

Barnard College

Handbook for Faculty Searches and Hiring

Key Points for Faculty Doing Searches

1) Developing the Pool

The diversity literature consistently argues that the most effective way to develop a broad pool of candidates is by networking in the field as widely as possible.

2) Evaluating the Candidates

The diversity literature shows that everyone, regardless of individual social location, has a tendency to evaluate candidates in terms of biases built into social expectations. As a result, conducting a fair search requires that steps be taken to actively counter this tendency. Some possible means of doing so include:

- a. Developing a clear set of criteria and then developing separate ratings of the candidates for each criterion.
- b. Designating a person from the search committee whose responsibility it is to raise issues related to diversity at each meeting.
- c. Use an evaluation form for each candidate who is interviewed either at a conference or on campus.

3) During the Campus Visit

Realizing the possibility of diversifying the faculty requires, not just avoiding inappropriate and illegal questions but actively recruiting candidates when they are here for campus visits.

The University of Michigan ADVANCE project has been successful at changing the climate and success rate for faculty recruitment at Michigan. Below is a description of steps that they have taken; highlighted sections may be particularly helpful for Barnard searches.

Departments and programs conducting searches are also encouraged to consult the ADVANCE program’s “Good Practices Involving Faculty Hiring, Mentoring, Evaluation Processes, and Climate” website at <http://advance.umich.edu/good-practices.php> and resources available to Barnard faculty on the “Faculty searches site” at <https://sites.google.com/a/barnard.edu/faculty-searches/>.

Selections from:

ADVANCE, University of Michigan

<http://advance.umich.edu/resources/handbook.pdf>

ADVANCE is a program funded by the National Science Foundation to increase the Participation and Advancement of Women in Academic Science and Engineering Careers. The project at the University of Michigan established the Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE) Committee, which produced this handbook.

The academic literature on diversity shows that many of the factors that having contributed to the hiring of women through the ADVANCE projects can diversify the overall pools of candidates, including more racial, as well as gender diversity. In addition, these practice can make the searches process smoother and more generally equitable.

I. Initiating the Search Process

The composition of the search committee and its charge are factors likely to have consequences for the outcome of the search. It is important that issues of composition and charge be addressed deliberately and early.

Composition of Committee

- € Search committees should include members with different perspectives and expertise, as well as with a demonstrated commitment to diversity.

- € Search committees should include women and underrepresented minorities whenever possible. Note, however, that women and minorities are often asked to do significantly more service than majority males, so it is important to keep track of their service load, free them from less significant service tasks, and/or compensate them in other ways.

Initial Discussions of the Search Committee's Charge Should:

- € Verify that its charge includes particular focus on equitable search practices, and the goal of identifying outstanding women and underrepresented minority candidates for the position.
- € Articulate the fact that diversity and excellence are fully compatible goals and can and should be pursued simultaneously.
- € Identify selection criteria prior to beginning the search.
- € Establish plans for actively recruiting women and underrepresented minorities prior to beginning the search.
- € Include discussion of how the plans to represent the school's or department's commitment to and strategies for hiring and advancing diverse faculty are integrated into the strategies. This may be of particular concern for departments that have few or no women or under-represented minority faculty. In these cases, it may be helpful to develop long-term strategies for recruiting diverse faculty. For example, the department might consider inviting women or minority faculty to give talks and then inviting them to apply for positions the following year.

How to Avoid Having Active Recruitment Efforts Backfire

- € Women and minority faculty candidates wish to be evaluated for academic positions on the basis of their scholarly credentials. They will not appreciate subtle or overt indications that they are being valued on other characteristics. Women candidates and candidates of color already realize that their gender or race may be a factor in your considerations. It is important that contacts with women and minority candidates for faculty positions focus on their scholarship, qualifications, and potential academic role in the department.

Defining the Position

- € Define the position in the widest possible terms consistent with the department's needs. Aim for consensus on specific specialties or requirements, while planning to cast the hiring net as broadly as possible.

- € Make sure that the position description does not needlessly limit the pool of applicants. Some position descriptions may exclude female or minority candidates by focusing too narrowly on subfields in which few specialize.
- € Consider as important selection criteria for all candidates (regardless of their own demographic characteristics), the ability of the candidate both to add intellectual diversity to the department, and to work successfully with diverse students and colleagues.
- € Establish selection criteria and procedures for screening, interviewing candidates, and keeping records before advertising the position.
- € Make sure that hiring criteria are directly related to the requirements of the position, clearly understood, and accepted by all members of the committee.
- € Get committee consensus on the relative importance of different selection criteria. Plan to create multiple short lists based on different key criteria. (See “Creating the Short List,” in section III, below).

Language for Announcing Positions

- € Proactive language can be included in job descriptions to indicate a department’s commitment to diversity. They may make the position more attractive to female and minority candidates. Examples include:
 - “The college is especially interested in qualified candidates who can contribute, through their research, teaching, and/or service, to the diversity and excellence of the academic community.”
 - “Women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply.”

