



# *SEARCHING FOR EXCELLENCE*

Evidence-Based Strategies for Equitable and Inclusive Faculty Hiring

Version 1.0  
*released 2016.09.29*

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BRUIN 

**UCLA** Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

# CONTENTS

Foreword..... 1

Introduction: How to Approach this Guide..... 3

Step 1: Form the Search Committee ..... 7

Step 2: Articulate the Hiring Criteria ..... 10

Step 3: Write and Post the Job Ad .....13

Step 4: Form the Applicant Pool .....15

Step 5: Construct the Shortlist ..... 18

Step 6: Curate the Campus Visit ..... 22

Step 7: Engage in Final Deliberations ..... 25

Step 8: Recruit the Candidate ..... 27

Step 9: Welcome New Colleague to UCLA..... 29

Conclusion: Building Equity for All..... 30

Appendix A: APM 210-1-d..... i

Appendix B: Ad Language ..... v

Appendix C: Evaluation Rubrics ..... vii

Appendix D: Successful Visit..... ix

Appendix E: Interviews ..... x

## FOREWORD

Hiring faculty is one of the most important things we do. Search committees, situated at the front line of faculty hiring, perform this critical function and thus help (re)shape UCLA's present and future. Our hiring practices not only determine whether we successfully recruit the best talent but also signal our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. These commitments are not in tension with merit. To the contrary, they are essential to achieving a deep and genuine excellence.

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*Equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential to achieving a deep and genuine excellence.*

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To better appreciate why we must be vigilant about our hiring practices, our Office has produced a series of [videos on biases and heuristics](#)—automatic mental short cuts that can lead us astray from genuine equity and merit without even knowing it. If you have not yet done so, we ask you to view those videos before reading on.

Of course, biases and heuristics are not the only factors that derail our pursuit of excellence. There are also, for example, structural barriers to the pipeline, cramped definitions of merit, and complacent acceptance of past practices. That's the bad news.

The good news is that we can do better by employing evidence-based “best practices.” This hiring guide describes these countermeasures, which were designed to plug into our hiring practices with only modest effort and initiative.

In conclusion, our Office is trying to “do diversity” differently, to diagnose rigorously, test quickly, learn deeply, and implement in fast and brave iterations. We obviously don't have all the answers. So please share your feedback and constructive criticism about the videos and this guide.

Please help us achieve our shared goal of excellence at UCLA.

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VICE CHANCELLOR  
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## MORE RESOURCES

**Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).** For more information about how our Office interacts with faculty hiring, including the **FACULTY SEARCH PROCESS POLICY MEMORANDUM**, please consult:

<https://equity.ucla.edu/programs-resources/faculty-search-process/>

FacDiversity@conet.ucla.edu

(310) 206-7411

**Academic Personnel Office (APO).** EDI's focus is on promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion in the hiring process. But you may have other questions about the faculty hiring process, which is generally handled by APO. For information about their online academic applicant tracking system, **UCLA ACADEMIC RECRUIT**, please consult:

<https://www.apo.ucla.edu/initiatives/recruit/documents>

academicjobs@ucla.edu

(310) 825-1696

## INTRODUCTION: HOW TO APPROACH THIS GUIDE

Although hiring practices vary widely across UCLA's many schools and departments, most searches follow a similar arc from the creation of the search committee to the hiring of a candidate.

With this in mind, this guide, *SEARCHING FOR EXCELLENCE*, has been designed to track prominent stages in the ladder-rank faculty hiring process. Specifically, the guide is organized into nine sections:

1. Form the Search Committee
2. Articulate the Hiring Criteria
3. Write and Post the Job Ad
4. Form the Applicant Pool
5. Construct the Shortlist
6. Curate the Campus Visit
7. Engage in Final Deliberations
8. Recruit the Candidate
9. Welcome New Colleague to UCLA

Each section begins with a short narrative outlining goals and marking potential pitfalls. The narrative is followed by concrete countermeasures. The potential pitfalls and corresponding countermeasures are presented schematically, but we recognize that real life is never so neat and clean. Real searches in real life are dynamic processes run by devoted but often frantically busy and over-stretched human beings.

Certain pitfalls will be more dangerous in some searches than others. In some cases, a particular countermeasure will prove invaluable; in others, it won't be worth the effort. In other words, we understand that scholarly judgment is both necessary and unavoidable.

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*Uncabined discretion + presumption of objectivity = subtle discrimination.*

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### MINDFUL TRANSPARENT JUDGMENT

What we seek, ultimately, is judgment that is both mindful and transparent. "*Mindful Transparent Judgment*" (MTJ) embraces the simultaneous messiness and virtue of our discretion. Uncabined discretion coupled with the presumption that we are already objective and fair leave us susceptible to implicit biases and structural norms that undermine equity, diversity, and inclusion. But mechanical adherence to pre-defined rules and processes set us up for a different sort of failure. In lieu of either extreme, MTJ challenges us to thoughtfully cabin and transparently

employ discretion. This guide provides concrete examples of how search committees can do so.

To start the discussion, it's helpful to provide some definitions.

## DIVERSITY

At one level, “diversity” is nothing more than a brute fact about the variance amongst us, a measure of the heterogeneity of any attribute within a population. We could focus on the diversity of eye color: blue or brown; handedness: right, left, or ambidextrous; operating systems: Mac, PC, or Linux. But in a great public research university such as UCLA, diversity isn't just about variety for variety's sake. Instead it's about the value that certain diversities generate.

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*Particularly at a renowned public research institution like UCLA, we prioritize diversity because it has functional and signaling value.*

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The ***functional value of diversity*** focuses on the work that diversity does within a particular context. In the marketplace, this is called the “***business case for diversity***,” which argues that diversity allows for greater profits, smarter risk-taking, and better decision-making.

In the University, at least two functional values deserve mention. One we call the “***pedagogical case for diversity***,” which posits that students from diverse backgrounds facilitate the robust exchange of ideas and break down intergroup biases, such as racial stereotypes, in ways that promote good citizenship and train future leaders. The Supreme Court has repeatedly reaffirmed the pedagogical value of diversity as a compelling interest.

