

Troubleshooting Faculty Searches: A Focused Discussion on DEI Statements and Known Applicants

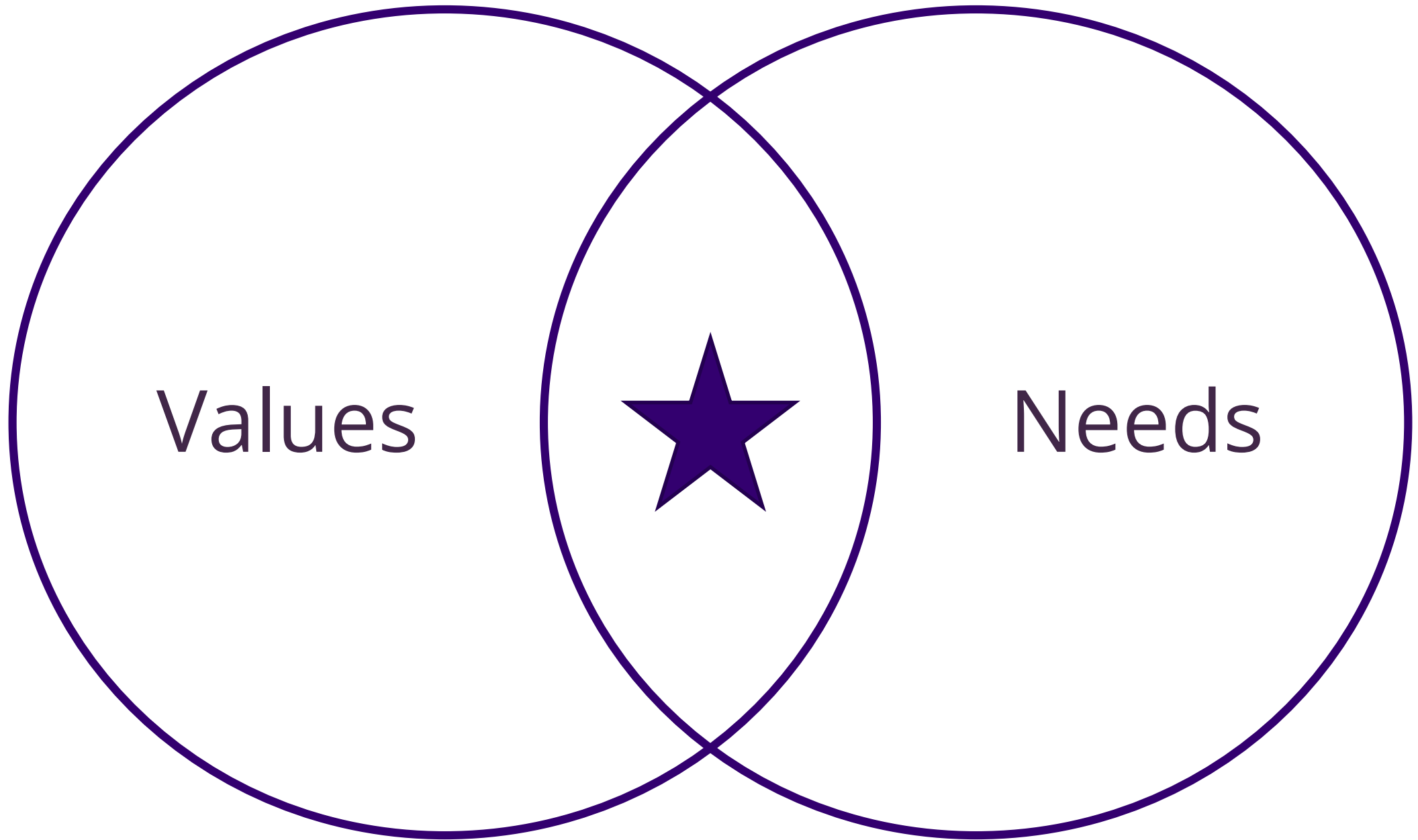
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Prior Webinars

- > [Faculty Hiring in a Virtual Environment: A Webinar on Ideas, Tools, and Best Practices](#) (Oct. 2020)
- > [Planning for Faculty Hiring: A Webinar on Search Committees, Assessment Rubrics, and Job Ads](#)(May 2021)
- > [Debriefing and Auditing Completed Faculty Searches](#) (April 2022)
- > <https://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/webinars/>
(OFA)
- > <https://advance.washington.edu/resources/?text=webinar&op=Search>
(ADVANCE)





Values

Needs

Hiring Goals = Intersection of Values and Needs?

