



# Best Practices in Faculty Searches



Session is based on the work of Dr. Chadwick Allen, Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement and UW Office of Academic Personnel Recommendations

# Agenda

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- Review Preparation and Reducing Bias
  - Application Review and Interfolio
  - Interview Process and Candidate Visits
  - Outside information
  - Search Committee Report

# Bias

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**Bias:** prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

**Implicit Bias:** the stereotypes and preconceptions about social groups stored in our brains that can influence our behavior toward members of those groups, both positively and negatively, without our conscious knowledge

# Positive and Negative Triggers

## Negative Bias Triggers:

- Non-traditional career paths
- Non-traditional research interests or methodologies
- Degrees from less historically prestigious institutions
- Prior work experience at less prestigious or lower-ranked institutions
- Do not appear to “fit” the unit’s existing profile

## Positive Bias Triggers:

- Traditional career paths
- Traditional research interests and methodologies
- Degrees from historically prestigious institutions
- Prior work experience at prestigious or highly-ranked institutions
- Appear to “fit” the unit’s existing profile...sometimes referred to as “cloning”—replicating the current unit profile in new hires

# Best Practices for Reviewing Files

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- Establish an assessment tool or rubric
- Committee agrees on a process
- What to review, in what order, and when
- Confidentiality is crucial

# Using an Assessment Rubric

## **Holds the committee to the priorities stated in the job ad**

- Define selection criteria up front
- Achieve consensus
- Rank selection criteria in terms of the unit's priorities
- Connect to mission, values and long-term goals for the unit

## **Ensures all candidates are subject to same kind of evaluation**

- Facilitates consistency
- Promotes fairness
- Promotes the perception of fairness

**\*This is not a substitute for conversation but a tool to guide conversation!**

# Interfolio


- Login
  - Website: <https://account.interfolio.com/login>
  - Partner Institution – University of Washington
- [UW Evaluator's Interfolio Guide](#)
- [Affirmative Action Information Report](#)
  - Compare applicant data to national/international pool data
  - Pulled by Search Administrator

# Interfolio

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- Application Materials
  - Tags
  - Rating
  - [Disposition Codes](#)



# Best Practices for Interviews

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- Conduct all interviews in the same format
  - Conduct all interviews under similar conditions
  - Have the same committee members present
  - Ask the same set of standard questions, in the same order
  - Ask questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion of every candidate
  - Make sure all interview questions comply with federal and state hiring laws

# Internal Applicants

- “Known Quantity” Bias: internal applicants can be both disadvantaged and advantaged during the hiring process.
- Openly discuss challenges faced when internal applicants are part of the pool – acknowledge the tension between confidentiality and collegiality
- As a committee, determine order to interview applicants – best practice is to have internal applicants go first
- Avoid courtesy interviews
- If conducting Zoom interviews, do the same for local applicants

# Inviting Finalists for Interviews

- Requires Dean and EVCAA Approval
  - Search Report
  - AAIR Analysis
- Best Practice: 3 candidates
- Invite internal candidates first

# Best Practices for Campus Visits (in person and virtual)

- Prioritize based on decision-making needs
- Meetings with leadership (Deans, EVCAA, Chancellor, Cabinet)
- Meetings with faculty (clarity of purpose)
  - 1:1 vs. group meetings
  - Structured vs. unstructured meeting topics
  - Meetings with specific committees (e.g., Diversity Committee)
- Meetings with staff, students, campus allies, community partners
- Public Presentations
- “Touring” the unit and/or campus
- “Casual” events
- Spaces for candidates to ask questions

# Best Practices for Campus Visits (in person and virtual)

- Itineraries should be as similar as possible
- Be mindful about full day interviews and the toll that takes on candidates, committee members, campus stakeholders
  - Fatigue is real!
  - Schedule breaks
- Identify a "host" for all candidates
- Try to provide informal/casual opportunities for finalists to ask questions they might not feel comfortable asking the committee or the unit
- Everyone who will interact with candidates needs to be informed about the process

# Best Practices for Campus Visits (in person and virtual)

- Work with candidates ahead of time on strategies to present their best selves
  - Clear expectations for interview/performance
  - If visiting virtually– location/lighting/interior design should not be a factor!

# Virtual Public Presentation Options

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- Live-stream presentation with immediate live Q & A
  - Pre-recorded presentation with live Q & A
  - Pre-recorded presentation live-streamed with live Q & A
  - Pre-circulated paper, live brief overview with live Q & A
  - Pre-circulated paper, brief pre-recorded presentation with live Q & A

# Best Practices for Hiring Meetings


- Commit to continuing to use the criteria of the assessment rubric
- Consult with UW Tacoma leadership before making public report
- Anticipate potential points of contention
- Commit to keeping conversation focused on stated criteria and unit values




# Outside Information

- If an individual search committee member has or receives additional information that is not included in an application, consult with your Dean on how to proceed with the information
- Consult with UW Tacoma Academic HR

# Search Committee Reports

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- Search committee reports should be in the voice of the committee and a narrative on the process and selection of recommended candidates that the faculty will vote on.
  - Use language that pertains to the job description and expectations
  - Avoid narratives that single out individual committee members.
  - No additional meeting notes or individual narratives should be provided

# Faculty Search Resources

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- [UW Tacoma Faculty Search Handbook and Resources](#)
  - [UW Evaluator's Guide to Interfolio Faculty Searches](#)
  - [Disposition Codes](#)
  - [Faculty Advancement Webinar on Faculty Searches](#)