A related functional value focuses on faculty, the “***intellectual case for diversity***,” which posits that the broader the range of faculty diversity, the more robust, creative, and relevant a university's scholarly production, academic programming, and overall community engagement.

The ***signaling value of diversity*** refers to the benefit that accrues from seeing people of all backgrounds in positions of esteem and leadership. Such environments signal to the broader community that positions of power and significance are open to all; that fair selection procedures were used; and that everyone, regardless of their identities, belongs at UCLA. We believe that this signaling value is especially important for a world-class public research university, embedded in Los Angeles, modeling for the State of California and the entire nation what it means to embrace, produce, and project genuine excellence.

## EQUITY

On a formal level, “equity” just means treating likes alike. In other words, if two candidates provide the same performance, give them the same score. If two junior faculty members demonstrate the same potential, give them the same (human capital) investment in terms of resources, teaching leaves, research funds, publishing opportunities, and encouragement.

To achieve this sort of equity, we must be able to measure candidates’ talents and achievements consistently and accurately. But even this extremely formal and modest articulation of equity is hard to realize because of tendencies, such as confirmation bias. Moreover, the best candidates often seem to be somehow incommensurable, forcing us always to compare apples to oranges, never apples to apples.

The challenge gets even harder when we consider more capacious understandings of equity that are less formal and formalistic. What if in the recent past, one candidate received special opportunities, resources, and coaching, but the other did not? For example, how should we think about greater productivity if one candidate had access to greater funding that allowed them to spend more time on research?

## EXCELLENCE

Most of us have a deeply intuitive but somewhat unarticulated notion of “excellence.” Almost always it involves being “smart.” But we all have different weights we place on factors such as research versus teaching versus service. Even though faculty enjoy extraordinary intellectual autonomy, it’s important to recognize that when we hire, we are acting as state employers (governed by labor law), function as official agents of a public university, and are governed by the Academic Personnel Manual (“APM”).

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*“Contributions in all areas of faculty achievement that promote equal opportunity and diversity should be given due recognition in the academic personnel process, and they should be evaluated and credited in the same way as other faculty achievements.”*

—APM 210-1-d.

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[APM 210-1-d](#) prescribes the criteria for hiring faculty that are binding on all of us. They include “(1) teaching, (2) research and other creative work, (3) professional activity, and (4) University and public service.” In considering each criterion, the APM makes clear that equity, diversity, and inclusion matter. Specific examples include (language not verbatim):

1. the development of particularly effective strategies for the educational advancement of students in various under-represented groups;
2. contributions to the advancement of equitable access and diversity in education;
3. activities that specifically address the professional advancement of individuals in underrepresented groups in the candidate's field.

## INCLUSION

Inclusion exists when all faculty members, regardless of their social identities, feel welcomed, respected, and valued. Even when we achieve equity in the hiring process and diversity on the faculty roster, there's no guarantee of full inclusion. The truth is that an institution can be diverse and uninclusive at the same time. Why? Because the representation may feel formal and begrudging.

There's no inclusion unless all faculty members have a voice in the governance of, and feel at home in, the department. This is why it is important to mark inclusion as a distinct institutional value and a separate measure of an institution's commitment to egalitarianism.

\* \* \*

We recognize that far more complex and robust accounts of excellence, equity, diversity, and inclusion are available. But we believe that these working definitions will be good enough for the purpose of this guide— which is to provide practical guidance to conducting an equitable and inclusive search.



## STEP 1: FORM THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

Most faculty searches begin with the formation of a search committee. When a dean puts a search committee together, she is often looking to build a team with expertise, credibility, and collegiality.

But consider the subtle ways in which that committee may end up lacking diversity. For instance, consider stereotypes and confirmation bias that could lead certain faculty members to be seen as lacking expertise or credibility. Or consider how negative attitudes could lead certain faculty members to be seen as insufficiently collegial.

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*“Conflict avoidance” refers to the desire to “just get along,” particularly during a search process that demands time and attention in our already busy schedules.*

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In addition, our normal desire to avoid conflict and the perception that diversity contributes more grit than grease can lead deans to skip over certain faculty, such as women or people of color, from serving on search committees. When a search committee lacks meaningful diversity, there are consequences.

### SIGNALING PROBLEM

A candidate who encounters a homogenous committee might conclude that the department cares little about equity, diversity, and inclusion. That might decrease the candidate’s interest, which reciprocally reduces the search committee’s interest, thus constructing a self-fulfilling prophecy loop.

### FUNCTIONAL PROBLEM

A homogeneous committee will often operate faster and with less conflict. But that’s not necessarily a good thing. Committee diversity tends to force more deliberation about more factors, in ways that counter groupthink.

Finally, consider how our natural tendencies toward ingroup favoritism can lead us to prefer candidates that remind us of ourselves. If everyone on the committee belongs to the same ingroup, for example the same racial group, that favoritism will cut systematically in one direction. By contrast, a diverse search committee will manifest different kinds of ingroup favoritisms, which can cancel themselves out.

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*Ingroup favoritism refers to our tendency to favor individuals who belong to our own teams, groups, or tribes, including socially salient categories such as race, ethnicity, or religion.*

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In sum, meaningfully diverse search committees help to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion with respect to both the internal governance of a department (via how that department selects faculty for service on search committees) and the department's interactions with the external labor market (via how a search committee selects candidates for a job).

The following page offers strategies that deans and chairs should consider when forming search committees.

## FORMING THE SEARCH COMMITTEE

1. **Work with your EA.** Inform your [Equity Advisor](#) (EA) that you are launching a new search and assembling a search committee. Your EA can offer guidance and insight throughout the search process—particularly on matters related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
2. **Pick a diverse team.** For reasons outlined above, seek a diverse team whose experiences, viewpoints, and backgrounds will challenge each other.

When thinking about diversity, be mindful of the categories enunciated in University nondiscrimination policies such as the [Faculty Code of Conduct \(APM 015\)](#), which include, among others: race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and veteran status.

