Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence (STRIDE)

Excellence is always our goal.
What is STRIDE?

- NSF-ADVANCE Funded Activity
- Goal: improve the search process by disseminating information on best practices for diversity and excellence
- Senior faculty
  - extensive study of the literature
  - advise review committees about best practices related to faculty recruitment, retention, and promotion
- Separate from Dean of Faculties administrative training required for search chairs

STRIDE Committee Members

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Department/Program</th>
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<td>Mary Alfred</td>
<td>Associate Dean</td>
<td>College of Education</td>
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Is there a problem?

- Women represent 50% of the population and capacity for innovation in the United States, but they represent only 24% of the STEM workforce.

- In fall 2013, there were 1,067 tenured or tenure-track STEM faculty* at TAMU. Of those:
  - 194 (18%) were women faculty
  - 26 (2.4%) were women faculty of color**

- A diverse STEM workforce is essential to innovation and our nation’s competitiveness as well as TAMU’s competitiveness.

*Certified DARS Warehouse Data, 35 ADVANCE Target Departments,
**African-American, Hispanic, and Native American
Why is diversity important?

• It gives us access to talent currently not represented.

• More perspectives are taken into account in devising solutions to problems.

• Diverse faculty serve as role models for a diverse student body.
  • Female students have better STEM engagement (number of classes taken, graduation rates) when they have female professors.

• We potentially exclude faculty of excellence.

Analysis of audition records of 14,000 musicians for positions in major US symphony orchestras during 1970-1996:

• Use of blind auditions increases the probability that a woman will advance from preliminary rounds by 50%.

• Roster data from 11 major orchestras show the switch to blind auditions accounts for 30% of the increase in the proportion of women among new hires.

We ALL – men and women – perceive and treat people differently based on their social and cultural identity group memberships.

This is implicit or unintentional bias.
Scope & Recognition of the Problem

Scope of Implicit Bias in Academia*

Letters of Rec
Faculty Awards
Graduate Student & Post-doc Selection
Faculty Hires/Promotion & Tenure

Recognition & Action

TAMU
Professional Societies
Journals
Funding Agencies (NIH/NSF)

*Not an exhaustive list
When are implicit biases most likely to operate?

- Under important time pressure
- When the task involves ambiguity
- Non-verbal automatic processes
  - e.g. creating yes/no piles of CVs

Activity: Letters of Recommendation

- See examples of 2 Letters of Recommendation. Discuss at your table. Report back to group.
  - Which letter would you consider more convincing and helpful?
  - What 2 phrases are most helpful?
  - What 2 phrases are least helpful?
Letters of Recommendation

Gender

A content analysis of more than 300 letters of recommendation for medical faculty at a large American medical school

Men
- Longer
- More references to CV, Publications, Patients, Colleagues

Women
- Shorter
- More references to personal life
- More “doubt raisers” (hedges, faint praise, and irrelevancies)
  - “It’s amazing how much she’s accomplished.”
  - “It appears that her health is stable.”
  - “She is close to my wife.”

See Things to Remember handout

Two CV Studies

- National samples of STEM academics
  -Reviewed identical applications for Lab Manager (Study 1)
  -Reviewed identical CVs of Assistant Professor (Study 2)
  -Differentiated only by male or female name
- Male applicant preferred 2:1 over female applicant
- Reservations were expressed 4 times more often when the name was female
  -“I would need to see evidence that she had gotten these grants and publications on her own.”
- Female applicants viewed as less competent and offered less mentoring and lower salary
  -mean $26,508 v. $30,238
- Results were consistent for both male and female reviewers

Implicit Bias: Not Just About Gender

Fictitious resumes to help-wanted ads in Boston and Chicago newspapers

- “White sounding” names receive 50% more callbacks for interviews
- “White sounding” names yielded as many more callbacks as an additional 8 years of experience
- Racial gap is the same across occupation, industry, and employer size

- Note regarding Emily & Greg and Lakisha & Jamal: name frequency data was calculated from birth certificates of all babies born in MA from 1974-79. Data was tabulated by race; distinctive names are those that have the highest ratio of frequency in one racial group to frequency in the other racial group.

Texas university students applied for jobs at a mall

- Wore hats not knowing the label
  - “Gay & Proud” vs. “Texan & Proud”
- No significant formal discrimination
  - job availability, permission to complete a job application, job callback, and permission to use the bathroom
- Significant interpersonal bias
  - Employers spent less time, used fewer words, and acted more negatively toward “gay and proud” applicants

Postdoctoral Fellowship Applications

Gender

Average Rating of Applicants as a function of their scientific productivity

Competence Score

Total Impact (Productivity)
1 impact point = 1 paper published in a journal with an impact of 1

Accumulation of Disadvantage

Any one slight might seem minor, but small imbalances and disadvantages accrue, having a major impact.

