



Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Faculty Affairs
2J2.00 Walter Mackenzie Centre
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 1C9
Telephone: 780- 492-4609
Fax: 780-492-7303

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Re: Best Practices for Hiring – Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Grow Wisely

Prepared by: Dr. Helly Goetz, Assistant Dean Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (June 2017)

Reviewed and edited by: Dr. Helly Goetz, Assistant Dean Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Dr. Fraser Brenneis, Acting Vice Dean, Faculty Affairs (March 2018); Dr. Kunimoto Vice Dean, Faculty Affairs, and Ms. Kendra Brunt, Director of Administration (May 2018)

Acknowledgment:

University of Alberta Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office (HRS)
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC)

Table of Contents

Introduction..... 3

1. Biases-Explicit-Implicit/Unconscious – What are they? How do they influence our decision-making? 4

2. Employment Equity..... 4

3. The Equitable and Inclusive Search 5

 3.1 Position Description..... 5

 3.2 Advertising 5

 3.3 Active Recruitment 6

 3.4 Academic Search and Selection Committee 6

 3.5 Reviewing Applications..... 6

 3.6 Interview Tips 6

 3.7 Interview 7

 3.8 Summary..... 7

4. Annual Review Process..... 7

Acknowledgements..... 8



Introduction

The Best Practices for Hiring – Equity, Diversity & Inclusion – Grow Wisely document provides a general and high-level overview of suggested best practices for hiring of faculty and staff at the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (FoMD), University of Alberta.

It includes common definitions used in recruitment, and suggests ways that build on current Faculty processes, for creating and maintaining an equitable, diverse and inclusive workforce and learning environment.

The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry honours equity and diversity. At the same time, we would like to see consistency in the recruitment cycle, valuing merit and recognizing unique cultural variations in how we measure merit.

The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry encourages its leaders to host conversations in their departments, working groups and forums in order to identify needs and gaps in the workforce, set hiring goals, and measure the success of the steps taken. The following suggestions to improve recruitment processes will place the FoMD in an advantageous place, one where we can Grow Wisely and respectfully.

1. Biases-Explicit-Implicit/Unconscious – What are they? How do they influence our decision-making?

All of us, as human beings have biases. Biases are an integral part of the way we understand the world around us. Bias presents itself as quick judgements we make on a daily basis on different topics, hence it affects our decision-making process and ultimately influences our work and learning environment. There are two types of biases: Explicit and Implicit/Unconscious.

Bias in general is prejudice in favor or against a person, group or thing, compared with another and usually in a way that appears to judge negatively the other. Explicit bias requires a person to be aware of their evaluation, and believe that their evaluation is correct and valid.

Implicit/Unconscious bias operates unintentionally.

Any bias affects perception and the resulting behavior. It is important to recognize bias. The first step to becoming aware of personal biases is to make the unconscious bias conscious. Once we understand our biases we can adopt tools that enable us to develop and maintain an inclusive, equitable work ethic, while adhering to our FoMD Faculty Wide Diversity Policy (<https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine/about/policies>), and positively impact our communication, collaboration and contribution within our working groups.

The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry along with the University of Alberta recognize the importance of a culture that is equitable, diverse and free of discrimination and harassment. (U of A Employment, Equity and Human Rights and Individuals at Risk Definitions – 2017-2018, <https://www.ualberta.ca/faculty-and-staff/equity-diversity-inclusion/definitions>. A link to the pdf is at the top, right side of the page.)

In order to Grow Wisely and respectfully, we must ensure that equity and diversity are integral to our policies and practices related to recruiting, hiring, maintaining, and promoting our faculty and staff.

2. Employment Equity

The University of Alberta and the FoMD are obligated to ensure our workforce broadly reflects the demographics we serve.

Employment Equity is a result of fair, appropriate, mindful and equitable processes in the searching for and hiring of candidates. It is about selecting the **most qualified** applicant with no “a-priori” preference or judgement.

The Federal Contractors Program for Employment Equity (FCP) is required to achieve and maintain a workforce that is representative of the available external labor market, such that traditionally “disadvantaged groups” (the four designated groups including women, Peoples with disabilities, Aboriginal Peoples and visible minorities) receive the same opportunity for employment as everyone else. This is supported by the University’s For the Public Good, Institutional Strategic plan:

<https://d1pbog36rugm0t.cloudfront.net/-/media/isp/final-doc/12885institutionalstrategicplan33final.pdf>.)

along with Canada Research Chair Equity Practices, Guidelines:

http://www.chairs-chaieres.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/action_plan-plan_action-eng.aspx



Employment Equity is a **truthful** reflection of the most appropriate policies and practices that maintain and promote faculty and staff, while equally valuing their merit and recognizing the unique cultural variations in how merit is measured.

The following are a few tips to consider to enhance an equitable search and selection process. Departments and units are encouraged to review these suggestions and to consider adding them into their existing practices.

