STRIDE

STRATEGIES and TACTICS for RECRUITING to IMPROVE DIVERSITY and EXCELLENCE

at The University of Tennessee

stride@utk.edu

We are grateful for the support and inspiration we have received from the STRIDE committee at the University of Michigan.

DIVERSITY
ISSUES AT UTK
BIAS
RESEARCH STUDIES
RECOMMENDATIONS
The Three Phases of the Search and Hiring Process

BEFORE the search begins.

The search PROCESS.

AFTER the search.

STRIDE 1

STRIDE 2

External Activities

- **Network** directly with young scholars, including your own students.

- Foster connections with **other institutions** to identify and track promising candidates.

- Widen the pool: actively pursue candidates thriving at **lower-ranked institutions**.

- In general, go beyond the “usual” set of institutions from which you might consider candidates.
RECOMMENDATIONS: BEFORE THE SEARCH BEGINS

Internal Activities

-> Develop “buy in” to the importance of diversity and inclusion

-> A good way for units to strengthen their commitment to diversity is to explicitly incorporate faculty diversity as a goal.

-> Develop a diversity plan through an inclusive process.

-> Invite diverse scholars for your colloquia and seminars

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RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH

Do not rush the hiring process

-> Conduct searches early in the semester.

-> Select committee members who will make the needed commitment in time and effort.

-> Give search committees plenty of time.

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RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH

Make your search as broad as possible

→ Define your search as **broadly** as possible.

→ Job description should include as **many areas** as possible.

→ Consider using a **single committee** for all open searches in your unit.

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BENEFITS OF BROAD SEARCHES

![Graph showing benefits of broad searches]

- **Before using broad searches (AY01-AY04)**
- **After using broad searches (AY06-AY09)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women Applicants</th>
<th>Women Hires</th>
<th>URM Hires (MEN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad searches</td>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</table>
Creating the position description - I

→ Ask applicants to describe their experience with diverse students and working in multicultural environments.

→ In addition to a letter of application and a curriculum vitae, request other materials such as copies of articles, ..., and samples of course syllabi.

Creating the position description - II

→ Be positive and inclusive.

Original language:
Situated near the Smoky Mountains, our department offers a supportive and collegial atmosphere in which scholars make a variety of important contributions to the world.

New language:
The City of Knoxville is a hidden gem with a beautiful and walkable downtown, varied nightlife, active neighborhoods, and eclectic shopping and restaurants. UT is located within easy driving distance to Asheville, Nashville, Atlanta, and the Great Smoky Mountains.
**Creating the position description - III**

- Where appropriate, label qualifications **preferred** instead of required; use **should** instead of must.
- Whenever possible, be **flexible with arbitrary numeric measures**, such as years of experience.

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**Be Active - I**

- Don’t just wait for applications to arrive. Seek and encourage URMs to apply.
- Make telephone calls.
- Send personalized letters to potential applicants or to those who might refer potential applicants.
- Write e-mails.
**Be Active - II**

- Talk face-to-face with people who might nominate or recommend potential candidates, stressing the unit’s commitment to diversity.

- Approach potential applicants at professional meetings and personally encourage their application for the position.

- Consult with minority faculty members on campus about the types of outreach they consider most effective.

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**The Evaluation - I**

- Focus on all the work done by the applicants, not just the first page of their CVs.

- Consider unit needs beyond area fit.

- Remember that candidates from the “best” schools aren't necessarily the best scholars.
The Evaluation - II

- Discuss and define evaluation criteria in advance.
- Allocate approximate importance (weight) for the criteria.
- Global assessments of candidates are more consistent with stereotypes.
- Consider alternatives to simple rank ordering (maybe create summaries).
- Calibrate your evaluations by discussing 1-2 applications in detail before beginning the review process.

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RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH

The Evaluation - III

- Self-correction: Be aware of the possibility of your own implicit bias.
- Be aware of the potential different environments the candidates have been in during their whole career.
- Avoid overweighing ‘liking’ or personality fit, which favors candidate consistency with implicit biases.
- Slow down and be deliberate!
**RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH**

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**The Campus Interview - I**

→ Ensure that all candidates meet a diverse set of people, including graduate and undergraduates students and staff.

→ Distribute appropriate policy information to all candidates before or during their first visit. (ex: family friendly policies, partner hiring options, quality of school systems in the area, etc. ...)

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**The Campus Interview - II**

→ Candidates should be asked if there are special people, special groups of people, or special locations they would like to meet or visit.

→ They also should be made aware of the kind of presentation they will be expected to make and of the audience for it.

→ If raised by the candidate, the interests and needs of the candidate's family or partner should be addressed during the interview.

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*Caroline S. V. Turner, “Diversifying the Faculty”, AAC&U.*

RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH

The Campus Interview - III

→ Too often emphasis is on evaluating the candidate and not on attracting the candidate.
→ Think carefully about how you're presenting your department, the university, and Knoxville

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Caroline S. V. Turner, "Diversifying the Faculty", AAC&U

RECOMMENDATIONS: THE SEARCH

The Campus Interview - IV

→ Show the department as it is now .... not how it was

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