3. **Credit invisible work.** In order to achieve diversity on search committees, you may have to go back to the same underrepresented faculty members repeatedly. Recognize that doing so is both inclusive and burdensome.

If a faculty member is repeatedly being asked to do more service work than her peers—as measured by time, effort, or emotional difficulty—**we strongly recommend that you credit this otherwise “invisible work” with time, resources, and recognition.**

4. **Take turns.** The membership of search committees should revolve. Otherwise, the same sorts of ingroup favoritism will play out repeatedly. If you send out the exact same team to scout for talent, don't be surprised if you get the exact same kind of candidates invited back, year after year. To be sure, expertise, seniority, availability, and service load (including hitting up the same underrepresented faculty repeatedly) can limit your options. But don't fall into a pattern that too readily assumes that certain faculty must (or must not) serve on a search committee.

**Attend a search briefing.** Each search committee member must receive a briefing from UCLA's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at least once every four years. To schedule a briefing or check your briefing history, visit:

<https://equity.ucla.edu/programs-resources/faculty-search-process/>

## STEP 2: ARTICULATE THE HIRING CRITERIA

You have your search team. Now it's time to think hard about the position you're looking to fill. This is no easy task. In addition to the biases discussed in the [Implicit Biases Video Series](#), potential pitfalls include unduly narrow definitions of merit and unstated, vague, or shifting standards.

### CRAMPED DEFINITIONS OF MERIT

What do we mean by “unduly narrow definitions of merit”? Well, consider the following: Would it be appropriate for a search committee, within this University, simply to disregard the importance of research or other creative achievement for a ladder-rank faculty appointment? Notwithstanding academic freedom and departmental autonomy, that would *not* be appropriate. Indeed, the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) makes clear that “superior intellectual attainment, as evidenced both in teaching and in research or other creative achievement is an indispensable qualification for appointment ... to tenure positions.”

Similar question: Would it be appropriate for a search committee simply to disregard all this “diversity stuff” as irrelevant? Again, the answer is no. The APM makes explicit that contributions to equal opportunity and diversity must be given “due recognition.” This is part of UCLA’s definition of excellence.

### SHIFTING STANDARDS

As for unstated, vague, or shifting standards, numerous decision-making studies demonstrate that without some pre-commitment, we often simply pick the candidate that we “like” best, then rationalize the prioritization or weighting of selection criteria after the fact. This is why we are wary of unfettered discretion.

That said, we are not suggesting that hiring follow some mechanistic, robot-like process. Discretion is inevitable, and when deployed thoughtfully and transparently, highly valuable. This is why we emphasize the value in moving from unfettered discretion toward “Mindful Transparent Judgment” (MTJ). Here’s one way to think about it.

First, MTJ forces us to carefully consider the criteria that actually matter and to expressly articulate those criteria upfront.

Second, as the search proceeds, MTJ forces us to employ the relevant criteria to guide and ground our evaluations of the candidates and to be transparent about how we are doing so.

Third, if subsequent discussions and deliberations reveal that we failed to account for everything that matters, MTJ compels us to transparently adjust in

ways that facilitate the thorough and complete evaluation of candidates. (We will say more about hiring criteria at [STEP 5: CONSTRUCT THE SHORTLIST.](#))

For now, the crucial point is that job criteria should be articulated in ways that accord with the APM and are prioritized or weighted with specificity and transparency. Here are some tips.

## ARTICULATE THE HIRING CRITERIA

1. **Respect the APM.** The Academic Personnel Manual (APM 210-1-d) sets out minimum criteria for appointment, promotion, and appraisal. These criteria include: teaching; research and creative work; professional competence and activity; University and public service.
2. **Credit achievement on equity, diversity, and inclusion.** On each of these criteria, the APM instructs:
  - a. **Teaching:** credit the “development of particularly effective strategies for the educational advancement of students in various underrepresented groups”;
  - b. **Research and Creative Work:** credit the “contributions to the advancement of equitable access and diversity in education”;
  - c. **Professional Competence and Activity:** credit activities “that specifically address the professional advancement of individuals in underrepresented groups in the candidate’s field”;
  - d. **University and Public Service:** credit “contributions furthering diversity and equal opportunity within the University through participation in such activities as recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students.”

For more on the APM, see [Appendix A](#).

3. **Strive for specific, measurable criteria.** Criteria should be specific, measurable, and tied to the skills, experience, and expertise required for the posted position.
4. **Avoid proxies when you can directly measure.** Search committees sometimes rely on proxies (e.g., degree-granting institution) for particular measures of merit (e.g., smarts). It’s convenient and not entirely irrational. But when we rely on proxies, we are trusting other people’s judgments and not our own. And that risks passing through the biased evaluations or practices of other institutions.
5. **Avoid criteria that artificially narrow the pool.** Job criteria can artificially narrow the pool of candidates who apply, thereby limiting the diversity of the pipeline of potential candidates. And even for those candidates who do apply, artificially narrow job criteria can lead a search committee to dismiss unnecessarily otherwise talented and competitive candidates. For each job criterion, ask yourself what effect it will have on the applicant pool, and whether that effect is genuinely justified.

## STEP 3: WRITE AND POST THE JOB AD

You have your job-specific hiring criteria. Now it's time to draft your job ad and execute your Search Plan. In our search for excellence, the goal must be to yield the broadest pool of highly qualified talent. In other words, maximize the pipeline.

Too often, search committees describe the pipeline as though it were just “out there,” exogenous, separate and apart from what search committees do. In fact, the range of candidates who apply for a given position is often a function of the job criteria, the content and placement of the ad, and whether or not a search committee engages in proactive efforts to yield a robust pool.

