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Actualizing Racial Equity throughout the Faculty Hiring Process

Damani White-Lewis, Ph.D.
University of Maryland, College Park

Office of Vice Provost for
Faculty
University of Pennsylvania



AGENDA

- ❑ What is racial equity?
- ❑ Roadmap
- ❑ Part 1: *Actualizing racial equity in faculty selection*
- ❑ Discussion
- ❑ Part 2: *Creating the conditions for racial equity*
- ❑ Discussion & Conclusion

”

**What is
racial equity?**



“Equity and equity-mindedness accept that it is whiteness - not the achievement gap - that produces and sustains racial inequality in higher education. [It] requires explicit attention to structural inequality and institutionalized racism and demands system-changing responses.”

(Bensimon, 2018)

**Whiteness:
(un)intentional
normative elements of
predominantly White
institutions that
facilitate access to
material and
immaterial resources**

“A social-justice imperative that prioritizes institutional responsibility for transforming organizational practices, policies, and culture to support equality of educational outcomes, in particular by race.”

**(Posselt, Hernandez,
Villarreal, Rodgers, &
Irwin, 2020)**

FAIRNESS

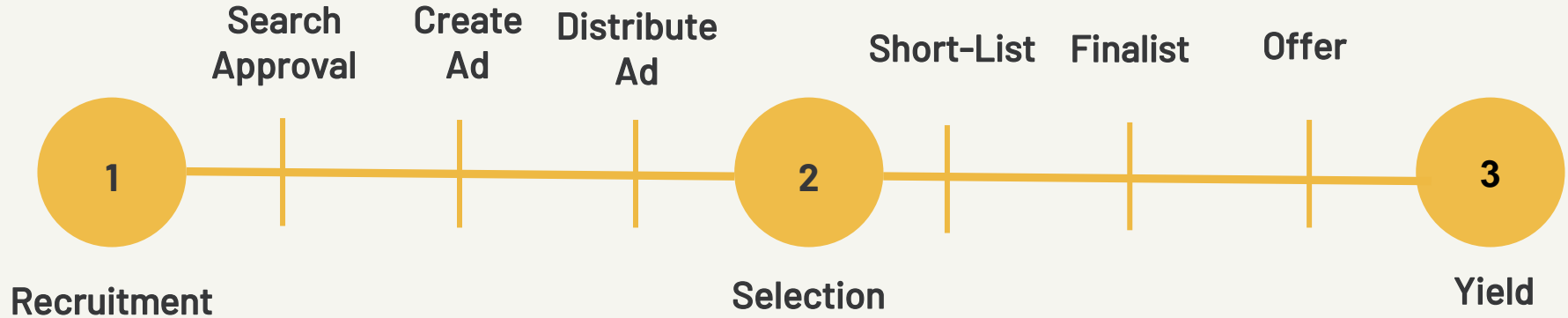
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EQUITY

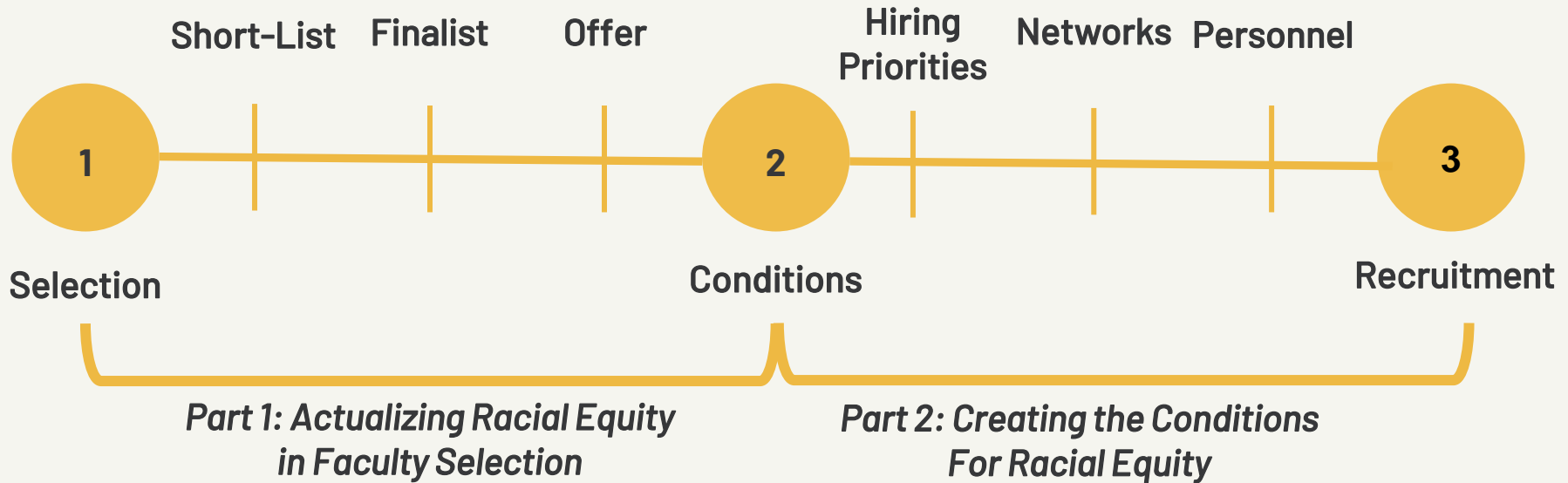
- 1. Identify the mechanisms (e.g., paradigms, practices, policies) that are most responsible for racial inequity**
- 2. Disrupt racial inequities by developing tailored interventions that improve our decision-making contexts**
- 3. Locate where and how change must occur within institutions and broader academic socialization systems to enhance equity**

