

Pathways to an Equitable Search

College of Public Health and Health Professions

University of Florida



College of Public Health and Health Professions Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

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College of Public Health and Health Professions

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

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Pathways to an Equitable Search

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Pathways to an Equitable Search

I. Purpose and Background

The College of Public Health and Health Professions has identified the faculty hiring process as a key area for the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. PPHP's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee conducted a self-assessment of current hiring practices during the Spring semester of 2021 in order to identify key needs. As a result, the Committee has developed guidelines to assist departments in the hiring processes and procedures. These guidelines were developed with the understanding that in addition to the mechanics of the hiring process, we are creating and sustaining an inclusive departmental and college climate that will facilitate hiring and retention.

The goals of this document are to facilitate equitable hiring practices in order to establish a workforce that is culturally diverse and well positioned to research, teach, and provide service to the university, community, and professional societies. This guide meets the following three goals (from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

- Decreasing unconscious bias in the recruitment, selection, and hiring process
- Confirming a culture of diversity and inclusivity for candidates in the process
- Creating a workforce that is equipped to address the needs of the multicultural populations served.

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II. Overview of Past Departmental Practices

In the Spring semester of 2021, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee led a self-assessment of current hiring practices focused on faculty searches for each department across the College of Public Health and Health Professions. In this self-assessment, committee representatives met with departmental faculty and staff to discuss current practices. In brief, these conversations centered around the following elements of the departmental processes currently being employed:

- Job description writing
- Position advertisement writing
- Advertisement strategies
- Initial screening process
- First round interviews
- Shortlist development
- Final interview process
- Group discussion and department discussion
- Other

Reflecting on the processes reported across the departments, the College has been conducting what can be considered a well-structured, typical academic search process across the departments. We provide the following general summary of past practices in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of current hiring processes in PHHP departments.

Search Process or Stage	General Description
Job description writing	Department HR Administrator works with hiring authority and PHHP HR to write. Chair reviews. Hiring proposal may be developed by specific faculty or area heads according to a given need.

Position advertisement writing	Department HR Administrator works with hiring authority, search committee, and PPHP HR to write.
Advertisement strategies	Word of mouth, UF listservs, professional organizations and societies, postdoctoral sites, some DEI-focused outlets
Initial screening process	Set qualifications as a committee, based on the job description and the input of the Department chair, before reviewing the applications. Then the entire committee reviews all applications - all applications are first reviewed independently, and then discussed as a group
First round interviews	Varies across departments
Shortlist development	Varies across departments, reported vetting processes also vary
Final interview process	Full 1-2 day interview of candidate, hour-long seminar with defined expectations for content (research, teaching, contributions to department/college); individual or group meetings with faculty in/out of department, students, leadership including Chair and Dean
Group discussion and department discussion	Appropriate personnel are solicited for feedback (faculty via forms) shared with search committee & hiring authority.
Other	No general trends

As a result of this internal assessment, the PPHP DEI Committee has identified a number of key areas for continued development in our equitable hiring practices. Several key areas include:

- Advertisement strategies
- Screening processes
- Interviews

From these findings, we compiled resources to serve as a guide for departments that can be incorporated into current practices.

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III. Establishing a Pathway to an Equitable Search

Step 1. Constant commitment to advancing the department environment and climate

The first step in recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive group of faculty members is to create a supportive, welcoming environment in which individuals can develop and thrive. The environment and climate in the department, then extending outwards to the college and university, are determining factors in whether individuals are retained after their hire and joining the department.

As such, the key is ongoing, authentic commitment to creating and building an environment and climate that facilitates inclusive hiring and retention. This involves being responsive to the needs of the members of the department (students, faculty, and staff), practicing active listening, staying current with news and events, and building an inclusive and welcoming environment. Additional suggestions may be to hold town hall meetings, listening sessions, workshops, integrate course content, share opportunities and resources, and similar.

Step 2. Appoint an equity search advocate

An Equity Search Advocate is a new, potentially essential role on the search committee. This individual's responsibility is to provide a trained perspective to facilitate and guide the search process in equitable hiring practices and policies. This individual should be appointed to each search committee to provide a neutral or external (to the department or otherwise not immediately adjacent to the position to be hired) perspective and facilitation.

According to the University of Florida Artificial Intelligence Hiring Guide, the equity search advisor may have responsibilities related to a number of specific areas of the search (copied from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

- Assisting the hiring authority in the selection process of the search committee and its chair.
- Providing advice as needed to ensure the search ad is posted in multiple venues that attract a diverse pool of applicants.

- Providing advice as needed to the chair/dean and to the search committee to ensure that contributions to diversity are being considered and that proactive search practices are used for recruiting and selecting new faculty.
- Discussing research on selection bias with the search committee.
- Reviewing the diversity of the availability pool and the applicant pool. If the diversity of the applicant pool does not reasonably reflect the diversity of the availability pool, suggesting proactive measures to enhance the diversity of the applicant pool. (Note: See Step 9 below for further information on national diversity resources.)
- Reviewing the short list of candidates selected for interviews. If this group is not diverse, reviewing the files of other applicants (particularly those under serious consideration) to determine if candidates of equivalent quality have been overlooked. (Note: See Step 9 below for further information on national diversity resources.)

