

Task Force on Faculty/Staff Diversity

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Recommendations

“To do” list for departments getting ready to make a hire - Human Resources will work with faculty and staff as they commence this process.

When writing the position description (PD):

1. Use “preferred” rather than “required”. For example, for faculty positions to fill undergraduate teaching positions, the PD should say “a master’s degree is required and a PhD is strongly preferred. Those at ABD status will be considered.”
2. Indicate that the university is committed to EEO and diversity and encourages individuals from diverse populations to apply
3. Consider that academic credentials plus experience as a corporate executive or college administrator might be a better fit and bring more value to students, the department and the university than many years of experience as a professor with no experience external to the academy.
4. Include words like “experience working with diverse students” or “experience working in multicultural academic environments” or “experience with a variety of teaching methods”
5. Be flexible – take into consideration non-traditional qualifications

When advertising positions:

1. Advertisements should target diverse graduate students – mentoring program and opportunity hires – how do we go about this?
2. Advertisements should target diverse candidates with experience external to the academy – how do we go about this?
3. Advertisements should showcase features about the institution that make it attractive to diverse candidates and we should include pictures on our web site that show the diversity of our workforce. Damon will talk to UCOM about this.
4. We should continue advertising positions on a variety of job related web sites and, especially for staff positions, seek out local sites that have more diversity than Spring Arbor (Albion, Jackson, Detroit, Fort Wayne, Kalamazoo, Flint, etc). Also contacting Black churches, technical colleges, intervarsity chapters at universities, and historically black college may add to our pool of qualified candidates.

5. On the job listings part of our web sites, we should include pictures of current employees from both genders and from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds.
6. Currently we advertise on the SAU website, the CCCU website, the Chronicle website, on Higheredjobs.com, and the Diversity Issues website.

When engaging in the search process:

1. Ensure that search committees are diverse. Include representatives from under-represented groups on search committees or connect the potential hire to employees from diverse backgrounds.
2. Have clearly defined search procedures and policies. Update if necessary (Randy?)
3. Train search committees about our hiring policies and practices. (Randy?)

When candidates come for interviews:

1. Arrange to have diverse candidates meet with other diverse faculty and give candidates realistic information about the success of diverse faculty both across campus and within department – assist in networking (need more ideas here about how to help this happen). This should be part of the search procedures and policies referred to in item 2 above under the “search process” section.

When a hire has been made:

1. Provide diverse hires with diverse and majority mentors where possible and provide for informal mentorships – Randy coordinate with Chief of Staff office (Damon) to identify and assign mentors.
2. Make sure the diverse hires are not expected to handle multicultural or diversity issues.
3. Encourage new colleagues to share their experiences.
4. Make it clear to the community that quality was not compromised in hiring a diverse candidate. For example, advertise accomplishments and community involvement of all employees on our web sites, to our Board of Trustees, etc. Profiles of new hires should be featured in internal and external communications.
5. If no minority is found to fill a position, then document the reason.
6. Be more aware of how minorities may feel differently about situations than you or I.

Long term action plan

- 1.SAU should develop a recruitment plan to attract diverse candidates including a recruitment tool kit. This recruitment tool kit should be made readily available. Garnet and Eric are looking

at recruitment toolkits from other colleges and universities and this summer will put together a recruitment toolkit for SAU. We will let UCOM know when we are ready to put this toolkit on our internal and external web site.

2. Always be in recruiting mode, do not wait for actual vacancy – make contacts with diverse candidates long before search. [We all need to keep our ears and eyes open for good candidates for future positions.]

3. Grow your own, reach out to and support undergraduate and graduate students from under-represented groups. How? [We need about \$20,000 to get going on this.]

4. Showcase the expertise of diverse hires (all hires actually) in the local community. Need to work with UCOM and IT on this.

5. Create a diversity page for our external and internal web sites and include our diversity statement and what we offer that would be attractive to a diverse work force. This information should also be included in the job listings part of our web sites. [Damon will talk to UCOM and IT about this]

6. Ask the faculty standing Diversity Committee to review the university's current diversity statement (a word document located on the T drive). That statement is included at the end of this document. [Garnet will talk to the Faculty Standing Diversity Committee about this]

7. Ask the faculty standing Diversity Committee to create a proposal consistent with Item 4 under the notes from the 2/27 meeting above. The committee should discuss their proposal with Human Resources. Here is that item: "One of the issues of Diverse Issues in Higher Education refers to a partnership between a small college and a graduate school in the area to have minority graduate students intern on the college campus with a view of developing a relationship for possible future employment, to give undergraduate students experience working with a minority graduate students, to provide mentoring experiences between faculty and these graduate students so they can get a feel for what it is like to teach in a small college environment, and other benefits for both the graduate student and the small college. This sounds like a great idea and apparently there is funding for such partnerships." [Garnet will talk to the Faculty Standing Diversity Committee about this]

8. An idea related to 3 is that we should have some money set aside for "opportunity hires", ABD candidates that are known to faculty who would make good hires in the future and in whom we could invest some time and dollars to attract them to SAU as instructors or adjuncts or consultants or ... while they are finishing up their dissertations. We estimate that we would need about \$50,000 to set this up and get it going.

Diversity at Spring Arbor University

A Statement of Commitment

Spring Arbor University is a community of learners committed to reflecting the Kingdom of God in the diversity of our students, faculty, staff, trustees, and other associates. Valuing the dignity of every human being is part of the historic legacy of our founding denomination. The University's continued focus on creating a diverse learning environment reflects these values and honors our heritage.

This University is committed to being a place where ethnic and racial inclusiveness is a hallmark of the community we create. However, as an imperfect human organization, we must acknowledge and plan for the challenge such diversity brings. But we boldly embrace this challenge, because as Christians, we know it is right. Jesus Christ *is* the perspective for our teaching, and through Him, we are called to move beyond mere tolerance of each other to genuine acceptance and mutually transformative learning.

Becoming a diverse community of learners is consistent with our liberal arts tradition. It facilitates a healthy exchange of cultural, economic, social, religious, philosophical, and political views within the classroom and in campus activities.

Further, as an educational institution, we know we will ill-prepare students for personal and professional lives in a global society if we fail to expose them to the rich diversity of peoples and cultures. This exposure cannot solely come from books but needs to be tested and experienced through interactive and on-going personal relationships.

Therefore, we will seek ways to invite and welcome diversity into our community. We will be proactive and creative in integrating different cultural perspectives into the curriculum and community life, and we will strive to be always a community of love and respect.