

Effective Faculty Recruitment



Updated: July 5, 2024

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EFFECTIVE FACULTY RECRUITMENT:

FROM IDENTIFICATION OF NEED TO FINALIZING THE HIRE

This lays out roles and responsibilities for administrators, staff, and faculty in the recruitment and search process.

CLARIFY HIRING NEED PRIOR TO SEARCH

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Reviews department governance to ensure process alignment with university, college, and departmental process.
- Convenes the designated faculty committee to discuss and refine the position description.
- Identifies administrative support for the search and search committee.
- Forms search committee after position needs are identified.
- Gives the Search Committee their charge.
- Sends position description including type of faculty (i.e., track and rank), funding source, and committee members to Human Resource Coordinator (HRC) by emailing hr_delivery@iastate.edu.
- Confirms with the Faculty Success Advisor that all search committee members have completed the required training in Workday Learn before access to applicant files is provided.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Schedules the initial meeting(s) for the Search Committee charge and training.
- Invites College Faculty Success Advisor and HRC to attend the first search committee meeting to complete in-person training.
- Creates CyBox folder accessible to Search Committee and UHR to upload Search Committee documents. This will be used for record retention requirements at the department level when the search is over.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- HRC partners with Faculty Success Advisor to conduct Search Committee training.
- Provides Search Committee access in Workday to applications once Search Committee training is completed.
- Provides supporting materials in CyBox to assist search committee.
- Meets with Search Committee Chair to discuss this checklist.

FACULTY SUCCESS ADVISOR

- Provides committee members with access to the [Search Committee Training course](#).
- Conducts a 60-minute, synchronous meeting using different modalities (i.e., in-person, virtual, or hybrid) with a Human Resources Partner or Coordinator, after all search committee members complete the online training
- Meets with search committee to summarize highlights of online training and address any questions raised. The Faculty Success Advisor and Human Resources Partner or Coordinator may meet with the search committee as part of a meeting in which other agenda items are discussed.
- Committee members are required to attend a meeting for each Search Committee served.

PREPARE POSITION DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION MATRIX

SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Meets and defines position further, identifying specific position responsibilities in teaching, research, extension, clinical practice, etc.

- Develops long and short versions of position description for use in print and web publications and sends to Department Chair for approval. **Consider review by International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) for potential green card sponsorship.**
- Reviews evaluation matrix by which candidates will be screened.
- Reaches consensus on relative importance and weighting of matrix criteria.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Makes and sends final position description to HRC directly.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Drafts evaluation matrix for search committee review based on qualifications determined in the final position description.

DEVELOP RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

DEPARTMENT CHAIR AND SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Develops advertising strategy. **Consider consultation with ISSO for potential green card sponsorship.**
- Discusses, identifies, and implements specific advertising and networking strategies to broaden recruitment efforts, including efforts to reach women and candidates from underrepresented groups.
- Requests faculty support to implement these recruitment strategies and broaden applicant pool.
- Has responsibility for disseminating position announcement to identified networks.

ADVERTISE POSITION

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Works closely with HRC to post position to Workday.
- Includes EEO/AA statement on advertisements in external locations.
- *NOTE: To satisfy potential Permanent Resident (green card) sponsorship for teaching positions, position announcement must be posted in print or electronically in a nationally circulated journal for a minimum of 30 calendar days. Documented proof of advertising is required for possible Permanent Resident (green card) sponsorship. Consult ISSO regarding additional green card recruitment required for non-teaching positions.*

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Creates the faculty position and job requisition in Workday.
- Posts the position via Workday to the ISU Jobs webpage for internal and/or external recruitment.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Posts job announcement to external locations for advertisement.
- Takes a screenshot of first and last day of advertisements (see NOTE regarding *Permanent Resident (green card) sponsorship* above).