- > Openly discuss your unit's values and needs **in advance**
- > Achieve consensus on your unit's specific goals for hiring **in advance**
- > Two areas where committees (and units) can experience tension
 - Assessing DEI statements
 - Evaluating internal and other known applicants



Assessing DEI Statements



Assessment Process: multiple stages



Application Stage

Review of application materials
(Research, Teaching, DEI, etc.)

Preliminary Interview Stage

Brief phone or virtual interviews
(Research, Teaching, DEI, etc.)

Finalist Stage

More extensive in-person or virtual interviews and visits
(Research, Teaching, DEI, etc.)



DEI Statements in Context: Application Materials

Research statements: long-standing, “traditional” component

Teaching statements: became normative in the early 2000s

DEI statements: moving from optional to normative

- > Currently required of applicants for UW faculty positions (Faculty Code Section 24-32)
- > Many units are at the **learning edge** regarding the purpose, goals, and assessment of DEI statements



Purpose of Inviting DEI Statements

Clarify the unit's diversity, equity, and inclusion values and goals

- > What are the unit's DEI aspirations?
- > How can future faculty contribute to advancing those aspirations?

Provide an opportunity for meaningful assessment

- > What would be helpful and appropriate to learn about applicants?
- > How does that information support the unit's values and needs?



DEI Statements in Context

I-200 was enacted through a ballot initiative in 1998:

“The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.”

- > Prohibits discrimination and preferential treatment during the **selection phase** of hiring
- > **Outreach efforts** to broaden pools of qualified candidates are allowed and encouraged by the university



Appropriate Goals for DEI Statements

For the unit:

- > Gain an understanding of applicants' past **actions** and/or potential capacity to contribute to unit's DEI aspirations
- > Gain an understanding of applicants' ability to engage in increasingly important roles and responsibilities of faculty members

For the applicant:

- > Demonstrate their ability to contribute to the unit
- > Focus on **actions**
 - Prior activities and experiences related to DEI issues in their discipline (past actions)
 - Plans or ideas for future DEI-related activities or strategies (future actions)
 - Informed by experience or research



DEI Statement Assessment

- > Purpose: inform the decision -making process
 - e.g., Help determine who you want to move to the preliminary interview stage
- > Focus on actions (past and potential), not belief statements
 - Passive action \leftrightarrow Leadership action
- > Tailor to field or disciplinary context
 - Contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the research group, classroom, department, college, institution, field/discipline, etc.
 - Analogize to other application statements (research, teaching)
 - > Expectations and use varies based on context and number of stages of evaluation

Resource: Planning for Faculty Hiring: A Webinar on Search Committees, Assessment Rubrics, and Job Ads (May 2021)



DEI Assessment: multiple stages



Application Stage

Questions to consider:

- > When will the DEI statement be evaluated?
 - Which round?
 - Before, after, or with other statements?
- > What are the evaluation criteria?
 - Have clear criteria
 - Recognize this is just the first stage of evaluation
- > How will the DEI statement evaluation inform this stage of assessment?



Examples of demonstrated actions or plans for action

- > Generate your own lists – field specific
- > Examples
 - Track record of supporting participation of people from UR/M groups in the field
 - > Working with diverse undergraduate student populations
 - > Mentoring diverse graduate -level students
 - > Mentoring diverse post -docs and early-career faculty
 - > Using inclusive teaching or mentoring practices
 - Track record of engagement with DEI in the field
 - > Working with K-12 outreach and pathways programs
 - > Teaching diverse subject matter from multiple perspectives
 - > Conducting research relevant to underserved communities
 - > Creating and/or delivering diversity -related programming
 - > Developing and/or leading diversity committees and initiatives
 - Plans for future action
 - > Articulate plan for their own involvement to advance DEI in the field (e.g., training students, pedagogy or curriculum, outreach, research topics, etc.)



DEI Assessment: multiple stages



Preliminary Interview Stage

Questions to consider:

- > How many DEI questions will be asked? 0? 1? 2?
- > What specific, focused DEI question(s) will be asked?
 - Ex: Can you provide an example beyond what you have already shared in your DEI statement about how you have or intend to contribute to diversity, equity, or inclusion in our unit or field?
 - Ex: Can you talk about a specific DEI-related challenge you have seen or faced and what you did or would do to address similar challenges in the future?
- > How will DEI evaluation inform this stage of assessment?



DEI Assessment: multiple stages



Finalist Stage

Questions to consider:

- > How will DEI be assessed? How much? In what form?
 - Ex: Focused interview with DEICmte. or other subgroup
 - Ex: Discussion prompt – In our unit, we have been working on _____. So far, we have done ___ and _____. What other perspectives or ideas do you have on this issue?
- > How will DEI evaluation inform this stage of assessment?

