

# Diversity

# Equity Opportunity

## Achieving Results: Guidelines for Searches to Improve Diversity



### Introduction

The following guidelines are designed to assist hiring managers and search committees in understanding their responsibilities in promoting Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action in the selection process for all positions. Some laws require the University in its role as a federal contractor to provide equal employment opportunities for all regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age or military involvement. New York State laws also prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Federal and New York State laws mandate the University to operate a program of affirmative action that ensures equal opportunities in employment. For over twenty years, the State University of New York has supported the principle that a full and open search should precede the filling of all vacancies.

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## Definitions and Terms



**Affirmative Action** - Specific actions in recruitment, hiring, promotions and other areas designed to eliminate the present effects of past discrimination or to prevent discrimination. It is a proactive program where aggressive steps of outreach and support of community action programs that consider women and minorities currently not in the workforce are developed.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)** - A system of employment practices under which individuals are not excluded from any participation, advancement, or benefits because of their race, color, religion, sex, national origin or other factor that cannot lawfully be the basis for employment decision. An employment system in which neither intentional nor unintentional discrimination operates. Unlike affirmative action, EEO requires little or no action. It is a position/policy of non-discrimination.

**Affirmative Recruitment** - Special recruitment efforts undertaken to assure that qualified protected class members are well represented in the applicant pools for positions in which they have been historically excluded or substantially underutilized. Such efforts may include contacting organizations and media with known constituencies of protected class constituencies, and similar actions. Open job posting and advertising "Equal Opportunity Employer" statements may be necessary in many situations simply as a matter of nondiscrimination, rather than as measures of affirmative recruitment.

**Recruitment Plan** - a narrative which contains the rationale for the search and a description of the search efforts, affirmative outreach activities, including but not limited to the placement of advertisements in publications or on web sites, use of conference visits, placements services, professional associations and other networks in increasing the pools of qualified applicants ensuring full participation of women and minorities currently not in the workforce.

## Pre-search Activities

### Job Development

- To ensure Equal Opportunity, formulate position descriptions for the needs of the department, not the individual! Consult with Human Resources for assistance.
- Ensure that the position contains only job-related criteria and does not reflect unlawful discrimination.
- Identify essential functions of the position as per the Americans with Disabilities Act. Consult with Human Resources for assistance.
- Ensure that all appropriate approvals on compensation and salary have been secured prior to the initial review of the recruitment plan by the AA/EEO committee.

### Recruitment Plan and Outreach Strategies

Consult with Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action (ODAA), the area AA/EEO committee and Human Resources (HR) for assistance as recruitment plan is being developed. The earlier that the collaboration occurs between these departments and the hiring area, the better! Develop the recruitment plan using these helpful hints:

- Review Goals and areas of underutilization for your job title (these are provided by ODAA.) What is the availability of women and minorities for this position? Are there special areas where focus should be placed as a result?
- Continue to think in a strategic manner regarding where good faith efforts should be placed. Focus on areas where there is special need because the University has set a goal. Evaluate areas of underutilization and where increased diversity will especially enhance services.
- Are there recruitment efforts already in place that may benefit this search?
- Is there an opportunity to take advantage of any specialized affirmative programs such as Traineeship, EARN, or the Postdoctoral advertisement initiative?
- Establish priorities - determine whether the department would like to utilize an internal or external posting; or regional or national outreach. Use outreach appropriate to the title, position and department (customize!)
- Advertise broadly where ever possible. Identify publications, web sites and institutions where the job advertisement can be placed. Identify various media where it would be most effective (and less costly!) for example, listserv/e-mail/web pages/mailings to peer institutions. Contact ODAA and HR for additional ideas.
- Establish professional working relationships with community based organizations professional associations, business and community leaders. Network with colleagues, business leaders and individuals in the field who may be resources for identifying qualified candidates. Document contact with these resources through telephone calls and face to face meetings.
- Participate and attend minority and women professional association conferences and regularly scheduled meetings. Maintain active membership on community boards, community-based organizations, and minority professional associations.
- Take advantage of the diverse pool of applicants in Stony Brook's own backyard – our student body, our current employees and our alumni. Work together with campus networks such as the Black Faculty Staff Association (BFSA), Union Universitaria Latinoamericano (UUL), the Asian American Faculty Staff Association (AAFSA) or the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Faculty Staff Network (LGBFSN) to enhance your current efforts.

*Remember that recruiting is an ongoing process that involves filling more than one position. Successful recruiting means building relationships with candidates, mentors and other members of the profession. This process is as valid for recruiting minority faculty and staff members as it is for majority group members.  
-- Lois Vander Waerdt, Affirmative Action in Higher Education: A Source Book*

## Establishing the Search Committee



- The Director or Chair of the hiring department extends an invitation to potential search committee members. The Search Committee conducts search activities, screens and evaluates candidates for the vacant position, and recommends candidates to the hiring manager for consideration.
- The recommended size of the Search committee is 3 to 5 people including someone who will serve as the Chairperson. Committee members should include individuals from diverse backgrounds.
- The committee members should include individuals knowledgeable of the position and organizational context within which the new hire will function. Select individuals who are available to serve and have the time to conduct the duties expected of them.
- It is not recommended that the hiring manager or individual with immediate supervisory responsibility be a member of the Search Committee.

