Latent Bias and Effective Faculty Searches

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Overview

• Implicit Bias and Need for Attentive Searches
• Strategies for Overcoming Latent Bias
• University Support and General Search Considerations
Faculty Diversity: Penn Standing Faculty

- URM
- Minorities
- Women

Bar chart showing percentages of URM, Minorities, and Women over the years 2004 and 2015.

- 2004:
  - URM: 5.9%
  - Minorities: 15.7%
  - Women: 15.7%

- 2015:
  - URM: 7.8%
  - Minorities: 22.9%
  - Women: 32.5%
Faculty Diversity: Hiring Rates Rising

- Women: 39.4% (2005-10), 40.6% (2010-15)
- Minorities: 26.6% (2005-10), 34.8% (2010-15)
- URM: 8.2% (2005-10), 14.1% (2010-15)
Student-Faculty Diversity (2014)

Undergraduate Students
- Hispanic: 9.9%
- Black: 7.0%
- Asian: 45.0%
- International: 18.2%
- White: 11.4%
- Other: 3.9%
- Two or more races: 4.5%
- Other: 0.1%

Standing Faculty
- Hispanic: 0.1%
- Black: 0.6%
- Asian: 3.5%
- International: 3.6%
- White: 77.0%
- Two or more races: 13.4%
- Other: 1.8%
My department makes genuine efforts to recruit women faculty.

- **All Faculty**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 3%
  - Neither: 19%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 39%
  - URM: 33%

- **URM**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 4%
  - Neither: 26%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 30%

- **Women**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 6%
  - Neither: 26%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 32%
My department makes genuine efforts to recruit minority faculty.

- **All Faculty**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 4%
  - Neither: 25%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 36%
  - 27%

- **URM**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 11%
  - Neither: 24%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 23%
  - 21%

- **Women**
  - Disagree or Strongly Disagree: 6%
  - Neither: 30%
  - Agree or Strongly Agree: 32%
  - 21%
Gender Bias

Interviewer: Which designers do you prefer?

Hillary Clinton: What designers of clothes?

Interviewer: Yes.

Hillary Clinton: Would you ever ask a man that question?

Interview: Probably not.
Racial Bias
“Ben Barres gave a great seminar today, but then his work is much better than his sister’s work.”
Both male and female scientists evaluated female undergraduates as less competent, less deserving of a compensation, and less hirable.

Inconsistent Standards

Black-sounding names ("Jamal"): 15 resumes = callback

White-sounding names ("Greg"): 10 resumes = callback
Equivalent to 8 extra years experience

Inconsistent Standards

Homosexual signifiers
40% fewer callbacks

High performing female students in Air Force Academy
Female students perform better in math and science courses when taught by women

Carrell, Page, and West (2009), “Sex and Science: How Professor Gender Perpetuates the Gender Gap.”
Unconscious Schemas

Gender Discrimination

University psychology professors preferred “Brian” over “Karen” by 2:1

The Motherhood Penalty

79% less likely to be hired
Half as likely to be promoted
Offered $11,000 less in salary
Held to higher performance and punctuality standards

Correll, Benard, and In Paik (2007), American Journal of Sociology, 1297-1338.
Student Overtures to Professors

- Professors more responsive to white students in almost every discipline.
- Asian students most discriminated against.
- Except Chinese students reaching out to Chinese professors, ethnic or gender identity of the professor did not mitigate the bias.

Milkman, Akinola, and Chugh (2014).
Male and white patients more likely than women and African-Americans to be referred for cardiac catheterization presenting identical symptoms.

African-American women significantly less likely to be referred.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters for women

• Shorter
• Fewer references to CV
• Twice as many gender references
• More references to personal life
• Fewer standout references (“excellent”) and more “grindstone” references (“hardworking”)
• Twice as many hedges and irrelevancies (“It’s amazing how much she’s accomplished”)

Harvard Implicit Bias Test

- https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html
In 689 faculty searches, URM faculty were hired when:

- Job description explicitly engaged diversity
- Institutional strategies were used
  --target of opportunity, waiver of search, spousal hire
- Search conducted by an ethnically/racially diverse search committee

Smith and Turner (2004)
Bias Interrupters

- Consistent, objective rules
  - Avoid “halo” impressions
- Require evidence
- Avoiding “solo” presence in pool
- Taking time to review applications
- Exposure to unconscious bias research

Dovidio & Gaertner (2000).
Fiske (2002).
Bias Interrupters—Pool composition

• Odds of hiring woman 79x greater if more than one woman in a finalist pool
• Odds of hiring minority 193x greater if two candidates in finalist pool
• No matter the size of the pool

Johnson (2016).
Letters of Recommendation—Bias Interrupters

- Length
- Depth
- Personal characteristics
  - Motivation, dependability, patience, creativity, troubleshooting
  - NOT personal relationships
- Comparisons to a pool

Michigan ADVANCE program
Need for consistency in...

• Assessment of “fit” and “likeability”
  • Ex=chemistry, collegiality, bossy, abrasive, strident, direct, outspoken, assertive, competitive, aggressive, anger

• Self-promotion v. modesty

• Upward trajectory/ unfinished business
  • Rising star, junior, could be mentored

Rudman, 1998
Brescoll & Uhlmann (2008)
Gupta (2013)
Kring (2000)
Scenario #1

A young woman showed some impatience in the face of some questioning during her job talk, which alienated some members of the department who now oppose her candidacy—despite her stellar credentials. A male candidate showed similar impatience, but no one has mentioned it. In fact, he is the leading candidate.

Professor Joan Williams, UC Hastings School of Law, 2015, Women's Leadership Edge
Scenario #2

A female candidate has referred to her partner in the course of the recruitment. She has not mentioned any partner employment needs, nor needs relating to children or a family. The committee is aware that these needs have in the past been raised late in recruitments, rendering the acceptance of a Penn offer more difficult.

How might these issues be raised?
Scenario #3

The issue of a junior professor’s obtaining his undergraduate degree from a large, second tier public institution is raised as a concern in his candidacy for a Penn position. There are a number of full professors in the School who have degrees from similar institutions, but none on the search committee or in the department. The teaching record, graduate institution, and publication record are all excellent.

A similar concern had not been raised in discussions of another candidate many months back who had not elected to take the job at Penn.
More strategies

• Putting things in writing
• Surveying the department ahead of time
• Rotating search committee membership
• Voicing all colleagues
Regulatory Requirements

Diversity Search Advisors

• Assist in formation of search committee
• Help craft job descriptions
• Evaluate the pool
• Aid in reviewing search waiver requests
• Help to evaluate candidates
• Sign-off on EOC forms (new hires, promotions, and resignations)
Effective Visits

- Show enthusiasm
- Offer dual-career and family-friendly policy information
- Identify colleagues who can discuss climate for women and minorities
- Introduce the city and region
- Stay in contact
- Be even-handed and transparent in negotiating
Some Resources

• Presidential Professorships
• Faculty Opportunity Fund/ Dual Career Fund
• Benefits and Retirements Brochures
• Pool Data
• Sites for Job Postings
• HERC
• Relocation Assistance
• Child Care