According to discussion at the Search Advocacy National Community of Practice Meeting (February 17, 2021), anyone can be a search advocate at any career pathway or stage. It would be useful to have all deans, chairs, and individuals in similar positions complete a training on search advocacy, whether or not they ultimately serve as a search advocate, so they understand the principles and roles of the search advocate. This can be a useful step in order to jumpstart the process of implementing search advocates across the college. The meeting also supported the concept of having a manual for the search advocates in order to support their two main roles – first as the process advocate (for example, addressing issues of bias), and second, as the process expert (for example, what’s the next step). This manual is useful in having something in writing to support what the advocates may say or do in searches.

The search advocate role can also serve an important role on campus in connection with broader diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Further, the discussion at the Search Advocacy National Community of Practice Meeting supported biweekly meetings of search advocates to create a campus-based community of practice. These meetings can form a quasi-support group for discussions of how to proceed, how to interact, and how to guide the process in the search advocate role.

Resources for Equity Searches

- Faculty Recruitment, Oregon State University
https://diversity.oregonstate.edu/sites/diversity.oregonstate.edu/files/faculty_search_timeline.pdf
 - Defines timelines for searches
 - Highlights roles of specific committee members, particular notable the role of the Search Advocate

- The Search: Forming a search committee, Equity Advocate Program, Oregon State University (<https://diversity.oregonstate.edu/faculty-recruitment/search-forming-search-committee>)
 - Highlights the role and importance of the equity search advocate
- Search Advocate Resources, Oregon State University (<https://searchadvocate.oregonstate.edu/search-advocate-resources>)
 - Provides resources for search advocates
 - Summarizes training and continued professional development for search advocates

Step 3. Consider the composition of the search committee

Beyond the equity search advocate, the other members of the search committee must be carefully considered in terms of creating a search committee that is diverse in a number of ways. Demographic diversity and expertise diversity are essential, as well as a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the search process.

Committee members should have completed training in diversity, equity, and inclusion-related topics, as well as particularly on biases related to the search process. The equity search advisor may also facilitate these discussions with the search committee as it is formed.

The University of Florida Artificial Intelligence Hiring Initiative recommends developing a plan for training and preparing individuals for service on a hiring committee. Selected resources may include (from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

- Managing Hidden Biases that Affect the Hiring Process – UF_GET250_ILT
- Interviewing and Hiring – UF_SCS040_ILT
- Faculty Search Tutorial – PVO800
- University of Florida, Human Resources, Faculty Searches (<https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/toolkits-resource-center/human-resources-toolkits/faculty-search-committee/>)

Step 4. Reflection and departmental self-assessment

As the department begins the hiring process, the first need is to be intentional about the development of a suitable hiring strategy for an inclusive search process. This guide is meant to guide and facilitate this process; however, several key steps are needed in order to apply this process within the specific needs and professional environment of each individual department.

The following questions are recommended to be discussed by the search committee when formed, but also by the department faculty and stakeholders led by the search committee, at the start of the process (adapted from Dean Michael Perri):

- Broadly, what value does our department attach to having a diverse faculty body?
- What do we see as the major obstacles to recruitment and retention of marginalized individuals and URM faculty in our professional area and within our department?
- How can the department overcome the barriers identified and create opportunities for enhancing diversity in the department?

Resources for Reflection and Self-Assessment

WISELI – Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Eve Fine, Jo Handelsman. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. 2012. https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf, pages 27-28 provide guidance for common questions and associated answers for equitable searches and diversity-related hiring practices

Step 5. Individual and group reflection

A key priority of an equitable search is to avoid the ambiguous “fit” determinations that are generally used implicitly to maintain the status quo and hire individuals of similar characteristics into a department. It is often internalized individual and group biases that manifest in selecting individuals of similar cultural backgrounds, appearance, hobbies, and similar, due to an internal “comfort” or “familiarity” with the individual. These may be presented in group discussion or setting as vague statements of “this person would fit well with our departmental culture.” However, specific statements of fit can be useful in the hiring process. These may include alignments in teaching styles, mentoring strategies, research interests or skills, or similar specific, position-related information.

In working to avoid the ambiguous “fit” discussion, individuals and the hiring committee, as well as the larger department, are encouraged to reflect on internalized biases. These may manifest in a number of ways.

Individuals are encouraged to explore their own implicit biases. A number of resources exist for learning, exploration, and advancement:

Resources for Exploring Implicit Bias

- Project Implicit, <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html>
- University of Florida Chief Diversity Officer, Implicit Bias, <https://www.cdo.ufl.edu/get-involved/field-guides/implicit-bias/>

- UCLA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, Implicit Bias, <https://equity.ucla.edu/know/implicit-bias/>
- Cornell University Graduate School, Implicit Bias Resources, <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/diversity-inclusion/faculty-resources/implicit-bias-resources/>
- UCSF Office of Diversity and Outreach, Unconscious Bias Resources, <https://diversity.ucsf.edu/resources/unconscious-bias-resources>
- Brown, The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning, Implicit Bias, <https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/implicit-bias>
- WISELI – Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Eve Fine, Jo Handelsman. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. 2012. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf, pages 44-48; 52-60

The University of Florida Artificial Intelligence hiring guide provides a number of types of biases and definitions, and strategies to mitigate these biases, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of biases, definitions, and strategies for mitigating bias from the University of Florida Artificial Intelligence Hiring Guide (copied from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf).

