



LEHIGH  
UNIVERSITY

# Faculty Recruitment Best Practices for Diversity and Excellence

Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Diversity

The Lehigh ADVANCE Program

**advance** | ADVANCING WOMEN IN  
SCIENCE & ENGINEERING  
AT LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

# Diversity Mission Statement

- Lehigh University, an institution committed to educational excellence and learning, will actively promote an inclusive community that values, affirms, and advances the diverse backgrounds, interests, experiences, and aspirations of all its members.
- Achieving diversity at Lehigh requires working toward building a community that is more reflective of our society.
- Fostering a campus culture that embraces diversity will advance the intellectual and social vitality of the Lehigh community, and confirm the symbiotic relationship between diversity and academic excellence.

—Board of Trustees, 2006

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**ABOUT THIS BOOKLET:** *This booklet is intended as a supplementary guide for recruiting new faculty. Its purpose is to suggest best practices for both long-term recruitment strategies and specific faculty searches. Consult the Provost's Office Web site and your college for additional information and forms for the search process.*

# Active Recruiting Strategies

- **Work to establish relationships** with advanced graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and more senior scholars who would be excellent candidates for upcoming positions in your department or program.
- **Invite potential candidates** to give seminars and meet with Lehigh faculty who would be likely collaborators inside and outside your department. Departments in STEM fields should take advantage of the Lehigh ADVANCE program that provides travel and honoraria for recruitment seminars by prospective women faculty.
- **Consult with Dr. Henry Odi**, Vice Provost for Academic Diversity, to help initiate and maintain relationships with prospective faculty from underrepresented groups.
- **Present a welcoming environment** for faculty from all backgrounds through your department or program Web site and other promotional materials.

- Work with your Dean to **maintain a flexible hiring plan** that will enable you to take advantage of opportunities to hire excellent faculty from underrepresented groups through the Provost's Strategic Faculty Hiring Initiative described here: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/pdfs/StrategicHiring.pdf>.
- **Review recent searches in your department.** If a top candidate refused an offer, try to find out why. Talk with recently hired faculty in your department to obtain advice on how the department can improve its search process. Lehigh ADVANCE and Dr. Henry Odi are available to conduct confidential conversations if preferred.



# Planning a Faculty Search

## Preparing for the Search

- Consult the Provost's Office Web site for resources including the *Faculty Search Handbook Guidelines* as well as your college for instructions and required forms. <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/faculty/hiring.html>
- Attend seminars conducted by the Provost's Office and your college on best practices in faculty searches.

## The Search Committee

- Address issues of diverse composition and committee charge early and deliberately. Diverse search committees and committees with an expressed commitment to identifying a diverse candidate pool are much more likely to develop such a pool. [NAS, *Gender Differences at Critical Transitions in the Careers of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics Faculty*, 2010, p143]
- When recruiting faculty from underrepresented groups to the search committee, consider their overall service load so they are not disproportionately asked to serve compared to faculty of similar rank.
- Examine the research on assumptions and biases, and discuss ways to diminish their impact throughout the search and hiring process. For example, social science research has shown significant differences in letters of recommendation for men and women. For more information, see Virginia Valian's *Why So Slow?* and Lehigh ADVANCE Web site: <https://advance.cc.lehigh.edu/unconscious-bias>
- Plan periodic checkpoints to determine whether your committee is developing a diverse pool. Allow for flexibility in the deadline for applications and creating the short list if you are unsatisfied with the composition of the pool.

## Define the Position

- Define the position as broadly as possible while meeting department or program needs.
- Review the national pool before the search begins. When the department has flexibility in hiring plans, consider the availability of women and other underrepresented faculty in subfields when defining the position.
- As you define the position, also develop evaluation criteria that will foster an inclusive pool. Determine which criteria are truly necessary for the position.



# Broadening the Pool

- Actively contact faculty mentors and prospective candidates. Make personal contact with potential candidates and recruit them.
- Search broadly and comprehensively. Advertise in a variety of resources where job seekers may search.
  - Include at least one print advertisement in a national professional journal in order to meet legal requirements for hiring international faculty.
  - Consider discipline-specific conferences and resources as well as those of related disciplines.
  - Contact Dr. Henry Odi, VPAD, for information and assistance about additional resources for conducting inclusive searches.
- As appropriate, include a statement in the position announcement that “Lehigh University is a recipient of an NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation award for promoting the careers of women in academic science and engineering.”
- Assemble a pool that at least meets the percentage of women and other underrepresented groups in the field over the past five years. Consult data from your professional association or the National Science Foundation.
- If you conclude that the pool is insufficiently diverse, extend your search using the various strategies discussed above.

# Creating the Short List

- Define terms of evaluation up front and apply these criteria consistently. Consider all candidates using these criteria. Looking at all or nearly all of the pool at once can help keep the evaluation focused on previously agreed-upon criteria and in the context of other applicants, while looking at candidates one by one can make avoiding bias more difficult.
- Place emphasis on the quality of scholarship and teaching rather than the elite status of candidates' degree institutions.
- In addition to evaluation of teaching and scholarship, consider the candidates' experience as collaborators and in mentoring students from diverse backgrounds.
- Place suitable value on nontraditional career paths.
- As appropriate to the composition of your department, make every effort to interview more than one woman or member of another underrepresented group. Social science research indicates that when multiple candidates are considered, emphasis is placed on qualifications rather than gender or ethnicity.
- If necessary, expand the number of on-campus interviews to broaden the pool of semifinalists.

