Search Committee Briefing

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Vice Provost for Affirmative Action

Affirmative Action Office
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University Park, PA 16802
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Fax: 814-863-7799
Email: searches@psu.edu
Purpose

- Penn State’s commitment and obligations to aa/eeo
- Role of search committees in meeting this commitment and obligation
- Consistent and Equitable practices to ensure a diverse pool of applicants in every search
- Administrative Procedure
- Retention Strategies

Briefing Outline

- Legal Framework of Searches
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Search Process
- Administrative Procedure
- After the Search
Legal Framework and Definitions

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Executive Order 11246 of 1965

Key Concepts

- **Equal Employment Opportunity**: The legally protected right of all people to be evaluated on ability and potential to perform a job

- **Affirmative Action**: Good faith efforts to eliminate barriers in recruiting, hiring, promoting and retaining minorities, women, people with disabilities, and Vietnam-era veterans
Roles and Responsibilities

- The Affirmative Action Office
- Dean/Department Head
- Search Committee Chair
- Search Committee Members

The Affirmative Action Office

- Implements the University’s legal duties as an aa/eeo employer
- Establishes a framework that provides all candidates fair and consistent treatment throughout the hiring process
- Offers advice on best practices for promoting diversity in the search process

Dean/Department Head

- Notifies the Affirmative Action Office when a search is authorized
- Appoints search committees that reflect the diversity of the department
- Provides the search charge
- Emphasizes the value of diversity
- Defines the extent of the committee’s authority and duties
Search Committee Chair

- Ensures that all applicants are considered fairly throughout the process
- Understands and communicates departmental affirmative action goals
- Establishes consistent protocols and procedures
- Emphasizes the importance of confidentiality

Search Committee Members

- Understand and keep in mind the department's affirmative action goals
- Identify and actively recruit highly qualified candidates from diverse populations
- Make personal contacts, and encourage candidates to apply
- Refer all external inquiries to the chair of the committee

The Search Process

- Planning
- Advertising
- Recruiting
- Receipt of Application Materials & Initial Screening
- Reviewing Diversity of Short List
- Preparing for Campus Visits
- Interviewing Finalists
- Considerations for Determining "Best Qualified"
- Recommending the Top Candidate
Planning and Advertising

- Discuss position in light of future direction of the department
- Develop consensus on screening criteria, including intellectual and cultural diversity
- Use flexible terms like "should" rather than "must"
- Use rolling rather than fixed deadlines
- Send a copy of the proposed announcement and recruitment strategy to AAO prior to posting the announcement

Recruiting Aggressively

- NETWORK: internally and externally
- Make personal contacts at professional conferences
- Maintain ongoing list of recipients of post-docs, awards, fellowships
- Solicit nominees from departments at institutions that serve high proportions of traditionally underrepresented groups
Receiving Application Materials

- As a matter of professional courtesy and sound legal practice, acknowledge receipt of each application
- Include Search Number and link to the Affirmative Action Data Card in letters of acknowledgement
- Also include relevant information demonstrating department, college and university commitment to diversity

Screening Applicants

- Evaluate diversity in pool by frequently consulting Applicant Pools on the AAO home page at:
  
  http://www.affirmativeaction.psu.edu

- Reaffirm consensus on selection criteria
- Be sensitive to biases in evaluation that can inadvertently screen out otherwise competitive candidates:
  - non-traditional career paths
  - research journal/graduate school elitism
  - breaks in research record
Non-conscious Hypotheses

- **Schemas** (stereotypes and expectations) influence our judgments of others, regardless of our own group
- Allow efficient, if often inaccurate, processing of information
- Often conflict with our conscious attitudes
- Change based on experience


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Schemas are...

- Widely culturally shared
  - Both men and women hold them about gender
  - Both whites and people of color hold them about race/ethnicity
- Applied more under circumstances of:
  - Ambiguity (including lack of information)
  - Time pressure
  - Stress from competing tasks
  - Lack of critical mass

Fiske (2002), *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 11, 123-128
For example, schemas affect:

- **Blind Auditions**
  - Audition data from 14,000 individuals show the use of a screen increases the probability that a woman will advance from preliminary rounds by 50%
  - Roster data from 11 major orchestras show the switch to blind auditions accounts for 30% of the increase in the proportion of women among new hires


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Schemas also affect . . .

