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Diverse Candidate Slates in Recruitment and Selection at Northwestern

Policy Statement

The Diverse Candidate Slates Policy sets expectations for individuals and organizations who participate in the recruitment and hiring of staff positions at Northwestern, including members of *ad hoc* Search Committees.

The objectives of this Policy are to establish procedures that will support equitable and inclusive recruitment processes, broaden existing sources of talent for recruitment across the University, mitigate the historic adverse impact of bias on Underrepresented groups in the recruitment and selection process, and ensure leadership accountability in upholding Northwestern's [commitments to Social Justice](#). This Policy addresses a single component of the recruitment cycle, and the Office of Human Resources is charged with developing and implementing supporting strategies that advance its objectives, as outlined further below.

Purpose

In an effort to create an effective hiring process that will prioritize the recruitment and advancement of Qualified Candidates while achieving equitable outcomes, effective June 14 2021, Diverse Candidate Slates are required at Northwestern for open, benefits-eligible staff positions in which an Underrepresentation exists.

While this Policy requires development of diverse slates of Qualified Candidates to interview or otherwise consider for an open position, managers are expressly prohibited from taking into consideration an individual's protected characteristic(s) when making hiring and/or promotion decisions. Such protected characteristics include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation.

For purposes of this Policy, the terms "Qualified" or "Qualified Candidates" refer to one or more individuals who apply for open staff positions at Northwestern University and who meet the minimum requirements to perform the duties of said position. Qualified Candidates may be internal to the University (i.e., current active employees of the University) or external (i.e., not employed by the University at the time of submission of an application for employment). As a general rule, the determination of whether a candidate is Qualified is made by the Talent Acquisition partner, or jointly by the Talent Acquisition Partner and the Hiring Manager.

Audience

All members of the Northwestern community.

Applicability

Staff positions include executive, managerial, administrative, professional, research staff (other than Research Associates), technical, and clerical positions.

The requirements herein shall also apply to open union, benefits-eligible staff positions to the extent such a requirement is consistent with the University's existing obligations under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Northwestern University in Qatar is excluded from this policy.

Postdoctoral fellow and Research Associate recruitment and selection are subject to the principles of this policy, but specific implementation procedures will be jointly developed and separately piloted in partnership between the Office of Human Resources and TGS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, the Office for Research and leadership within our colleges and schools.

Policy Implementation and Supporting Practices

Position Approval

The Hiring Manager will be informed if the position they intend to create or backfill is within a Job Group that is Underrepresented at Northwestern at the following times:

- 1) If the position to be created or backfilled is subject to review by the Position Approval Committee (PAC), the position approval notification from PAC will indicate that the particular Job Group has an Underrepresentation and that this Policy applies.
- 2) In addition to the PAC approval notification, the Talent Acquisition Partner and Hiring Manager will discuss the recruitment strategy at the beginning of the recruitment/search process. At this time, the Talent Acquisition Partner will proactively share job market data and will confirm to the Hiring Manager if the position is Underrepresented and subject to the requirements of this Policy.

Recruitment and Outreach

Hiring managers, with support from Talent Acquisition partners, are expected to make good faith efforts in all searches to build diverse slates, regardless of whether an Underrepresentation exists. For purposes of this Policy, good faith efforts include outreach to diverse populations or organizations that support various dimensions such as age/generation, disability, race, ethnicity, gender identity, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status.

If the position is Underrepresented, the Talent Acquisition Partner will identify and present a diverse slate of candidates for the hiring manager to review and consider for interview. Upon review of the proposed candidate slate, the Hiring Manager retains final authority to determine which candidates to invite for in-person or virtual interviews. Subject to the Exceptions outlined below, the candidates selected for interview must include those from at least one of the Underrepresentation for the relevant Job Group.

Interviewing

Candidates invited for in-person or virtual interviews will include Qualified individuals who are Underrepresented within a Job Group throughout the University. Subject to the exceptions described

below, the recruitment and hiring process will only advance when the Talent Acquisition partner determines that there is a Diverse Candidate Slate available to interview.

The requirement to form Diverse Candidate Slates also applies to *ad hoc* internal search committees.