Biases	Definition	Strategy
Leniency Bias	The tendency to give people the benefit of the doubt or to be an “easy” rater. Occurs when a rater is reluctant to unfavorably rate a candidate because they are being kind, which results in ratings that are not true representations of the candidate’s performance.	Establish anchor answers (information that the candidate should provide to show evidence of competencies and/or qualifications) and ensure that each rater evaluates candidate responses based on the alignment of that response with those anchors.
Central Tendency Bias	Occurs when a rater tends to rate all performances at the middle of the scale and is reluctant to rate a performance as either	Make sure that all interview questions are clear and concise. Utilize anchor answers. If suitable, consider using a scale that eliminates

	<p>superior or unacceptable. This is the desire to “play it safe” or avoid giving extreme ratings; the rater may be under the assumption that “nobody can be that good or bad.” It is very important to make distinctions among candidates and to make full use of the rating scale.</p>	<p>a middle option so that the panelist must make a choice.</p>
Severity Bias	<p>Occurs when a rater is unwilling to issue a favorable rating to a deserving candidate and instead assigns a much lower rating on average. This can suggest either an unusually harsh standard or a failure to appropriately observe the behaviors demonstrated by the candidate.</p>	<p>Ensure that probing questions are utilized in the absence of key information needed to fairly assess the candidate.</p>
Contrast Bias	<p>Comparing candidate’s performance against another candidate instead of evaluating the candidate’s performance based on competencies. It has been found that if a rater evaluates a candidate who is just average after evaluating a series of unfavorable candidates one after another, the average candidate tends to be evaluated more favorably even though that does not coincide with performance.</p>	<p>Before you begin the interview process, determine what skills and/or competencies are needed. Utilize that information to develop your rubric and evaluate each candidate individually utilizing that tool.</p>
Similar-to-me Bias/Affinity Bias	<p>Tendency of individuals to rate candidates who resemble themselves higher than they rate others. Occurs when a candidate is judged more favorably because the candidate exhibits behaviors</p>	<p>Prior to conducting your interviews, establish specific job related criteria to be used by all committee members for the purpose of evaluating all candidates. Reduce the small talk. It’s normal to start</p>

	that have much in common with the rater, which elicits feelings of comfort and compatibility. It may be tempting to award high ratings even when the exhibited behaviors may not justify it. It is important to judge the candidates on the identified job-related desired behaviors.	with “How are you?” or “I hope your drive in was okay,” but that can quickly turn to questions that exacerbate bias.
Anchoring Bias	Sometimes called <i>expectation anchor bias</i> , occurs when we have information that we become rigidly attached to that has nothing to do with the candidate or qualifications, such as a precedent set by the previous person who held the position.	Use the tools created to evaluate candidates (selection criteria, rubric, etc.); you will have a quantifiable answer as to the best candidate.
First Impression Effect	Tendency of an assessor to make an initial positive or negative judgment of a candidate and allow the first impression to distort later information, leading to discrepancies with evaluation of the overall performance.	Hold a consensus meeting in which the panel members discuss openly, as a group, their individual evaluations of the candidates based on the established job-related criteria.
Beauty Bias	Tendency for people to assume that people who are more physically attractive are also superior performers. They may not be necessarily more qualified for a job.	Having a structured screening process for evaluating candidates before in-person interviews will help to mitigate this kind of bias. Also, including a diverse panel.
Horn/Halo Effect	A “halo” effect bestows positive attributes to a person, unlike the “horns” that are perceived negative attributes that cause you to jump to negative (and equally inaccurate) conclusions about a person.	Make sure at least 2-3 different aspects of behavior are addressed to get a holistic view so that one awesome or awful trait or skill doesn’t overshadow everything else.

Confirmation Bias	The tendency to look for information that confirms a belief you already have and to subconsciously filter out all evidence to the contrary. This leads us to create flawed patterns in our thinking and can create bias in hiring.	In the interview process, using specific interview questions to gauge <i>specific skills and traits</i> of a candidate will help reduce confirmation bias, since it forces the interviewer to evaluate the candidate on questions that are <i>predetermined</i> and <i>directly related to the position</i> .
Attribution Bias	Attribution bias is a phenomenon in which you try to make sense of or judge a person's behavior based on prior observations and interactions you have had with that individual that make up your perception of them.	Rather than assume, ask clarifying or probing questions. Don't forget that candidates are often nervous and may misspeak or stumble. Give them a chance to share their full story with you before you evaluate.
Gender Bias	Gender bias is the tendency to prefer one gender over another gender.	Consider having your HR team redact aspects of a candidate that may reveal their assumed gender. Also, make sure to compare candidates based on skill and merit rather than traits that can cloud your judgement of them.
Stereotyping	Tendency to place a candidate into a stereotyped group, and then generalize their performance as typical of that group and ignore the individual's differences.	Ensure that your job description is built on the actual skills and experience required. Be clear about required knowledge, skills, and abilities in your job ads. Develop and apply key selection criteria to create a shortlist of candidates. To make sure you are being fair and equitable, develop a set of behavioral and competency based interview questions based on the job

		description and selection criteria.
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Step 6. Seek outside resources and input

Throughout the search, search equity advocates and members of the search committee are encouraged to seek outside resources, input, and support on creating and maintaining an equitable search. These resources may be campus-based (for example, the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, the Health Science Center Diversity and Inclusion Committee, human resources representatives, and similar) or web-based (for example, literature, professional society resources, and similar).