- **Evaluation of Identical Resumes: RACE**
  - Applicants with African American-sounding names had to send 15 resumes to get a callback, compared to 10 needed by applicants with white-sounding names
  - White names yielded as many more callbacks as an additional eight years of experience
  - The higher the resume quality, the larger the gap between callbacks for white and African American names

Schemas also affect .

- Evaluation of Identical Resumes: GENDER
  - When evaluating identical application packages, male and female university psychology professors preferred 2-1 to hire "Brian" over "Karen" as an assistant professor
  - When evaluating a more experienced record (at the point of promotion to tenure), reservations were expressed four times more often when the name was female

Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke (1999), Sex Roles, 41, 509

Schemas also affect .

- Evaluation of Identical Resumes: SEXUAL ORIENTATION
  (law students)
  - Gay-labeled male applicants received 62% as many offers as other male applicants
  - Gay-labeled female applicants received half as many offers as female applicants

Why do Race cues produce different evaluations?

- Identical resumes, but ambiguous fit of credentials to job (rather than ambiguous credentials)
  - A sample of white evaluators recommended:
    Black candidate 45% of time
    White candidate 76% of time
  White candidates get “benefit of doubt” in ambiguous situations – bias leading to advantage


Letters of Recommendation for Successful Medical School Faculty Applicants

- Letters for men
  - Longer
  - More references to scholarship
- Letters for women
  - Shorter
  - More references to personal life
  - More doubt raisers (hedges, faint praise, irrelevancies)
    “It’s amazing how much she’s accomplished.”
    “It appears her health is stable.”
    “She is close to my wife.”

Diversity on Search Committees

When a group lacks critical mass, reliance on schemas is greater


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Reviewing Diversity in the Short List

- If department is underrepresented for minorities and/or women, complete the [Short List Approval Form](#) and return to AAO prior to inviting candidates for interviews
- Short List (with affirmative action data) will be returned to chair with copies to the department head and dean
- When department is underrepresented, affirmative action data may be used to break a tie between candidates that are ostensibly equally well qualified
Preparing for Campus Visits

- When arranging interviews, explore the candidate's possible need for reasonable accommodation for a disability. Ask (only): "Will you need any special accommodations for your interview?"

- Whether or not the candidate requests an accommodation, ensure that interviews, presentations, lodging and dining arrangements are mobility accessible

- Maintain a physical environment that demonstrates that Penn State values diversity and inclusiveness

Interviewing Finalists

- Be careful not to ask inappropriate questions regarding marital status, age, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, etc.

- Be prepared to respond to inquires regarding delicate issues. For example:
  - Do not ask questions regarding a disability, but be willing to respond to accommodation inquiries by informing candidates that Penn State is committed to compliance with the ADA

- Afford underrepresented candidates the opportunity to meet privately with others who can provide relevant information and personal experience
Determining “Best Qualified”

- Federal regulations governing equal opportunity and affirmative action stipulate that an employer should hire “the best qualified” candidate
- Legally, the best qualified candidate must:
  - Meet minimum qualifications
  - Fit the substantive parameters of the position announcement, including rank, area of teaching and research concentration
- Beyond minimum requirements, “best qualified” is an open textured concept affording professionals significant latitude
- Excellence in teaching, research and service are the University’s top priorities: “excellence” must be understood in the context of an array of core values that define Penn State

Documenting the Search

- Record various iterations of the position advertisement and the rationale behind the final version
- Maintain files for all individuals who indicated an interest (even candidates with incomplete files are legally considered “applicants”)
- Document the criteria used to screen applicants beyond minimum qualifications
- Document any additional criteria used to select the short list and the list of finalists
- Maintain the list of core questions utilized during the interview
- Provide a brief explanation for elimination of individual candidates selected for the short list but not offered interviews
- Offer specific reasons for selection of the successful candidate and others interviewed but not selected
- Maintain records for at least three years
The Administrative Process

