

“Suffolk's diversity is one of the best things about the institution. However, that diversity is not reflected in the faculty.”

23%

Students who identify as either Black or Hispanic

7%

Full-time Faculty in CAS and SBS who identify as Black or Hispanic



# Timeline and Process

## SPRING AND SUMMER 2023

Analyzed enrollment data and faculty demographics

Conducted research on best practices

Completed literature review

Collaborate with Human Resources on Inclusive Hiring Training

Talk with academic leadership and faculty



Draft reviewed by key stakeholders

## FALL 2023

Final guide submitted to academic deans from Provost

Identified funding in retention budget for position postings



# Students achieve greater outcomes and are better served by practitioners and scholars who...

FOSTER THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

USE CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND AFFIRMING PEDAGOGY

DEVELOP PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEM

CURB STEREOTYPE THREAT

ENHANCE THEIR SENSE OF BELONGING

ADVOCATE ON THEIR BEHALF

Liera and Ching 2019



# A Guide for Equitable and Inclusive Faculty Searches

Suffolk University | Office of the Provost  
Equitable and Inclusive Faculty Searches

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Eliminating bias

Equity-mindedness

Language matters

## PREPARING TO SEARCH

Position announcement

Recruiting

Search committees

### INTRODUCTION

In a recent survey, one student offered this observation: "Suffolk's diversity is one of the best things about the institution. However, that diversity is not reflected in the faculty." Without any data other than the student's own observation, they identified a reality and a problem. Institutional data confirms this. Reviewing Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 data, 23% of undergraduate students identified as either Black or Hispanic and 7% of our full-time faculty (in CAS and SBS combined) identified as either Black or Hispanic. While there are some limitations with this data analysis, mostly that we are unable to account for multiracial individuals, Suffolk's data is consistent with colleges and universities nationally ([Santov and DiAngelo 2017](#), [White-Lewis 2021](#)).

Research shows students achieve greater outcomes and are better served by practitioners and scholars who are more likely to foster their achievement, use culturally relevant and affirming pedagogy, curb stereotype threat, develop personal relationships with them, enhance their sense of belonging, and advocate on their behalf ([Liera and Ching 2019](#)).

Therefore, in consideration of the above two points, the goal of this guide is to promote best practices in faculty searches in order to recruit and retain the most qualified faculty whose particular interests in teaching, practice, and/or scholarship help to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at Suffolk University.

This guide includes best practices and resources related to recruitment and retention of excellent faculty. Topics include the job posting, assembling the search committee, conducting the search, equity-mindedness, and eliminating bias. A number of resources are also included in this guide.

It is important to note that conducting inclusive and equitable searches is not extra or additional work. Rather, it is culturally responsive to the needs of our community and a long-term strategy for the success of the university.

This guide is intended to provide generalized resources and recommendations for search committees. Recognizing the uniqueness of some of our academic disciplines, not all of the information in this guide would apply to every search. Search committees are encouraged to adapt resources to meet the needs of their search while maintaining a goal to run an inclusive and equitable search. Please note this guide is not intended to replace any required training from Human Resources.

### EQUITY AND INCLUSION

#### Eliminating Bias

It may not be a surprise to anyone that research demonstrates how our biases influence hiring. When people refer and hire individuals who are similar to them, they are overlooking important and relevant information. Individuals who are motivated by what is known or familiar then limit the search committee's idea of who could fill this role. Furthermore, researchers have found that scholarship that was purposefully focused on a certain population or marginalized identity was considered to be too narrow ([White-Lewis 2020](#)). As an example, a candidate's background may be related to effective learning strategies for black students in rural K-12 education; search committee members may find this to be too narrow a research area, which then influences the search committee's decision to move these candidates along in the process.

1

Fall 2023

## THE SEARCH

Conducting the search

Removing the criteria of "fit"

Utilizing rubrics & templates

## RETENTION

Recommendations

## RESOURCES

Websites

DEI related organizations

### Recommendations

- Complete the required LinkedIn Learning Pathway on Faculty Hiring through Human Resources.
- Ask search committee members to complete the online [Implicit Association Test](#) from Harvard. Facilitate a discussion that prompts committee members to reflect upon their own biases, how bias may enter the search process, and how they may mitigate that.
- Employ a search that has a broad research scope, rather than one that seeks to fill a specific research gap or topic. This may help to mitigate preconceived notions of who a successful hire might be.
- All members of the search committee must review all candidates who meet the minimum position criteria as stated in the job posting. This helps to standardize the process and promote objectivity.
- The search committee may want to consider how to weigh candidate referrals. Referrals may be an effective way to recruit individuals into the candidate pool but may also carry bias with them.
- Ask well-crafted questions in each of the interviews and utilize a rubric, or some other evaluative tool, to evaluate the candidate's responses. Please see sample questions below:
  - [UC Davis Sample Interview Questions](#)
  - [UC Boulder Sample Interview Questions](#)
  - Rubrics are provided later in this document.

### Equity-Mindedness

Grounded in the work of Dr. Bensimon at the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California, we may approach faculty searches with an [equity-minded framework](#). In this approach, we are asked to center race in an analysis of how colleges work, recognize that institutional racism is prevalent within higher education, understand that racial inequities originate from practices that historically have centered and favored whiteness, and place the responsibility to change these practices on ourselves.

### Questions to Promote Equity-Mindedness

- Recognizing that candidates with marginalized identities face many barriers and challenges, how might a review of all applications account for this?
- What experience does the candidate have advancing equity and inclusion?
- How can the candidate advance racial equity at Suffolk?
- How has the candidate reflected on how colleges produce racialized outcomes?
- How has the candidate demonstrated their experience teaching and/or mentoring racially minoritized students?
- How has the candidate expressed their understanding that college students hold multiple and intersecting identities that shape their experience on campus?

### Language Matters

How we talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion has evolved, and will continue to evolve. Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion must be reflected in our language.

Deficit-based language with a negative impact	Suggested inclusive and equity-based language
Minority	Marginalized or minoritized
Underrepresented minority	Race, racial equity, racial equity gap / Opportunity gap
Underprepared	Black and Brown / Latiné
Disadvantaged	Asian, Desi American, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander
Achievement gap	Culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy
Non-traditional	Equity, Socially just communities
Equality	

2

Fall 2023



# Theory, Research, Practice, Reflection

## **THEORY**

Equity-Minded Framework: Dr Bensimon at the Center for Urban Education at USC

## **RESEARCH**

White-Lewis (2020) found that once candidates had satisfied an initial review of qualification based on minimal job requirements, characteristics such as personal values, political orientation, and personality traits become particularly important to the search committees.

## **REFLECTION**

What does our criteria for this position suggest about the ideal candidate for this role?  
How would this criteria impact candidates from racially minoritized groups?

## **PRACTICE**

Replacing deficit-based language such as minority or underrepresented minority  
Utilize rubrics, such as the Rubric for Assessing a Candidate's Contributions to DEI  
from University of California, Berkeley



# Version 2.0...

Formalize process for Equity Advocates

Include information specific to searches inclusive of disability

Faculty recruitment website

Create training(s) for search committees

More focus on retention