The development or gathering of the screening and selection tools (for example, rubrics, feedback forms, questions, and anchors) should be considered at this point. Resources should be gathered from all available sources (PHHP, UF Human Resources, and similar sources). Each of these resources, particularly rubrics and screening tools, should be evaluated by the committee through a discussion led by the Equity Search Advocate. All materials should be evaluated for potential biases (individual, demographic, scholarly, and similar) and new materials should be brought in or the current ones modified, as appropriate.

Step 7. Specify goals and indicators or benchmarks of search process success

As the search committee composition is established, resources are gathered, goals of the search and indicators or benchmarks of success need to be established by the group, in collaboration or with the support of relevant stakeholders. For example, the search committee, along with the equity search advocate, may set goals and indicators for specific points along the process, benchmarks of success for search numbers or candidate pools, or similar. These goals and indicators should be discussed by the committee in alignment with equitable search practices and vetted by the equity search advisor. Consultation with the college’s human resources representatives are also recommended. Similar to the previous step, all evaluation, assessment, and feedback materials should be carefully evaluated by the committee and the Equity Search Advocate. Additional resources or individuals should be brought in as consultants to assist at this stage, as needed.

Step 8. Create an inclusive position advertisement

The search committee, equity search advisor, and relevant stakeholders (for example, human resources representatives, deans, and similar) should work collaboratively to create an inclusive position description.

Considerations for creating an inclusive position advertisement may include (adapted from Dean Michael Perri):

- Compose an “inclusive” job advertisement by providing clues of “belonging” and community building
- Express interest in and support for candidates with experience in research, teaching, and/or service to underrepresented communities
- Demonstrate concrete support and resources the University of Florida will provide to the prospective candidate, should they be hired
- Avoid overly specific requirements that may lead potential candidates to self-select out of the candidate pool
- Ensure that website and position announcements discuss institutional and departmental values that support family-friendly policies and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Consider opportunities and statements related to “dual career” appointments

The University of Florida Human Resources provides a number of examples of inclusive statements for job announcements (copied from

http://training.hr.ufl.edu/instructionguides/faculty_search/fac_inclusivestatementsoffacultypositions.pdf):

- Candidates should describe how multicultural issues have been or will be brought into courses.
- Candidates should describe previous activities mentoring women or members of underrepresented groups.
- Women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and veterans are encouraged to apply.
- Successful candidates must be committed to working with diverse student and community populations.
- Applicants are expected to describe in their letter of intent how their scholarship contributes to diverse communities.
- The University is responsive to the needs of dual career couples.
- The University is committed to building a culturally diverse educational environment. Applicants are requested to include in their cover letter information about how they will further this goal.
- The University is committed to supporting the work-life balance of its faculty.

- The campus is especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community through their research, teaching and/or service.
- The University of Florida's [or school/college/department] seeks to recruit and retain a diverse workforce as a reflection of our commitment to serve the diverse people of Florida, to maintain the excellence of the University, and to offer our students richly varied disciplines, perspectives, and ways of knowing and learning.
- The school/department is interested in candidates who have demonstrated commitment to excellence by providing leadership in teaching research or service toward building an equitable and diverse scholarly environment.
- We will consider applicants' knowledgeable in the general area of xxx. There are several broad areas of interest, including [several named]. In general, we give higher priority to the overall originality and promise of the candidate's work rather than to the sub-area of specialization.
- The University of Florida is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and is committed to increasing the diversity of its faculty. We welcome nominations of and applications from anyone who would bring additional dimensions to the university's research, teaching and clinical mission, including women, members of minority groups, protected veterans and individuals with disabilities.

The University of Florida Artificial Intelligence Hiring Initiative provides the following specific guidelines on three main areas – an inclusive culture and climate, inclusive job requirements, and gender neutral considerations (copied from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

Inclusive Culture and Climate:

- In support of being a preeminent University, we are committed to developing strategies that attract the best and brightest from all backgrounds.
- The University of Florida is committed to creating a thoughtful, equitable, and inclusive culture that provides space for innovation and creativity. We support that commitment by offering a fulfilling work experience that allows for collaboration, growth, and development as well as shared perspectives.
- We recognize the value of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access and acknowledge the benefits they add to our workforce as we drive creative and innovative solutions that connect us all.
- We are committed to creating an inclusive environment and are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We attribute our success to a workforce that embraces the contributions of people of all backgrounds and ability levels.
- Our faculty, staff, and students make up a community of all social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. The richness of that diversity contributes to our innovation and shared

success. Join a culture that fosters an environment of inclusion, awareness, and engagement.