Supporting Practices

Slating candidates for open positions or Promotions constitutes a single component of the recruitment cycle. Therefore, in order to support the implementation of this Policy, the Office of Human Resources is responsible for incorporating practices that support the formation of Diverse Candidate Slates, including but not limited to:

- establishment of institutional partnerships with multicultural professional organizations that promote employment of talent from underrepresented communities;
- collaboration with Northwestern [Staff Affinity Groups](#) in outreach efforts;
- removal of language bias from job descriptions and job postings;
- development of targeted employment branding and marketing tactics through both traditional and emergent media;
- deployment of broad-based, multi-modal, and targeted inclusive recruitment training, in coordination with schools and units;
- participation in and sponsorship of career fairs for Underrepresented minority groups;
- enhancement of existing staff referral processes;
- amplification of University communications that signal active support of social and racial justice in its educational, research, and philanthropic work; and
- periodic assessment of diversity, equity, and inclusion metrics.

Policy Exceptions

In rare cases, the hiring manager may request a waiver to proceed with the interview process in the absence of a Diverse Candidate Slate. In making waiver determinations, the Office of Human Resources, through its Talent Acquisition partner, will consider the following:

- (1) Evidence of a good faith effort to comply with this policy AND:
- (2) (a) Search has been active and ongoing and position has been posted for 30 days and no Qualified Underrepresented candidate has applied to the position or been identified by Talent Acquisition,
OR
(b) Search is for a position that is at least 25% grant funded or will receive research startup funds or is staff in a core facility and has been posted for 14 days and no Qualified Underrepresented Minority candidate has applied to the position or been identified by Talent Acquisition,
AND
- (3) A plan of action has been documented by the hiring manager in partnership with Talent Acquisition to improve outreach and engagement efforts that will add Qualified Underrepresented

talent to the candidate pool when a position within this job category becomes available in the future.

Staffing and Executive Search Firms

Any staffing or executive recruitment firm (preferred and non-preferred or specialty search firm) that engages in a search on behalf of Northwestern University is expected to include Underrepresented candidates in the pool from which the hiring manager or committee selects candidates.

In evaluating both the staffing and executive search firms' performance and partnership with Northwestern, the University will consider their ability to meet the expectations of this policy and the firms' own commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, among other factors.

Training

Evidence of successful completion of, or current participation in, [Diverse Candidates Slates training](#) is required before any hiring manager, search committee member or individual interviewer may participate in a search.

Diverse Interview Panels and Search Committees

Any search must include diverse perspectives. For purposes of this section, "diverse perspectives" means that a search panel or a search committee equitably includes Underrepresented Minorities and women at each interview stage, or individuals who represent a minority in relation to the normative group within the sponsoring unit. The same expectation of diverse perspectives applies in circumstances where a Hiring Manager invites other colleagues to partake in screening or interviewing of candidates. Other diverse perspectives may include but are not limited to gender identity or expression, disability, or types of experiences. When internal search committees are formed at the University, the sponsoring unit will undertake best efforts to ensure that opportunities for committee participation are extended equitably across the University.

In addition to providing and using a rubric for interviewer assessment of candidates, a search panel may choose from among these strategies to incorporate diverse perspectives in their recruitment and selection strategy:

- Engage direct reports or peers in the creation of the candidate profile
- Ask people to join the interview panel who will contribute to its diversity based upon personal experiences
- Ask people from outside the unit – for example, possible customers of the unit – to join the interview panel
- Ask a Talent Acquisition Partner to join the interview panel

Promotions

Employee Promotions, other than Reclassifications within the same role, will be managed through an open competitive process to ensure transparency, equity and fairness in the selection. This means that all promotional opportunities must be posted, at a minimum, internally to allow similarly situated, Qualified Candidates across the University to be considered for the role. The Diverse Candidate Slate requirement shall apply equally to slates made up of internal candidates only, external candidates only, and mixed (internal and external) slates.

If a internal candidate is identified for Promotion prior to posting the position, the online job posting may include the following notice: "*A well-qualified candidate within this department or unit has been*

identified and will be considered for the position along side other qualified candidates identified through a competitive recruitment process. The University reserves its right to give priority consideration to internal qualified candidates.”

Building Diverse Slates for Open Positions

- Hiring managers and committees will partner with Talent Acquisition to review open and forecasted roles and identify opportunities for targeted outreach to Underrepresented populations for that Job Group throughout the University. If a staffing or executive firm will be engaged for a search, the hiring manager should contact Talent Acquisition to understand Underrepresentation that exists within the Job Group and share the information with the staffing or executive search firm for their targeted outreach efforts.
- Hiring managers and committees will partner with Talent Acquisition to incorporate a recruitment strategy that includes outreach to internal and external organizations to recruit diverse candidates.
- Commitment to and evidence of diverse candidate outreach must be documented in partnership with Talent Acquisition to maintain a record of good faith effort.
- Based upon agreed minimum qualifications for the position, Talent Acquisition will recommend a slate of Qualified Candidates to be interviewed for the position. The proposed interview slate will include representation of Underrepresented Minorities and women who meet qualifications for the open position. The Hiring Manager will review the slate of interviewees and will have the discretion to adjust in alignment with the expectations of this Policy.