“Mountains are molehills piled one on top of the other.” – Virginia Valian

Even 1% Difference has a Cumulative Effect

Why are we unaware of implicit biases?

- We view ourselves as fair and impartial.
- We believe advancement is merit-based.
- We admire the competence of some, which seems to show that we are free of bias.
- We perceive that evaluations are basically fair because some make it to the top.
  - We have the sense that the truly capable succeed.
  - It is hard to remember that an exception is just that: an atypical event, and therefore actually evidence that the norm is different.

Activity: Challenges & Strategies

• Discuss at your table. Report back to group.

• After receiving approval from your unit, what are the steps in a faculty search?

• What challenges do you encounter with faculty searches?

• What strategies and tactics do you employ for recruiting to improve diversity and excellence?
What Can Search Committees Do?

“What’s a Search, not a Sort.”

Active Strategies to Overcome Implicit Bias in the Search Process:

- Always Be Recruiting
- Search Committee Composition
- Inclusive Advertising
- Thoughtful Evaluation of Candidates
- Host an Effective Visit
Priming the Pump: 
Always Be Recruiting

Recruiting begins before you have a position.

• Conduct a faculty SEARCH, not a faculty SORT.
  • Do more than wait for CVs to roll in.

• Network directly with young scholars, including your own students. Invite them to speak.

• Pre-interview promising scholars at conferences to encourage entry into academia and to apply to A&M.

• Foster connections with other institutions to identify and track promising candidates.

• Widen the pool from which you recruit.
  • Actively pursue candidates thriving at less well-ranked institutions.
Search Committee Composition

- Require and reward a high level of commitment: an effective search is an intense, extended process.

- Include people openly committed to diversity and excellence.

- Include a diverse representation of individuals on the committee to the extent possible.
  - Remember to take account of their added service load in other assignments.
Inclusive Advertising

• Research indicates that introducing a diversity indicator in the job description creates the potential for expanding the role of diversity in faculty searches.

• Use inclusive language when writing the advertisement and highlight policies that attract diverse faculty (http://dof.tamu.edu/content/faculty-work-life).

• Post the advertisement in the “usual” places, but also in places that target underrepresented groups (see Recruiting Resources handout).

  • Association for Women in Science--job listings page http://www.awis.org/
  • SACNAS, Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science--Online job opportunities http://sacnas.org/professionals/opportunities
  • Diverse: Issues in Higher Education http://diverseeducation.com/
  • The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education http://www.hispanicoutlook.com/index.htm
  • Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists http://maes.ihispano.com/user/register/company
  • APS Women in Physics Email group http://www.aps.org/programs/women/email-lists/wiphys.cfm

Thoughtful Evaluation of Candidates

- Be aware of your mental models and how they affect evaluation; make sure your committee works to actively counteract it.
- Discuss and define what excellence is and how it will be assessed for all candidates.
- Discuss and define evaluation criteria in advance: scholarly activity and support, teaching promise, fit with department priorities.
- Design organized evaluations that combine examination of written materials and direct contact with the candidate.
- Avoid global evaluations and summary rankings; acknowledge uncertainty.

PAUSE
- Pay attention
- Ask yourself about bias
- Understand how bias affects your decisions
- Slow down
- Evaluate candidates

Use an Evaluation Tool
(see handout)

Applicant Evaluation Tool
for Search Committees

The following offers a method for department faculty to provide evaluations of job applicants. It is meant to be a template for departments that they can modify as necessary for their own uses. The proposed questions are designed for junior faculty candidates; however, alternate language is suggested in parenthesis for senior faculty candidates.

Applicant’s Name: ____________________________________________

Please indicate which of the following are true for you (check all that apply):

- Read applicant’s CV
- Read applicant’s statements (research, teaching, etc.)
- Read applicant’s letters of recommendation
- Read applicant’s scholarship (indicate what): ______________________

Please rate the applicant on each of the following:

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<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Unable to Judge</th>
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<td>Evidence of research productivity</td>
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<td>Potential for scholarly impact/tenureability</td>
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<td>Evidence of strong background in [relevant fields]</td>
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<td>Evidence of [particular] perspective on [particular area]</td>
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<td>Evidence of teaching experience and interest (including good mentorship)</td>
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<td>Potential to teach key departmental courses</td>
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<td>Potential to contribute to the mission of the department/college</td>
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<td>Contributes to the diversity of the department</td>
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<td>Potential to teach the core curriculum on [particular area] (including creation of new courses)</td>
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Other Pre-Interview Tips

• Try to interview a pool of candidates that reflect the discipline’s and college’s values about diversity in STEM.

