Preparing for the Campus Visit
and Evaluating Finalists

Friday, November 6, 2015
12:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Hamilton College:
Diversifying the Faculty

Romney Associates, Inc.
Presenters

- Linda Marchesani: Director, Workplace Learning and Development, UMass Amherst in affiliation with Romney Associates, Inc.

- Pat Romney: President, Romney Associates, Inc.
Today’s session will cover:

- Preparing for the campus visit
- Engaging the candidates
- Conducting the interviews
- Assessing diversity qualifications
- Interrupting bias in the faculty search process
- Evaluating candidates
Preparing for the Campus Visit

• Read Academic Job Wiki
• After reading the handouts...As a table, based on your own experience and the “what not to do” scenarios, come up with strategies for preparing for a successful campus visit.
Preparing for the Campus Visit

• Consider the dual purpose of the campus visit.
  – Candidates are being evaluated and they are also evaluating the department, college and community.

• Ensure timely, consistent communication about logistics, itinerary and all aspects related to the campus visit and subsequent parts of the search process.
  – If possible, assign one person to handle all communication.

• Demonstrate sincere interest in the candidate.
  – Make personal contact whenever possible.
  – Become familiar with the candidate’s CV, publications, and scholarly interests.
Preparing for the Campus Visit

• Provide a clear itinerary, including the kind of presentation they will be expected to make and the audience they will address.
  – Consider expanding upon typical presentation requirement.
  – Consider the makeup of the audience.

• Ensure that the candidate understands departmental research, teaching, and service expectations.
  – Anticipate areas of likely inquiry (culture/climate, service/governance responsibilities/opportunities, departmental relations).
  – Be mindful of the unspoken expectations that often accompany being a faculty of color on a predominately white campus and address them.
Preparing for the Campus Visit

- Identify Diverse and Majority Faculty who have similar scholarly interests so candidate may follow-up

- Provide an itinerary that allows candidate to get a feel for the diversity on the campus and within the college community.
  - Arrange informal meetings with diverse campus (faculty/staff/students) and community constituents.
  - Make available both internal diversity resources and resources in the community.
Preparing for the Campus Visit

• Provide contextual information so candidate can make informed decision as to “fit.”
  – Provide all candidates with a packet of information about the department, the College and other relevant resources.
  – Present the campus and the department realistically.
    • Highlight areas of strength and support and acknowledge challenges with respect to college, department, and faculty relations.
Engaging the Candidates

Consistency is key

• Determine evaluation criteria in advance – must mirror what was posted/advertised.
• Arrange interviews, demos, and job talks.
  – Consistency of opportunity (time, formatting, space, technology, attendees).
• Gather equivalent information on all candidates.
• Provide template or evaluation forms (based on advertised criteria) so Search Committee can rate each candidate both on answers to questions/criteria and overall.
Conducting the Interviews

- Allow enough time for the interview and ask a realistic number of questions.

- Ask uniform interview questions.
  - Follow-up questions may be different.
  - Make sure uniform questions examine a candidate’s scholarship, skills, experience, and temperament in a variety of settings.
  - Use Behavior based interview questions.

- Avoid inappropriate and/or illegal questions during the interview and during less formal parts of the campus visit.
Behavior Based Interviewing

• Premise: Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.
• Asks candidates to describe/tell about their previous skills, knowledge and experiences.
• Example:
  – Tell us about a lesson you taught that did not go well. What did you learn about your teaching from that experience? What did you change as a result of that experience? What was the result?
Assessing Diversity Qualifications

Assessing contributions to diversity and excellence of the academic community as demonstrated by teaching, research, intellectual, scholarly or artistic endeavors, and/or service:

1. Teaching

2. Mentoring and Advising

3. Sponsored Projects
Assessing Diversity Qualifications

5. Diversity Related Honors and Awards

6. Artistic Endeavors

7. Service Contributions to the Institution

8. Service Contributions to One’s Profession

9. Service Contributions to the Community Outside of Academe
Be aware of potential hidden bias

- Cloning: Similar attributes/background
- Snap Judgments: Judgments with insufficient evidence
- Positive Stereotypes: Presumptions of competence
- Negative Stereotypes: Presumptions of incompetence
- Euphemized Bias: Visionary, Star, Committed, Focused
Combating Bias

• Outsmarting our blind spots – “It may require some thought.” (Banaji and Greenwald. *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People*. 2013)

• The Bok players. http://bokcenter.harvard.edu/bok-players
Case Study Questions

Please read and review the case study and discuss with your colleagues:

1. What kinds of biased statements (or actions taken) would never be made at Skidmore?

2. What kinds of biased statements (or actions taken) are reminiscent of things you have heard at Skidmore?

3. How might you intervene to minimize the bias?

4. What suggestions might you make to the Search Committee Chair?
Candidate Evaluation

• Meet as soon as possible after completing interviews.

• Complete individual evaluation of each candidate PRIOR to speaking with other committee members.

• Candidates continue to be evaluated using the original selection criteria and well developed evaluation tools.
  - Consistency is key.

• Consider alternatives to rank ordering, such as summaries of each candidate’s strengths and
Other evaluation issues to consider

• **Stakeholder input**
  – Can represent diverse viewpoints not present in the committee.
  – Can represent opinions not related to the needs of the position and selection criteria.

• **Letters of reference**
  – Limit conversations to sections of letter that address specific criteria; disregard personal information or irrelevant comments.
  – Consistency in number of letters required and reviewed.

  Recommended if personal reference letters.
“All steps taken during the search process can contribute to a solid foundation for the successful retention of faculty of color hired as well as to successful recruitment in the future.”

References

Best Practices in Faculty Hiring, University of Oregon., http://facultyhiring.uoregon.edu/screening-applications.