**Hiring
Workloads
Promotion & Tenure
Retention**

Traditional Roadmap



Revised Roadmap





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Part I: Actualizing Racial Equity in Faculty Selection





Background: What's the big deal with fit?

1

Multiple survey studies argue for fit in faculty hiring

(e.g., Landrum & Clump, 2004; Sheehan et al., 1998; Tomlinson & Freeman, 2017; Wright & Vanderford, 2017)

2

Other studies take issue with the term fit

(e.g., Danowitz Sagaria, 2002; Moody, 2015; Reece et al., 2019; Rivera, 2017; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017)

3

No study uses an empirical model of fit to close this chasm

Fit in Candidate Selection and Hiring

Person-Job Fit

Person-Organization Fit

General Employability

Idiosyncratic Preferences

1

Matching of candidate characteristics with the job and/or organization

2

Explicit measurement of those characteristics

3

Moderate to strong consensus between raters

	Normative Selection Model	Faculty Selection Model
Stage 1	<p><u>Person-Job Fit</u> Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA's) for minimal qualifications</p>	<p><u>Person-Job Fit:</u> Subject expertise agreement</p> <p><u>Idiosyncratic Preferences:</u> Research impact, funding, and DEI</p>
Stage 2	<p><u>Person-Organization Fit</u> Values to determine org suitability</p>	<p><u>Person-Organization Fit:</u> Subject expertise alignment</p> <p><u>Idiosyncratic Preferences:</u> Status maximization + risk assessments</p> <p><u>Unique Dept. Criterion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruitability - Dept politics - Replication

”

Subject-Expertise Alignment as Person-Job Fit

There was one extremely good woman who's Korean, and who's won all sorts of prizes and everything. If the search had been open, she would've [progressed further]. She doesn't 100% tick the diversity box, but pretty much because she's a woman, and she's Asian. And she had these wonderful research proposals. But it wasn't comparative. And our colleagues said, "But look, she doesn't fit what's on the post." And we have to say, "Well, I'm afraid that's the case. And I'm very sorry we can't have her, but for this position, she doesn't fit the bill."

Dr. Singleton - Humanities





Research Impact as Idiosyncratic

It really was pretty narrow. But it was on a big subject: immigration. Which wasn't his only subject, he had a lot of other papers. He was interested in immigrant incorporation into [U.S.] ... [historical event] had resulted in a bunch of immigrants being drafted into the army, as opposed to being left in their home communities, which were usually ethnic communities. So he had the names of people...like who they had married, so they could get the ethnicity from that. He was able to tell who married in their ethnic group. So that was his research...and that was really cool, but it was also very narrow.



Dr. Barry - Social Sciences

” Risk Aversion as Idiosyncratic

So I would have liked that guy. He was the best. I wouldn't have gone for him. I would have gone for somebody that I thought was just almost as good and that we would have had a better chance for.”

