NatSci Best Practices and Procedures for a Successful Faculty Search

1. Committee ground rules
2. Why conduct a broad search in the first place?
3. Implicit bias in search processes
4. Strategies for limiting implicit bias
5. Best practices in conducting a faculty search
6. NatSci requirements and approval process

- *Meeting conduct*: How will you treat each other? Good rules of thumb: Be present, respectful, listen actively, do not interrupt, establish mechanisms for ensuring that all voices are heard.

- *Decision-making:* How will your committee make decisions? Consensus? Majority vote?

- *Attendance:* Ideally, all members will attend all search committee meetings and activities. What happens when that is not possible? What is a quorum? How will members be informed about decisions that are made in their absence?

- *Conflict of interest:* How will the committee define a COI? How will COIs be handled?

- *Confidentiality:* Search committee members must commit to the confidentiality expectations of the search. Candidate identities are not discussed outside committee meetings until interview list is approved. Honor the confidentiality request of candidates in perpetuity.

- *Accountability:* How will the committee hold itself accountable to adhering to ground rules?

Do broader searches result in better diversity outcomes?

- Recruiting Diverse and Excellent New Faculty

https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/07/19/advice-deans-department-heads-and-search-committees-recruiting-diverse-faculty

  - Broad job descriptions yield a more diverse applicant pool
  - Provide cues of belonging in job description (avoid gendered language)

- Recommendations from MSU Department of Physics and Astronomy (attachment)

Databases
- Awardees of the [Hannah Gray Award from HHMI](#)
- Awardees of the [NIH Blueprint Diversity Specialized Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Advancement](#)
- Awardees of the [Ford Postdoctoral Fellowship](#)
- Awardees of the [Burroughs Wellcome Fund Postdoctoral Enrichment Program](#)
- [Minoritypostdoc.org](#)
- [Diversify Microbiology](#)
- [Diversify EEB](#) (Ecologist and Evolutionary Biologists)
- [Diversify Immunology](#)
- [Diversify Chemistry](#)

Groups and communities that commonly self-identify on social media
#BLACKandSTEM
#LatinxandSTEM
#diversityinSTEM

*A Beginner's Guide to Minority Professor Hires, Michael Johnson PhD, Dept Immunology, Univ Arizona

Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students

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Despite efforts to recruit and retain more women, a stark gender disparity persists within academic science. Abundant research has demonstrated gender bias in many demographic groups, but has yet to experimentally investigate whether science faculty exhibit a bias against female students that could contribute to the gender disparity in academic science. In a randomized double-blind study ($n = 127$), science faculty from research-intensive universities rated the application materials of a student—who was randomly assigned either a male or female name—for a laboratory manager position. Faculty participants rated the male applicant as significantly more competent and hireable than the (identical) female applicant. These participants also selected a higher starting salary and offered more career mentoring to the male applicant. The gender of the faculty participants did not affect responses, such that female and male faculty were equally likely to exhibit bias against the female student. Mediation analyses indicated that the female student was less likely to be hired because she was viewed as less competent. We also assessed faculty participants' preexisting subtle bias against women using a standard instrument and found that preexisting subtle bias against women played a moderating role, such that subtle bias against women was associated with less support for the female student, but was unrelated to reactions to the male student. These results suggest that interventions addressing faculty gender bias might advance the goal of increasing the participation of women in science.

Implicit bias in evaluating applications

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Check for updates

How Gender and Race Stereotypes Impact the Advancement of Scholars in STEM: Professors' Biased Evaluations of Physics and Biology Post-Doctoral Candidates

Asia A. Eaton[1] · Jessica F. Saunders[2] · Ryan K. Jacobson[1] · Keon West[3]