- Notify the Affirmative Action Office - Form A
- AAO provides availability estimates - Form B
- Chair provides recruitment plan and proposed advertisement - Form B
- Receipt of application materials
- Refer applicants to AAO website to submit AA Data Card
- Review the composition of the Short List
- Document the search - Form C

FORM A

Penn State University
Affirmative Action Office
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form A
Dean's Level

*To be completed by the Dean's office when initiating a search for tenure track positions and forwarded to the Affirmative Action Office, at 328 Boucke Building, University Park, or via email to searches@psu.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGE</th>
<th>Dean</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
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1. | Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |
| Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |
| Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |

2. | Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |
| Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |
| Title of Position | Location (if not University Park) | Dept./Division Head/DAA (E-mail) | New Search | Re-opened Search |
FORM B

Penn State University
Affirmative Action Recruitment Report
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form B
Department Level

Section I
The information in Section I is provided by the Affirmative Action Office for review by the department conducting the search. Sections II and III must be completed by the department conducting the Affirmative Action Office prior to posting the position announcement. Please refer to the Affirmative Action Office for 328 Beems Building, University Park, or via email to AAO@psu.edu.

Table of Contents

Title of Position
College
Department
Search Committee Chair (Name)
Department Chair (Name)
Department Division
Department E-mail

Table: 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representation and Affirmative Action Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure Track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Tenured and Tenure Track in Dept./Div.

Section II
Composition of Search Committee, Total:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Me</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>AA/Ind/Alaka Nat</th>
<th>Asian Pac Isd</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Department/Chair/Chair: Please indicate the search and recruitment strategies to ensure a diverse and comprehensive pool.

Search/Recruitment Plan: Please list specific publications/organizations, review of applications to which announcement appears.

Data Review of Applications to Committee.

Section III
Please provide the proposed position announcement as you intend it to appear in print. (Note: All ads must include "Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its workforce.")

Proposed Posting (Advertisement):

Date Submitted to AAO:

SHORT LIST APPROVAL FORM

Penn State University
Affirmative Action Office

SHORT LIST APPROVAL FORM

College ____________________________
Department ________________________
Title of Position ____________________
Search Committee Chair ____________ Phone # ____________

Please indicate the names of the individuals on the short list and return this form to the
Affirmative Action Office (searches@psu.edu or 328 Beems Building, University Park, PA 16802) prior to proceeding with interviews:

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

Approved by AAO __________ Date __________

cc: Dean Department Head

AAO 02-03
FORM C

Penn State University
Affirmative Action Recruitment Report
Tenure-Track Faculty Search Information Form C
Department Level

To be completed by the department and submitted to the Affirmative Action Office, 535 Shafer Building, or via email to provost/pfaa

Title of Position

Department/Division

Search Committee Chair

This information can be found on the Affirmative Action Office website: http://www.psu.edu/affirmativeaction/pfaa/pfaaapply.pdf

COMPOSITION OF THE APPLICANT POOL (based on AA data (only data required)

Total number of Cards

After the Search: Retention Strategies

- Recognize issues that are unique to minority faculty members:
  - Representing the “group”
  - “Shelving” themselves
  - Balancing internal/external community service
    - Guard against excessive community service

Mentoring: a key strategy

- A Reciprocal Process: Impacts Recruitment and Retention
- Reduces the isolation and alienation of being “the first” or “one of a few” within a department
- Sends a strong message of departmental commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion

Effective Mentoring

- Mutual Respect & Trust
- Commitment to overall goals
- Willingness to learn about self and others:
  - Strengths
  - Challenges
- Willingness to share power and privilege

- Do not assume that mentoring is more beneficial when mentor and protégé are of the same gender, race/ethnicity, discipline, or share similar professional interests:
  - Acknowledge the differences/similarities
  - Become comfortable asking questions
  - Create safe spaces for learning to occur
A Final Word

The process of recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty population requires that we be open to and prepared for the challenges that come with accomplishing our goals.