Dr. Williams - Humanities

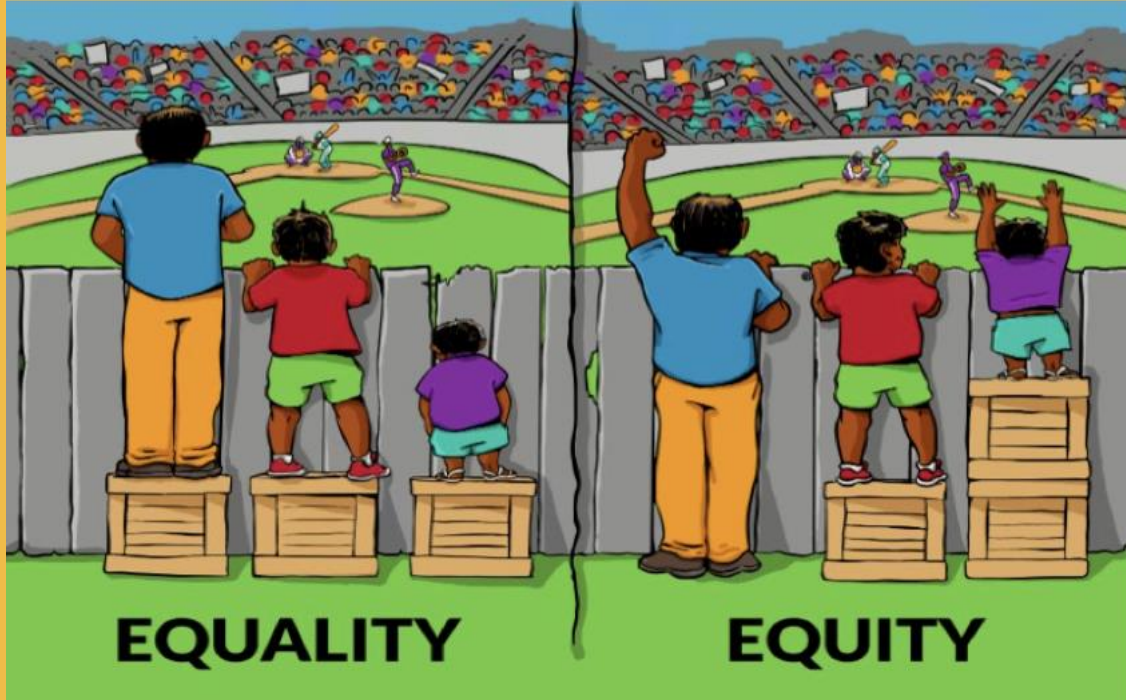
In spite of the fact that we want to compete for the top of the pool, we also look for people who may have reasons to come to [Northfield]. We want to keep an eye out for anything that might suggest that the person's open to living in [this] city. That could be a talented assistant professor in a place where we think they're under-placed...We may choose to interview that first person, because we feel like we have a bit more of an opportunity to turn that into a hire.

Dr. Liu - Life Sciences



”

Weighing DEI as Idiosyncratic





Weighing DEI as Idiosyncratic

“It’s not this kid’s fault that he’s not tall enough to see over this fence. That’s one of the things that’s really important: that every file gets the same kind of evaluation. You start in the same place. You work it, every file, through the same way. Each file’s gonna get a half hour, so no matter what you’re doing, you’re spending a half hour with every file. But whatever that process is for you, every file is getting it.”

Dr. Dixon - Social Sciences

“You’re not really allowed to explicitly say ‘let me bring in one [extra] person from a URM group.’ But you start thinking about, ‘maybe the letters for this person have been down graded because someone expects less of them. With that understanding, [we’ve] been able to increase the underrepresented fraction in the short-list pool...Like I said, you might be getting bias from the previous inputs

Dr. Charles - Physical Sciences



Problem with “fit” in faculty hiring

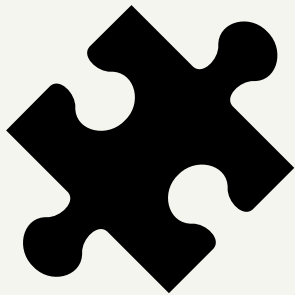
1

Its application to understanding and justifying hiring decisions is severely overstated, and

2

It obscures the abundance of idiosyncratic preferences throughout hiring, which perpetuate racial aversion, neutrality, and convenience

**“Faculty searches are as much, if not more, about the department and faculty than about the candidates themselves”
(White-Lewis, 2020, p. 851)**



Subfield
Alignment / Dept
Replication

Research Evaluation	Teaching Evaluation	Awards	Inst Type	Personality	DEI
---------------------	---------------------	--------	-----------	-------------	-----

