit" into the profession or organization (Cunningham, Guss, & Stout, 2019)

Recruiting with DEIA in Mind

- Advertise job advertisements more widely and intentionally
- Diversity Statements
- DEIA in listed requirements/ desired qualifications
- Institutional obstacles
- Rubrics and interview questions

The Job Ad

- Avoid ableist and/or gendered language, e.g. "energetic," "expert"
- Requirements
 - Ensure listed requirements are actual requirements, e.g. "Ability to lift 25 lbs."
 - Encourage candidates to apply even if they don't meet all desired qualifications
- List the salary range
- Advertise benefits, working conditions
- Include contact for the search committee chair

Sample Recommendations

Evaluating Candidates

- Avoid disqualifying candidates for clerical errors/misunderstandings
- Create rubrics mapped to criteria/requirements before reviewing applications
- Prioritize interview components that reflect the demands of the position
- Share anonymous evaluation form with presentation attendees
- Avoid vague terms like "fit" or "likeability" (Cunningham, Guss, & Stout, 2019)

Sample Recommendations

Interviews

- Share interview questions ahead of time
- Avoid conflicts with religious holidays such as Ramadan
- Build in breaks throughout the day
- Don't assume everyone can use the stairs; always offer the elevator
- Point out the location of all bathrooms

Sample Recommendations

Future Considerations

Challenges

- HR software
- Implementation across searches
- Getting job postings approved
- Requisite time and labor
- Buy-in and understanding from search committee members

Outcomes

- Used the guide in ~6 searches
- Transferred ownership of the guide to the Dean's Office
- Living document; ongoing assessment
- Process of documentation helped identify inconsistencies
- Positive/constructive feedback from candidates

Future Directions

- The role of social gatherings, e.g. meals
- Inclusive staff hiring processes
- Framing equity-related requirements in job description
- Obtaining meaningful candidate feedback from presentation attendees

Resources

- [ALA ODLOS: Recruiting for Diversity](#)
- [Bias-Free Hiring: Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Gender Decoder](#)
- [Harvard's Implicit Association Test](#)
- [ITHAKA S+R Anti-Racism Talent Management Audit](#)

Questions?

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