Contacts

- Office of Human Resources- Talent Acquisition (Hiring and recruitment inquiries, including any questions about this Policy)
- Office of Human Resources- W.E.L.L (Well-being, Engagement, Learning & Leadership- Training and Performance Excellence inquiries)
- Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (Access and outreach inquiries)
- Office of Equity (Affirmative Action inquiries and investigations)

Transitional Provision

For a period of twelve (12) months following the effective date of this policy and on a quarterly basis, the Office of Human Resources will conduct impact analysis and report to the Policy Review Committee, the Office of the Senior Vice President, and the Office of the Provost on the following metrics:

- Time to build a Diverse Candidate Slate
- Exception requests to waive the application of this Policy by school and unit
- Approval and denials of good-faith exception requests
- Time to Offer
- Time to Hire
- Offer Accept/Reject rates
- In coordination with the relevant school, progress on any pilot program at The Graduate School, Office for Research, FSM Faculty Affairs

After this initial twelve (12) month period, the Office of the SVP and the Office of the Provost will make a decision regarding the continuity of this policy on the basis of an “Operational Impact and Progress Assessment” to be developed by the Office of Human Resources. This report may also be the basis for future policy and operational improvement recommendations to the Northwestern Policy Review Committee.

Definitions

Diverse Candidate Slate

A Diverse Candidate Slate is a group of Qualified Candidates that includes individuals who are Underrepresented within a Job Group throughout the University.

Job Group

A group of positions within Northwestern that require similar skills, have similar promotional opportunities, and pay similar wages.

Minority

The smaller part of a group within a relevant market that differs in race and ethnicity from the socially dominant group. Although the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) does not classify women as a minority, women are considered to have “minority status” in many respects, as they have historically experienced systemic exclusion from the economy.

Race/Ethnicity

For the purposes of this Policy, Race/Ethnicity is defined in alignment with US Census categories:

- American Indian or Alaska Native - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America).
- Asian - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black or African American (Not of Hispanic Origin) - All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
- Hispanic or Latino - All persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- White (Not of Hispanic Origin) - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.
- Persons of Two or More Races - All persons who identify with two or more of the above race categories.

Underrepresentation /Underrepresented

An insufficient or low representation of Minorities or women employed within a Job Group compared to the number of Minorities or women determined to be available for that Job Group in the relevant job markets. An Underrepresentation exists when the percentage of Minorities or women employed within a particular Job Group is less than what would reasonably be expected given their availability.

For example, suppose there are 100 employees in the Administrative Assistant/Clerical job category and three of them or 3% are Black. However, the Black labor market for Administrative Assistant/Clerical positions is 15%. In this case, Blacks are underrepresented in the Administrative Assistant/Clerical job category.

Hiring Manager

An individual staff or faculty member responsible and with the authority to make decision to hire or not to hire a candidate for open staff positions, or to promote an active staff member, at Northwestern University.

Promotion

A move from one position to a different (existing) or newly created position with a higher salary grade midpoint which results in an increase in salary and requires a competitive search process. When a Promotion occurs as defined herein, the individual who is promoted leaves a vacancy in the department or unit. The vacancy may be backfilled or eliminated through reorganization.

Reclassification

The reassignment of an existing position to a new job classification (i.e. job title or salary grade) resulting from an authorized, ongoing, and substantial change of no more than half of a position's current duties requiring the employee to utilize a skillset that differs from what was previously necessary to accomplish the work.

A Reclassification may result in placement of a position into a lower pay grade ("downward reclassification"), same salary grade but different title ("lateral reclassification"), or a higher salary grade ("promotional reclassification"). Generally, a position with an incumbent employee cannot be reclassified prior to the employee's successful completion of 12 months in the position, and will not be reviewed for reclassification more than once in a 12-month period. A reclassification may not result in a new vacant position within the department. Incidental changes in the volume or complexity of work alone does not substantiate the need for job audit and reclassification.

Talent Acquisition Partner

A member of the Office of Human Resources Talent Acquisition team who is responsible for supporting the identification, acquisition, assessment and hiring of candidates to fill vacant positions at Northwestern.

History

Policy Origination Date: June 14, 2021

Next Review Date: June 14, 2022