

## Inclusive Searches: Some Best Practices

*This document has been created by the Faculty Diversity Committee in conjunction with the Council on Inclusive Excellence to outline the contents of a workshop on inclusive searches.*

**General Principle:** Effective decision-making happens when decision-makers have ample time, when procedures and criteria are transparent, and when decision-makers are accountable for processes and outcomes.

### **Important topics for programs and search committees to clarify prior to search (e.g., as they are developing a proposal for the PAC):**

- What is the overall vision of the program?
- What is the program's stance on diversity, equity, and inclusion and how is it explicitly addressed within coursework and the faculty body? Is the program's vision on Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) explicitly stated in its description?
- What structures exist within the program to foster and ensure heterogeneity within the faculty body and the curriculum?
- What are the program demographics of the students and faculty? How do these demographics reflect one another?

### **Tips for writing advertisements:**

- Use the advertisement to frame the position as broadly as possible to attract the largest pool of potential applicants.
- Consider how the rank of the position affects the pool of applicants. Could the rank of the position be framed more inclusively to attract a wider group of candidates?
- Consider how the advertisement can be used to signal not only the appeal of position and Bard, but also the College's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In particular the position description might emphasize:
  - Bard's commitment to DEI at all levels.
  - It may be possible to create a program/division-wide description of DEI values and work.
  - Signaling the resources and support available at Bard can help to make the position more attractive to the broadest range of candidates.
  - Through the materials requested from a candidate (e.g., a statement on how a candidate's research and teaching promote DEI), the advertisement can signal the Program's and the College's commitment to DEI.
  - Amend current boilerplate search language from: "Bard College is an equal opportunity employer and we welcome applications from those who contribute to our diversity." to: "Bard College is an equal opportunity employer and is especially interested in candidates whose record of achievement will contribute to the diversity goals of the institution."
- Consider appointing a committee member to serve as "advocate" for candidates close to the threshold of consideration (for members of underrepresented and non-underrepresented groups alike).
- Some sample advertisements from the University of Washington:  
<http://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/02/Job-Ad-section-examples.pdf>

### **Some common practices to promote inclusive hiring**

- Ensuring a long enough timeline for careful consideration of and deliberation about all candidate.
- Giving serious consideration to candidates from a wider range of PhD granting institutions, especially institutions that tend to have a more diverse student body.
- Providing alternatives to “traditional” recruitment techniques (e.g., not requiring candidate interviews at professional societies’ conferences)
- Develop connections to institutions producing highest numbers of underrepresented PhD.

### **Tips for screening applications**

- Try to meet as a committee to establish review/screening criteria prior to review of applications. Some sample questions:
  - What do we mean by “most qualified” in this search?
  - Do our review criteria check against stumbling blocks and bias?
  - Will we use a single ranking system?
- Develop screening checklist
- Create multiple rankings on the basis of different criteria
- Key to allow for sufficient time to review applications; this works against ranking prematurely or rushing to judgment about specific candidates.
- Be aware of implicit and explicit bias. Harvard has developed a tool that helps to identify implicit biases: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> Some possible ways that implicit bias manifests:
  - A “cultural fit” perspective or argument disadvantages first-generation, low-income and other groups underrepresented in the professoriate. This is particularly true in high prestige environments.

### **Interview practices**

- Establish a basic set of interview questions that will be put to each candidate (follow-up questions can be used to explore more specific aspects of the candidate’s profile).
- Develop “good” interview questions that speak more directly to the program’s and Bard’s needs.
- Create a rubric/score sheet for interviews to ensure consistency.
- Commit to an “equity-minded” approach, and especially to ensuring consistency and fairness across all candidates.
- Query each candidate as to how he or she would contribute to campus diversity.
- Consider using a standardized form to solicit feedback about candidates.
- Be aware of what can and cannot be asked of candidates. Information can be found at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Website (<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/practices/>)

### **On campus interviews**

- Each candidate’s schedule should be roughly the same, and include a public presentation, a meeting with the appropriate administrator(s), lunch with students, meetings with faculty (from program, from search committee, and with shared scholarly interests), dinner with the search committee.

- Make sure the Dean reviews the itinerary before it is shared with the candidate.
- Candidates may be provided with a menu of potential people they would like to talk to outside their program/division. These people can be *purely* informational, but can signal Bard's broader commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Make sure everyone meeting with the candidate has a copy of the CV, as well as any question and interview evaluation rubrics developed by the search committee.
- Have a designated "point person" for the visit - the point person should know where the candidate is and whether there have been any adjustments to the schedule. Everyone should know who the point person is.
- The dean's office will provide the admin assistant with a welcome packet; over the summer we can extend it to include information about area demographics.
- Identify a day and time you will reconvene to evaluate the visit day.

### **Following Hiring**

- Search committee chairs should provide continued mentorship for all new faculty hires.
- Members of underrepresented groups may have unique concerns (e.g., challenges in teaching, heavy demand from students for advising, particularly heavy service loads).