

Planning for Faculty Hiring: A Webinar on Search Committees, Assessment Rubrics & Job Ads

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Outline

- > Why offer a webinar now?
 - Looking ahead to next year's hiring season
 - Reflecting on what went well and what didn't go well this past year
- > Forming faculty search committees
- > Creating and using assessment rubrics
- > Writing job ads that align with your rubrics
- > Final Thoughts
- > Q & A



Clarify Before Deliberating



ADVICE (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 11/3/20)

How a Search Committee Can Be the Arbiter of Diversity

By Lucy Leske and Christine Pendleton

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-a-search-committee-can-be-the-arbiter-of-diversity?>

Being Intentional about Faculty Search Committees

Thinking about Faculty Search Committees

- > Size of the committee – how many members?
- > Scope of the committee's work – how much responsibility?



Faculty Search Committee Models

- > **Emphasis on expertise in the field or subfield of the hire**
 - prioritizes unit's research and teaching needs
- > **Emphasis on broader expertise & values across the unit**
 - adds unit's curricular, pedagogical, service, and citizenship needs
- > **Emphasis on expertise & values both within and outside the unit**
 - adds unit's desire for collaboration, interdisciplinarity, networks
- > **Emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion**
 - adds unit's desire to enhance its DEI profile and advance its DEI mission



Faculty Search Committee Models

- > Role(s) of the search committee chair?
- > Role(s) of unit leadership (chair, director, dean, etc.)
- > Role(s) for graduate students and/or post-docs?
- > Role(s) for administrative staff?



Sample Committee Formations (1)

1. Senior specialist in subfield serves as committee chair
2. Second senior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit

VS.

1. Senior specialist in subfield serves as committee chair
2. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Senior specialist in different subfield from within the unit
4. Graduate student representative from within the unit
5. Member of unit leadership team serves ex officio; does not vote



Sample Committee Formations (2)

1. Senior colleague outside subfield chairs committee; does not vote
2. Senior specialist in subfield from within the unit
3. Junior specialist in subfield from within the unit
4. Specialist in different subfield from within the unit
5. Specialist in related field from outside the unit
6. Graduate student representative from within the unit
7. Member of diversity committee from within the unit



Faculty Search Committees

- > How many stages of evaluation in this search?
- > How often will the committee consult with the larger unit?
- > Anticipate potential Conflicts of Interest -- and have a plan for handling them
- > Anticipate potential tensions over selection of finalists and making offers



Rubrics

Questions to consider

- > Why use rubrics?
- > What are various rubric models?
- > Why define rubrics before writing job ads?



Why rubrics? (Big picture)

- > Generates early conversations about values, goals, and process
- > Creates opportunity to develop consensus and shared understanding
- > Offers structure and helps manage pace and timing



Why rubrics? (Nuts and Bolts)

- > **Provide structure for better decision making**
 - Avoid moving targets
 - Align with long-term strategic plans
 - Align with goals and values
- > **Focus discretion and flexibility**
 - Promotes purposeful discretion and flexibility
 - Promotes articulation of reasons for choices



Why use rubrics? Foster Clarity

- > **Criteria identification and calibration**
 - What are we actually evaluating, and how will we make assessments?
 - What do we mean when we say _____?
 - How to account for disparate impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic?
 - Do the criteria exacerbate bias or privilege some groups over others?

- > **Decision making**
 - What do you need to know to advance candidates to the next stage?
 - What should be evaluated and when?
 - What if an important criteria was missed?



Why use rubrics? Promote Consistency and Fairness

- > **Seek evidence and mediate “intuition” and “gut feelings”**
 - Foster accountability
 - Motivate helpful practices (e.g., proxies versus evidence)
 - Mitigate bias
- > **Encourage monitoring of criteria**
 - Continue to assess usefulness of criteria
 - Flag the introduction of new criteria – and discuss



Rubric Models

- > General criteria model
- > Increasing proficiency model
- > Listing criteria model

What needs to change at different stages of evaluation?



