

Equity in Recruitment, Promotion and Tenure Processes

Presentation for Faculty Association

October 27, 2020

Natasha Goudar Manager Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Equity and Human Rights (EQHR)

[equitymanager@uvic.ca/](mailto:equitymanager@uvic.ca)

www.uvic.ca/equity



Uvic Commitment to equity

- ▶ Uvic Equity Statement:

- ▶ *UVic is committed to upholding the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion in our living, learning and work environments. We know that diversity underpins excellence, and that we all share responsibility for creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive community. In pursuit of our values, we seek members who will work respectfully and constructively with differences and across levels of power.*

- ▶ Strategic Framework Value of EDI:

- ▶ Commitment to equity and inclusion is embedded in the university's policies and its strategic plan, A Vision for the Future - Building on Excellence.
 - ▶ First objective expressed in the strategic plan is “to be a diverse, welcoming learning community, with a demonstrated commitment to equity and fairness.”

- ▶ Employment Equity Plan:

- ▶ Defines how we will accomplish vision
 - ▶ Reaffirms that equity underlies and is a pre-condition for excellence
 - ▶ That excellence is furthered by a diversity of people and perspectives

Collective Agreement: s. 32.2i.

32. Appointments, Reappointments, Promotion and Tenure Committees

32.2i: All committee members must have received training in effective **employment equity practices** and **current institutional expectations** with respect to equity, prior to the commencement of the committee's work.

Key elements to reduce barriers and increase equity

- ▶ The importance of individual and group preparation
- ▶ The importance of addressing unconscious biases
- ▶ The importance of criteria
- ▶ The importance of good processes

Elements of a fair and equitable process

- ▶ Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion: Recognize the ubiquity of bias, the value of diversity, and the need to increase our valuing and practice of DEI in all our work
- ▶ Transparency: Clear steps, followed diligently and recorded, and shared with the community
- ▶ Individual responsibility: Attend to one's personal biases; assess as individuals before group discussions
- ▶ Openness and power sharing amongst members of the committee
- ▶ Care and deliberation: Take time to ask questions and review materials to ensure common understanding; attend to the full portfolio; be aware of context and bias of each source and its connection with criteria
- ▶ Full engagement: Attend all meetings; share one's views; work to understand other perspectives
- ▶ Impartiality: develop a collective process to address perceived or real conflicts of interest; make an honest, unbiased decision based on appropriate information
- ▶ Trust: Build trust among the committee and in the process and outcome through practicing honesty, engagement, care in one's words and assessment, and adherence to the process

Prepare well

- ▶ Review the preparatory material guides and resources (bias, fit, guide to ARPT)
- ▶ Identify and address conflict of interest, bias and power imbalances
- ▶ Clarify how group will work together and guidelines for participation
- ▶ Decide how decisions will be made and encourage everyone to participate
- ▶ Discuss assumptions and biases
- ▶ Take any concerns about the process to the chair of the committee (or if necessary to EQHR or Faculty Relations)

Unconscious Biases

- ▶ Unconscious biases are everywhere and can have significant impact
- ▶ What are unconscious biases?
- ▶ What are ways to reduce the impact of unconscious biases?

Attend to unconscious bias: Learn what it is and take steps to reduce its influence

1. Everyone has biases and they have significant impacts on our perception and choices
2. Bias acts against already marginalized and underrepresented groups, and in favour of already well-represented and powerful groups
3. Biases affect interpretation: they act as a lens to filter “facts”, creating biased mental impressions
4. Reduce bias by discussing common biases, individually identifying biases you hold, reviewing search materials for bias, and using consistent processes and strong criteria
5. Develop an inclusive definition of “fit” that focuses on elements related to success in the job, not similarity with the institution’s demographics

Types of Biases

Normative Bias

Assumptions about and preference for traditional career paths and established “excellence”

Performance Bias

Performance and abilities are overestimated for individuals from high status groups

Confirmation Bias

Predisposition to find or not find information that confirms expectations/ stereotypes

Performance Attribution Bias

For members of high status groups, success is attributed to abilities or effort. For members of low status groups, success is attributed to help from others

The “Fit” Bias

Focus on how you like or connect with a candidate or how well they “fit” rather than their competencies

Affinity Bias

Preference for candidates who are similar to you

Unconscious Biases

Three common triggers of unconscious biases are:

- ▶ **Tasks:** We associate certain positions with a certain type of person with a certain career trajectory and record
- ▶ **Numbers:** When looking at a group, like a large number of job applicants, we're more likely to use biases to assess the applications
- ▶ **Clarity:** When information is lacking, our brains tend to fill in the gaps with what we are expecting.

Best Practices to Minimize Biases

- **Preparation:** Take time at start of process to set good group processes, etc.
- **Time/ thoroughness:** Take time for deliberate decision making
- **Criteria:** Develop these at the start, apply consistently, review for biases
- **Bias work:** Question your own stereotypes and biases (are they legitimate based on the work required for the role?) and monitor each other
- **Individual work:** Make contributions from your particular perspective and listen to each other
- **Group processes:** Establish guidelines, address power, practice listening, ensure good record keeping & confidentiality
- **Consistency:** Apply processes consistently throughout the process

Resources

- ▶ *Reviewing Applicants: Research on bias and assumptions.* University of Wisconsin.
- ▶ *Rising above cognitive errors: Guidelines for Search, Tenure Review, and Other Evaluation Committees.* Joann Moody, PhD, JD
- ▶ [Criteria template](#)
- ▶ UVic [Hiring Resources webpage](#)
- ▶ UVic [Unconscious Bias webpage](#)

Thank you!



WE DO NOT SEE THINGS
AS THEY ARE,
WE SEE THINGS AS
WE ARE

Natasha Goudar, M. Ed.
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Equity and Human Rights Office
equitymanager@uvic.ca

Image: Anais Nin