How DEI questions are asked signal what you value—we are evaluating *and* recruiting



DEI statements in Context: the Job Advertisement

- > Provide guidance to applicants
 - Clear parameters (word or page limit)
 - Clarity about what you are looking for
 - > Actions over philosophy (e.g., Please describe actions you have taken toward ...)
 - > Areas of emphasis (e.g., The DEI statement is an opportunity for applicants to highlight their **leadership** and other **prior experiences** with diversity, equity, and inclusion in **educational settings**, as well as to describe **specific** ways applicants would **contribute** to DEI efforts in the department and/or field.)
 - Align with assessment rubric
- > Think about assessment process **before** writing job ad – you need to have a sense of what you want so you can ask for what you want

Resource: Planning for Faculty Hiring: A Webinar on Search Committees, Assessment Rubrics, and Job Ads (May 2021)



Evaluating Internal and Other Known Applicants



Evaluating Known Applicants

- > Internal applicants—and other well-known applicants—can be both **advantaged** and **disadvantaged** in faculty searches.
- > How do we maintain **fairness**, **confidentiality**, and **collegiality** when there are internal or other known applicants?
- > How do we define and manage potential **conflicts of interest** ?
- > How are internal and other known applicants affected by **other types of potential bias** in the evaluation process?



Known Applicant Situations

Early career hires (assistant professors, visiting appointments, etc.)

- > Local applicant (potential relationships)
- > Past or current mentor/adviser relationships
- > External known applicant (past or current relationships)

Senior hires (associate or full professors)

- > External known applicant (reputation, but potential relationships)

Leadership hires

- > Internal known applicant (past or current relationships)
- > External known applicant (reputation, but potential relationships)



Evaluating Known Applications

Fairness

Fairness : ensuring that the evaluation process is as consistent and transparent as possible

- > Best Practice: achieve consensus on hiring goals
- > Best Practice: achieve consensus on evaluation criteria
- > Best Practice: be scrupulous about following your process
- > Best Practice: when possible, compose the search committee to avoid perception of bias



Evaluating Known Applications Confidentiality

Confidentiality : ensuring the search committee can do its job efficiently and well

- > Best Practice: rigorously adhere to the evaluation criteria
- > Best Practice: avoid introduction of gossip, rumor, anecdote, hearsay, etc.



Evaluating Known Applicants

Collegiality

Collegiality : ensuring our colleagues are treated with respect

- > Best Practice: appoint a communication contact for internal and other known applicants who is not on the search committee
- > Best Practice: inform internal applicants of their roles in the unit's hiring process
- > Best Practice: achieve consensus on appropriate communication with internal and other known applicants



Evaluating Known Applicant Interviews

Interviews : ensuring fairness and the perception of fairness

- > Best practice: avoid “courtesy” interviews
- > Best practice: schedule internal candidates early in the sequence
- > Best practice: keep interviews as consistent as possible across candidates



Faculty Code COI Statement

Faculty Code Section 2450

Conflict of Interest Regarding Appointment, Employment, and Academic Decisions

A conflict of interest exists when a person participating in a decision has a substantial connection or interest related to individual(s) affected by the decision that might bias or otherwise threaten the integrity of the decision process or that might be perceived by a reasonable person as biasing or threatening such decisions. **This includes familial, romantic, or sexual relationships and financial conflicts of interest.**

This may also include some professional relationships. No list of rules can provide direction for all the varying circumstances that may arise; good judgment of individuals is essential.



Conflicts of Interest

- > How will committee members define potential conflicts of interest?
 - Familial relationships
 - Romantic or sexual relationships
 - Business or other financial interests
 - Official academic advising relationships*
 - Major research collaborator, co -PI, or co-author*
- > How will committee members respond to potential conflicts of interest?
 - When to disclose?
 - When to recuse?
- > How will other members of the unit respond?
 - When to disclose?
 - When to recuse?



Bias and other forms of potential conflict

Conflicts of interest are distinct from various forms of bias:

- > Gender bias
- > Racial, ethnic, or national origin bias
- > Favoritism (actual or perceived)

Conflicts of interest are also distinct from other forms of potential conflict with an internal applicant:

- > A history of open disagreement or animosity
- > A perception of hostility



Evaluating Known Applicants: Unit Culture

- > Anticipate potential tensions over the selection of internal applicants or other known applicants as finalists
- > Commit to keeping conversation focused on stated evaluation criteria and unit values
- > Ask all evaluators to disclose the basis of their assessments



Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- > Intersection of values and needs = hiring goals
- > Assessment happens across multiple stages
- > Discuss DEI assessment early and often
- > Discuss potential tensions around known quantities early and often
- > Consensus requires ongoing reflection and discussion

- > Work toward common cause and common sensibility



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