3. The Equitable and Inclusive Search

- 3.1 Position description
- 3.2 Advertising
- 3.3 Active Recruitment
- 3.4 Search and Selection Committee
- 3.5 Reviewing Applications
- 3.6 Interview tips
- 3.7 Interview

3.1 Position Description

- Follow the Job and Organizational Development process:
<https://www.ualberta.ca/human-resource-services/hiring/job-design-and-evaluation>

3.2 Advertising

- Contact your local Human Resources (HR) advisor to obtain advice on job advertisement.
<https://apps.hrs.ualberta.ca/HRSContactForm/Home/NotEmployeeForm>
- Use inclusive language: gender neutral (instead of “he/she”, use “they” or take gender out completely).
- Acknowledge the potential impact that career interruptions can have on a candidate’s scholarly achievements, and encourage the applicant to explain on their application the impact that career interruptions may have had on their record of achievement (research, education, administration).
- Highlight the interest in diversification of the faculty.
- Consider liaising and communicating with associations, groups and organizations that serve members of the four designated groups referred to in the Employment Equity Act– {Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and women} in order to advertise in sites that are outside of the conventional locations. Please note that while some organizations may not post job advertisements they are good to network with, as they may have communication methods that can be used to share job postings.
- See examples of professional societies and associations of designated groups:
 - AWA – Academic Women Association: <https://uofaawa.wordpress.com>.
 - Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada – <http://www.swaac.ca>.
 - Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science and Technology:
<http://www.ccwestt.org/>.
 - Relevant industry, government and research organizations (e.g. Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women: <http://www.criaw-icref.ca>).
 - Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta. See: <https://www.ualberta.ca/native-studies/>.
 - Canadian Indigenous Language and Literacy Development Institute – CILLDI. See: www.cilldi.ualberta.ca.



- Aboriginal Initiative – University of Alberta. See: www.aboriginal.ualberta.ca
- Faculty of Extension – Indigenous Community – Industry Relations. See: <https://www.ualberta.ca> >programs >community engagement.
- University of Alberta Disability Services – www.ssds.ualberta.ca.

3.3 Active Recruitment

- Encourage a conscious identification of candidates according to available/predicted vacancies and needs.
- Strategically identify, reach out, and consult with organizations and institutions that successfully support and promote minority and female doctoral and/or postdoctoral scholars.
- Review the FoMD Recruitment Process Map and Initial Recruitment Procedure Form at: <https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine/about/policies> and select the top 2 documents under Academic Policies.

3.4 Academic Search and Selection Committee

The **Chair**¹ should:

- Highlight the importance of equity, diversity and inclusion
- Members should take the implicit bias test to understand some of their unconscious biases: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/langchoice/canada.html>.
- Follow U of A Policies and Procedures On-line (UAPPOL) - Academic Selection Procedure: <https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Procedures/Academic-Selection-Procedure.pdf>

3.5 Reviewing Applications

- When hiring administrative staff, consider removing applicant names from all applications shared with the search committee.
- For faculty member hiring, candidates remain identified.
- Be aware of the use of different terms to describe men's and women's contribution in CVs as well as in letters of reference.
- Declare any conflict of interest. <https://www.ualberta.ca/faculty-and-staff/my-employment/ethical-conduct/conflict-of-interest>

3.6 Interview Tips

- The following link has detailed information regarding recruitment of Academic & Support Staff: <https://www.ualberta.ca/human-resource-services/hiring/recruitment-and-advertising>
- Avoid questions that may reveal protected grounds (U of A Employment, Equity and Human Rights and Individuals at Risk Definitions – 2017-2018: <https://www.ualberta.ca/faculty-and-staff/equity-diversity-inclusion/definitions>

¹Definition of the term Chair in this document: Chair of any committee such as search and selection, search and recommendation or other group of individuals with a formal task to select or recommend an individual for an academic role in the FoMD. Examples include but are not limited to: new faculty members, administrative positions, CRCs, etc.



3.7 Interview

Awareness of protected grounds. See: <https://www.ualberta.ca/faculty-and-staff/equity-diversity-inclusion/definitions>

3.8 Summary

The reason we recommend the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion-related questions is in response to the Institutional strategic plan – For the Public Good – that articulates our institutional values and provides strategies to achieve them. We must strengthen and continue our recruitment of faculty and staff who value principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and demonstrate skill in achieving them.

Quoting from the For the Public Good:

- "We value diversity, inclusivity, and equity across and among our people, campuses, and disciplines."
- "Build a diverse, inclusive community of exceptional undergraduates and graduate students from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and the world."
- "Review, improve, and implement equity processes and procedures for recruiting and supporting faculty to ensure a balanced academy, representative of women, visible minorities, sexual and gender minorities, Indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities."
- "Review, improve, and implement equity processes and procedures for recruiting and supporting staff to ensure that all categories of staff are representative of women, visible minorities, sexual and gender minorities, Indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities."

4. Annual Review Process²

- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee (EDIAC), Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry will conduct a yearly review of transparency and openness of institutional recruitment processes and report to the Vice Dean, Faculty Affairs on the management of the results and recommended actions.

² While this particular task was not specifically mentioned in the Terms of Reference for EDIAC, periodic revision of processes as related to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion is expected. Please refer to Terms of Reference EDIAC, Responsibilities section, 2, 5, 8. <https://www.ualberta.ca/medicine/about/diversity/terms-of-reference>



Acknowledgements

- Human Rights and Employment Equity considerations in Recruitment Inclusive Recruitment Tips University of Alberta Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office (HRS).
- Tips – Inclusive Recruitment – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office (HRS) University of Alberta.
- Definitions – UofA Employment, Equity and Human Rights and Individuals at Risk Definitions – 2017-2018.
- Academic Selection Procedures – Employment Equity and Human Rights:
<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Procedures/Academic-Selection-Procedure.pdf>