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*The pipeline isn't just “other there.” We help build that pipeline by our actions and omissions.*

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Here are some pitfalls specific to writing and posting the job ad:

1. Failure to include specific job-criteria (see [STEP 2: ARTICULATE THE HIRING CRITERIA](#)) and instead write an entirely generic ad;
2. Failure to reference the University's non-discrimination and affirmative action policy, which is legally required;
3. Failure to signal explicitly that the institution values equity, diversity, and inclusion, and the ways that each contributes to scholarship, teaching, service, and the overall intellectual life of the University;
4. Failure to distribute the ad widely, including in venues that are read or utilized by underrepresented groups and women.

On the next page, you can find additional guidance on writing and posting the job ad.

## WRITE AND POST THE JOB AD

1. **Draft a Proper Job Ad** that:
  - a. **[required]** includes the UCLA Affirmative Action Statement (for the required language, see [APPENDIX B](#));
  - b. **[required]** states either the department's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, or that the department seeks a candidate with a proven record of contributing to equity, diversity, and inclusion (for sample language, see [APPENDIX B](#));
  - c. invites each candidate to submit a statement indicating her contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion;
  - d. notes that UCLA has family-friendly policies and resources (for sample language, see [APPENDIX B](#));

avoids stereotypically masculine hiring descriptions (e.g., assertive, decisive, logical)—to be clear, we're not suggesting that women are not assertive, decisive, or logical. But [research](#) suggests that using stereotypically male terms in a job ad can decrease the number of female applicants.
2. **Advertise broadly and strategically.**
  - a. if appropriate, utilize cross-disciplinary list-serves and hiring platforms;
  - b. advertise in forums, groups, or organizations that serve underrepresented groups and women.
3. **Get the Search Plan approved.** FYI, the Search Plan must be approved by the department chair, dean, and Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, before the job ad may be publicly posted.



## STEP 4: FORM THE APPLICANT POOL

This next step—Form the Applicant Pool—might strike you as redundant. After all, what more needs to be done after you have written a proper job ad and posted it in a few places?

We've separately identified this step to encourage search committees to embrace a proactive attitude toward broadening and increasing the diversity of the pool. The pitfall with applicant pools is that we passively wait for applications to land on our desks instead of actively seeking out prospects.

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*Suppose you hired an executive search firm and paid them good money. Would you be satisfied if all they did was post a job ad with boilerplate language?*

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To facilitate an active search, you should utilize personal and professional networks to identify and reach candidates who might otherwise not apply. You should specifically and methodically seek out highly qualified candidates from underrepresented communities.

How exactly? Some tips on the next page.

## ACTIVELY SEARCHING FOR TALENT

1. **Actively Search, Don't Passively Sort.**
  - a. **Make the call.** Have every member of the search committee call, email, text at least three former colleagues, mentors, and students. Since people are busy and things will slip, keep a common spreadsheet and hold each other accountable.
  - b. **Directly engage established mentors.** In any field, there are a few professors who have a proven track record of mentoring underrepresented students onto faculty trajectories. Find out who those people are, and contact them for their recommendations.
  - c. **Ping discipline-specific affinity groups.** Examples include the Association of Black Sociologists, the National Latina/o Psychological Association, or the Society of Women Engineers.
  - d. **Attend conferences and events.** Use word-of-mouth, and attend especially those events that target underrepresented groups and women.
  - e. **Maintain a list of potential targets,** which might include current President's or Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellows who will be on the market within a year or two.
2. **Check the [President's and Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellows](#).** After developing job-specific criteria, determine if any former Fellows fit your search. These Fellows are highly talented and heavily recruited (fellowships are awarded to roughly 5% of all applicants), and can carry significant hiring incentives. The benefits of hiring a former Fellow include:
  - A [search waiver](#) is often available;
  - UC campuses that hire eligible Fellows receive salary support in the amount of \$85,000 for five years;
  - In certain cases, UCOP provides start-up funding for Fellows hired into STEM ladder-rank faculty positions;
  - Fellows have proven track records—since 1995, 55 of 56 eligible for tenure have received it.
3. **Get the Applicant Pool Report approved.** After all timely applications have been received, the UCLA ACADEMIC RECRUIT system allows the department to generate an Applicant Pool Report, which compares the demographics of applicants to national availability statistics.

If the applicant pool seems oddly limited or unrepresentative, search committees should review the preceding process and consider taking additional steps designed to yield a broader applicant pool. Remember that **the Applicant Pool Report has to be approved by the Vice Chancellor for EDI before the search process can continue.**

## STEP 5: CONSTRUCT THE SHORTLIST

Your Search Plan was approved, your job ad went live, you've actively scouted for talent, and your Applicant Pool has been approved. What comes next?

The search committee will have to start reviewing the paper record—anything from CVs and resumes to research statements and scholarship. There might be multiple stages of review, but the end goal is to construct the Shortlist of candidates you will invite to campus for full faculty visits. Throughout this process, the challenge is to review all candidates equitably, on the merits.

What are the pitfalls?

The dangers are that we selectively ignore the articulated job criteria or apply them unevenly, in ad hoc and nontransparent ways. Why? Because we are overly influenced by proxies (e.g., school that granted the degree), affinities based on shared ingroups (e.g., common culture, religion, race, politics), authoritative announcements (e.g., letters of recommendation by field luminaries).

There's also the danger that under stress and deadline pressures, we rush our deliberations and resort to shortcuts. The biases discussed in the [Implicit Biases Video Series](#) can compound these pitfalls in ways that diminish the likelihood that candidates from underrepresented groups and women will make the Shortlist.

The following countermeasures can help.

## PREPARE THE PAPER REVIEW

1. **Be humble.** It all begins with the simple yet challenging task of recognizing our own fallibility. Our brains are incredible machines, but the machinery is susceptible to biases that we're not even aware of. That means there are always error bars to our judgments and that those errors predictably tilt in the direction of our attitudes and stereotypes.

We have to own those limitations. Numerous studies have confirmed that if we already think we're perfectly objective, we're prone to discriminate more, not less.