Inclusive Job Requirements:

- Consider identifying a demonstrated commitment to valuing diversity and contributing to an inclusive working and learning environment as an essential function of the role.
- Utilize equivalency statements when substitutes for certain requirements are possible, such as, “an equivalent combination of education/experience may substitute for a Master’s degree.”
- Only list “must-haves” in your requirements and include “nice-to-haves” in your candidate profile.

Gender Neutral Considerations:

- Use gender-neutral pronouns and statements
- Consider using the Gender Decoder (<http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>) to support the identification of subtle gender-coded phrases.
- Limit job requirements to “must-haves” to trim your list down. Statistics provided by Hewlett Packard’s Internal Report state that men apply for jobs when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, but women apply only if they meet 100% of them.
- Avoid insider language, industry jargon, acronyms, and company-speak when possible.
- Highlight UF’s family-friendly benefits and leave programs.

The University of Florida Artificial Intelligence Hiring Initiative also provides the current general equal opportunity language for the university (copied from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf).

The University of Florida is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The University is committed to nondiscrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status in all aspects of employment including recruitment, hiring, promotions, transfers, discipline, terminations, wage and salary administration, benefits, and training.

The recommended structure of position announcements for the University of Florida is as follows (copied from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

I: Opening Statement highlighting University, College/Unit, DE&I Commitment

II: About College/Unit

III: The Opportunity – Highlight information regarding the job that would appeal to your candidates.

IV: Must-Haves – Requirements (The successful candidate should possess the following skills

and qualifications)

V: The University of Florida (Share leading facts about the University and why it's great to be a part of the Gator Nation)

VI: Application Instructions

VII: Our Commitment (State the college/unit's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion followed by the University's equal opportunity statement)

Resources for Job Descriptions and Search Announcements

WISELI – Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Eve Fine, Jo Handelsman. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. 2012. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf, pages 33-35 provide guidelines on writing descriptions and announcements for vacancies

Step 9. Create an inclusive distribution strategy

The stakeholders who created the position advertisement and the department as a whole should also create a distribution strategy to announce the position within relevant professional circles and venues in a method that promotes an equitable and inclusive search.

In these efforts, specific efforts may be useful (adapted from Dean Michael Perri and from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

- Expand the recruitment network to include those with successful track records of mentoring marginalized and underrepresented minority students and trainees.
- Develop or continue to cultivate relationships with alumni in order to expand the distribution networks of advertisements to reach marginalized and underrepresented minority groups.
- Use contacts at HBCUs to expand the recruitment network.
- Create a two-way seminar relationship with HBCUs, with UF faculty giving seminars as well as invite speakers from HBCUs to UF seminar series.
- Consider specific advertisement venues that are known to reach marginalized and underrepresented minority groups.
- Build relationships with colleges and organizations that seek to educate and promote diversity efforts.
- Reach into communities of underrepresented talent using volunteer opportunities, fellowships, mentorships, scholarships, and/or internships.

- Partner with your communications and marketing teams to use your social media pages to promote diversity and showcase current diversity programs or employee groups.
- Strive for equal representation of all groups in your marketing materials and online.
- Seek feedback from current diversity groups within your areas about how you can improve recruiting efforts.
- Focus retention efforts on creating an inclusive environment where diversity groups feel both valued and empowered.
- Eliminate GPA minimums to remove barriers to application and individuals self-selecting out of applying.
- Embrace high-touch recruiting. If prerecorded interviews are used as a method to screen candidates, use personal email messages when engaging candidates versus system templates. Consider an initial phone contact to introduce the candidate to the video interview process before the interview is scheduled.
- Partner with student chapters of professional organizations on campus to assist with recruiting diverse talent from a broader bench of schools.
- Allocate college resources, if applicable, to fund postings on high-traffic sites and job boards where individuals from underrepresented and marginalized groups may be likely to discover.

Specific job boards and networks beyond the typical word-of-mouth and close professional contacts may be of use. A non-exhaustive list is provided here (from https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf):

- Network Members
- AABHE Career Center
- AACSB Career Connection
- AAMC CareerConnect
- Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs • Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions
- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) • American College Health Association
- American Conference of Academic Deans
- Arizona Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
- Association for Continuing Higher Education Inc
- Association for Leadership Science in Nursing
- Association of Deans & Directors of University Colleges & Undergraduates Studies
- California Association of Colleges of Nursing
- CASE Career Central
- CASFAA Career Center
- Higher Education Career Center by University Business
- INSIGHT Into Diversity • National Association of Business Careers and Education

- National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education
- New York State Association for College Admission Counseling
- Southeastern Association of School Business Officials
- The Enrollment Management Association

At this point, proactive steps can be taken still to enlarge the pool of potential candidates, for example by revisiting ways to advertise and promote the position, having the equity advisor attend the Southern Regional Education Board's Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, and similar).

Step 10. Request candidates provide a diversity statement

Diversity statements in faculty position applications have been a hotly debated topic in recent years (Flaherty, 2018a). The benefits of requesting or requiring diversity statements center on helping the hiring committee understand the applicant's commitment to or relationship with advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in various aspects of their teaching, research, and service endeavors. More specifically, the focus on hiring faculty who "foster intellectually and culturally rich, inclusive, and equitable learning environments" necessitates the focus on diversity statements (Sylvester et al., 2019). Faculty members' roles in the classrooms, in leadership, influence on institutional actions and resources impact the campus climate (Sylvester et al., 2019).