CONDUCT INITIAL SCREENING OF APPLICANTS

SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Completes training prior to accessing applicant materials.
- Discusses and determines the existence of any conflicts of Interest (real or perceived) among committee members which may impede a fair, independent and objective process. Potential conflicts of interest exist when a committee member is a family member of a candidate or has served as a graduate advisor/major professor or post-doctoral supervisor of a candidate.
 - Search committee members are encouraged to be proactive, declare any potential conflict, and be forthcoming in making any relationship known, consistent with university policy.
 - Though the search committee chair is responsible for making the final decision regarding conflict of

interest and documenting this in writing to the department chair/school director (or dean), they are encouraged to proactively consult with the Dean's Office before taking any action.

- Reviews all applications confidentially to protect the identity of applicants.
- Each individual search committee member completes an evaluation matrix for all applicants in the pool. Each required and preferred qualification listed on the evaluation matrix must receive an individual score. Each applicant will receive one overall score and ranking.

CONDUCT IN-DEPTH SCREENING OF APPLICATIONS

SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Meets to review and discuss individual committee members' evaluations of candidates based on evaluation matrix.
- Members present their evaluations during the discussion of each candidate, or the committee chair may assign specific candidate files to present (in case of large number of applicants).
- Determines which candidates do not meet the required minimum qualifications.
- Discusses systematically all candidates who meet the required qualifications.
- Sorts applicants into three categories:
 - Tier 1: Very strong candidates who are recommended for interview.
 - Tier 2: Reasonably strong candidates who may be considered at a later time.
 - Tier 3: Least qualified candidates who are no longer under consideration. These can be eliminated from the pool.
- Completes the evaluation matrix providing reasons for the rankings.
- Maintains all required documentation in CyBox. This includes all written Search Committee notes, screening matrices, and any other pertinent information from the Search Committee process. **Must be retained for 6.5 years if there is a green card sponsorship.**

SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR

- Concludes the in-depth screening meeting(s) by reviewing candidate groupings and identifying reasons for applicant elimination from the pool.
- Secures consensus from the group for the decisions made to eliminate applicants (Tier 3).
- Communicates to Department Chair the Search Committee's recommendations and rationale for candidate interviews.

OBTAIN ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL FOR ANY TYPE OF FIRST STAGE INTERVIEWS

First stage interviews could include phone, virtual, airport, or in person/on-campus interviews.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Reviews recommendations from search committee and obtains any college level approval as necessary.
- Submits consensus matrix for review to HRC directly with request to move candidates to interview.
- Communicates to search committee chair approval to proceed.
- Work with administration to ensure communications are made with applicants and notifies those who are not selected to move on in the process.

SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR

- Provides Department Chair recommendations for first stage interviews based on screenings.
- Receives approval for interviews from department chair.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Reviews completed matrix and uploads into Workday.
- Follows up with Search Committee Chair if there are questions or clarification needed on any ratings.

- Completes dispositions for all candidates in the applicant pool in Workday that are no longer being considered (communicates with administrative support to ensure timing of regret letters).
- Communicates to Department Chair confirmation to proceed with interviews.
- Provides committee members with best practices resources on conducting phone or virtual contact to determine each candidate's interest and assess communication skills.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Works with Search Committee chair to arrange first stage interviews for all approved candidates.
- Works with HR to send out regret letters as needed for non-considered applicants.

CONDUCT INTERVIEWS

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Communicates approval of list for interview candidates to Search Committee Chair.
- Meets with candidates as part of the regular interview process.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Schedules on-campus interviews and extends invitations to designated participants in the interview process.
- Sends information to candidates about ISU and central Iowa (e.g., Build Your Career at Iowa State document). Invites candidates to ask any questions they have.
- Asks if any accommodations are required of candidates during interview.
- Arranges for candidates to meet with individuals and groups according to their specific needs or requests (e.g., Faculty and Staff Associations, programs and groups that reflect interests and goals), while maintaining consistency in interview experience for all candidates.
- Oversees all hospitality needs of the interviews.
- Helps interview candidate with any travel needs as necessary.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Plans the campus visit for candidates including any college administration expectations of level of participation in each step of the interview process.
- Reviews best practices for conducting interviews and generates a list of interview questions prior to meeting with candidates. Same questions need to be asked of all interview candidates.
- Hosts candidates while participating in the on-campus interview process (e.g., assists with meals, transportation).
- Meets with candidate as part of the regular interview process.

