**Role Description: EDI Committee (or Process) Advisor**

**Background**

Evidence demonstrates that every person brings a lifetime of experience and cultural history that shapes their perspectives. The composition of a search committee is key to a broad and inclusive search and the committee should include individuals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise. In addition to including individuals with knowledge of the substantive area and the technical expertise to effectively evaluate candidates’ qualifications committee members should represent a diverse cross-section of the faculty, including members with a demonstrated commitment to diversity.

Candidate evaluations should be objective and equitable, based solely on the qualifications in the position description/advertisement and the quality of the application materials. Good practices to counterbalance the effects of inherent bias include learning about biases and assumptions and striving to minimize their influence on the evaluation of candidates. In addition to recommending implicit bias training, developing specific criteria for evaluating candidates and applying them consistently to all applicants for the search committee, an EDI process advisor will be invited to participate. The EDI Committee Advisor will serve as a neutral non-voting party, outside of the department, to advise and assess equitable processes during the evaluation of applicants.

**Eligibility**

Graduate level (Masters; PhD or MD) and demonstrated EDI expertise.

**Remuneration: Honoraria**

**Duties:**

The Advisor will:

1. review candidate materials and attend search committee meetings;
2. ensure that the interview process spends sufficient time evaluating each applicant and that each candidate’s entire application will be considered and not depend too heavily on only one element, such as prior relationships or educational background at a prestige of institution or letters of recommendation;
3. identify and verbalize sources of bias during deliberations for reflection by committee;
4. help the committee formulate explanations of the decision for rejecting or retaining a candidate based on evidence in the candidate’s file as related to the qualifications;
5. help evaluate the committee’s decisions to consider whether qualified women and underrepresented groups have been included and whether evaluation biases and assumptions are influencing decision-making;
6. Provide feedback on the process to Chair of committee.

**Some guiding questions for assessor:**

**Timing:**

* Did committee follow the timeline established at the start of the search?
* Was the timeline less or more than what was allocated for the search?
* What issues or concerns were raised about timing in this search?

**Advertising**

* Did you make special efforts to increase the diversity of the pool?
* What were these special efforts?
* What were the outcomes of these efforts in the applicant pool, interview candidates, offers made, and offers accepted?

**Interviews**

* Were all candidates’ interview sessions conducted as similarly as possible?
* Were all candidates treated respectfully and asked the same questions?
* Were candidates given the opportunity to request specific visits or meetings?
* What issues or concerns do you have about the campus interviews?

**Communication**

* Did the committee respond in a timely manner to prospective candidates?
* Were candidates promptly notified who were no longer under consideration?
* Were finalists who were not selected notified as promptly as possible?
* Did any issues or concerns emerge concerning communication with candidates?

**What were some of the strengths of the process?**

* What went well? What are some areas of the process that need improvement?
* What did not go well?
* To improve the process of future faculty searches, it helps to know why current candidates accept or reject offers.

**Why did your recent hire accept the position**?

What went right in the search? Positive practices include:

* Warm attention from the department chair
* Frequent and prompt attention by phone and email
* Meeting with candidates
* Receiving information about family-friendly policies and resources
* A sense of the negotiation being with the candidate’s long term best interest in mind

**Did any candidates reject the offer?**

What went wrong in the search? Problematic practices include:

* Contradictory information from the chair and other faculty members
* Evidence of disorganization or lack of unity in the department’s approach
* Suggestions by faculty that candidates aren’t being recruited for scientific excellence but because of gender or race
* Being asked questions about family issues before any offer is made (these are illegal questions).

**References**

<https://www.aapm.utoronto.ca/academic-administrative-procedures-manual/recruitment/>

Adapted from Iowa State University. (n.d.). Evaluating a search: What went wrong or right? Resource guide for recruiting excellent and diverse faculty.

<https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/best_practices-pratiques_examplaires-eng.aspx?pedisable=true>

<https://equity.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2036/2019/07/Search-Committee-Guidelines-2019.pdf>