2. **Time, Time, Time.** Budget enough time to discuss the candidates and commit to stopping or taking a break if the committee hits fatigue. Merit-based judgments don't fare well under time-pressure, high stress, or at cognitive depletion. Worse, under these conditions, we might break in favor of the familiar, our ingroups, which encourages demographic self-replication.
3. **Renew your vows.** Remember the job criteria you collectively agreed-upon and articulated before the applications came in? Time to remind yourselves so that you can hold each other accountable to the criteria that matter. Every member of the search committee (including any other faculty who play a role in evaluating candidates) should be familiar with the relevant criteria before review begins.
4. **Contributions to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.** In particular, every member of a search committee should be reminded that the job criteria include due recognition to contributions to equity, diversity, and inclusion. To repeat, it's not optional. It is required by APM 210-1-d.
5. **Develop a rubric.** When you grade examinations, you probably use a grading sheet or rubric. Otherwise, it's hard to compare one student's answer to another's. Moreover, there is a risk that important, but not entirely determinative variables—such as writing style—can lead us astray, away from other elements we are trying to measure, such as substance.

So, develop a rubric or evaluation tool to guide evaluations, based on the pre-determined job-specific criteria. For a sample evaluation tool, see [APPENDIX C](#).

## CONDUCT THE PAPER REVIEW

1. **Use the rubric(s).** Even at the most preliminary review stage, take contemporaneous notes—including during your review of CVs, resumes, scholarship, and even letters of recommendation.

You have a grading sheet for a reason. Our memories aren't perfect. And if we see some great things in the paper record, we might forget about important omissions in the file. All the criteria matter, so give them their due.

Remember, our goal is to avoid basing judgments on non-relevant criteria—a common default when reviewing application materials. Rubrics and related tools support decision-making because they force us to tie evaluations to the relevant criteria.

2. **Spend equal quality time on all candidates.** Related to our prior recommendation that search committees allocate enough time to review the files, a fair and impartial review requires equal attention to all candidates. This means taking breaks when necessary.

Trying to muscle through when we are exhausted risks giving less attention to the last applications we review and increases the likelihood that we'll unknowingly rely on our biases.

3. **Take steps to avoid anchoring and confirmation bias.** To do so, adopt practices that facilitate open-minded and holistic evaluation of each candidate.

For instance, instead of reviewing each candidate's application in isolation and making an immediate thumbs-up or thumbs-down determination, review a set of applications side-by-side and then determine who should proceed to the next stage of consideration.

Or, instead of ranking candidate on a single scale, summarize each candidate's strengths, weaknesses, and likely contributions. Alternatively, create multiple lists that rank candidates based on the various job-specific criteria.

The foregoing countermeasures reduce the risk that you will too quickly *anchor* your views about a particular candidate and, subsequently, review any additional information about that candidate in ways that *confirm* the initial anchoring. Additionally, these strategies should help you catch any unintended patterns in your decision-making—for instance, if you're tending to overvalue certain criteria over others.

4. **Generate a Shortlist Report.** UCLA ACADEMIC RECRUIT allows a search committee to generate a Shortlist Report, which lists Shortlist finalists and provides a national benchmark of eligible candidates for comparison. If the Shortlist pool looks materially different from the applicant pool, departments

should give a “hard look” to ensure that talent was not inadvertently overlooked.

5. **Get the Shortlist Report approved.** The Shortlist Report must be reviewed and approved by the department chair, dean, and Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion before Shortlist candidates can visit UCLA to give a job talk.

## STEP 6: CURATE THE CAMPUS VISIT

As with evaluating the paper record, our individual biases and the structure of full faculty visits can impede fair evaluations of a candidate's in-person performance—whether in an interview, job talk, or informal meal. For example, ingroup favoritism might lead us to more favorably (or negatively) evaluate a candidate with whom we share (or don't share) a salient connection.

So, please take strong emotional reactions to a candidate with a grain of salt. If you really like someone, and that candidate happened to share a salient ingroup (however defined), reflect on and examine—don't just act on—your enthusiasm. On the flipside, if you really dislike someone, and that candidate happened to fall into a salient outgroup, again, reflect on and examine—don't just act on—that negative reaction.

A similar point can be made about stereotypes. We might, for example, leave a job talk with a strong reaction. Did an Asian American candidate seem shy? Did a woman candidate seem arrogant or abrasive? Did someone seem insufficiently masculine or feminine? Whenever your impression of someone converges with stereotypes, reflect and examine—don't just act on—that impression.

More generally, as you curate the campus visit, keep in mind that full faculty visits constitute a two-way courtship. We're evaluating candidates. But they're also evaluating us. They are deciding whether UCLA's professional landscape will support them and their families, in a fair and respectful environment in which they can flourish.

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*During full faculty visits, UCLA is not only buying but also selling. All candidates should leave campus feeling unequivocally welcomed and valued.*

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All candidates should leave UCLA feeling unequivocally welcomed and valued. If a candidate leaves feeling otherwise, that impression undermines our ability to recruit her and all others who learn of her experience. As with the other stages of the search process, certain countermeasures can help to ensure that we treat all candidates with equal respect and courtesy.



## PLAN THE CAMPUS VISIT

1. **Develop standard materials.** For each visit, construct a standard agenda and information packet for all candidates (for a sample checklist, see [APPENDIX D](#)). Provide all candidates with these standard materials prior to their arrival.
2. **Provide a list of faculty.** The information packet and agenda should include the list of faculty who will be engaging the candidate in official interviews or over a meal. Well-connected candidates—from the best resourced universities, with the most influential mentors—are likely to know various members of the faculty including their research interests. By providing a faculty list to all candidates beforehand, we help level the playing field.
3. **Offer equal accommodations to all.** One candidate shouldn't be put up at the UCLA guesthouse, whereas other candidates are put up at Luskin. One candidate shouldn't be picked up by a faculty member at the airport, whereas other candidates are told to Uber.