WRAP UP INTERVIEW

ENTIRE SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Works with administrative support to gather feedback from internal participants as determined by search committee.
- Reviews and discusses feedback on all candidates interviewed.

SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR

- Prepares a summary document for the Department Chair assessing candidate acceptability for the position based on feedback gathered from search committee and internal participants.
- Communicates to HR which candidates are no longer under consideration.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Works with Search Committee to create mechanism for internal feedback.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Reviews recommendation rationale and feedback provided by search committee and other interview participants as necessary. Works with college administration as needed for decision process of moving forward.
- Notify candidates that are no longer under consideration as a result of the interview.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Dispositions all candidates in the applicant pool in Workday that are no longer under consideration (ensure notification has already been done before changing the disposition in Workday).

CONDUCT REFERENCE CHECKS

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Provides support to Department Chair in scheduling reference checks and off-list reference checks as needed.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Notifies candidates still under consideration that reference checks will be completed.
- Department chair, as hiring manager, conducts a minimum of three on-list external (to ISU) reference checks from the list supplied by the candidate. These reference checks must be made by phone or virtual meeting. Survey links or email are not acceptable.
- ***If position is being offered with tenure, completes two off-list reference checks. These reference checks must be made by phone or virtual meeting. Survey links or email are not acceptable.***
- Department Chair will provide a summary document of all reference information to be kept in the search file in CyBox in a secure sub-folder that is not accessible to the search committee members or can be loaded after search committee members' access has been removed.

CONCLUDE SEARCH COMMITTEE WORK

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

- Ensures any final interview expenses or travel support assistance is wrapped up for the candidates.
- Ensures CyBox folder is completed and follows up with any search committee members on documentation that might be missing.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

- Ensures all documentation has been uploaded into the CyBox folder for the faculty search. This includes all written Search Committee notes, screening matrices, interview notes, reference notes, and any other pertinent information from the Search Committee process.
- Evaluates the search process itself for what went well, what did not go well, and how to make the department's next search better.
- Provides feedback on process to the department chair.

SELECT FINALIST AND EXTEND OFFER

DEPARTMENT CHAIR

- Works with college leadership (e.g., Dean, Associate Dean) if necessary to proceed with any needed approval and then complete a Draft Academic Letter of Intent.
- Follows [protocol for extending offers with tenure](#)
- Gives verbal offer to the top candidate once all necessary approvals are received.
- Provides final draft of offer letter to HRC to route in Workday when candidate accepts position.

- Contacts all interviewed candidates to share the position has now been filled.
- Notifies HRC that all interviewed candidates have been notified.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Moves candidate to Contingent Offer once candidate accepts offer. **Notify ISSO if selected candidate requires sponsorship.**
- Dispositions all remaining candidates in the applicant pool in Workday.

PROCESS HIRE

Offer Letter Routing in Workday

- HRC enters offer letter in Workday.
- Offer Letter routes to Department Chair for approval.
- Offer Letter routes to Dean (review only).
- Offer Letter routes to Provost for tenure-eligible positions.
- Offer Letter routes to Department Chair (signature) and Candidate (signature).

Background Check

- Once candidate signs offer letter, HRC moves candidate to Background Check. UHR Talent Acquisition will initiate the appropriate background check in Workday and monitor through completion.

Offer Finalized

- HRC ensures all Workday processing is complete and candidates are dispositioned as needed.

Offer Finalized & New Faculty Starts

- After completion of a background, the applicant is formally hired into Workday.
- Welcome letter from Department Chair includes information on new faculty orientation, college/department orientations, reminder to set up benefits and an Iowa State net id and email address, etc.
- Position Responsibility Statement developed and finalized. Generated by Department Chair as a sub-business process related to Onboarding of the new faculty member. PRS routes directly to faculty member for signature

*If you have questions as you move through this process, please reach out to your [HR Delivery Team](#) in a proactive manner.

