Being a Change Agent in the Search Process

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Access
Objectives of this seminar

- Familiarize you with tools and strategies for increasing the diversity of your pool
- Point you to resources you can use to implement these strategies
- Discuss the role of unconscious bias in evaluation of applicants for faculty positions
- Review techniques to reduce bias in self and others
- More in-depth than required online module for all search committee members
Why does diversity matter?

- "...June [2014, will be] the completion of what is likely to be the last school year ever in which a majority of America's K-12 public-school students are white.” ...

- "...as our society diversifies, broadening the circle of opportunity has become a matter not only of equity but also of competitiveness. “ ...

- Today’s minority young people are the nation's future workers, consumers, and taxpayers. If more of them don't obtain the education and training to reach the middle class, the U.S. "will be a poorer and less competitive society," (Rice University sociologist Steven Murdock, former Census Bureau director under George W. Bush)
Why does diversity matter?

- A large and growing body of research provides evidence that a diverse student body, faculty, and staff benefits our teaching and research mission by increasing creativity, innovation, and problem-solving.

- Diverse working groups more productive, creative, and innovative (e.g., Herring, 2009)

- Ideas generated by diverse groups of higher quality (McLeod et al., 1996)

- Level of critical analysis of decisions and alternatives higher in groups exposed to minority viewpoints (e.g., Sommers et al., 2006; Antonio et al., 2004)
Academic Professional

December 2015

Women 70.21%
Men 29.79%

White 87.66%
African American 9.36%
Asian 0.43%
Latino/a 1.70%
Native American 0.85%
Two or More 0.00%
From 2006 to August 2014 companies with 1 or more women on the board of directors have outperformed companies without women on the board by

18% in Europe
20% in the US
55% in Asia

Global performance: companies market cap >USD 10 billion

3000 companies in 40 countries, all sectors

Source: CSG 3000

Campus Commitment to Diversity in Hiring

- The faculty senate has affirmed the importance of diversity as central to the university’s goals (see Campus Diversity Values Statement endorsed by the Faculty Senate)

- Greater faculty and staff diversity identified as key issues in Campus Strategic Plan and Visioning Future Excellence Outcomes Report

- DRIVE (Diversity Realized at Illinois through Visioning Excellence) faculty committee appointed by Chancellor and Provost to promote diverse faculty hiring
Underrepresentation of Women & Minorities

Why are minorities and women underrepresented at Illinois, and in academia more broadly?

- “Supply-side” or pipeline factors result in a smaller pool – often cited as main reason for lack of diversity in hiring

- However, “demand-side” factors such as unconscious bias result in lower preferences for women and minority applicants who do make it into the pool

Demand-side Issues: Unconscious Bias

- Even if we have strong egalitarian values and believe we are not biased we may still behave in discriminatory ways (e.g., Dovidio, 2001)

- Judgments shaped by a lifetime of experience and cultural history despite efforts to be objective about quality of work, etc., leading to unconscious bias (implicit stereotyping)

- Applies to a variety of physical and social characteristics associated with race, gender, age, & ethnicity—even height
Demand-side Issues: Unconscious Bias

When shown photographs of people of the same height, evaluators overestimated men’s heights and underestimated women’s heights, even though a reference point, such as a doorway, was provided (Manis, Biernat, & Nelson, 1991)

Decisions were based on assumptions about average height of men vs women despite evidence that the individual in question did not fit the stereotype
Resumes of applicants with “white-sounding” and “male” names were more likely to be interviewed for open positions than were equally qualified applicants with “African-American-sounding” or “female” names (Bertand & Mullainathan, 2004; Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke, 1999).

When rating the quality of verbal skills as indicated by vocabulary definitions, evaluators rated skills lower if told that an African American provided the definitions than if a White person provided them (Biernat & Manis, 1994).
Biases in the Search Process

- Broad, nationwide sample of biology, chemistry, and physics professors (n=127, men and women) evaluated application materials of an undergraduate science student for a laboratory manager position (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012)

- Same materials, name either male or female

- Participants rated the applicant’s competence, hireability, amount of mentoring they would offer, and likeability
Biases in the Search Process

Moss-Racusin et al., 2012, Science faculty’s subtle gender biases favor male students
Biases in the Search Process

- Evaluators who were busy, distracted by other tasks, and under time pressure gave women lower ratings than men for the same written evaluation of job performance.

- Gender bias decreases when evaluators are able to give more time and attention to their judgments (Deaux & Emswiller, 1974; Isaac, Lee, & Carnes, 2009).