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*If the department chair is near LAX when one candidate arrives, it's a wonderful gesture for the chair to chauffeur that candidate to campus . . . but only if the chair can do the same for all candidates!*

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4. **Be inclusive.** Be mindful of your personal interactions with candidates, and make a sincere effort to be equally kind, warm, and accommodating to everyone. Small acts, often subtle gestures or cues, can have strong signaling power. Even if we don't feel an immediate sense of connection or kinship with a candidate, it's important that we treat them no worse than the candidate with whom we feel an immediate bond.
5. **Final Meeting with the Chair.** Include an end-of-day meeting between each candidate and the chair. It's a way to send a final message about the department before the candidate leaves and to take the candidate's temperature about how she experienced the day. Again, if there are standard bits of information to share—e.g., expected timeline, standard teaching or start-up packages—provide such information in a uniform fashion to all candidates.

## CONDUCT THE INTERVIEWS

1. **Prep the faculty who will be evaluating candidates.** This starts with briefing your colleagues on the collectively agreed upon job-specific criteria and providing everyone with a rubric or evaluation tool.

Also, given that candidates are likely to interview with multiple sets of faculty in varying settings, spread the word on the value of *structured interviews*. We all value casual and unscripted encounters with potential colleagues; and, interviews are particularly well-suited to get a glimpse of who someone actually is. But there's quite a bit of evidence that completely unstructured interviews in informal settings do not produce reliable information about future job performance. Much of the time, we're doing little more than judging whether we like someone, which may include whether that candidate reminds us of ourselves.

To guard against such outcomes, take some time to semi-structure the interviews. For example, find some way to make sure that every candidate gets asked the same set of core questions. This will make comparisons across candidates easier. For more, see [APPENDIX E](#).

2. **Don't break the law.** California law prohibits employers from asking about a candidate's race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, or sexual orientation. Beyond abiding by the law, it's important to avoid these questions because they can unintentionally signal that UCLA is not welcoming to all. For these reasons, every UCLA employee (faculty or otherwise) who interacts with a candidate during the search process should review the [California Department of Fair Employment and Housing Fact Sheet](#).

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*If a candidate asks about topics that the interviewer could not initially ask (e.g., regarding childcare or the accommodation of religious holidays), you can and should offer a helpful response—even though you may not evaluate a candidate based on their response or inquiry. For example, you can say:*

*“UCLA has programs to assist in partner employment, childcare, schooling and other family concerns. If these programs are of any interest to you, let us know how we may be helpful.”*

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## STEP 7: ENGAGE IN FINAL DELIBERATIONS

You're almost there—full faculty visits are complete and it's time to identify the one (perhaps two) candidate(s) to whom you will extend an offer. As with every stage of the faculty search process, we need to be mindful of potential pitfalls and proactively adopt countermeasures.

The pitfalls are all the ones we have already discussed – such as the biases foregrounded in the Implicit Bias Video Series, ingroup favoritism, conflict avoidance, uncritical or unarticulated departures from, or revisions to, established and previously agreed upon merit criteria.

Here's the bottom line: this is not the time for the search committee to go rogue. All the committee's good work and (hopefully) earned perception of legitimacy can go up in smoke if the committee does not hold the equity, diversity, and inclusion line.

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*Remember what we said at the outset of this document: Equity, diversity, and inclusion are not obstacles to merit. To the contrary, they are essential ingredients that help ensure that our hiring processes are genuinely meritocratic.*

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In addition to the countermeasures we've already covered, we've included a few additional tools and tips for your arsenal. Because you know your search better than anyone, we invite you to consider how best to utilize each countermeasure during your final deliberations.

## ENGAGE IN FINAL DELIBERATIONS

1. **Remember and practice what you've learned.** You've taken notes, filled out rubrics, and questioned your initial judgments. Now, individually and collectively, recall your objective and the articulated job criteria, review the ground rules for deliberation, keep using your notes, and maintain an open mind.
2. **Assign each finalist a champion and devil's advocate.** The goal is not to advocate for any particular candidate, but rather to make sure that no one falls through the cracks (by lacking a champion) and no one gets a free pass (because an influential search committee member supports that candidate). By slowing down and canvassing more opinions and perspectives, we're less likely to fall victim to ingroup favoritism, confirmation bias, or implicit biases that undermine our meritocratic review.
3. **Embrace the friction generated by meaningful diversity.** Ideally, differing perspectives will arise during final deliberations. Don't seek to avoid the friction. Instead, embrace it as a virtue that should improve decision-making.
4. **Record your rationale.** For each Shortlist candidate who does not receive an offer, you must articulate why they did not and include this rationale within the proper field in UCLA ACADEMIC RECRUIT.

## STEP 8: RECRUIT THE CANDIDATE

Post-offer, the goal is to maximize yield. And, now the tables really are turned—the candidate is interviewing us. While no recruitment process can give candidates everything they want, all candidates should leave feeling like they were treated fairly and equitably, and that were they to come to UCLA, the University would invest in them and their future.

Every interaction matters, particularly for underrepresented groups and women who often have genuine concerns about whether they will feel at home at UCLA. Candidates may not expressly press these concerns, but they will be taking notes, over the course of their campus visit and subsequent communications, one interaction at a time. They will notice actions and omissions, what's said and what's left unsaid.

At this stage, one significant pitfall is the department's failure to invest equally in recruiting all candidates, which can occur if certain candidates receive more enthusiasm from the search committee and faculty members than others. Even where a less-recruited candidate is ultimately hired, the failure to roll out the red carpet (especially if other candidates received such treatment) can send negative signals about the department's interest in the candidate.

These pitfalls can have a distributional effect that undermines the University's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In at least some departments, underrepresented groups and women are less likely to receive the same level of enthusiasm as White men.

What to do about this? The countermeasures on the next page should help.

## RECRUITING THE CANDIDATE

1. **Change the frame from “search” to “yield.”** Commit as a search committee to enthusiastically recruit every offeree and express to the faculty the need to do that as well. Urge the dean to communicate to the faculty the importance of expressing that enthusiasm. Once a decision has been made to extend an offer, both the search committee and the department should close ranks.
2. **Interconnect.** Connect candidates to parts of the University that intersect with their scholarship, teaching, and service. This kind of arbitrage will signal to candidates that the department is invested in integrating them into the broader University community.
3. **Vett guides and realtors.** Carefully screen folks who tour candidates around Los Angeles. Those guides might characterize neighborhoods in off-putting ways. Even when that message is not expressly communicated, candidates report that they are rarely shown housing options in majority-minority parts of the city.

