

**A Toolkit for
Faculty and Academic Affairs
Search Committees:
Increasing Excellence and Inclusion**

Based on Best-Practices



**DOMINICAN
UNIVERSITY**

(Revised, October 2019)



To members of the Dominican University Community:

I am pleased to have the Office of the Provost partner with the Chief Diversity Officer, the Vice President for Mission and Ministry, and the Office of Human Resources on this toolkit for assisting search committees. Dominican University is committed to hiring, retaining, and promoting a diverse faculty and staff, at levels that meet or exceed that of peer institutions and the national average. This toolkit is a companion document to the “Recruiting and Hiring Procedures” section of the university’s Employment Handbook (<https://www.dom.edu/offices/hr/resources>). The recruitment and hiring procedures are designed to provide a comprehensive approach to hiring staff and faculty members.

The toolkit is based on best-practices in the field, and draws upon relevant, contemporary research which fits with the Dominican University mission for advancing a “more just and humane world” while striving to achieve greater diversity at the university, in particular as we invite new faculty and academic staff to join our community.

This toolkit offers significant and important advice, from search committee formation to the screening of candidates’ credentials. The chair of each search committee within academic affairs will be expected to sign off on their having read through this document as well shared and/or discussed the content of the toolkit with colleagues on the committee.

As Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs of Dominican University, I believe that our care and focus in achieving critical goals in this area not only distinguishes us as an institution, but also advances our mission. I am proud to partner with all my colleagues in academic affairs and across the larger university as we strive to increase excellence and inclusion.

Jeffrey Carlson, Ph.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Hiring a diverse faculty means that each department seeks diversity in disciplinary expertise, intellectual perspective, cognitive style, and dimensions of human identity including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, socio-economic status, nationality, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation language, ability, age and their intersections. Dominican's foundational priority states that the university will: recruit, support, develop and retain faculty and staff excellence. Here are strategies used to address Dominican's commitment to hiring a diverse faculty.

1. **Develop an effective search committee.** Build a committee that includes someone outside of the department. An outside perspective and voice can increase the committee's shared understanding for what diversity means for a particular search.
2. **Demonstrate a clear commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the process.** Select an equity advisor to ensure that a candidates' contribution to diversity is fully considered and that the process for recruiting and ranking qualified candidates is fair and equitable.
3. **Develop shared expectations for how the committee will operate.** In addition to establishing rules for attendance, reviewing applications, candidate assessment tools, and attendance at meetings, build rapport among the committee members by developing shared expectations and ground rules for how candidates will be recruited, evaluated, and interviewed throughout the process.
4. **Foster consensus-building** by developing an **atmosphere of respect for each member of the committee. The Committee chair is responsible to** foster collegiality, respect, and open-mindedness among members of the committee.
5. **Ensure that every member of the Search Committee understands how the commitment to equity and inclusion is expressed on our campus.** Ensure that the committee can each provide specific examples of how the university is pursuing diversity, equity and inclusion.
6. **Members of the committee should be able to articulate the institutional strengths that will attract underrepresented candidates to Dominican.** The Search Committee should discuss their views about diversity and excellence and clarify how they will increase a candidate's understanding of the university and what it offers to underrepresented candidates.
 - Campus and community demographics
 - Success of other faculty of color in the department, in the program, on the campus
 - Possibility of achieving tenure and being promoted in rank
 - Faculty development opportunities and mentors
 - Community resources that include ethnic churches, stores, restaurants, and other professionals of color that can refer for medical, dental, educational services, etc.
 - Clear statements about how diversity is valued and infused into the curriculum
 - Proximity of a large metropolitan area within a short traveling distance from the campus
 - Availability of underrepresented groups to serve as research subjects
7. **Source talent effectively.** Recruit a diverse applicant pool by searching broadly and inclusively; conduct personal outreach to potential applicants through research networks, grantors, and respected researchers in the discipline; seek out colleagues who can refer you to potential applicants. Continue to develop relationships with minority caucuses, associations, and underrepresented groups of researchers through conferences and networking. Use networking and relationships to aggressively increase or expand the pool of candidates from underrepresented groups.