More variable and idiosyncratic that erect
more barriers for minoritized candidates

Research Productivity: Bendels et al., 2018; Lubienski et al., 2017

Grantsmanship: Ginther et al., 2011; Hoppe et al., 2019

Teaching Evaluations: Kelly & McCann, 2014; Martinez et al., 2017

Institutional Type: Clauset et al., 2015; Lee, 2021; White-Lewis, 2020

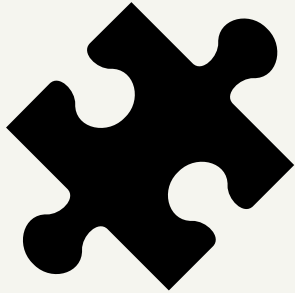
Personality: Liera & Hernandez, 2022; Rivera, 2017

Classic P-E Fit with fewer
barriers for minoritized
candidates

Five Equity Practices in Selection

- 1 Rubrics
- 2 Calibration
- 3 Counterbalancing - Within
- 4 Counterbalancing - Between
- 5 Weighing DEI & Holistic Review

Rubrics



Subfield
Alignment / Dept
Replication

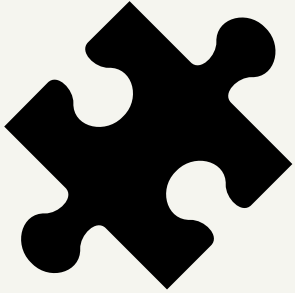
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Significant push for rubrics in faculty hiring, but scant and even contradictory evidence that they improve selection contexts. Do they matter?

We found that “it depends” – certain conditions facilitated more effective use:

- Conversations around clarity and consistency
- DEI criteria integrated across areas vs single “DEI” score
- Did not mitigate social biases
- No single “nudge” will improve hiring, but they make good things better

Calibration



Subfield
Alignment / Dept
Replication

Research Evaluation	Teaching Evaluation	Awards	Inst Type	Personality	DEI
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30



30



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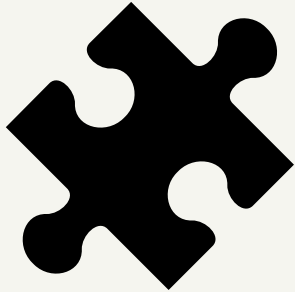
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“Importantly, we had different rating tendencies. I tended to rate most positively. Devon least so, and Katie and Chatura in the middle. Our average scores are 3.46, 3.03, 3.29, and 3.3 respectively. *This suggests that we should be mindful of people evaluated by Devon and me as they may outsize scores in one direction or another.*”

Counterbalancing - Within



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Replication

Research Evaluation	Teaching Evaluation	Awards	Inst Type	Personality	DEI
---------------------	---------------------	--------	-----------	-------------	-----

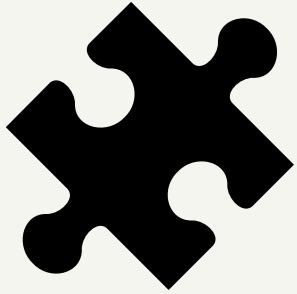
Masculine defaults in hiring and selection (Cheryan & Markus, 2020)

Counterbalancing within criterion can enhance racial equity on parameters that are meaningful to our departments and institutions

- Use of culturally relevant pedagogy
- Research and grants that support equity-driven research
- Experience mentoring racially minoritized students
- Other possibilities in Liera & Ching, 2019

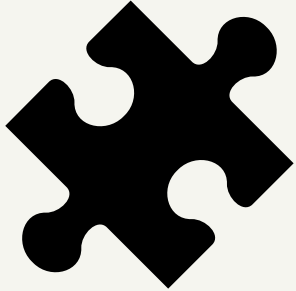
Counterbalancing - Between

Standard Search



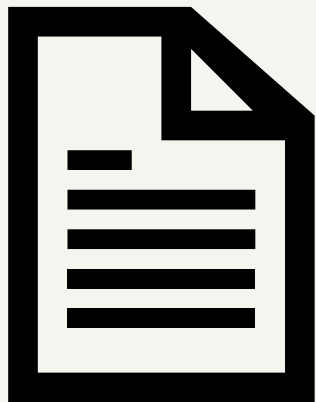
Research Evaluation	Teaching Evaluation	Awards	Inst Type	Personality	DEI
---------------------	---------------------	--------	-----------	-------------	-----

Mentor Professor Search



Mentorship	Research Evaluation	Teaching Evaluation	Awards	Inst Type	Personality
------------	---------------------	---------------------	--------	-----------	-------------

Weighing DEI & Holistic Review



Similar gender bias exists in evaluation of lab managers (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012) and in historical analysis of academic employment patterns (Sheltzer & Smith, 2014)

What helps explain differences between the high productivity band and the low band?

Applicant Characteristics				Competitiveness Ratings	
Race	Gender	Record	Name	M	SD
Black	Female	Outstanding	Ayanna	3.66 _a	0.839
White	Female	Outstanding	Kathleen	3.58 _b	0.859
Black	Male	Outstanding	Cedric	3.57 _b	0.829
White	Male	Outstanding	Doug	3.42 _c	0.820
White	Male	Outstanding	H. Neil	3.32 _d	0.901
Black	Male	Average	Jermaine	2.93 _e	0.912
White	Female	Average	Emily	2.91 _e	0.903
White	Male	Average	John	2.85 _f	0.889
Black	Female	Average	Essie	2.83 _f	0.889
White	Male	Average	Rick	2.81 _f	0.890

****different subscripts indicates significantly different at $p < .05$ level**

“Not enough information”

***Interview,
Statements***

Publications

“Other qualifications”

**Pedigree,
Awards,
Teaching, etc.**

Publications

“DEI becomes important”

DEI

**Pedigree,
Awards,
Teaching, etc.**

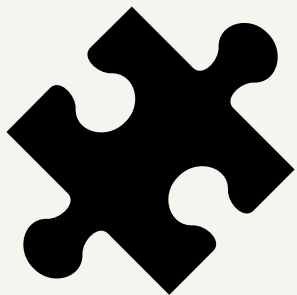
Publications

” Equalizer Perspective

“I am looking not just for academic achievement, but for some diversity at least in gender in my final selection since this group of CVs seemed relatively equal. I would be looking for other types of diversity were I provided that information because I recognize that often, if the CVs look the same, the candidates from minority groups are likely to have had challenges that those from majority didn't have.”

“Generally, once these lists were made, we would look to see where women and POC have fallen and consider whether there are some at the 3-5 position that we should also consider.”





Research Evaluation

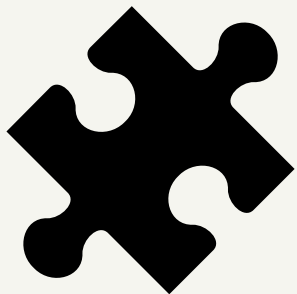
**Teaching
Evaluation**

Awards

**Inst
Type**

Personality

DEI



Research Evaluation

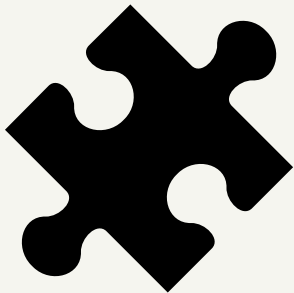
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Evaluation**

Awards

**Inst
Type**

Personality

Weighing DEI & Holistic Review



Research Evaluation

Teaching
Evaluation

Awards

Inst
Type

Personality

DEI

1 All things equal

2 Scoring DEI statements

3 Using DEI statements for holistic review

“...considered all elements of the application and valued treating applicants as unique individuals, they placed those applicants in the context of the opportunities available in their families, neighborhoods, or high schools”

(Bastedo et al., 2018, p. 793)

Other Best Practices from ADVANCE

Developing a Diverse Candidate Short List

[Read more](#)

As search committees winnow candidate lists, often diversity is reduced. This brief summarizes ways search committees can enhance diversity as they reach this stage of the hiring process.

Constructing Clear Candidate Evaluation Criteria & Using A Rubric

[Read more](#)

The criteria by which faculty search committees evaluate candidates is often undefined or ambiguously defined. This brief summarizes strategies for making candidate evaluation criteria clearer and advice on how search committees can more effectively use rubrics. Examples rubrics are included.

Website: <https://advance.umd.edu/search-committee>

Google: UMD + ADVANCE + Search Committee

Lets put it all together

- 1 Definition of racial equity
- 2 Fit in broader hiring and selection
- 3 Fit, and lack thereof, in faculty hiring – and why that matters
- 4 5 equity practices in selection: Rubrics, Calibration, Counterbalancing, Weighing DEI Contributions
- 5 Other best practices in general

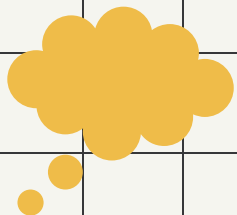


Ground Rules

1. Be authentic
2. Recognize complexity
3. Reserve judgement on ideas/beliefs
4. Prepare for tolerable discomfort
5. Listen
6. Correct
7. Reflect and be open to change



Adapted from
The Dialogue
Institute



Questions

1. What racial equity efforts have you seen in faculty hiring here? Have they been successful and why?
2. What best practices from Part I can you add to those efforts?
3. What best practices from Part I (or on campus) leave you skeptical?
4. What kind of study would really push efforts forward?
5. What are your thoughts on “weighing DEI?”



AGENDA

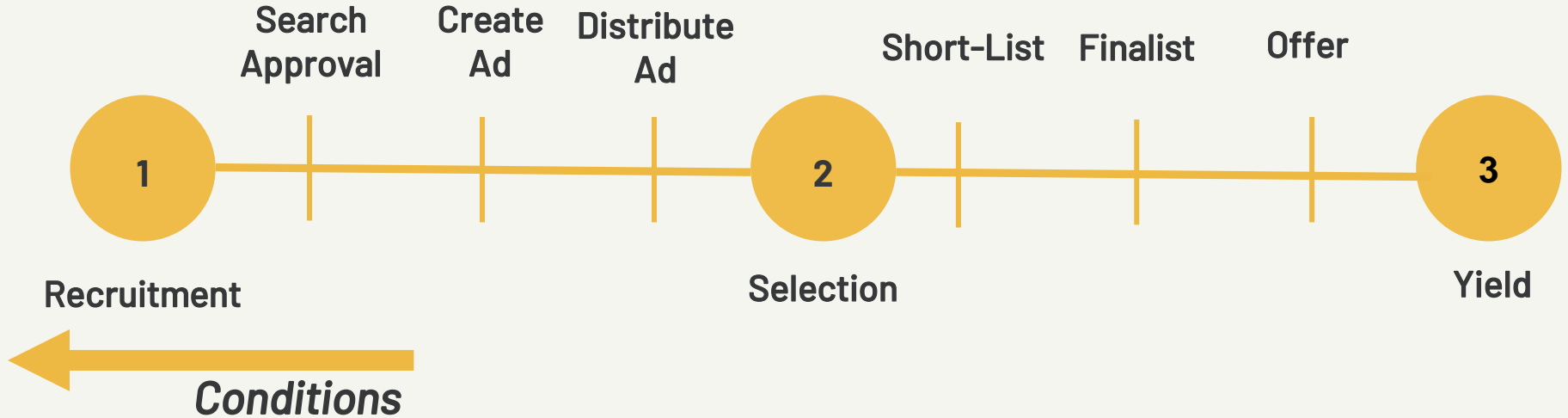
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Part II: Creating the Conditions for Racial Equity



Roadmap



**Hiring
Priorities**

**Networks &
Recruitment**

**Personnel &
Leadership**

Hiring Priorities

Hiring Priorities (HP's)

1

The process by which an academic unit determines the scope and direction of future faculty searches

2

If left interrupted, departments often replicate HP's that reproduce inequities, or at minimum fail to consider how DEI impacts HP's

3

Subfield Conservatism = Resources + Department Infrastructure

” Hiring Priorities

“Each year, it’s very uncertain whether the department will receive approval for a faculty search, or how many, and then in what areas. And that puts a certain amount of stress on what could be called factions: different cohorts in the department who have very different hierarchies.”



” Hiring Priorities

“I think if I had to generalize, it would be that faculty members making decisions in departments are worried enough about the health of [the department], that they tend to be fairly conservative when they name the field they want to hire in.

It takes some extra encouragement to say, ‘Look, you are the faculty building the institution; reach far. Change the direction of the disciplines covered in your department. You can be creative. People will often think, ‘No, my job is just to keep this line, and the best way to keep the line is to create it as exactly as it was,’ which of course limits any kind of intellectual diversification.”



Explicit Changes

Designating an equity focus, and integrating that focus in evaluation metrics

Using field norms and demographics as a factor in HP determination

Procedural Changes

Addressing departmental voting procedures that empower junior faculty

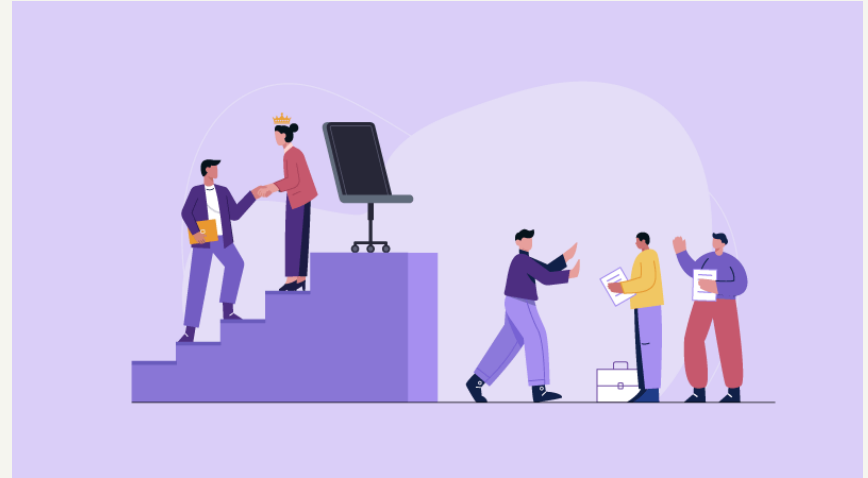
Using strategic plans to increase transparency of HPs and spread resources across multiple subfields

Networks & Recruitment

Networks & Recruitment

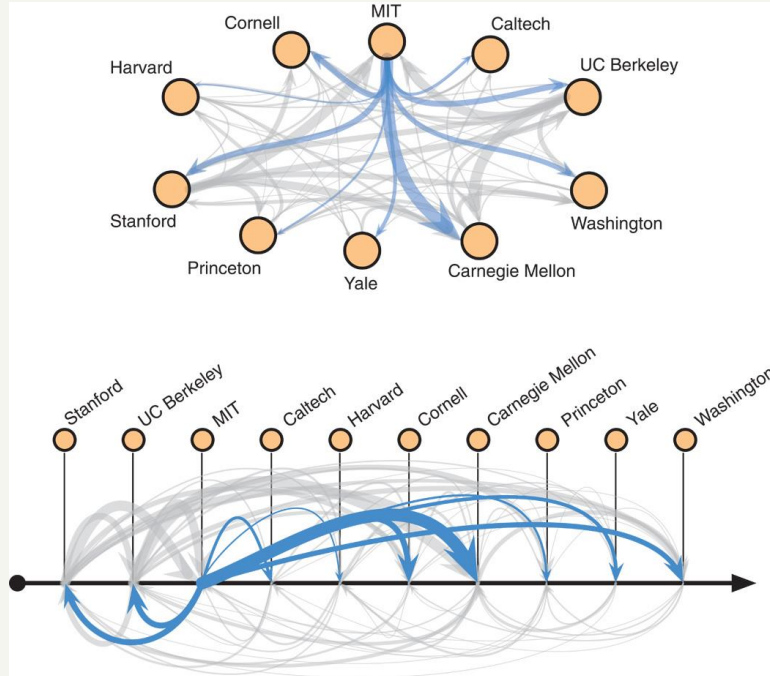


Hierarchical Networks



Academic Inbreeding

Hierarchical Networks



- Studied hiring placement in comp sci, business, and history (n=19,000 faculty)
- Found that faculty hiring reflected a profoundly steep hierarchical prestige network
- “The observed hierarchies are sufficiently steep that attributing their structure to differences in merit alone seem implausible.”

Academic Inbreeding



- The practice of departments and institutions hiring their own graduates
- Associated with lower productivity (Horta et al., 2010; Soler, 2001)
- Becoming better in the United States, but still very prevalent abroad (Kim, 2022)

Tensions and Solutions

- 1 Hierarchical prestige networks and academic inbreeding are problems, but there are structural realities as well
- 2 “Increased institutional prestige leads to increased faculty production, [and] better faculty placement (Clauset et al., 2015)

Departmental Readiness

- Understand how “ready” departments are to commit to structural practices
- Ranges from “no awareness” to “professionalization” (Edwards et al., 2000)

Value-Added Approach?

- How can we recognize faculty at other institutional types in faculty hiring?
- Stochastic Frontier Analysis of institutional STEM degree productivity (Titus & Eagan, 2016)

Aligning Personnel & Leadership

Administrators' Theories of Change

1

Departments underneath the same institutional policies still reach such different faculty diversity outcomes, even when comparing across similar disciplines.

2

Administrator's theories of change (ToC's) are predictive assumptions about the relationship between desired changes and the actions to produce them.

3

Many kinds of reform (e.g., STEM) require ToC's, but not faculty diversity. They may reveal how faculty diversity is achieved or stalled in differentiated units.

4

*Five markers of theories of change:
Context, Interventions, Indicators, Assumptions, and Outcomes*

Incrementalism

"We're bringing in diverse speakers, which in the long run may change some of the implicit biases in all of our heads...[they] take something as small as putting up posters of female scientists in the hallway. Does that ultimately effect the climate? I don't know. Does it change their slight bias on a faculty search? It's a stretch to say that, but it may be that a hundred small things matter."

Pragmatism

"It's very modest. We don't even play the more radical game: pushing on merit, corrective justice, slavery - don't want to go there. Not because it's unimportant, it's just that I'm a pragmatist."

I'm just trying to say 'look, you're not perfect. This is not your full-time job and even full-time people don't actually know how to search that well."

Let's just do it better. It's a very modest, non-threatening intervention which could create its own critiques but it's done for a reason."

Progressivism

"So if we're really gonna be effective, and I can't say this enough, we've gotta' keep our foot on the gas because we're swimming upstream and if you don't then you just slide downstream. Best practices won't get us there without really exerted effort and that's because of the slope. When you see the slope of change of best practices, the slope is so level. It's positive but it's slow."

Incrementalism

1. Inst. actions already
available within state
systems and equity
offices

Pragmatism

2. Managing People
3. Tracking Trends

1. Inst. actions already
available within state
systems and equity
offices

Progressivism

4. Invoking Collective
Responsibility
5. Personal Initiatives

2. Managing People
3. Tracking Trends

1. Inst. actions already
available within state
systems and equity
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Implications for Theories of Change

1

Leaders need to make their theories of change more explicit to guide faculty diversity and equity efforts

2

Is progressivism universally best? How context-dependent are theories of change?

3

How can we envision bilateral accountability mechanisms for minimal progress?

Equity Advocates & Search Committees

1

Equity advocates are faculty or staff that receive (in)formal training to interrogate exclusionary hiring practices

2

EA's need defined roles and positional power to properly subvert norms
EA's need to be in community with other EA's to share practices
EA's need formalized training and supportive committee members

3

"Analysis of recruitment data (n=13,750) showed that women and URM search chairs resulted in 23% more women and 100% more URM apps (Kazmi et al., 2021)

Other Best Practices from ADVANCE

Enhancing On-Campus Interviews

[Read more](#)

Campus interviews offer candidates an opportunity to meet department members and imagine what it may be like to work at the university, but they are also highly prone to bias. This brief summarizes strategies for enhancing the structure of on-campus interviews.

Writing an Inclusive Job Description

[Read more](#)

The brief examines how and why the language used in faculty job advertisements can enhance, or limit, diversity in the applicant pool.

Website: <https://advance.umd.edu/search-committee>

Google: UMD + ADVANCE + Search Committee

Lets put it all together

- 1 Definition of hiring priorities, and alterations to enhance equity
 - Explicit changes
 - Procedural changes
- 2 Hierarchical networks and recruitment tactics that mitigate it
 - Departmental readiness
 - Value-added approach?
- 3 Importance of aligning personnel
 - Deans, department chairs, equity administrators,
 - Equity advocates
 - Faculty search committee members





Ground Rules

1. Be authentic
2. Recognize complexity
3. Reserve judgement on ideas/beliefs
4. Prepare for tolerable discomfort
5. Listen
6. Correct
7. Reflect and be open to change



Adapted from
The Dialogue
Institute



Questions

1. What have you noticed about your department's process of setting hiring priorities? Improvements?
2. Broadly discuss the benefits and challenges of networks and institutional type in faculty hiring
3. What steps can you take this month, semester, and year to improve your department's readiness?
4. How would you describe theories of change in your department?
5. What might accountability look like?



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Thank you!

Contact Information:

- Email: dkwlewis@umd.edu
- Twitter: [@DMoneyL](https://twitter.com/DMoneyL)
- Website: damanikwhitelewis.com