- Educating faculty, chairs, deans, and administration that unconscious bias exists may be one of the most effective methods of ending it (Stout, Staiger, & Jennings, 2007).
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE A CHANGE AGENT IN THE SEARCH PROCESS?

Become an advocate for diversity
Initiate a conversation about diversity at first committee meeting

- Explain role of diversity advocate, which is to:
  - Work to ensure and track diversity of the pool
  - Monitor for bias

- Establish evaluation criteria

- Make sure all committee members know they should get familiar with the Academic Search Process website and review the Guidelines http://diversity.illinois.edu/academicsearch.html
Role of a diversity advocate

- Work to ensure diversity of the applicant pool
- Track diversity of the applicant pool
Strategies to increase diversity of the pool

- Work with HR staff to mail/email job postings to professional journals/associations, web recruitment boards, electronic newsletters, newsgroups that represent diversity, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian serving institutions.

- Engage local and regional networks of people in related fields to see if they know of potential candidates.

- Encourage colleagues who will be attending professional conferences to recruit for the position.

- Ask members of the department to call colleagues at other institutions to see if they know of underrepresented individuals who might be qualified for and interested in the position.
Diversity of the applicant pool can be tracked at any time by contacting the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Access (ODEA) to request a list of TOP eligible candidates.

ODEA will automatically provide a report after the search has closed.

If the pool is insufficient the search may be extended.
### Diversity of the Pool

**Job Org Code:** 433000  
**Auto-Generated Code:** A1600010  
**Job Title:** Test  
**Department:** Test  

#### Summary by Ethnicity

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Role of a diversity advocate

- Discuss, monitor, and point out biases if they emerge in the search process
Strategies to avoid bias

- Ensure consistent evaluation of all applicants by spending sufficient time reviewing each applicant

- Evaluate each candidate’s entire application
  - Avoid depending too heavily on only one element such as letters of recommendation, or the prestige of the degree-granting institution or post-doctoral program
  - Be able to defend every decision for eliminating or advancing a candidate through documentation of decisions

- Ensure careful/fair treatment of all applicants at each stage of the selection process (review, interviews, discussion of finalists)
Strategies to avoid bias

- Question your judgments and decisions and consider whether unintentional bias may have played a role
  
  - Are women or minority applicants subject to higher expectations in areas such as number/quality of publications? Name recognition? Personal acquaintance with well-known colleagues?
  
  - Are applicants who received degrees from institutions other than major research universities being considered? If not, why not?
  
  - Are achievements/contributions attributed to collaborators despite evidence to the contrary in publications and letters?
Examples of “Short Cuts” that contribute to bias

- **Negative Stereotypes**
  - Presumptions of incompetence

- **Positive Stereotypes**
  - Presumptions of competence

- **Snap Judgments**
  - Judgments with insufficient evidence

- **Cloning**
  - Similar attributes/background

- **Euphemized Bias**
  - Visionary
  - Star
  - Committed
  - Focused

Source: Based on materials provided at *Interrupting bias in the faculty search process. ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change*
Deliberations of a Search Committee

- Video: Interrupting Bias (password bias355!)

Source: Based on materials provided at Interrupting bias in the faculty search process. ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change
Evaluation Case Study

- What concerns do you have about this deliberation process?
- Share one bias that you identified in the case study
- Share a suggestion of something a diversity advocate could do in this situation

Source: Based on materials provided at Interrupting bias in the faculty search process. ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change
What else can a diversity advocate do?

- Communicate that diversity is valued in the job announcement and at institutional level

- Learn more about your own unconscious biases (e.g, take the Implicit Attitudes Test), and encourage other faculty to learn about unconscious bias

- Always be recruiting!

Confidentiality
- Access to application materials and other information about screening is limited to Search Committee members, hiring officials, and individuals supporting the search.
- Maintaining confidentiality is a professional courtesy; leaking information to people not involved in the search process may cause the loss of high quality applicants. The identity of all applicants is private except for those who become finalists as defined by law.

Failure to disclose relationship with applicant

Charge to committee from hiring official
(http://diversity.illinois.edu/SupportingDocs/Hiring%20Official%20Charge%20Checklist.pdf)
- Strengths/weaknesses vs. ranked evaluation
- Clear definition of minimum and preferred qualifications
Acknowledgements and Credits

- Special appreciation to WISELI: Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin
  - This presentation drew upon brochures prepared by Eve Fine and Jo Handelsman
    - Benefits and Challenges of Diversity in Academic Settings
    - Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions

- And to the ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, University of Washington for slides/resources
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