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*Candidates from underrepresented groups repeatedly report being told by UCLA-recommended realtors that the only safe place to live in Los Angeles is west of La Cienega!*

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4. **Clarify expectations.** Make sure the dean and/or the department chair informs the candidate about tenure and promotion standards. Doing so will help to ensure that candidates have a clear sense that the department’s commitment to merit, equity, diversity, and transparency transcends the moment of the hire.
5. **Hustle up resources.** Think creatively about getting candidates the kind of resources they will need to thrive at UCLA. You can always ask your Equity Advisor for suggestions. If necessary, have your dean reach out to the Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Other valuable faculty resources available through the Academic Personnel Office @ <https://www.apo.ucla.edu/faculty-resources-new-faculty>.

## STEP 9: WELCOME NEW COLLEAGUE TO UCLA

The search process has ended, the candidate has accepted the job, and she has arrived on campus. The search is over, but the search committee's job is not done. Help integrate the candidate into the department and the broader UCLA community, and enlist other faculty in the department to help.

Integrating the new faculty member into the department helps to follow through on the University's commitment not just to equity but also to inclusion. Plus, when a new hire feels at home in a department, the entire department wins. A professor's feelings of belonging advance excellence by increasing the likelihood that she will succeed in ways that enhance the department's reputation and standing.

Finally, the more welcomed a recently-hired professor feels, the more likely she is to share her knowledge about prospective hires and help the department recruit downstream.

We stress these benefits of inclusion because we recognize that the new faculty member will not necessarily have been everyone's first choice. Against this backdrop, it becomes all the more important that once a department votes to make an offer, the search committee, chair, and dean encourage *every* faculty member in that unit to close ranks and welcome our new colleague into the department and University. Doing so advances inclusion and excellence and can lead to further diversity gains later on.

## CONCLUSION: BUILDING EQUITY FOR ALL

As noted in the Foreword, faculty hiring carries tremendous responsibility. The work of faculty search committees today will impact the landscape of UCLA's faculty and leadership for years to come. Without a doubt, the stakes are high.

With this in mind, we created *SEARCHING FOR EXCELLENCE* to equip search committees with strategies and tools that, if thoughtfully and diligently employed, would promote a more equitable and meritocratic search process. We realize, however, that everything can and should be improved. So we welcome your feedback, questions, critique, or anything else you'd like to share concerning this document.

Above all, thank you for reading all the way through. It demonstrates your personal commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Together, we can build equity for all.



## APPENDIX A: APM 210-1-d

### JOB SPECIFIC CRITERIA CONSISTENT WITH APM 210-1-d

Criteria enumerated in APM 210-1-d serve as **guides for minimum standards for evaluating performance** in (1) teaching, (2) research and other creative work, (3) professional activity, and (4) University and public service:

#### (1) Teaching

In judging the effectiveness of a candidate's teaching, the committee should consider ... [the] extent and skill of the candidate's participation in the general guidance, mentoring and advising of students; effectiveness in creating an academic environment that is open and encouraging to all students, including development of particularly effective strategies for the educational advancement of students in various under-represented groups. Among significant types of evidence of teaching effectiveness are development of new and effective techniques of instruction, **including techniques that meet the needs of students from groups that are under-represented in the field of instruction.** (emphasis added).

#### (2) Research and Other Creative Work

Textbooks, reports, circulars, and similar publications normally are considered evidence of teaching ability or public service. However, contributions by faculty members to the professional literature or to the advancement of professional practice or professional education, **including contributions to the advancement of equitable access and diversity in education should be judged creative work when they present new ideas or original scholarly work.** (emphasis added).

#### (3) Professional Activity

The candidate's professional activities should be scrutinized for evidence of achievement and leadership in the field and of demonstrated progressiveness in the development or utilization of new approaches and techniques for the solution of professional problems, **including those that specifically address the professional advancement of individuals in under-represented groups in the candidate's field.** (emphasis added).

#### (4) University and Public Service

[C]ontributions to student welfare through service on student-faculty committees and as advisers to student organizations should be recognized as evidence, **as should contributions furthering diversity and equal opportunity within the University through participation in such activities as recruitment, retention, and mentoring of scholars and students.** (emphasis added).

## APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION GUIDELINES

APM-210-1-d provides clear guidance for both review and appointment of a faculty that is dedicated to the diverse goals of UC. Search committees **should give appropriate consideration to the following accomplishments** demonstrated by a candidate during the academic review process for appointment and promotion.



These are examples and not an exhaustive list; other activities may also fit the guidelines described in APM – 210-1-d.

### (1) Teaching

- a. Contributions to pedagogies addressing different learning styles, for example:
  - i. Designing courses or curricula that meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students;
  - ii. Developing effective teaching strategies for the educational advancement of students from under-represented groups.
- b. Experience teaching students who are under-represented, for example:
  - i. Teaching at a minority-serving institution;
  - ii. Record of success advising women and minority graduate students;
  - iii. Experience teaching students with disabilities.

### (2) Research and Other Creative Work

- a. Research contributions to understanding the barriers facing women and minorities in academic disciplines, for example:
  - i. Studying patterns of participation and advancement of women and minorities in fields where they are under-represented;
  - ii. Studying socio-cultural issues confronting under-represented students in college preparation curricula;
  - iii. Evaluating programs, curricula, and teaching strategies designed to enhance participation of under-represented students in higher education.

- b. Research interests that will contribute to diversity and equal opportunity, for example, research that addresses:
  - i. Race, ethnicity, gender, multiculturalism, and inclusion;
  - ii. Health disparities, educational access and achievement, political engagement, economic justice, social mobility, civil and human rights;
  - iii. Questions of interest to communities historically excluded by higher education;
  - iv. Artistic expression and cultural production that reflects culturally diverse communities or voices not well represented in the arts and humanities.