## The Initial Meeting



- The Chairperson schedules a planning meeting with the Committee members, the head of the hiring department, the Chair of the area AA/EEO Committee, and a representative from HR. At this meeting, the hiring manager and AA/EEO Chair charge the Search Committee with conducting an AA/EEO search and define the expectations of the search.
- The hiring manager is responsible for detailing the position description, qualifications, preferred and minimum qualifications required, advertisement and outreach sources, and developing the selection criteria and evaluation-rating sheet. Revisions and suggestions from the search committee may be incorporated into the recruitment plan at this stage.
- Outline the period for receiving and reviewing resumes. Allow sufficient time to recruit a diverse applicant pool and for all outreach efforts to be realized. External recruitment for State positions require a minimum 30 day posting; Research Foundation positions require 10 working days.
- The Chair of the Area AA/EEO (or his/her designee) should be invited to the initial meeting to assist the Search Committee in their review of the department's goals and consideration of women and minorities currently not represented in the department's workforce, discuss procedures as they relate to AA/EEO compliance, assist in outreach efforts and provide helpful advice.
- Consider developing a contingency plan if the initial recruitment effort does not bring in a sufficiently diverse pool.
- All involved in the search should receive a reminder on confidentiality. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the search and selection process!

## Advertising



- If the recruitment plan includes an intention to advertise, the Search Committee or hiring unit can call Human Resources and the University Advertising Office for assistance in completing the Advertising Request Form (call 2-6434 for supply ).
- Develop the text of the advertisement based on the approved position description and job qualifications.
- The posting should contain the position title, minimum qualifications required, and accurately reflect the position description.
- Send the Advertising Request form (one for each publication or website) and the text to Human Resources along with your other paperwork.
- You will be contacted by University Advertising prior to ad placement and the appropriate AA/EOE language will be added by University Advertising Office.

## Preparation of Rating and Evaluation Documents

- Develop a resume rating form that ranks candidates based on minimum and preferred qualifications. Consult with HR for assistance.
- Develop a list of standardized questions used to be asked of every candidate. Consider the interview format and review the list of legal and illegal inquiries. Consult with HR and ODAA for assistance.
- Develop an interview evaluation form to rank the candidates based on their responses. Ensure that the rating criteria treats all applicants consistently and equitably.
- Both documents should be objective and quantitative by design in order to limit subjective criteria.
- Decide whether any other type of screening will be utilized, i.e. a presentation, writing sample, computer skills assessment. Consultation with ODAA and HR is required and must be directly job related. Applicants must be treated consistently and equitably; and be provided with reasonable accommodations where necessary.

## Submitting Search and Selection Plan

- The plan must be submitted to the AA/EEO Committee for review and approval and should include:
- Position Description, Personnel Requisition, Advertising Request Form and appropriate Ad copy, Affirmative Action Recruitment (SUSB 68) Form, resume rating document, list of standardized questions to be used by interviewers, interview evaluation form.
- Upon approval, the appropriate information is submitted to Human Resources for Posting in Campus Job Opportunities and University Advertising to place the appropriate ads.

# Mid-search Activities



## Reviewing the Applicant Pool



- Receiving of applications and resumes: Search Committee Chair or designee should acknowledge receipt of each applications and resume and include a Voluntary Affirmative Action Information Survey (VAAIS) with each response. These forms are returned to the ODAA.
- Reviewing the Candidates: Using the Resume Rating document, the Search Committee members individually review and rank resumes. The Search Committee will meet to review the rankings and to select the group of candidates who will be considered further for the position. Identify and log applicants that meet the minimum and preferred qualifications. Identify and log applicants that do not meet the minimum qualifications.
- Ensure that applicants are evaluated on the basis of pre-established criteria.
- Avoid extraneous comments, in notes or verbally that are not job related. Do not write notes on the resumes.
- Take care not to eliminate candidates in underrepresented groups until the committee has had the opportunity to consider each one.
- Monitoring the Applicant Pool- in reviewing the resumes, Search Committee determines gender and ethnicity of every applicant. In addition, the Committee should ensure that the applicant pool reflects a diverse pool of qualified candidates.
- Request summary reports on the applicant pool (VAAIS reports) from the ODAA in order to see the pool's composition. Provide the title of the position and the posting reference number and the results can be emailed or faxed to the hiring department.
- If qualified women and minorities are not included in the pool of qualified applicants, the Chair of the Search may call ODAA for additional resources in the development of further recruitment strategies. Revision or expansion of the recruitment plan is highly recommended at this stage.
- If the applicant pool is not as large, as diverse or as qualified as expected, consider whether the announcements and outreach conducted was effective. Check the screening of the preferred qualifications to ensure that all candidates were given appropriate consideration.