II. Committee Activity before the Search begins

The search committee, and/or a larger group in the department, should engage in a relatively extended review of the wider disciplinary context, as well as the departments own past history of searching and hiring, before beginning a new search. The department is more likely to be able to achieve a different outcome from past outcomes if it has some understanding of factors that may have played a role in limiting past success in recruiting women and minorities.

Reviewing the National Pool

- € Take steps to identify the national “pools” of qualified candidates for the field as a whole and for subfields in which you are considering hiring. Subfield pools are sometimes quite different from overall pools.
- € Identify an institutions or individuals that are especially successful at producing women and/or under-represented minority doctorates and/or postdoctorates in your filed or the desired subfield. Recruit actively from those sources.

Reviewing Past Departmental Searches

- € Find out how many women and under-represented minorities have applied for past positions in your department, as a percentage of the total applicant pool.
- € Find out how many women and under-represented minorities have been brought to campus for interviews in your field in previous searches.
- € If women or under-represented minority candidates have been hired in recent searches, ask the search committees, the department chair, and the recently hired faculty themselves how they were successfully recruited.
- € Find out what has happened to women and under-represented minorities who were not offered positions in previous searches. Where are they now? Does it appear that something interfered with the assessment of their likely success?
- € If no women or under-represented minorities have been offered positions in recent searches, consider redefining departmental evaluation systems in ways that might better take strengths of female and under-represented minority candidates into account. Consider whether positions have been defined too narrowly. If candidates have been ranked on a single list, consider using multiple ranking criteria in the future.

III. Recruiting Activities during the Search

Broadening the Pool

- € View your committee’s task as including a process of generating a pool rather than merely tapping it. This may be accomplished by having committee members attend presentations at national meetings and develop a more diverse list of potential future candidates based on those meetings. Candidates identified in this way may be in any field, not necessarily the one targeted for a particular search. In fact, the department may consider

creating a committee to generate women and/or minority candidates, who can then be considered for targeted recruitment outside of subfield-defined searches. In addition, the committee may consider issuing promising candidates invitations to visit [Barnard] informally to present research before those individuals are ready for an active search. Cultivating future candidates is an important activity for the search committee to undertake, and may require that the search have a longer time horizon than is typical.

- € **Keep in mind that some eminent universities have only recently begun actively to produce women and minorities PhDs.** Therefore, consider candidates from a wide range of institutions.
- € Consider the possibility that women and under-represented minorities who have excelled at their research in departments less highly ranked than [Barnard] may be under-placed and might thrive at [Barnard].
- € Beware of systems of evaluation that inadvertently screen out well-qualified applicants from minority-serving institutions.
- € Be careful to place a suitable value on non-traditional career paths. Take into account time spent raising children or getting particular kinds of training, unusual undergraduate degrees, and different job experiences. There is considerable evidence that evaluations of men frequently go up when they have such work experience, while evaluations of women with the same kinds of experience go down.
- € Research indicates that interviewers evaluate women and underrepresented minorities more fairly when there is more than one woman in the interview pool. When there is only one woman or underrepresented minority, s/he is far less likely to succeed than women or minorities who are compared to a diverse pool of candidates, probably because of the heightened salience of his or her race or gender.
- € **Rank candidates separately on several different criteria, rather than using a single aggregate ranking. This helps mitigate the tendency for “halo” effects that result from reliance on overall impressions rather than evidence-based judgments of particular criteria.**

- € Consider re-opening or intensifying the search if the pool of applicants does not include female or minority candidates who will be seriously considered by the search committee.

Using Active Recruiting Practices

- € Advertise the position from at least thirty days before the application deadline.
- € Use electronic job-posting services targeted at diverse groups such as minority and women's caucuses or professional networks in your discipline.
- € Make personal contacts with women and minorities at professional conferences and ask them to apply.
- € Ask faculty and graduate students to help identify women and minority candidates.
- € Contact colleagues at other institutions to seek nominations of students nearing graduation or others interested in moving laterally, making sure to request inclusion of minorities and women.
- € Place announcements in websites, listservs, journals, and publications aimed specifically at underrepresented minorities and women.
- € Identify suitable women and minority faculty at other institutions, particularly faculty whom may currently be under-placed, and send job announcements directly to them.
- € Contact relevant professional organizations for rosters listing women and minorities receiving PhDs in the field.

Creating the Short List

As you begin to evaluate applicants and candidates, be aware of the kinds of evaluation biases that psychological research has identified in both women's and men's judgments of job candidates. Read Virginia Valian's book *Why So Slow?* (or some key chapters), or view her videotaped lecture summarizing this research <http://video.mit.edu/watch/why-so-slow-the-advancement-of-women-9841/>, and discuss it as a group.

