

PREPARING TO CONDUCT AN ACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE SEARCH

Purpose

Active and inclusive searches are those that consciously, actively, and thoughtfully deploy evidence-based practices that ensure that unconscious biases are acknowledged and disrupted so that the ultimate hire has faced the most equitable process. Active and inclusive searches focus on definitions of excellence that recognize the historical and societal context of the development of fields of study and the current state of the discipline. These searches employ tactics that are known to produce deep applicant pools and use review practices that mitigate the biases that are known to influence the outcome of a search. Our shared objective is to recruit excellent faculty who have the broadest range of experiences and perspectives possible to ensure that the education we offer our students is broadly representative of the world they will enter upon graduation. An active and inclusive search will result in the development of an outstanding faculty who embody different social identities, positions, abilities and/or maintain different perspectives from those currently represented in the department or program at Bates.

Search committees should consider the following and come prepared to discuss strategies for an active and inclusive search with the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty (VPAA/DOF) and the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion (VPEI) at the initial search committee meeting.

Process

The search committee should identify specific actions that will make the search, recruitment, and review process attentive to inclusion. Purposeful efforts to create as large a pool of candidates as possible will enable us to invite to the faculty a group of scholars who contribute in meaningful ways to our community ensuring that “we engage the transformative power of our differences, cultivating intellectual discovery and informed civic action.”

The following should be considered with input from all departmental or program colleagues from each academic unit connected to the position in the position concept. Encouraging contributions at the onset of the search will help to ensure that the search is successful.

The academic unit(s) should assess the compositional diversity of the discipline, its faculty, its students, and the college. The VPAA/DOF and VPEI will provide data at the initial committee meeting. If you need additional data or have questions about those that you do receive, please complete the [data request form](#). The academic unit(s) also must consider how the new faculty member will advance

their and the college's mission through curricular and co-curricular offerings and address current gaps and opportunities in the discipline(s), the department/program(s), and the major(s). You may want to draw on past documents produced by the department or program(s), including end of year reports, department or program reviews, and evaluation of the curriculum or thesis program.

The VPAA / DOF and VPEI are available to assist you at any stage of the recruitment and search process.

Academic units should review the needs and opportunities in your department or program for expanding the approaches to scholarship and teaching to ensure a rich intellectual experience and an inclusive learning environment for all students.

- Assess student enrollment in the department or program: How many BIPOC or first-generation-to-college students are majors? How do the demographics of students enrolled in courses in the department or program compare with the student body diversity? How have student demographics shifted since the last faculty search or department/program review?
- Discuss the kinds of knowledge, experience, or practical skills that a candidate could bring to the unit and its emerging needs. For example, how might a candidate expand the use of inclusive pedagogies, participate in curricular transformation, or expand course offerings to meet the RPPC distribution requirement.
- Discuss expectations for a new hire – and for existing faculty – based on these emerging needs.

Assess the existing compositional diversity of the faculty in the department or program, at the College, and in the discipline.

- Review [data on national pools of candidates for the field \(and sub-fields\) from which you are considering hiring](#). Get a picture of the compositional diversity of scholars in the field (including who they are, where they are being trained, where their research is being supported) and where they are pursuing their work.
- Identify institutions, organizations, and individuals who work with significant numbers of emerging scholars that are historically underrepresented in higher education and in your discipline.
- Identify the challenges the department or program has faced in actively recruiting a broadly diverse pool of candidates in the past.

Identify strategies the department or program will use to attend to actively recruit a diverse pool of applicants.

- Consider how the department or program will recruit broadly.
- Identify institutions and departments you will contact during the recruitment period. Include:

- institutions from which you will recruit, going beyond the “usual” range of institutions, and include those which have a diverse student body in your discipline, including historically Black colleges & universities (HBCUs), Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs), and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs),
- affinity-organized scholarship groups within professional associations and/or subcommittees focused on inclusion in the discipline that you will contact
- conferences that provide opportunities to recruit applicants that you may attend
- resources that will help you locate potential candidates for a faculty appointment
- Use directories and rosters of prestigious fellowship programs at both the dissertation and postdoctoral levels that support individuals from diverse backgrounds. Reach out to these individuals personally.
- Consider candidates who have been successful in their fields outside of the academy
- Reach out to scholars currently under-placed and thriving at other institutions