While diversity statements are not universally required for faculty applications at institutions across the country (Flaherty, 2018a), they provide a unique opportunity for insight. Recent research indicates that "applicants often included statements of support for advancing these values, or described their understanding of structural issues that impact them on campus and off. Valuing diversity and clearly understanding it weren't always linked in these statements, the authors note. But they often were" (Flaherty, 2018b). Applicants may discuss inclusive teaching practices, attention to underrepresented scholars in course readings, or similar for the classroom, as well as public scholarship, contributions to institutional practices, and personal backgrounds or experiences (Flaherty, 2018b).

PHHP has two central goals with requesting candidates provide a diversity statement:

- Understanding candidates' past contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion

- Exploring candidates’ anticipated future contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly in the context of their contributions at the University of Florida
- Demonstrate the college’s commitment to a culture of enhancing diversity and inclusion in all areas

Of importance, while the trend of requiring or requesting diversity-related statements in higher education faculty applications is newer and increasing, the work related to DEI is not new – writing about it is (Sylvester et al., 2019). In this, “faculty, often those from underrepresented backgrounds in the academy, have long been engaged in intellectually-grounded scholarly, pedagogical, and service work that advanced DEI, often without acknowledgement or recognition” - basically, centering on the ideas of “invisible labor” and “cultural taxation” (Sylvester et al., 2019). This labor or tax manifests may manifest as “serving on numerous committees, advising larger numbers of students, and serving as ‘departmental experts’ for their particular ethno-racial group” and can detrimentally impact “career progress and job satisfaction” (Joseph and Hirschfield, 2010).

Overall, the diversity statement “forces the next generation of faculty members to be thinking about it in terms of their professionalism and ensures that faculty know this is a value statement that higher education institutions take seriously” (Mitchell, 2018).

As such, requesting a diversity statement can not only center the importance of this work to the college and the institution in all aspects of teaching, research, service, and community engagement, but also increase visibility and recognition of “invisible labor” or “cultural taxation” experienced by individuals of marginalized identities or underrepresented minority groups.

Resources for Diversity Statements

- Sylvester, C-Y; L Sanchez-Parkinson; M Yettaw; T Chavous. The promise of diversity statements: insights and an initial framework developed from a faculty search process. *Currents – Connecting Diversity Scholarship to Practice and Society*. 1(1), 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.112>
 - Describes recent findings and trends on content in diversity statements
- Resources of content appearing in diversity statements for faculty applications
 - Penn Career Services, Diversity statements for faculty job applications, <https://careerservices.upenn.edu/application-materials-for-the-faculty-job-search/diversity-statements-for-faculty-job-applications/>
 - UCSD Physical Sciences, Six examples of submitted diversity statements (redacted), <https://physicalsciences.ucsd.edu/files/examples-submitted-diversity-statements.pdf>

- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, The Writing Center, Diversity Statements, <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/diversity-statements/>
- UCLA, Diversity Statements, <https://www.mcw.edu/-/media/MCW/Education/Graduate-School/Documents/UCLA-Diversity-Statements.pdf>
- Beck, S. L. (2018). Developing and writing a diversity statement. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Retrieved [May 3, 2021] from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/developing-and-writing-a-diversity-statement>.

Step 11. Access national data on diversity

National data on diversity can be used as an important checkpoint for initial candidate pools and later longlists and shortlists of applicants. National databases can be used to compare the diversity of a job applicant pool for a particular opening to diversity aspects in comparable positions based on a national average.

Similar to Step 9, at this point, proactive steps still can be taken to enlarge the pool of potential candidates, for example by revisiting ways to advertise and promote the position, having the equity advisor attend the Southern Regional Education Board's Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, and similar.

This initial comparison to national data on diversity is a key step in reflecting on the applicant pool and the outcomes of advertisement and distribution efforts.

Step 12. Certify applicant pools

Throughout the search process, the committee, assisted by the equity advisor, should work to establish a clear and transparent process for oversight of the progress made towards recruiting a new colleague.

Certifying applicant pools, particularly as related to comparisons to national data on diversity, is useful to provide the search committee and the hiring authority with feedback focused on the diversity of the applicant pool, the longlist, and the shortlist of candidates, as applicable. One resource to consider for comparison would be the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) available at: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>, however, there may be other resources available specific to individual positions or sub-fields.

The certification process is useful to determine at each stage whether the search should move forward based on whether the candidate pool reflects the diversity of the field and is appropriate to the goals outlined at the early stages of the search process.

Search committees should consider how competitive the candidates are. The goal is to ensure that there are diverse competitive candidates in the talent pool.

This step occurs before any interviews are conducted. If needed, the recruitment process can be extended or strategically revisited.

Importantly, these certifications are not individual or group-level hiring decisions based on demographics. These are essential checkpoints to assess the success of active recruitment for a diverse, talented pool of candidates. Further, these checkpoints provide a review of potential biases entering the search (as defined in earlier steps) that would eliminate talented candidates from each step unnecessarily. In no way are hiring decisions being made at any of these applicant pool steps, rather these serve to be inclusive of talent in the applicant pool.