# Talking with Candidates

- Make certain every candidate is respected and treated well throughout the entire process.
- Focus on recruitment rather than evaluation in communicating with candidates. Evaluation properly takes place in faculty meetings to consider candidates.
- Be sure that all faculty who interact with candidates are familiar with Lehigh's programs and where to find resources or answers to questions. Discuss the following information with all candidates who visit campus, not just candidates from underrepresented groups:
  - Research funding
  - Faculty development
  - Work/life balance
  - Dual-career programs
  - Faculty benefits information

- Identify faculty from outside the department/search committee to engage in a confidential conversation with the candidate about work/life balance and the climate at Lehigh and the surrounding community or enlist assistance of other campus resources:
  - Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
  - Lehigh ADVANCE
  - Vice Provost for Academic Diversity
  
- You should not ask a candidate questions about personal characteristics or matters such as the candidate's *age, marital or family status, national origin, sexual orientation, health, or disabilities*, nor should you speculate about these characteristics. Bringing such personal matters into the search process is contrary to the University's nondiscrimination policy and is inappropriate because it is not relevant to a candidate's qualifications and raises questions of whether such information is sought for illegal discriminatory purposes.
  - If the candidate raises these topics, you are welcome to discuss them, but it is important to avoid even the appearance that such personal characteristics or information are issues in the recruiting process.
  - For further information, please consult Lehigh's Human Resources Office or General Counsel's Office, or resources on Pre-Employment Inquiries available from the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission at: <http://www.phrc.state.pa.us>.

*“Lehigh is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive community which values, affirms, and advances the diverse aspirations, experiences, and interests of all its members. Offering a diverse and inclusive community contributes to academic excellence and leadership development for all of our students and the larger campus community.”*

–Alice P. Gast, President

–Patrick V. Farrell, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs



# Interdisciplinary Hiring

- At Lehigh, interdisciplinary faculty are hired through:
  - formal joint appointments (*see* R&P 2.2.3.1)
  - appointment letters specifying responsibilities to departments and interdisciplinary programs
  - informal interdisciplinary arrangements
- Search committees should draft a position description as broad as possible to avoid limiting the candidate pool while keeping recruitment criteria and expectations clear.
- While required only for formal joint appointments, to establish clear expectations the department should draft a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for all interdisciplinary hires similar to that described in R&P 2.2.3.1. Include: teaching responsibilities, fields of research and expectations, service, space needs, and budget. The MOU should be drafted prior to the search and then revised to reflect the particular circumstances of the hired faculty member.
- Inform all candidates about the [Interdisciplinary Networking Committee](#) program developed by Lehigh ADVANCE and the Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs. These networking committees include faculty from the faculty member's home department and other departments and programs as appropriate to their scholarship and teaching interests.

# Successful Hiring

- Keep in touch with top candidates after the on-campus interview. Ask if they have follow-up questions.
- Not every candidate is experienced in negotiating the offer. Make sure each finalist is aware of components of the offer package as appropriate, including:
  - Salary
  - Benefits
  - Start-up funding
  - Lab and/or office space and renovation
  - Course release/teaching expectations
  - Summer support
  - Moving expenses, etc.
- Maintain confidentiality even after the search is completed. Successful candidates should not learn details about the search that would create an unwelcoming environment or reveal information about other candidates.

## Dual-Career Situations

- If a top candidate inquires about dual-career issues, consult the Faculty Dual-Career Programs and Guidelines at: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/faculty/dualcareer.html>. While you may not ask about a candidate's partner status, you can suggest that if a candidate has interest in Lehigh dual career programs, they should consult the Web site.
- Consult with your Dean if appropriate.
- Enlist colleagues to help identify employment opportunities for the partner, as appropriate.

## After the Search

- Assist the new faculty member in locating resources at Lehigh and in the surrounding community to facilitate their move.
- Encourage the new faculty member to take advantage of the University's faculty mentoring and faculty development programs.
- Develop and carry out an evaluation of the search process and follow up with candidates who did not accept an offer.

*“Lehigh brought you in because they believe you are incredibly talented and smart. So we are going to tap into those talents and intellectual capacity because that’s what’s going to continue to advance the mission and the vision of this institution.”*

—Henry Odi, Vice Provost for Academic Diversity



## **Selected resources consulted in preparing this booklet:**

Drexel University	University of Michigan
Johns Hopkins University	University of Wisconsin
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	NSF ADVANCE Portal

## **Campus resources:**

Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Diversity  
(<http://www4.lehigh.edu/diversity/default.aspx>)

Lehigh ADVANCE  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/luadvance>)

Faculty Search Handbook Guidelines  
([http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/faculty/hiring/pdf/faculty\\_search\\_handbook\\_2012.pdf](http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/faculty/hiring/pdf/faculty_search_handbook_2012.pdf))

Lehigh University Women's Studies Program  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/~infem>)

Faculty Development  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/~inllab/facDev.html>)

Office of Research  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/~inresrch/index.html>)

Human Resources  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/~inhro>)

Lehigh programs on work-life balance and dual-career issues  
(<http://www.lehigh.edu/worklifebalance>)

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