If you have questions on **offers with Tenure, please contact the Provost's Office.

BEST PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE FACULTY RECRUITMENT

GUIDANCE FOR ADMINISTRATORS ON LEADING A FACULTY SEARCH

Before the Search

At a Minimum (Baseline):

- Clearly articulate campus rationale for support of faculty innovation and excellence by making explicit the connections between these considerations and student educational success.
- Create a search committee that is enthusiastic and genuinely committed to faculty excellence, innovation, and accessibility.

Better Practices:

In addition to the above:

- Create a well-rounded search committee, comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, and students from varied backgrounds, that brings multiple perspectives and fresh ideas to bear.
- Include and align commitment to institutional strategic priorities as well as the mission statement.

Best Practices:

In addition to all the above:

- Secure all resources needed to conduct a comprehensive search – for example, place job announcements in publications that reach a diverse audience.
- Establish and cultivate ongoing relationships with local and national organizations and special interest groups, and with students and faculty at colleges and universities that educate a diverse graduate student population.
- Create open lines of communication with potential faculty already in your department or school, such as adjunct or part-time professors, graduate students, postdocs and research associates.

During the Search

At a Minimum (Baseline):

- Make sure that the search committee understands its charge from the onset, clearly emphasizing that faculty excellence is a goal and that actively seeking a broad pool of candidates is expected.
- Critically analyze the job description and advertisement, making sure that they are inclusive.
- Mail/email position announcements to organizations that include scholars from underrepresented groups.
- Cover the costs of the candidate's expenses related to the interview, including hotel, food, and travel expenses.
- During the campus visit, make sure that all interactions with the candidate are honest, genuine, and gracious.
- Offer to connect the candidate with a Faculty and Staff Association of their interest (or person of similar identity and interests) to find perspectives on the campus and community climate.

Better Practices:

In addition to the above:

- Write a position description that attracts a broad pool of applicants, making sure that it clearly states that excellence and innovation are departmental and institutional goals.
- Make personal contact by letter or phone to underrepresented faculty, visiting scholars, and/or individuals who have made innovative presentations on campus.
- Establish a vita bank for potential future searches.
- Use listservs, bulletins boards, and other forms of technology to announce positions and recruit potential candidates far and wide.

Best Practices:

In addition to all the above:

- Educate the search committee and provide opportunities for discussion on hiring myths, Affirmative Action rules and regulations, and cognitive errors.
- Utilize personal and professional networks, contacts, and recommendations to seek leads to potential candidates of underrepresented groups.
- Initiate recruitment trips to universities that prepare a significant number of Ph.D. graduates of underrepresented groups, including women.
- Incorporate recruitment networking into professional conference attendance by department faculty.
- Advise the candidate of any incentives that might be negotiable in the salary package (modified workload, grant-funded opportunities, etc.).
- Cover the cost of an additional campus/area visit to explore housing.

After the Search**At a Minimum (Baseline):**

- Honor all start-up conditions documented in the final offer letter.
- Do not overload the new hire with excessive service demands, such as committee membership, advising, etc.

Better Practices:

In addition to the above

- Follow-up with the new hire regularly to help with transitions and answer any concerns that might develop.
- Provide mentoring and professional development opportunities.

Best Practices:

In addition to all the above:

- Continue efforts to cultivate an excellent and innovative faculty and support other campus initiatives.
- Provide the new hire with clearly stated standards and procedures regarding evaluation and performance.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the search process. Acknowledge the successes and failures and recommend process changes for future search processes.
- Sponsor gatherings to highlight the research, extension/outreach, teaching, and service contributions of underrepresented faculty.