Step 13. Focus on the interview process and questions

Interviewing and planning interview questions goes well beyond the kinds of questions that should not be asked. Several techniques are available for interviews. Prepared questions are a way to facilitate equitable approaches to interviews for each of the candidates. The University of Florida has prepared a detailed interview guide (<https://hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/hiringdeptinterviewguide.pdf>) that addresses each stage of the live interview.

Behavioral-based interview questions are known to be effective in using past behaviors as a predictor of future performance, and the University of Florida Human Resources has created an extensive guide for interview questions, including dozens of example questions (see http://training.hr.ufl.edu/resources/LeadershipToolkit/job_aids/behavioral_interview.pdf).

Consider also the location of the interviews, with respect to ability, access, and representation. For example, interviewing candidates in a room with portraits of individuals of a single demographic, particularly one with which the candidate does not identify, can be off-putting and create an uncomfortable situation.

Resources for interviews

- Consult the complete University of Florida Hiring Department Interview Guide (<https://hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/hiringdeptinterviewguide.pdf>) for the following resources:
 - Interview preparation and setting up interview expectations
 - Pre-introduction, materials, and applicant information reviews
 - Interview questions
 - Guidelines for developing interview questions
 - Types of interview questions
 - Behavioral interview questions
 - Questions to ask managers/supervisors
 - Interview questions to avoid
 - Interview topics
 - Interview techniques
 - Tips for team interviews
 - Interviewing candidates with physical disabilities
- Consider the University of Florida Behavioral Based Interview Guide (http://training.hr.ufl.edu/resources/LeadershipToolkit/job_aids/behavioral_interview.pdf) which provides dozens of example questions in the following categories:
 - Advocacy
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Humility
 - Role Model
 - Integrity
 - Transparency
 - Communication
 - Problem solving
 - Political savvy
 - Strategic thinking
 - Execution
 - Accountability
 - Judgment
 - Financial management
 - Fair and legal management
 - Resolve
 - Talent selection
 - Coaching/mentoring
 - Collaboration
 - Facilitative decision-making
- Spark Hire
 - Video interviewing software available to consider at the University of Florida (company site – www.sparkhire.com)

- WISELI – Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Eve Fine, Jo Handelsman. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. 2012. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf, pages 81-108

Step 14. Create “safe spaces” in the hiring process

During the interview process, it is important for individuals to connect with others and learn more about the institution, the departmental culture, and living and working in the area. They may have questions about schools, neighborhoods, and similar. As such, interviewees should be provided with “safe spaces” and venues to interact more casually with individuals who may be able to provide insights on or answer questions about important aspects of the job, environment, or community that the individual would not otherwise be able to ask.

In particular, marginalized candidates and individuals from underrepresented minority groups may benefit from focused efforts in this area, as might their families. Meetings with UF faculty, affinity group members, staff, and leadership from similar backgrounds or experiences, as well as social engagements with the significant others and faculty members with current faculty may be among many options to consider. Importantly, this may help increase retention of individuals after they are hired.

Step 15. Treat the search process as a continuous activity

Outside of the linear search process, the broader concept of a faculty search should be considered an ongoing talent development process for each department and unit. All faculty members should be looking continually for rising colleagues in the field. Efforts should be taken by the department to expand the network of national colleagues who can be contacted when there is an open search and for recommendations of potential candidates.

Further efforts should be taken by departments to develop and maintain ongoing memberships and relationships with national organizations, particularly those whose mission is entirely for or has a branch for marginalized and underrepresented minority groups (for example, the Black Caucus of the American Public Health Association).

Additionally, individuals from other institutions and rising researchers and educators should be invited to give seminars, not only for the mutual benefit to the individual and the department, but also to gauge potential interest in future positions or collaborations.

Step 16. Reflect on the search and hiring process

The final logistical step in the search and hiring process should be a closing reflection on the stages, steps, and process taken by the search committee and the department. Whether or not the search was successful (a suitable candidate was identified and hired), the search committee and department have a valuable opportunity to reflect on and improve the process for the next time. For example, the search committee can gather and discuss obstacles and challenges as well as accomplishments and successful aspects to apply again in the future.

EEO reporting can be a valuable resource at this stage to consider the demographics of the talent pool, where talent was removed from the hiring process, and where applicants learned about the position. This information can be useful to the current committee in reflection on the individual search, as well as for more broadly evaluating the success of the strategies applied and future hiring plans for the college.

Step 17. Create a supportive environment for new hires

The final stage of the search process creates a circle with the first stage – focusing on the environment to support new hires and retain others. Mentoring programs, networking opportunities, social events, and connections to professional development programs (for example, the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity) can be useful resources and community-building structures.