Abstract

The current study examines how intersecting stereotypes about gender and race influence faculty perceptions of post-doctoral candidates in STEM fields in the United States. Using a fully-crossed, between-subjects experimental design, biology and physics professors ($n = 251$) from eight large, public, U.S. research universities were asked to read one of eight identical curriculum vitae (CVs) depicting a hypothetical doctoral graduate applying for a post-doctoral position in their field, and rate them for competence, hireability, and likeability. The candidate's name on the CV was used to manipulate race (Asian, Black, Latinx, and White) and gender (female or male), with all other aspects of the CV held constant across conditions. Faculty in physics exhibited a gender bias favoring the male candidates as more competent and more hirable than the otherwise identical female candidates. Further, physics faculty rated Asian and White candidates as more competent and hirable than Black and Latinx candidates, while those in biology rated Asian candidates as more competent and hirable than Black candidates, and as more hireable than Latinx candidates. An interaction between candidate gender and race emerged for those in physics, whereby Black women and Latinx women and men candidates were rated the lowest in hireability compared to all others. Women were rated more likeable than men candidates across departments. Our results highlight how understanding the underrepresentation of women and racial minorities in STEM requires examining both racial and gender biases as well as how they intersect.

https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/10/06/study-suggests-language-recommendation-letter-writers-use-may-disadvantage-women

INSIDE HIGHER ED

more than they do for men

Published on *Inside Higher Ed*
(https://www.insidehighered.com)

Home > Study finds recommendation letters inadvertently signal doubt about female applicants

Study finds recommendation letters inadvertently signal doubt about female applicants more than they do for men

Submitted by Colleen Flaherty on June 19, 2018 - 3:00am

Hedges/faint praise
Irrelevant info

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2572075/

A Linguistic Comparison of Letters of Recommendation for Male and Female Chemistry and Biochemistry Job Applicants

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Standout: superb, exceptional, extraordinary
Ability: genius, clever, creative, analytical
Grindstone: conscientious, hardworking, reliable

Abstract

Letters of recommendation are central to the hiring process. However, gender stereotypes could bias how recommenders describe female compared to male applicants. In the current study, text analysis software was used to examine 886 letters of recommendation written on behalf of 235 male and 42 female applicants for either a chemistry or biochemistry faculty position at a large U.S. research university. Results revealed more similarities than differences in letters written for male and female candidates. However, recommenders used significantly more standout adjectives to describe male as compared to female candidates. Letters containing more standout words also included more ability words and fewer grindstone words. Research is needed to explore how differences in language use affect perceivers' evaluations of female candidates.

Strategies for limiting bias

- **Avoid making job description too narrow**

- **Broadly advertise** (targeting institutions, listservs and organizations that traditionally serve women and minorities in the STEM disciplines)

- **Develop evaluation criteria** prior to evaluating candidates and apply them consistently to all applicants at all stages

- **Have at least two committee members evaluate each application portfolio**

- **Allow sufficient time** to fairly and thoughtfully evaluate each applicant

- **Evaluate each candidate's entire application**; don't depend too heavily on only one element such as the letters of recommendation, or the prestige of the degree-granting institution or postdoctoral program.

Be able to defend every decision for eliminating or advancing a candidate

University of Wisconsin Madison
https://wiseli.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/10/BiasBrochure_3rdEd.pdf

https://uwosh.edu/equity/recruit/

The interview stage

	Lawful Pre-Employment Inquiries	Unlawful Pre-Employment Inquiries
Age	Are you 18 years or older? *(only for the purpose of determining whether applicant is of legal age for employment)*	How old are you? What is your date of birth?
Religion or Creed		Inquiry into an applicant's religious denomination, affiliations, etc.
Race or Color		Complexion or color of skin.
Marital/Parental Status	Do you have any relatives employed by this employer?	Information regarding **marital status** or **children**. Are you single or married? Do you have any children? Is your spouse employed? What is your spouse's name?
Sex		Mr., Miss or Mrs. or an inquiry regarding sex. Inquiry as to the ability to reproduce or advocacy of any form of birth control.
Disability	Can you perform the essential duties of the job in which you wish to be employed, with or without accommodation?	Inquiries regarding an individual's physical or mental condition *which are not directly related to the requirements of a specific job* and

FEATURE

Loaded questions

Faculty search committees ask many questions of job candidates. But some questions are off-limits.