General Criteria Model (first cut)

Typical Criteria		Goals and Values Criteria
Evidence of research productivity		Evidence of research creativity
Potential for scholarly impact		Potential for impact
Evidence of teaching or interest and potential in contributing to the department curriculum		Evidence of inclusive teaching in topics relevant to department curricular interests
Demonstrated commitment or potential to advance meaningful demographic diversity		Evidence of commitment to expanding who is participating in the field

Increasing Proficiency Model

Area	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Poor (1)
<p>Demonstrated commitment or potential to advance meaningful demographic diversity in the discipline/field</p>	<p>The applicant (1) recognizes different and unequal experiences in the field of individuals from different demographic backgrounds, particularly those from historically underrepresented or minoritized groups (2) demonstrates a track record of participation or leadership in DEI activities in their current or prior positions and articulates specific outcomes</p> <p>AND links them to proposed actionable items they will take as an assistant professor that are creative and innovative solutions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field</p>	<p>The applicant recognizes different and unequal experiences in the field of individuals from different demographic backgrounds, particularly those from historically minoritized groups</p> <p>BUT provides only standard solutions they would take as a faculty to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.</p>	<p>The applicant provides some discussion of their prior efforts beyond a bare minimum level of outreach or “mentoring underrepresented students” but does not propose any solutions or ideas to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the field</p>	<p>The applicant (1) acknowledges issues and/or describe experiences in diversity efforts</p> <p>(2) but shows an inability to articulate any past work or ideas in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the field</p>



Listing criteria model

> General categorization

- **Excellent:** Meets all or nearly all criteria without any major area of concern
- **Good:** Meets most criteria without any major area of concern
- **Fair:** Meets some criteria and may have some areas of concern
- **Poor:** Does not meet minimal criteria or has major areas of concern

> Clarify criteria

- Define areas of concern (major v. minor)
- Define/List expectations/criteria
- Determine how to weigh quality and quantity across evaluation categories



Example 1: DEI Statement criteria

Criteria candidates could potentially demonstrate (need not be all)

- > Lived experience related to group(s) historically underrepresented or marginalized (URM) in the field and/or hiring unit
- > Knowledge of disparate participation or support of UR/M groups in the field
- > Differentiates diversity from equity and inclusion
- > Track record of supporting participation of people from UR/M groups in the field
- > Track record of engagement with DEI in the field
- > Articulates plan for their own involvement to advance DEI in the field (e.g., training students, pedagogy or curriculum, outreach, research topics, etc.)



Example 2: DEI Statement specific metrics

Possible areas of candidate's relevant DEI contributions:

- > Working with K-12 outreach and pathways programs
- > Working with diverse undergraduate student populations
- > Mentoring diverse graduate-level students
- > Mentoring diverse post-docs and early-career faculty
- > 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



Example 3: DEI Statement areas of concern

Areas of concern that could result in a lower evaluation:

- > Little or no evidence of engagement
- > Does not connect themselves or their own actions to advancing DEI
- > Overly general or cursory response to the prompt
- > Holds DEI topics separate from other faculty duties (e.g., separated from research or teaching)
- > Shows limited interest in engaging, learning, or growing in this area



Things to consider

- > What do you need to know at each stage to move to the next stage?
- > How many evaluation categories do you need at each stage?
 - Cognitive load (5 – 8 categories)
 - Can you identify 2 – 3 “deal breakers”?
- > Will each criterion have the same or a different weight?
- > What changes based on applicant or candidate rank?
 - e.g., an assistant professor candidate versus an associate professor candidate?



More things to consider

- > How do you balance structure and flexibility?
- > How do you ensure unit goals and values are incorporated into the rubric?
- > How do you manage unintended consequences?
- > When should you begin the rubric formulation process?
- > Who should you involve in the rubric formulation process?
 - Consider your unit history, current practices, broader unit goals and needs, unit culture and practices



Rubrics and Internal Applicants

Should you use the same rubric criteria for internal applicants that you use for external applicants?

- > Can you stop committee members from assessing internal applicants differently than external applicants?
- > Can you stop voting members of the faculty from assessing internal applicants differently than external applicants?
- > What types of evidence are allowed for internal applicants?
 - And at what points in the process should these different types of evidence be allowed?