8. Learn about **unconscious or implicit biases**. Unconscious assumptions are often expressed as ‘fit’. The idea of fit can disproportionately influence the evaluation of applicants. Search Committees are encouraged to discussing flip the script meaning that the committee should explicitly articulate how the department and the college can meet a candidate’s expectations for thriving in a supportive community?
9. **Own your biases**. Understand what bias is and the research that supports implicit bias. Use the concept of owning your biases or being mindful of unfounded assumptions and associations that you and your colleagues might make in the hiring process. Review candidates carefully and take the time to question your own judgements about which candidates should be advanced for further consideration.
 - Bias is a natural phenomenon; everyone harbors some implicit bias and it occurs at an unconscious level. With respect to the existence of unwanted biases; we have the capacity to mitigate their effects through strategies that help us check them. Seek more intergroup contact, perspective-taking, and seek experiences among those individuals who may trigger your particular bias. Once you understand your personal biases, you can begin to mitigate their effects.
 - Implicit bias is activated involuntarily; unconscious biases are beyond our awareness and our intentional control. Implicit bias is concerned with the assumptions that we make about others that can influence our actions and decisions.
 - You can believe in equal treatment and still be biased based on skin tone, race, weight, hair, accents, income, gender, etc. The negative associations that we may have as individuals can have an impact on how we assess and/or treat candidates.
 - Discuss specifically how you are reaching out and anticipating candidates with disabilities who might apply. How might these candidates need advanced planning to perform effectively during an interview? Do not comment on particular disabilities prior to an on-campus interview. The process should ensure that all candidates know how to request accommodations that they may require.
10. **Be prepared to discuss professional and personal concerns of applicants**. Place yourself in the position of an applicant from an underrepresented group. What concerns might you have? Anticipate opportunities to address concerns that are expressed in personal statements, cover letters, diversity statements, specific work experiences or family obligations.

Benefits of a Diverse Faculty

“Diversity within the faculty body is of critical importance to American universities in the 21st century.” Engendering Faculty Diversity Through More Effective Search and Recruitment, Diana Bilimoria and Kimberly K. Buch

A Diverse Faculty Produces Academic Excellence

1. A diverse faculty creates a “dynamic intellectual community” (Fine & Handelsman 2010). Engagement in a community of scholars includes multiple viewpoints, and leads to innovation and creativity (University of Wisconsin LaCrosse 2013; Fine & Handelsman 2010).
2. A diverse faculty will help maintain competitive advantage (MIT 2010) among our peer and aspirant groups.
3. A diverse faculty improves the educational experience for students; studies have found that faculty diversity increases critical thinking. “Learning from or among diverse groups of people is an education in itself” (Guenter-Schlesinger & Kunle 2009: 4). Students of color benefit by having role models and mentors who can relate to their particular experiences and white students benefit by coming into contact with faculty and students whose experiences are different from their own (Berret 2012; ASSU Community Action Board 2013). Diversity increases student satisfaction (Astin 1993), and fosters intellectual development and skills (Pascarella et al. 1996).

Pursuing Truth, Giving Service, and Creating a More Just and Humane World

Dominican University’s Mission compels us to be a national model for social justice. Our founders, the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters and Father Samuel Mazzuchelli, envisioned a welcoming and hospitable learning environment where all would be welcome at the table. Our values and commitment must be made real by our actions and priorities.

Our university community should be composed of diverse faculty members that include all sectors of the U.S. population including men, women, underrepresented minorities, professors from varied spiritual and religious traditions, LGBTQ-identified professors, professors with disabilities, and other populations underrepresented in academia.

A Diverse Faculty Strengthens Democracy

1. Universities form and train future leaders. Students who go to schools with a diverse faculty and student body have higher levels of tolerance and acceptance, greater dexterity for problem solving, and sophisticated leadership skills (University of Wisconsin LaCrosse 2013; Weinberg 2008).
2. University professors are leaders. We have a direct impact on the students in our classrooms, but we also teach, create knowledge, and advocate for policy and programs through our research, participation in professional organizations, and university and community service. We show our university’s commitment to democracy by creating a diverse university that is inclusive and

reflective of our local and national population.