By Rajendrani Mukhopadhyay

http://www.asbmb.org/asbmbtoday/201608/LoadedQuestions/
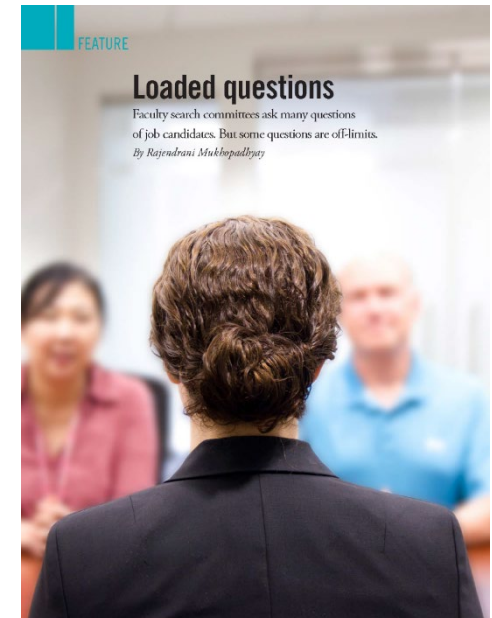
Periodically evaluate your judgments, determine whether qualified women and underrepresented minorities are in your pool, consider whether evaluation biases and assumption are influencing your decisions

- Are women and minority candidates subject to different expectations or standards in order to be considered as qualified as majority men?

- Are candidates from institutions other than the major research universities that have trained most of our faculty being under-valued?

- Have the accomplishments, ideas, and findings of women or minority candidates been under-valued or unfairly attributed to a research director or collaborators despite contrary evidence in publications or letters of reference?

- Is the ability of women or minorities to run a research group, raise funds, and supervise students and staff of different gender or ethnicity being underestimated?

- Are assumptions about possible family responsibilities and their effect on a candidate's career path negatively influencing evaluation of a candidate's merit, despite evidence of productivity?

- Are negative assumptions about whether women or minority candidates will "fit in" to the existing environment influencing evaluation?

Job description

- Write a broad job description
  - Avoid gendered language
- Decide on the required and desired qualifications of ideal job candidate
- What materials should be submitted with application?
  - Recommend asking applicants to address their experience with and commitment to DEI within research and teaching statements
  - Ask for names and contact information for references (request letters after evaluation)

Search narrative

- Include committee members, decision making model, COI policy, advertising strategy, screening stages, unit process after search committee recommendation

Write a position description that is not gender-coded

- http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/
- Without realizing it, we all use language that is subtly 'gender-coded'. Society has certain expectations of what men and women are like, and how they differ, and this seeps into the language we use. Think about "bossy" and "feisty": we almost never use these words to describe men.
- This linguistic gender-coding shows up in job adverts as well, and research has shown that it puts women off applying for jobs that are advertised with masculine-coded language.
- This site is a quick way to check whether a job advert has the kind of subtle linguistic gender-coding that has this discouraging effect.
- This tool uses the original list of gender-coded words from the research paper written by Danielle Gaucher, Justin Friesen, and Aaron C. Kay: Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality (Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, July 2011, Vol 101(1), p109-28).

Evaluation criteria and assessment

- Develop explicit assessment criteria and rubrics that fully capture identified qualifications as stated in job description
- Decide on relative weighting of criteria
- Develop stage-specific criteria to narrow down the applicant pool, i.e., initial screen, 2nd screen for Zoom interviews, 3rd screen for on-campus interviews
- Use Rubric to Assess Contributions to DEI document (Amber Benton)
- Apply consistently across candidates

