Promoting Equity and Diversity in Personnel Actions
Today’s focus: the HOW.

But, first ... the WHY?
Understand ... why is diversifying the workforce important at ECU?

- In addition to ECU’s legal obligations to affirmatively recruit and ensure equal opportunity ...
- ECU’s Strategic Plan includes the University’s commitment to “[m]aximize [s]tudent [s]uccess” including that, “[w]e will reflect a global workplace and society by diversifying our faculty, staff, and students”.
- University Responsibilities emphasize the University’s commitment: “[w]e will embrace an inclusive university community and are committed to recruiting and retaining faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds”.
Equity, diversity, and inclusion are **crucial** to student success. Why?

Some of the reasons why are:

- A diverse curriculum prepares students for a diverse society.
- An inclusive climate provides students with exposure to various opinions and viewpoints related to a range of issues to explore and develop.
- An inclusive climate enhances student’s sense of belonging.
- Research has shown that students who are educated by more diverse faculty have:
  - higher levels of complex thinking,
  - more positive interactions with faculty,
  - are more likely to experience active and engaging learning environments, and
  - in general, have greater educational outcomes.
We serve a diverse region with a diverse set of needs and problems.

A diversity of perspectives in problem-solving leads to more innovative solutions.

An inclusive research team enhances engagement efforts with a diverse community.

Research shows that we are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior for members of our in-group; so, if ECU does not adequately reflect the population of our region, then community service efforts may be disproportionately distributed.
Equity, diversity, and inclusion are *essential* to the success of our workforce. Why?

Some of the reasons why are:

- In general, organizations with greater levels of diversity have been shown to have **higher levels of creativity, problem solving, and productivity**.
- An inclusive climate increases employers’ sense of belonging, which is associated with **positive outcomes** in the workplace including:
  - increased job satisfaction,
  - increased retention,
  - better employee engagement and performance,
  - increased mental health and
  - increased motivation.
Now ... the HOW.
Ways we can Promote Equity and Diversity in Personnel Decisions

1. Diversify the faculty pipeline
2. Be mindful of implicit bias in making selection decisions
3. Communicate ECU’s and the unit’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
4. Support faculty for success
5. Foster an atmosphere of inclusion, respect, and value
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Diversifying the Faculty Pipeline
... a Strategic Approach

Identify and develop long-term, substantive relationships with the unit’s “pipeline”

key sources of qualified, diverse talent for the unit’s profession and/or discipline
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Implicit Bias in Selection Decisions

- “Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.”
- Research tells us:
  - we are unaware that biases are/have developed, and
  - we do not intentionally develop bias.
- Our biases may influence us to make either a positive or negative conclusion.

We ALL have implicit bias!
Research supports that bias does, in fact, occur

Names: Race/Ethnicity
FINDINGS: “[W]hite applicants were called back approximately 50% more often than African-American applicants, regardless of industry or occupation”.

Skin-tone Memory Bias
Evidence suggests that a “counter-stereotypic Black male tends to be remembered as ‘Whiter’ in accordance with cultural beliefs”, supporting “the existence of a skin tone memory bias”.

Names: Sex/Gender
“Faculty participants rated the male applicant as significantly more competent and hireable than the [identical] female applicant.”
Manifestations of Implicit Bias
... and Challenging our Biases

**Document Review**
- Judgment based on a candidate's name, group affiliation, perceived gender or age, or other perceived identifying factors.
- Job ads, letters, statements, etc. – gendered wording

**Interview Process**
- Judgment of facial expressions, tone, and body language
- Time spent speaking and listening to a candidate
- Distance between self and candidate

**Challenging Implicit Bias**
- Increase awareness through reading/research
- Participate in education
- Be aware of and assess the origins of your own opinions and ideas about individuals under review
- Use tools such as rating sheets to best ensure consistent application of selection criteria
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Communicate Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Communicate ECU’s commitment to DEI
- Discuss internally and be able to articulate the unit’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion ... what is your “Why”?
- Increase awareness about the DEI commitment through department and college/school meetings, website, communication materials ... do they reflect diversity (pictures and language used)?
- Inclusive language in job advertisements to let prospective applicants know about the commitment to DEI
- Ask applicants to submit a diversity statement, such as how they will contribute to ECU’s and the unit’s commitment to DEI
- Invite interview finalists to meet with Employee Resource Groups
Inclusive Job Ad Language

Applicants should have the ability to utilize identity-conscious, culturally sensitive, and inclusive teaching strategies that engage with diverse experiences and worldviews ...

The [POSITION] will be committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring, resource allocations, promotion, research, engagement, and teaching. They will broaden participation among members of underrepresented groups; integrate diverse experiences and multiple perspectives as the foundation for a rich learning experience; and provide leadership to meet the needs of diverse learning styles, populations, and intellectual interests.

[The Department] recognizes that diversity and respect for human differences within the academy is a key source of intellectual vitality and innovative spirit, and encourages genuine respect for individual backgrounds, lifestyles, experiences, perspectives, and opinions. [The Department] invites applicants from diverse backgrounds who will contribute affirmatively and creatively to the university’s multicultural environment. We seek candidates who reflect the rich mix of backgrounds, life experiences, cultures, perspectives, and world views found within our university and community.
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Support Faculty for Success

- Facilitate or promote mentoring relationships, both informal (within the department) and formal (Office for Faculty Excellence)
- Connect new (and existing) faculty with Employee Resource Groups
- Encourage participation in National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity
  - Multi-week courses on topics such as (building a publishing pipeline, the art of manuscript revision, preparing tenure and promotion materials, etc.)
- Encourage the use of resources/support for faculty offered through:
  - Office for Faculty Excellence
  - Academic Library Services
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Foster an atmosphere of inclusion, respect, and value

- Establish clear expectations and embed diversity, equity, and inclusion in unit strategic planning, with periodic assessment of goals
- Seek input and value contributions from a diverse group of individuals to get diverse perspectives.
- Assess the culture of the unit from a diverse cross-section of the department to identify any concerns and potential solutions
- Foster inclusivity in informal situations. Seek to disrupt cliques through team building opportunities.
- Partner with the Office for Equity and Diversity to provide training on tools and skills designed to address problematic behavior.
Reading and Sources

Reading and Sources (cont.)

THANK YOU!

Office for Equity and Diversity Leadership:

- LaKesha Alston Forbes, Associate Provost for Equity and Diversity, Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator
- Toya Jacobs, Diversity and Inclusion Program Manager
- Sue Martin, Director of Equal Opportunity and Title IX
- Sheniqua Reid, Executive Assistant and Office Manager
- Amy Waters, Affirmative Action Compliance Program Manager

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