The following ethnic codes, as defined by federal regulations, are to be used when reporting:

- ⇒ White (not of Hispanic origin.) A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa or the Middle East
- ⇒ Black (not of Hispanic origin.) A person having origins in any of the racial groups of Africa.
- ⇒ Hispanic. A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- ⇒ Asian or Pacific Islander. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This includes for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands and Samoa.
- ⇒ American Indian or Alaskan Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Note: Persons not having origins in one of the groups given above, but having assumed names that are associated with such groups, are not identified on the basis of the assumed names. Base group analysis on best available evidence (observation, deduction, or voluntary information.) Federal regulations require that application materials (resumes, letters of recommendation, rating scales, interview records, etc.) be preserved for three (3) years after the making of a personnel decision, or until the termination of State or Federal agency proceedings or a court hearing.

## Preliminary Candidate Selection



## The Interview



- Once the Search Committee has established a list of candidates they wish to invite for the interview, the Chair of the Search will meet with the AA/EEO committee to present the preliminary candidate selection for review and approval.
- Upon AA/EEO approval and sign off on the mid-search section of the SUSB 68, the Search Committee can proceed to invite the selected candidates to campus.
- At this stage in the process, those applicants no longer under consideration should receive written notification from the Search Committee.
- Upon approval by the AA/EEO Committee, approved candidates are invited in for the preliminary interview with the Search Committee. The Search Committee should decide on the schedule, format and design of the interview process.
- Review Lawful and Unlawful Employment Inquiries to ensure all committee members understand what are acceptable questions to ask an applicant.
- Design the interview process and campus visit to avoid any bias toward any candidates. Treat candidates as consistently as possible.
- Summarize the interview ratings using objective criteria, and with consistency and equity.
- After the interviews are concluded, references have been checked and a summary of the interview ratings and the references' comments have been considered by the Search Committee, the Committee selects the final group of candidates to be referred to the Hiring Department/Unit. The candidates may or may not be ranked according to the preference of the hiring manager; strengths and weaknesses may be outlined.

# Pre-Hire Activities



## The Final Stages in the Process

- The hiring manager conducts interviews with all finalists. All criteria that apply to the search committee also apply to the hiring manager. Hiring managers must utilize consistent interview questions asked of all candidates, use objective criteria for ranking candidates and summarize their interviews using non-discriminatory reasons for selection or non-selection of the candidates.
- Reasons for non-selection must be traceable to specific behaviors or deficiency in training and experience for example:
  - ⇒ Length of Service
  - ⇒ Performance Evaluations
  - ⇒ Job Experience
  - ⇒ Individual Skills
  - ⇒ Educational Background
  - ⇒ Demonstration of Skills/Abilities
  - ⇒ Training History
  - ⇒ Attendance / Punctuality
  - ⇒ Personal Conduct Record
  - ⇒ Any other Job-related Facts
- The hiring manager should provide detailed reasons for non-select – for example, if someone is “lacking preferred qualifications” outline what those qualifications are; if someone withdrew their application, outline the reason why. Ensure that any reason summarized on the SUSB 68 form is traceable back to documentation in the search materials (i.e. the interview notes and screening.)
  - ⇒ Please note: “most qualified” or “best fit” is not a sufficient reason for selection. Be specific about the skills and qualifications that resulted in your decision.
- The Hiring/Appointment Package - Once the hiring department has selected the candidate of choice, the Hiring Manager and the Search Committee prepare a package summarizing the Search.
- Document all good faith recruitment efforts. Give credit to the department for the efforts that were placed. Include copies of all advertising and emails sent.
- State and federal regulations require recruitment and hiring packages be kept for a period of no less than three years. Items that are kept include:
  - ⇒ Applicant pool data - '68 form & VAAIS
  - ⇒ Applications, Resumes or C.V.'s of all applicants (including those that do not meet the minimum qualifications)
  - ⇒ Documentation of outreach efforts
  - ⇒ Copies of all advertisements placed

## The Offer

- Upon final review and approval by the AA/EEO Committee and the Affirmative Action Officer (via signed off SUSB 68), the hiring manager is free to offer the employment opportunity to the candidate of choice.
- After candidate of choice has accepted the offer, non-selected candidates should receive written notification from the search committee.

**Stony Brook University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer.**

**This publication is available in alternative format upon request.**

**The Office for Diversity and Affirmative Action is available to provide additional assistance, information and resources at any point during the Search process and may be contacted at 632-6280.**

**[www.stonybrook.edu/diversity](http://www.stonybrook.edu/diversity)**