TIPS FOR BROADENING THE CANDIDATE POOL

- Have a recruitment plan and include a deep pool as an objective.
- Start recruiting before you need to. Collect names of promising individuals who present at conferences and write interesting articles. When possible and practical, seek to forge a relationship with these individuals so that when an opening occurs, they are familiar with your department and the university.
- Call for nominations from your faculty.
- Develop a broad definition of the position and the desired scholarship, experience, and disciplinary background. Be clear about what is “required” and what is “preferred,” keeping required qualifications to a minimum. Consider including “experience working with groups that champion accessibility and student success” as one of your preferred criteria.
- Write your position description using inclusive language.

- Send your announcement to venues that target women and scholars from underrepresented groups.
- Take your announcement to professional meetings. Talk to prospective candidates there.
- Call colleagues in the field and ask for leads. Phone conversations will typically be more productive than email.
- Do not require recommendation letters during the first phase of the recruitment process. This makes it easier for individuals to express interest in a position confidentially.
- Think creatively. Explore term faculty possibilities or other alternative arrangements that might be desirable as a first step.
- Advertise and recruit broadly. Contact professional associations to send ads to specialty groups. Contact graduate programs with high numbers of PhD graduates who are women or underrepresented groups. Utilize databases.
- Call potential candidates directly to encourage them to apply.
- Actively involve all search committee members in the recruitment process.
- Provide information to give to candidates containing institutional information (dual career, gender initiatives, family-friendly policies, Faculty and Staff Associations) and marketing tools, as well as departmental information. Share the document [Build Your Career at Iowa State](#), available on the ISU ADVANCE website and the Search Committee Training course in Workday Learn.
- Ensure that every candidate is treated with respect.

GUIDELINES AND TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE INTERVIEWS

Before the interviews:

- Together with the committee, articulate your interview goals. Review and reflect on the desired qualifications of candidates. Make sure you will obtain sufficient information to make your decisions.
- Develop a set of core questions to be asked of each candidate. Whether you use a prepared set of questions or a more unstructured interview, develop some system of guaranteeing that someone asks each candidate the questions that will be key to the evaluation and comparison. Consider follow-up telephone conversations with candidates who were not asked all questions.
- Be sure all interviewers are aware of which questions are inappropriate.
- Consider who will interview the candidates. Discuss how to raise an interviewer's awareness of potential bias and prejudice, and how to obtain and evaluate interviewer's feedback.
- Determine the interview structure and schedule. Be sure to provide breaks for the candidate and to permit sufficient time for the interviews. Build in some flexibility.
- Personalize the visit for each candidate. Decide which events other than interviews your candidates will engage in. Consider how you will learn about the candidate's needs and interests.
- Provide candidates with the opportunity to seek information about campus resources from knowledgeable sources not directly involved in the search. Schedule a meeting for all candidates with someone qualified to discuss their needs or refer them to relevant individuals and resources. This prevents candidates from having to address these needs with members of the search committee.

- Provide candidates with a detailed schedule that identifies by name and affiliation each person who will interview them and give a brief explanation of how this person relates to the search.

Inviting Candidates to Campus

- Make sure all travel arrangements are made promptly and efficiently. Make it clear how candidates will be reimbursed for any charges they incur.
- Ask candidates if they have particular individuals or resources they wish to visit when they are on campus and arrange for such visits ahead of time, if possible.
- Send candidates the final schedule and list of arrangements well in advance.
- Arrange for candidates to be picked up at the airport by individuals who will make a favorable impression and put the candidate at ease.
- Provide candidates with contact information (e.g., cell phone numbers) for one or more individuals who will be able to help with last minute questions or travel problems.
- **For high-profile or administrator searches ONLY:** Release the identity of each candidate one to three business days before the finalist's arrival. Be consistent in approach and timing. If the finalist arrives on Sunday or Monday, then their candidacy ought to be announced on Friday. On the day of release, make the following finalist information available: CV, photo, itinerary. Send an email to faculty and staff in the department/school. If appropriate, distribute the announcement to the campus community, President's Cabinet, Board of Regents Office, *Iowa State Daily*, *Ames Tribune*, *Des Moines Register*, *Gazette*, and *Des Moines Business Record*. Send an article to *Inside Iowa State* to announce the number and names of finalists as well as the dates of their visits (including the times, locations, or virtual meeting registration for open forums).