Pathways to an Equitable Search

IV. Resources

Resources are available for many of the sections above, as well as selected key resources gathered here:

Artificial Intelligence at the University of Florida. Inclusive Hiring. https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf

University of Florida Strategic Talent Group <https://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/talent-search/>

University of Florida Human Resources. Behavioral Based Interview Guide. http://training.hr.ufl.edu/resources/LeadershipToolkit/job_aids/behavioral_interview.pdf

University of Florida Human Resources. The Interviewing Experience. <https://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/hiring-center/selecting-candidates/the-interviewing-experience/>

University of Florida Recruitment & Staffing Human Resource Services. University of Florida Hiring Department Interview Guide. <https://hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/hiringdeptinterviewguide.pdf>

WISELI – Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin-

Madison, Eve Fine, Jo Handelsman. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. 2012. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, A Guide for Search Committees at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Second Edition. https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf (NOTE: pages 27-28 provide a question and answer approach to common equity search-related questions)

Pathways to an Equitable Search

V. Equity Search Quick Start Worksheet

Pathway Step	Description	Tips and Considerations	Search Notes and Open Space
1	Constant commitment to advancing the department environment and climate.	The first step in recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive group of faculty members is to create a supportive, welcoming environment where individuals can develop and thrive. Reflect on what your department is doing and can do.	
2	Appoint an equity search advocate.	Review the role of the equity search advocate and identify an individual to serve in this capacity for the search.	
3	Consider the composition of the search committee.	Appoint a diverse search committee in terms of demographics and expertise, with a particular focus on individuals committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the search process and beyond.	
4	Reflection and departmental self-assessment.	Develop a suitable hiring strategy by defining goals, identifying obstacles, and developing strategies to overcome challenges.	
5	Individual and group reflection.	Explore implicit biases individually and discuss biases in hiring and ambiguous “fit” issues as a group. Specifically reflect on and identify biases.	
6	Seek outside resources in input.	Identify and make readily available campus-based and external resources on conducting and maintaining an equitable search.	

7	Specify goals and indicators or benchmarks of search progress success.	As a group, set goals and indicators for points along the search process, including candidate pools, vetting, and similar.	
8	Create an inclusive position advertisement.	Work collaboratively as a group and with necessary stakeholders (for example, HR) to write an inclusive advertisement for the open position.	
9	Create an inclusive distribution strategy.	Continue the discussion for writing the position advertisement with specifically defining ways to broadly distribute the announcement to facilitate an inclusive search.	
10	Request candidates provide a diversity statement.	Include a request of applicants to write and provide a diversity statement in their application materials.	
11	Access national data on diversity.	Use national data on diversity as an important checkpoint for initial candidate pools, longlists, and shortlists of candidates.	
12	Certify applicant pools.	Compare applicant pools, longlists, and shortlists with defined job-related criteria, national data on diversity, and other earlier defined benchmarks.	
13	Focus on the interview process and questions.	Plan interview questions, focusing particularly on behavioral-based questions. Develop a strategy and inclusive plan for the interview process.	
14	Create “safe spaces” in the hiring process.	Interviewees should be provided with “safe spaces” for candid conversations with individuals during the interview process, particularly with underrepresented minority groups and facilitated social engagements.	

15	Treat the search process as a continuous activity.	Beyond the linear process for an equitable search, all faculty members should consider inclusive searches as an ongoing process, broadly considering who might be a valuable addition to the department, who to invite for seminars, while going to external seminars, and similar.	
16	Reflect on the search and hiring process.	Reflect on the success (or lack of success) of the process, the steps that worked, and what can be improved to create a more equitable search for next time.	
17	Create a supportive environment for new hires.	Circle back to the first stage – consider what steps can be taken to make the environment more welcoming and supportive for the new hire. Consider mentoring programs, networking opportunities, social events, and similar.	

Pathways to an Equitable Search

VI. References

This content has been adapted from and significantly inspired by University of Florida resources developed and presented by Audrey Gainey, Director of Talent Acquisition and Onboarding, Spring 2021, as well as a process developed by Dr. Michael Perri, Dean of the College of Public Health and Health Professions as part of the Faculty Recruitment Enhancement Initiative Plan. This Plan focused on filling critical needs in research and education focused on health disparities, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The following references are also used in addition to those listed as resources in the sections above:

Artificial Intelligence at the University of Florida. Inclusive Hiring. https://learn-and-grow.hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/02/UFHR_AiAtUF_InclusiveHiring.pdf

Flaherty, C. 2018a. Making a statement on diversity statements. Inside Higher Education. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/11/12/former-harvard-deans-tweet-against-required-faculty-diversity-statements-sets-debate>

Flaherty, C. 2018b. Breaking down diversity statements. Inside Higher Education. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/11/19/new-paper-explores-what-faculty-candidates-include-their-diversity-equity-and>

Joseph, TD; LE Hirschfield. 2010. 'Why don't you get somebody new to do it?' Race and cultural taxation in the academy. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34(1), 121-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2010.496489>

Mitchell, C. 2018. Why colleges should require faculty diversity statements. *Inside Higher Education*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/11/15/benefits-faculty-diversity-statements-opinion>

Search Advocacy National Community of Practice Meeting. February 27, 2021.

Sylvester, C-Y; L Sanchez-Parkinson; M Yettaw; T Chavous. The promise of diversity statements: insights and an initial framework developed from a faculty search process. *Currents – Connecting Diversity Scholarship to Practice and Society*. 1(1), 2019. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.112>

University of Florida Human Resources. Behavioral Based Interview Guide. http://training.hr.ufl.edu/resources/LeadershipToolkit/job_aids/behavioral_interview.pdf

University of Florida Recruitment & Staffing Human Resource Services. University of Florida Hiring Department Interview Guide. <https://hr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/hiringdeptinterviewguide.pdf>