The most important general point about the process of creating the short list is to build in several checkpoints at which you make a considered decision about whether you are satisfied with the pool of candidates you have generated.

- € Get consensus on the multiple criteria that will be used to choose candidates from interviews. Notice that different criteria may produce different top candidates. Be sure to consider all criteria that are pertinent to the department's goals (ex, experience working with diverse students might be one). In addition, discuss the relative weighting of the different criteria, and the likelihood that no or few candidates will rate high on all of them.
- € Develop a "medium" list from which to generate your short list. Are there women or minority candidates on it? If not, consider intensifying the search before moving on to a short list.
- € Consider creating separate short lists ranking people on different criteria, such a teaching, research potential, collaborative potential, and mentoring capacity. Develop your final shortlist by taking the top candidates across different criteria. Evaluate this step before finalizing the list; consider whether evaluation bias may still be affecting your choices.
- € Alternatively, review the top female and/or minority candidates in your pool. Consider whether your short list should be revised because the committee's judgments were influenced by evaluation bias (the tendency to underestimate women and underrepresented minority members' qualifications and overestimate those of white males).
- € Evaluation bias is minimized if you interview more than one woman and/or underrepresented minority candidate. As noted earlier, research indicates that interviewers evaluate women and underrepresented minorities more fairly when there is more than one woman in the interview pool. When there is only one woman or underrepresented minority, s/he is far less likely to succeed than women or minorities who are compared to a diverse pool of candidates, probably because of the heightened salience of his or her race or gender.

IV. Handling Campus Visits

The campus visit is an important opportunity for the department to communicate two messages:

1. You are seriously interested in the candidate's scholarly credentials and work.

2. [Barnard] is a good place to come because it is intellectually lively, and committed to diversity in the faculty, staff, and student body.

How these messages are communicated can make a critical difference in recruiting women and minority candidates.

- € Make it clear that you are interested in the candidate's scholarship and skills, rather than his or her demographic characteristics. It is generally not helpful to make a point with candidates that the department is eager to hire women and minorities.
- € Consider how the department will represent the college as a whole as a place in which women and minority faculty can thrive.
- € Consider how the department will represent *itself* as a place in which women and minority faculty can thrive. This may be difficult for departments that currently have few or no women and minority faculty members. Some things that may make the department more attractive to women and under-represented minorities are:
 - Clear and public policies and procedures from evaluation and promotion
 - Mentoring resources for junior faculty
 - Development of some practices in evaluation and annual reporting that value mentoring of women and minority faculty and students
- € Give the candidate a chance to interact with the department's faculty in multiple venues. Formal talks may not reveal every candidate's strengths. Consider including Q+A sessions, "calk talks," and other less formal interactions.
- € Be sure to offer information and access to faculty who might represent opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.
- € Avoid leaving candidates alone with faculty who may be hostile to hiring women and underrepresented minorities. If a candidate is confronted with racist, sexist or homophobic remarks, take positive and assertive steps to defuse the situation. be sure there is a practice in place in the department for dealing with the expression of racist, sexist or homophobic attitudes, and that the candidate is made aware of it, if the situation arises.
- € Introduce women and minority members of the department to all candidates, not just women and minorities. Moreover, if women and

minority faculty members are expected to play an especially active role in recruiting new faculty, be sure to recognize this additional service burden in their overall service load.

- € Focus on the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the job and avoid making assumptions based on perceived race, ethnic background, religion, marital or familial status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

- € Ask faculty to provide feedback about specific facets of the candidate's potential, rather than just requesting generic feedback. Studies show that when people focus on particular issues of performance, they are much less likely to rely on implicit biases.

V. Negotiating the Offer

The way an offer is negotiated can have huge impact not only on the immediate hiring outcome, but also on a new hire's future career. Candidates who feel that chairs conduct negotiations honestly and openly, and aim to create circumstances in which they will thrive, are more satisfied in their positions and more likely to stay at [Barnard] than are those who feel that a department or chair has deliberately withheld information, resources, or opportunities from them. Initial equity in both the negotiated conditions and in the department's follow-through on the commitments it makes are important factors in retention as well as recruitment.

- € Women and minority candidates may have received less mentoring at previous career stages than their counterparts, and may therefore be at a disadvantage in knowing what they can legitimately request in negotiations. In addition, there is some evidence that women are less inclined to negotiate for themselves than men are. to ensure equity, aim to empower the candidate to advocate on his or her own behalf, by providing all candidates with a complete list of things it would be possible for them to discuss in the course of negotiations. This list will vary by field, and should include those items that will maximize the likelihood of candidate success in that field. For some fields these might include:
 - Salary
 - Course release time
 - Start up expenses (such as: lab equipment, research and travel funds)
 - Lab space
 - Research assistance
 - Moving expenses
 - Other issues of concern to the candidate