### (3) Professional Activity

- a. Engagement in activity designed to remove barriers and to increase participation by groups historically under-represented in higher education:
  - i. Participation in academic preparation, outreach, or tutoring;
  - ii. Participation in recruitment and retention activities;
  - iii. Service as an advisor to programs such as Women in Science and Engineering.
  - iv. Exceptional record mentoring students and junior faculty from groups underrepresented in the field;
  - v. Promoting welcoming classroom environments for students from culturally diverse groups.

### (4) University and Public Service

- a. Participation in service that applies up-to-date knowledge to problems, issues, and concerns of groups historically under-represented in higher education:
  - i. Engagement in seminars, conferences, or institutes that address the concerns of women and under-represented minorities;
  - ii. Presentations or performances for under-represented communities;
  - iii. Honors, awards, and other forms of special recognition such as commendations from local or national groups or societies representing under-served communities;
  - iv. The application of theory to real-world economic, social, and community development problems;
  - v. Election to office, or undertaking service to professional and learning societies, including editorial work, or peer

- reviewing for a national or international organization addressing disparities in access to higher education;
- vi. Selection for special public service activities and invitations to give talks within the field that address the needs of under-represented or culturally diverse groups;
  - vii. Participation in professional or scientific associations or meetings, and presentation of papers related to the needs of communities historically excluded from higher education.

## APPENDIX B: AD LANGUAGE

### REQUIRED UCLA AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age or protected veteran status. For the complete University of California nondiscrimination and affirmative action policy, see: UC Nondiscrimination & Affirmative Action Policy.

### SAMPLE LANGUAGE REGARDING DEPARTMENT'S COMMITMENT

We welcome candidates whose experience in teaching, research, or community service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and excellence.

Individuals with a history of and commitment to mentoring students from underrepresented minorities are encouraged to apply.

The department is seeking outstanding candidates with the potential for exceptional research, and excellence in teaching, and also a clear commitment to enhancing the diversity of the faculty, graduate student population, and of the majors in <field>.

A demonstrated commitment to improving access to higher education for disadvantaged students through teaching or mentoring activities is desired.

The Department is particularly interested in candidates who have experience working with students from a diverse background and a demonstrated commitment to improving access to higher education for disadvantaged students.

Experience in mentoring women and minorities in STEM fields is desired.

The University of California seeks to recruit and retain a diverse workforce as a reflection of our commitment to serve the people of California, to maintain the excellence of the University, and to offer our students richly varied disciplines, perspectives and ways of knowing and learning.

## FAMILY FRIENDLY LANGUAGE

UCLA has programs to assist in partner employment, childcare, schooling and other family concerns. For additional information, visit the UCLA Academic Personnel Office [website](#) or the UC Office of the President's [website](#).

## APPENDIX C: EVALUATION RUBRICS

### SAMPLE CANDIDATE EVALUATION TOOL

The following offers a method for faculty to evaluate job candidates. Departments should modify this template as necessary for their own uses. The proposed questions are designed for junior faculty candidates; however, alternate language is suggested in parenthesis for senior faculty candidates.

Candidate's Name:

Please indicate which of the following are true for you (check all that apply):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read candidate's CV                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Met with candidate                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read candidate's scholarship               | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended lunch or dinner with candidate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read candidate's letters of recommendation | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain):                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended candidate's job talk              | _____  |
|   | _____  |

Please comment on the candidate's scholarship as reflected in the job talk:

Please comment on the candidate's teaching ability as reflected in the job talk:

Please rate the candidate on each of the following:	excellent	good	neutral	fair	poor	unable to judge
Potential for (Evidence of) scholarly impact						
Potential for (Evidence of) research productivity						
Potential for (Evidence of) research funding						
Potential for (Evidence of) collaboration						
Potential for (Evidence of) outreach efforts to diverse groups						
Fit with department's priorities						
Ability to make positive contribution to department's climate						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to attract and supervise graduate students						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to teach and supervise undergraduates						
Potential (Demonstrated ability) to be a conscientious university community member						

Other comments?



## APPENDIX D: SUCCESSFUL VISIT

### SAMPLE CHECKLIST FOR A SUCCESSFUL VISIT

1. Identify primary staff support to coordinate all necessary documentation, travel arrangements and reimbursements.
  - a. May pre-purchase airline tickets for candidate
  - b. Offer accommodations for length of stay
  - c. May reimburse all or part of candidate's expenses
  - d. Travel advances may be available
2. Determine if the candidates will have individuals accompanying them during the campus visit. If so; prepare an agenda for the (partner, guest).
3. Determine if the candidate will need child-care arrangements during the campus visit. If so, help coordinate arrangements.
4. Send the agenda to the candidates ahead of time.
5. Send the potential candidates department and school brochures, campus map, University publications, resource guide and faculty handbook.
6. Meet any special needs of the candidates (physical, dietary, etc.).
7. Apprise the candidates of cultural events during campus visits.
8. Keep in contact throughout the search process.

## APPENDIX E: INTERVIEWS

### BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Draft an agenda that includes:

- 1) questions likely to solicit information related to the predetermined job-specific criteria;
- 2) the order questions will be asked;
- 3) the individual who will ask each question.

Determine the rules of intellectual engagement.

- 1) How much time will there be for Q&A?
- 2) Will interruptions be permitted?
- 3) May candidates go beyond the allocated time?
- 4) Who will manage the queue?

Review the agenda and the rules of engagement.

### DURING THE INTERVIEW

Stick to agenda and the agreed upon rules of engagement.

During the first interview, record:

- 1) each question that was asked;
- 2) who asked the question; and
- 3) the order in which questions were asked.

In subsequent interviews, recreate the first interview. This means, to the extent possible:

- 1) ask the same questions;
- 2) in the same order;
- 3) by the same individuals; and
- 4) the same faculty attend each interview.

It's fine and appropriate – and indeed even desirable – to ask different follow-up questions depending on each candidate's response. That's what mindful transparent judgment is all about. But you should remain as uniform as possible across interviews because uniformity improves our ability to comparatively evaluate candidates.