3. Diverse universities promote integration and solidarity. Sylvia Hurtado found that students who attended universities with diverse faculty and students were more likely to live and work in diverse environments and create integrated communities (2003).

SEARCH PLAN WORKSHEET

Recruiting and Hiring for Diversity on our campus

Instructions to Search Committee Chairs

Please **review and complete this worksheet before scheduling the Search Committee meeting with the CDO.**

Department: _____

Position Description Approved _____ (date)

Position Open _____ Position Closed _____

Complete the two questions below.

A. Describe how the proposed position description encourages a diverse pool of applicants to apply?

Examples: There is a *departmental diversity statement* in the position description and/or the position description includes *the key demographics of our campus*, and/or the position description clarifies *key expectations for inclusive teaching* and/or includes a statement regarding the university's commitment to providing *students with opportunities to participate in high impact practices*; such as undergraduate research. The position describes Dominican as a Hispanic-serving institution and/or as a *culturally inclusive campus*. The position requires a *personal statement and/or a diversity statement* from each candidate that explains how they can contribute to the diversity and inclusion on our campus.

B. Does the position description specify minimum and preferred qualifications for the position?

Minimum qualifications include the amount and type of education, training, and/or licensure, and work experience that is required for the position. Minimum qualifications may include: academic credentials, desired scholarship interests, teaching experience, disciplinary background, and publications. Preferred qualifications include those qualifications that are consistent with the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion; such as, experiences involving teaching, mentoring or advising students from diverse backgrounds or from underserved populations, and/or the ability to foster diversity in the curriculum or in the discipline. Preferred qualifications may also include supervising a diverse team or developing diversity and inclusion initiatives within a department or collaborating with other departments on diversity and/or equity-related initiatives. For administrative positions, additional preferred qualifications may include managing diversity related projects and/or providing professional development opportunities to support faculty or staff in meeting diversity and inclusion expectations. Preferred qualifications for administrators may also include evidence of the candidate's ability to design and implement programs to advance diversity and inclusion goals.

Please complete the information below:

Search Committee Members

Please list the committee members:

1. _____, Search Committee Chair
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

For senior administrative, supervisory, and full-time faculty positions, DU requires each search committee to appoint an **equity advisor and a member from outside the department**. An outside member of the department may be the equity advisor but an outside member of the department is not the only person that the committee may select to play this role.

The **equity advisor** assists the committee in following the best practices as specified in the *Toolkit for Faculty and Academic Affairs Search Committees: Increasing Excellence and Inclusion (Toolkit)*. The equity advisor's role *is to* ensure that a candidate's contribution to diversity is fully considered and that the search practices for recruiting and ranking qualified candidates are fair and equitable. The equity advisor will be familiar with the *Toolkit* and remind the Committee of the factors that can affect the hiring of diverse faculty; including implicit or unconscious bias. Please list the equity advocate. (Note: the committee designates its equity advisor).

1. _____

Please list the member of the committee from outside of the department

1. _____

Advertisement

All positions are on the Dominican University website. Human Resources will place the ads and coordinate with the Search Committee chair on placing the ads and the timelines for reviewing applicants.

Below, **specify major publications** where advertisements for the position will be placed; such as, *Inside Higher Education*, *Higher Education jobs*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, professional association listings, publications,

national databases, minority fellowship programs, graduate student organizations, newspapers, etc.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

List other strategies for advertising the position below. Specify the strategies the committee will use to ensure that the position attracts a diverse and highly qualified candidate pool.

Professional meetings and conferences. Please list the professional meetings, minority associations, disciplinary based groups for faculty from diverse backgrounds that the committee will contact:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Graduate schools/programs. If appropriate for your search, please list graduate schools/programs, the committee will contact:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Professional contacts and connections. Please indicate which individuals in this category will receive a position description.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Note: A successful search often results in increased faculty diversity broadly defined. If there is evidence that the search was not conducted in a manner that would result in diverse candidate pool, the Dean and the Provost can review the Search Committee's process and initiate a new search.

Understanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion uses the following definitions for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Diversity encompasses complex differences and similarities in perspectives, identities, and points of view among members of our campus as well as among individuals who make up the wider community. Diversity includes important and interrelated dimensions of human identity such as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, socio-economic status, nationality, citizenship, religion, sexual orientation, ability, and age. *These differences are important to understand but they cannot be used to predict any individual's values, choices or responses.*

Inclusion is the *active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity*. Such engagement involves cultivating individual relationships and connections with diverse groups by participating in an inclusive curriculum, engaging in culturally relevant co-curricular activities, and working in different communities. Inclusion is a mindset that encourages awareness and acceptance of cultural differences to promote a welcoming climate for all.

Equity is fairness. Equity involves understanding students' identities and experiences, affirming students' strengths and developing programs, policies, and practices to meet their needs. Equity expresses our institutional mission to preserve human dignity and individual rights. Equity involves intentionally recruiting and retaining highly qualified faculty and staff that reflect the cultural backgrounds and identities of our students.

Social Justice is rooted in the human dignity of each person and in the care of God's creation. Social justice supports the development of fair and just relationships between individuals, communities, and societies. The fair and equitable distribution of resources, benefits, and economic opportunities requires *individuals to work together in community for the common good*. To protect human rights and safeguard the environment, we are called to understand the causes of oppression and injustice in our society and around the world. We are respectful of difference and the right of individuals to participate in social movements to eliminate domination, exploitation, and discrimination against persons or groups. Working for justice involves understanding the historical and/or cultural contexts that perpetuate inequities, especially for the poor, the venerable, and the marginalized. Social justice embraces the ethical imperatives of peace, respect, and cooperation between peoples and nations.

GUIDE TO BEST PRACTICES IN FACULTY SEARCH AND HIRING

University of Washington

Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches

<http://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/handbook/>

Columbia University in the City of New York

<https://provost.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/BestPracticesFacultySearchHiring.pdf>

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/10/21/recommendations-institutions-diversifying-their-faculty-and-staff-opinion>

SEARCH COMMITTEES AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2017/01/Search-Committees-and-Conflicts-of-Interest.pdf>

CANDIDATE DIVERSITY STATEMENTS

Sample requests for diversity statements:

<http://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/02/diversity-statement-samples.pdf>

Tips for assessing diversity statements:

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/08/Assessing-Diversity-Statements.pdf>

INTERRUPTING IMPLICIT BIAS

Interrupting bias in the faculty search process

<https://www.engr.washington.edu/lead/biasfilm/>

Managing unconscious bias

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/08/Paradigm.pdf>

How search committee can see bias in themselves

https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-Search-Committees-Can-See/238532?cid=oh&elq=956d60aaa705456eba331f748d88e90d&elqCampaignId=4625&elqTrackId=011b5700eca34ba2b93f28405b269567&elqaid=11670&elqat=1&utm_medium=en&utm_source=oh

ENSURING FAIR AND EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATES

<https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/uw-s3-cdn/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2018/09/12132416/Assessment-Section2018.pdf>

The link immediately above leads to the sections on the following four dimensions of assessing candidates:

- **Creating and implementing an assessment rubric**

Sample Assessment rubrics

- <https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/02/Rubric1.pdf>
 - <https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/02/Rubric2.pdf>
 - <https://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2016/02/Rubric3.pdf>
- **Creating and implementing an assessment plan to work against bias**
 - **Preliminary Interviews**
 - **Hosting the campus visit**

GUIDELINES FOR FAIR AND UNFAIR INQUIRIES

<https://ap.washington.edu/ahr/policies/recruitment/search-and-hire-interviewing/pre-employment-inquiries/>

What may and may not be asked of candidates and how to frame good questions.

DEBRIEFING SEARCH COMMITTEES:

Unit leadership should plan to debrief search committee chairs and, when possible, full search committees at the conclusion of the hiring process. This is an opportunity to learn from both successes and problems that arise.

RACE and ETHNICITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION-American Council on Education and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

<http://www.equityinhighered.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/REHE-Chapter-10-SA.pdf#2019%20report%20from%20the%20American%20Council%20on%20Education%20>