Important Considerations for the Faculty Search Process

Conducting consistent, fair, inclusive, and effective faculty searches is one of the core ways that Duke cultivates diversity and inclusiveness within its community. Inclusive and fair searches are especially important with regard to applicants from underrepresented groups and groups designated as protected under federal laws and regulations. While quality faculty searches require substantial effort, the outcomes of these searches have far-reaching implications and lend direction to Duke’s environment for years and, sometimes, decades. The following are a few best practices for the faculty search process at Duke:

**Beginning the Search**

- Design a job description to attract a robust pool of candidates, but one that is clear about the required and preferred qualifications as well as the application materials that must be submitted.
- Establish clear deadlines.
- Establish clear screening criteria.
- Request faculty demographic profile from the Office of Institutional Equity.
- Routinely, actively, and creatively publicize the position and encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply.

**Evaluating Candidates**

- Understand the role that unconscious bias might play in the search process.
- Stick to the established screening criteria.
- Facilitate a structured review and interview process.
- Keep extensive notes on meetings, discussions, and decisions made involving candidates.
- Interviews and campus meetings should not be confrontational; questions should be well-crafted and relevant to the job as described within the job description.

**Closing the Search**

- Make sure that your selection adds to Duke’s excellence and diversity.
- Collect and file all records related to the search.

The Office for Institutional Equity provides case-by-case support and guidance with regard to compliance, search inclusivity, outreach, and demographics.
Unconscious Bias

We all have biases—some are explicit, but many are implicit, often making them difficult to recognize especially because they are often at odds with one’s conception of their own values. These biases have the potential to influence how we view others and how we make decisions, including decisions that are made during the faculty selection process. The following are some strategies for reducing the potential for unconscious bias within the search process:

- Focus on skills and competencies, avoiding unnecessary reliance on “pedigree.”
- Be open to a wide range of candidates who might present their job skills and competencies differently.
- Be aware of your own potential biases regarding education, type of experience, location of experience, organization affiliation, etc.
- Be open to different presentation styles, speech patterns, choice of words, or accent.
- Reflect on possible biases related to: (e.g., dress, tattoos, piercings, hair) or other characteristics such as complexion; perceived race, ethnicity, gender, age, weight, sexual orientation; perceived veteran or disability status; socio-economic class, etc. that do not signify their job skills or competencies.
- Consider “cues” to prompt focus on possible implicit biases.

Regulatory Requirements

Due to Duke’s status as a federal contractor and per the requirements stated within robust equality-related legislation, operations are subject to a broad range of regulatory guidelines. A subset of these guidelines stipulate how the faculty selection process must work.

Individuals involved in the faculty selection process must be cognizant of these requirements and should comply—in full—with such regulations. Compliance with these regulations not only keeps Duke in alignment with the law, it also allows Duke to assess and improve on the selection process and lends help towards Duke’s goal of growing and maintaining a diverse community though inclusive and fair searches.

The following are some core regulatory requirements to keep in mind:

1. **Provide Equal Access.** All positions must be posted to a public forum for at least 7 days; access to this posting should not be discriminatory in any way.

2. **Include EEO Tag Line.** Duke’s EEO Tagline must be included with all solicitations or advertisements for employment.

3. **Allow Applicants to Self-Identify.** All applicants must be given the opportunity to self-identify their race, ethnicity, gender, veteran status, disability status, and internal/external status.
4. **Document the Recruitment Process.** The recruitment process should be transparent and structured from the development of job descriptions to final offers, including compensation.

5. **Qualification-Based Selection.** All selection decisions must have significant rational basis rooted in qualifications relevant to the job description.

6. **Keep Records.** Records of all searches (regardless of if a selection was made) must be retained for three years from the date of last action. Records include:
   
   - Job descriptions
   - Job postings and advertisements
   - Records of job offers
   - Applications and resumes
   - Interview notes
   - Tests and test results
   - Written employment policies and procedures
   - Personnel files
   - Correspondences with candidates

**Resources**

**Individuals**

Abbas Benamamoun, PhD – Vice Provost, Faculty Advancement  
Inderdeep Chatrath, PhD – Assistant Vice President, Office for Institutional Equity (OIE)  
Leigh Fickling, JD – Executive Director, Disability Management System (DMS)

**Websites**

Office of Faculty Affairs: [https://admin.trinity.duke.edu/faculty-affairs](https://admin.trinity.duke.edu/faculty-affairs)  
Office for Institutional Equity: [https://oie.duke.edu/](https://oie.duke.edu/)  
Office for Institutional Equity Diversity Toolkit: [https://web.duke.edu/equity/toolkit/](https://web.duke.edu/equity/toolkit/)  
Office for Faculty Advancement: [https://facultyadvancement.duke.edu/](https://facultyadvancement.duke.edu/)  
Implicit Association Test: [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html)  
Handbook for Faculty Searches and Hiring: [https://www.umich.edu/~advporj/handbook.pdf](https://www.umich.edu/~advporj/handbook.pdf)  
The Revolving Door for Underrepresented Minority Faculty in Higher Education: [https://folio.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/10244/50/insight_Revolving_Door.pdf?sequence=1](https://folio.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/10244/50/insight_Revolving_Door.pdf?sequence=1)

**Duke EEO Tagline**

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Duke is committed to encouraging and sustaining work and learning environments that are free from harassment and prohibited discrimination. Duke prohibits discrimination and harassment in the administration of both its employment and educational policies. Duke University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to providing employment opportunity without regard to an individual's age, color, disability, genetic information, gender, gender expression, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Duke also makes good faith efforts to recruit, hire, and promote qualified women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans.

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Duke prohibits discrimination based on sex. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Duke has designated a director of Title IX compliance in the Office for Institutional Equity as its Title IX coordinator.

**Relevant Legislation**

- Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended
- Executive Order 11246, as amended
- Equal Pay Act of 1963
- Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008
- Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978
- Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended