

## Diversity in the Search Process, Search Pool and Hiring Process (edited 10/13/2016)

This document relays only the experience of best practices of the author. It is our belief that best practices in search processes are dynamic. For example, a few years ago, it was important to reach out to faculty who might know of students from under-represented groups. In my view, what has happened is other universities are now implementing similar measures, which makes this method less useful. In other words, the professor that gets a single request might respond, but when there are 10 such requests, it is less likely to bear fruit.

Suggestions:

- **Start early:** It is crucial that focus areas are identified as early as possible (several months before the job announcement season). This allows you to consider targets of opportunity even at the senior level.
- **Choose a diverse search committee**
  - Include women and/or URM faculty on the committee when possible
  - It should be a prerequisite that the committee chair supports the goals of faculty diversity
  - In some cases you might find it important to appoint a diversity advocate. In other cases, the SOC can suffice.
- **At least the search committee chair should meet with the Associate Dean for Diversity and Faculty Development – this will allow him/her to familiarize themselves with the SOC process**
- **In writing the search ad, be broad in the language and include Cornell's commitment to diversity.**
- **Send targeted email to colleagues/faculty at peer institutions:** This has become a standard part of every search.
  - Each department is keeping a list of faculty from under-represented groups. This is a starting point
  - The more personal the connection the better. Take advantage of networks of each committee member
- **Connect with appropriate members of the Ephraim Garcia Engineering Society (EGES) and the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE). The web sites follow:**
  - WISE:  
<https://www.engineering.cornell.edu/research/faculty/WomenFacultyInEngineering/index.cfm>
  - EGES:  
<http://www.engineering.cornell.edu/research/faculty/EphraimGarciaEngineeringSociety/index.cfm>
- **Choose colleagues and use their web presence to identify potential candidates:** A recent trend is for faculty to have a web presence to display their research group – with pictures. If you

notice a candidate from an under-represented group, the email above can be even more targeted.

- **Several schools around the country have started URM or Female-Centered in academia conferences, look at some of the attendees:** Some of the most recent instances of these conferences are below:
  - <http://nextprof.engin.umich.edu/>
  - <https://risingstars.ece.cmu.edu/participants/>
- **Invite students (maybe even junior students) or colleagues to give a seminar:** Identification of potential candidates early can make the difference in where they look at the time of graduation.
- **Attend women/URM focused group meetings at national meetings:** This can help identify candidates. One can also attend the technical talks of students at national meetings (once they are identified).
- **All of your efforts to diversify the search should be carefully documented**
  - Not only will the Strategic Oversight Committee ask, but it will help with future searches

After the efforts to diversify the talent pool that applies, we need to take efforts to combat any unconscious bias issues in evaluating candidates. Some suggestions for doing so are

- to assign a portion of your committee to carefully review *all* URM and female applicants, or
- to ensure that all URM and female applicants are viewed several times
- **Recent research shows that women (and by extrapolation URM candidates) are more likely to receive an offer if there is more than one woman in the interview pool.** This means that it is even more crucial that we seek diversity at every step of our search process.

At the time of the interview:

There is a delicate question of how to achieve success at the time of the interview. By success, we mean that in the case that the interviewee is particularly impressive, what can we do to ensure that they view Cornell as an impressive environment when it comes to women or URM candidates. There are several possibilities. Which alternative is best depends on the candidate:

- On the first visit (to make a first impression) the department could facilitate a meeting between the candidate and either a member of WISE or EGES or both. On the positive side, it is quite likely that this connection will be made organically (because of departmental or research overlap). At this meeting the department or member of WISE/EGES can inform the candidate of the group. The concern is that some candidates do not want to feel at all that they are being recruited because of their identity. Of course this is never the case. Excellence is a prerequisite for hiring.

- If you decide it is inappropriate in the first visit, an impressive candidate is likely to return for a second visit at which time you can offer to make this connection.
- On either the first or second visit, the chair of the department can offer a list of possible connections to be made. This list could include a meeting with WISE or EGES or Diversity Programs in Engineering, it might include a meeting with a realtor, if the person has family, there may also be a meeting with HR that can explain some of the family-friendly environment policies in place (among other things).