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

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

- 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!*
• 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

- Application Materials
- Tags
- Rating
- Disposition Codes
Best Practices for Interviews

- 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

• 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

• 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

- UW Tacoma Faculty Search Handbook and Resources
- UW Evaluator’s Guide to Interfolio Faculty Searches
- Disposition Codes
- Faculty Advancement Webinar on Faculty Searches