• Conduct phone/Skype interviews with a high number of candidates before inviting three to campus.
  • Use standard set of questions

• Consider inviting more than three candidates to campus.
Host an Effective Visit

- Treat all applicants as valuable scholars and educators, not representatives of a group.

- Ensure that all candidates meet a diverse group of people. (This may include graduate and undergraduate students.)

- Offer time on the schedule to meet with TAMU representatives of their choice (e.g. WFN, GLBT Professional Network, International Faculty & Scholars Network, Jewish Faculty Network etc.)
  - Arrange a meeting or just provide time on their schedule and a list of resources.

- Consider involving faculty and staff networks (e.g. WFN)

Provide Candidates with Information Before They Interview

Make sure that all candidates know about dual-career support, family-friendly policies, and the local community prior to their first visit.

- Provide an information packet to all candidates. Information about TAMU family-friendly policies and the community are available at:
  - [http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life/BALANCING-WORK,-PERSONAL-AND-FAMILY-ISSUES](http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life/BALANCING-WORK,-PERSONAL-AND-FAMILY-ISSUES)
  - [http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life](http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life)

- Provide all candidates with a list of faculty and staff networks on campus.
  - [http://diversity.tamu.edu/Campus-Resources/Faculty-Staff](http://diversity.tamu.edu/Campus-Resources/Faculty-Staff)

- Be aware that dual-career support is available to partners of faculty recruits regardless of marital status or sexual orientation.
  - Support is available for faculty or staff partners of faculty recruits.
  - Department Heads request assistance through their Deans as part of the recruiting process.
  - Support for dual-careers enhances both recruitment and retention of all faculty.
  - [http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life/DUAL-CAREER-PARTNER-PLACEMENT](http://dof.tamu.edu/Faculty-Resources/CURRENT-FACULTY/Faculty-Work-Life/DUAL-CAREER-PARTNER-PLACEMENT)
  - [https://advance.tamu.edu/dual-career-program-background/](https://advance.tamu.edu/dual-career-program-background/)
Host an Effective Visit

Be aware of

**Unintended Consequences of Personal Questions**

The following scenarios were derived from a 2007 University of Michigan ADVANCE survey of faculty candidates who withdrew from searches or turned down offers.
Do you have a partner who will be coming on the visit and might want to learn more about job options here?

This university and department are really supportive of my partner’s job search.

“I got nonstop questions about family issues from the faculty. Nobody asked my husband about family issues.”

“This is a friendly department where everyone helps one another out.

“Obviously they didn’t want to offer a job to someone who was going to have a problem.”

“I might choose to live in a different place from my husband. I was not treated equally.”
Do you have school-aged children or do you want to learn more about schools here?

This university, this department, and the faculty are family-friendly.

“Do you have kids?”

“I figured the reason they asked me about whether I had kids was that they wanted to figure out whether it would be hard for me to move. Obviously it was a negative.”

“A senior male asked me if I was going to have children. Just like that. I said what I was trained to say: No.”

This is a great place to raise a family.
What if a candidate mentions or asks about a dual-career issue, family-life policies, or schools in B/CS?

• Answer the question asked.

• Do not ask questions to gather further information from the candidate.

• As necessary, identify other resources outside the search committee.
Consider Only Job-Relevant Criteria

• Interviewers should only evaluate qualifications that are relevant to a faculty position – questions about matters that are not job relevant (e.g., family status) are not appropriate.

• Search Committee members should not seek or discuss information about the existence of a dual-career partner or family status of the candidate.

• See the List of Appropriate Interview Questions.
A Successful Search is Just the Beginning!

- **Build a culture of search excellence.** Reflect on your search and provide a report suggesting improved approaches for the future.

- **New faculty success is essential.** Enable new faculty to take advantage of all TAMU has to offer, including the ADVANCE Program.

- The **ADVANCE Program** can help. We promote excellence in four areas: workplace climate, recruitment, retention, and faculty leadership.
Additional Steps

• Further educate yourself
  ➢ Read “Why So Slow” by Virginia Valian
  ➢ Know the Key Research Findings (see handout)
  ➢ Take an implicit bias test
    ➢ implicit.harvard.edu

• Share information about implicit bias with others

• Encourage other faculty to participate in a STRIDE Workshop

• Engage ADVANCE