Managing Campus Visits

- Use the campus visit as an opportunity for the department to communicate:
 - Show that you are seriously interested in the candidate's scholarly credentials and work.
 - ISU is a good place to work because it is intellectually lively.
 - ISU is a good place to work because it has a variety of flexible faculty policies that support individuals and families.
- Consider how the department will represent itself as a place in which individuals from all identities can thrive. Some things that may make the department more attractive are:
 - Clear governance policies and procedures for evaluation, promotion, and advancement.
 - Faculty mentoring resources.
 - An explicit plan to promote fairness and transparency within the department.
 - A tour of the department, campus, and community.
- Give the candidates a chance to interact with the department's faculty in multiple venues, from formal seminar presentations to informal discussions and social events.
- Focus on the candidate's ability to perform the essential functions of the job and avoid making assumptions based on race, ethnicity, religion, relationship or familial status, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.
- Ensure that all persons involved in the interviews are fully committed to recruit each one of the candidates with welcoming and equitable treatment. Assertively counteract any instances of treatment that appear to be racist, sexist, or otherwise inappropriate.
- Use a set of common questions with all candidates to allow comparative judgment and ensure that crucial information related to the position is obtained.

- To ensure transparency, consider providing all candidates with a complete list of things that would be possible for them to negotiate. These might include:
 - Course release time
 - Lab equipment and space
 - Renovation of lab space
 - Research assistance
 - Clerical / administrative support
 - Professional development funds
 - Travel funds
 - Start-up funds
 - Summer salary
 - Moving expenses
 - Assistance with partner employment
 - Other issues of concern to the candidate
- If a candidate has a partner who will need placement help, try to arrange interviews or other opportunities for the partner as early in the hiring process as possible. Be familiar with university resources to support these efforts, such as [Dual Career Resources](#) (Strategic Faculty Recruitment and Partner Opportunity Hires) in the Provost's Office and the Central Midwest Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC).

During the Interview

- Follow the plan established before the interview process and allow enough time for the interviews.
- Remind interviewers which questions are inappropriate, and that they are not only inappropriate at formal interviews but also at meals, social events, and other informal gatherings.
- Consider distributing the resource *Interview Questions: What To Ask? What Not To Ask?* in the Appendices to all faculty members and interviewers.
- Encourage all faculty members to attend a candidate's talks/lectures. This is an important part of making candidates feel welcomed and respected.
- Allow sufficient time for follow-up questions, candidate questions, and breaks.
- Remind interviewers to complete evaluations.

After the interviews:

- Meet with your search committee as soon as possible after the completion of the interviews.
- Raise awareness of unconscious assumptions and their influence on evaluation of candidates. Consider whether any such assumptions are influencing your evaluation of final candidates.
- Have hiring manager (department chair) check references following a consistent format. If phone calls are made, use a common set of questions to ask in all reference checks.
- Communicate with both successful and unsuccessful candidates in a timely manner.
- Decide how to proceed if your top candidate turns you down.

Finalizing the Search

- Solicit written assessments of the candidates from those who met with or interviewed them.
- Document the search process and final candidate rankings.
- Personally call or email all finalists not selected as soon as the candidate selected has formally accepted the position and signed the offer letter.

- Evaluate the search process for what went well, what did not go well, and how to make the next search better.

MAINTAINING AWARENESS OF COGNITIVE ERRORS

Findings from research in social psychology on cognitive errors

- Gender stereotypes often lead to cognitive errors in the evaluations of individuals
- Gender stereotyping functions as a cognitive shortcut.
- Cognitive errors often occur through lack of awareness.
- All persons are prone to biases.
- Even well-intentioned people are capable of bias.
- Biasing processes are more extreme when:
 - Individuals are tired, rushed, or otherwise cognitively burdened
 - Women are rare in a unit (“tokens”).
 - Valued performance information is lacking
 - Evaluation criteria are vague or ambiguous

The good news is that biases can be reduced.