Standard interview schedule

- Conduct structured interviews with search committee questions to ask all candidates
- Who/what groups will all candidates meet with?
- Strive to make interview experience the same for all candidates
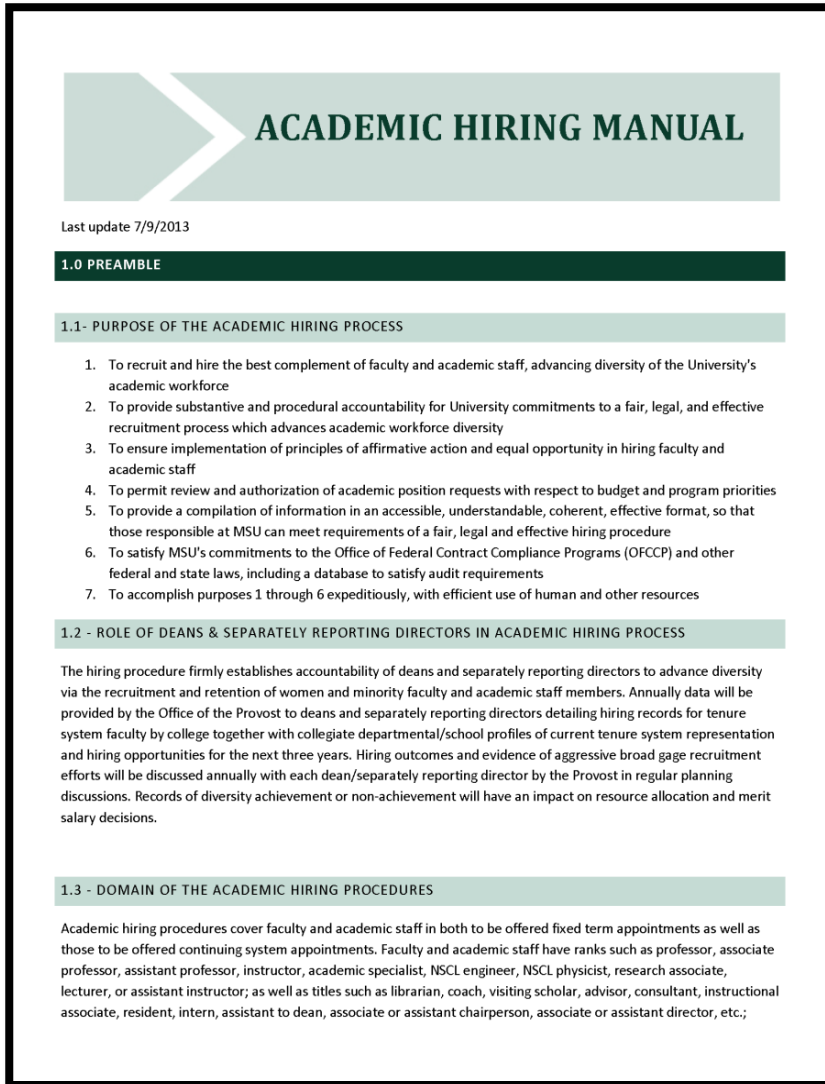
- Search committee develops
  - Position description/advertisement
  - Brief narrative of search process from initial screening of applicants through interview
  - Evaluation criteria for each stage of screening
  - Interview schedule template and interview questions *(these may be deferred until after position is approved and posted)
- Documents submitted to Assoc Dean Fac Development for review and approval
- Unit staffing coordinator enters position into EBS for approval by
  - NatSci HR coordinator (Shari Townsley)
  - Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (OI3)
- HR posts position on PageUp
- Job can now be publicly advertised

Affirmative Action Advocate

- Conduct an affirmative action session
- Appoint an affirmative action advocate: This committee member shall evaluate the search on an on-going basis, in terms of the goals and principles of affirmative action, equal opportunity, non-discrimination and diversity and bring deficiencies to the attention of the search committee for corrective action, including but not limited to:
    - discriminatory bias, prejudice or stereotyping in communications, including but not limited to committee discussions, written communications, and interview questions
    - inadequate/ineffective search strategies for identifying qualified individuals of underutilized groups, and soliciting applications from such individuals
    - inadequate representation of underutilized groups in applicant or candidate pools
    - discriminatory bias, prejudice or stereotyping in criteria for the evaluation of applicants' materials and candidates' interviews
    - little or no weight given to affirmative action goals as a factor in the decision making process
- Touch points with Assistant Dean for DEI
    - after application deadline to assess diversity of applicant pool
    - after interview list is identified
    - interview list must be approved by Assistant Dean for DEI and Associate Dean for Faculty Development before submitting to HR

Academic hiring manual

Faculty Search Toolkit