Why define your rubric before writing the job ad?

- > Encourages more careful and intentional construction of the job ad
- > Fosters alignment of applicant materials with evaluation process and criteria
- > Promotes transparency to unit, committee, and applicants
- > Provides a framework for processing applicant materials based on evaluation stage



Job Ads

Basic job ad structure

- > **Part 1:** position overview
- > **Part 2:** hiring unit's expectations and interests
- > **Part 3:** required application materials
- > **Part 4:** unit's closing statement, including priority deadline
- [Part 5: UW's required statements]



Sample rubric - Psychology

1. Research focus
2. Diversity mission
3. Research fit
4. Broad thinking
5. Overlap in research
6. Teaching/mentoring
7. Service/collegiality
8. Overall (priority to keep applicant in pool for further review)



Mapping job ad to rubric

- > Part 1: position overview
 - research fit, research focus
- > Part 2: hiring unit's expectations and interests
 - broad thinking, overlap in research, teaching/mentoring, service/collegiality, diversity, overall
- > Part 3: required application materials
 - teaching/mentoring, diversity, research focus, research fit
- > Part 4: unit's closing statement, including priority deadline
- > Part 5: UW's required statements



Sample job ad – Psychology (Part 1: overview)

The Department of Psychology at the University of Washington invites applicants at any rank for a tenure-track or tenured faculty position in social/personality psychology. We seek applicants who research the causes and consequences of social inequities and how to remedy them.

We are most interested in research specializations that address issues of diversity, intergroup and interracial relations, prejudice, stereotypes, culture, racial and ethnic identity, racism, institutional and systemic bias, and social groups, broadly construed.

Part 1: position overview

Rubric: research fit, research focus



Sample job ad – Psychology (Part 2: Expectations and Interests)

Applicants will be expected to provide high quality teaching and mentoring at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. We are particularly interested in candidates who have a strong commitment to promoting the success of students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in academia.

The successful candidate is expected to have or develop a record of high-quality publications and a funded research program. Applicants should have the Ph.D. degree, or foreign equivalent, by the start of the appointment.

Part 2: hiring unit's expectations and interests

Rubric: broad thinking, overlap in research, teaching/mentoring, service/collegiality, diversity, overall



Sample job ad – Psychology (Part 3: application materials)

Applications should include a curriculum vitae, a statement of research interests, a statement of teaching interests, the names and contact information for three individuals who can provide references, a research sample of no more than two reprints or preprints, and a diversity statement of no more than 500 words.

The diversity statement should address leadership, commitment, and experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Applications must be submitted electronically through Interfolio.

Part 3: required application materials

Rubric: teaching/mentoring, diversity, research focus, research fit



Sample job ad – Psychology (Part 4: closing statements)

We are **committed to** creating a diverse and inclusive departmental climate. You can learn more about our department at: <https://psych.uw.edu/about>

Review of applications will begin on [date], but applications will be thoughtfully reviewed and considered until the position is filled.



Sample job ad – compare/contrast (DEI statements)

Original:

... a diversity statement of no more than 500 words.

The diversity statement should address leadership, commitment, and experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Typical alternative:

Applications should include a diversity statement.



Sample job ad – compare/contrast (DEI statements)

Original:

... a diversity statement of no more than 500 words.

The diversity statement **should address** leadership, commitment, and experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Potential revision:

... a DEI statement of no more than 500 words.

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 help advance the department's commitments to DEI and anti-racism.



Sample job ad – compare/contrast (priority deadline)

Original:

Review of applications will begin on [date], but applications will be thoughtfully reviewed and considered until the position is filled.

Typical alternative 1:

Applications accepted until [date].

Typical alternative 2:

Priority deadline for receiving applications is [date]. Position is open until filled.



Final Thoughts

- > **Value of intentionality**
 - matching committee and rubric models to your goals
 - aligning materials request with evaluation criteria
 - building consensus on unit needs, criteria, and process
- > **Stages of evaluation**
 - highlighting purpose of each stage
- > **Discretion and flexibility**
 - articulating intentions and reasons



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