How cognitive errors disadvantage female candidates

- Cognitive errors lead to the use of a gender-differentiated double standard for assessing competence and ability.
- Cognitive errors can be embedded in seemingly objective supporting materials (recommendation letters, teaching evaluations).
- Cognitive errors can result in seeing successful women as unfeminine or difficult (the “double bind”).
- Cognitive errors can result in shifting evaluation criteria for women and men.
- Cognitive errors can result in even harsher biases against women who are mothers.

What can be done?

- Underlying principle: disrupt the tendency to use stereotypes as cognitive shortcuts.
- Strategies/solutions:
 - Devote adequate time for the search and candidate review process.
 - Read candidate’s work rather than relying solely on supporting materials.
 - Critically analyze supporting materials (recommendation letters, teaching evaluations, research statements).
 - Be accountable – be prepared to explain your decision and rankings.
 - Be transparent – What are the criteria? Are they the same for persons of different identities? Are they the right criteria?
 - Structure groups and allow for maximum participation.
 - Think about how the job ad and descriptions might impact the applicant pool and perceived fit of the candidates.
 - Use the candidate evaluation form based upon the matrix.

Reference:

Moody, J. (2013). Cognitive Errors that Contaminate Academic Evaluations and Block Faculty Diversity. In *Faculty Diversity* (pp. 23-42). Routledge.

EVALUATING EXTERNAL RECOMMENDATION LETTERS FOR FACULTY CANDIDATES

External reference letters are also known as letters of recommendation or recommendation letters. External recommendation letters are different from reference checks, which is previously described on page 7. The search committee may specifically ask recommendation letter authors to include the items listed below or suggest that candidates ask their recommendation letter authors to include this information.

Recommendation letters should state:

- The relationship to the applicant
- The skills and abilities of the applicant and the referee's value judgment of these qualities
- The teaching record of the applicant and the referee's assessment of it
- The applicant's research record and the referee's value judgment of it
- The applicant's publication record and the referee's value judgement of it
- Other additional items pertaining to this search as indicated by the search criteria

Recommendation letters can be systematically different depending upon the identity of the candidate. The following language, which may be the result of poor attention to writing rather than deliberate red flags, can unintentionally influence the reader:

- Doubt raisers or negative language: "Although their publications are not numerous" or "While not the best student I have had, they"; Potentially negative language: "They require only minimal supervision" or "They are totally intolerant of shoddy research"
- Faint praise: "They worked hard on projects that they accepted" or "They are void of mood swings and temper tantrums" or "They have been lucky in their collaborations"
- Hedging: "Their health and personal life are stable" or "They respond well to feedback"
- Irrelevancy: information that lacks academic characteristics such as "They are very active in church" or "They are quite close to my partner"
- Using gender terms for women and titles for men: "A lovely woman, she was an asset to our department" vs. "Dr. Smith was an asset to our department."
- Gendered adjectives: "Dr. Sarah Gray is a caring, compassionate physician" vs. "Dr. Joel Gray has been very successful with his patients"
- Grindstone adjectives: showing that women succeed through effort, and men succeed through abilities or talent such as "She is hardworking" vs. "He is highly motivated," "She is dedicated" vs. "He is highly intelligent," "She is conscientious, dependable, meticulous, thorough, diligent, dedicated, careful" (all synonymous effort adjectives) vs. "He is brilliant, inspired, talented, a rising star, gifted" (all synonymous talent adjectives), or "She contributed" vs. "He wrote".
- Gendered skill focus: writing more about "her teaching" (often perceived as a more female skill) and "his research" (often perceived as a more male skill); focusing on "her training" vs. "his skills and abilities"

Reference:

*Madera, J. M., Hebl, M. R., Dial, H., Martin, R., & Valian, V. (2019). Raising doubt in letters of recommendation for academia: gender differences and their impact. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 34(3), 287-303.