ADVANCERIT
Reimagining our Careers and Campus Culture

Tip Sheet

Recommendations for Reducing Unconscious Bias in Promotion & Tenure Review Processes

1. Require committee members to participate in a bias literacy workshop. Research provides evidence that educational interventions lead to a reduction in unconscious bias [26,27].

2. Recognize and accept that all of us are subject to the influence of bias and assumptions, despite good intentions. Avoid considering yourself as "objective" [2,4].

3. Diversify promotion and tenure review committee membership by race, gender, rank (if appropriate), hearing status, age, etc. This will provide committee members with visible reminders that excellence comes in diverse forms. It will increase group members' motivation to respond equitably [4].

4. Discuss criteria that your review committee will use before evaluating candidates, and apply the criteria consistently [4].

5. Devote sufficient time and attention to evaluating each candidate, and minimize distractions [4].

6. Minimize time pressure and stress from competing tasks [28].

7. Evaluate the entire package of each candidate [4].

8. Recognize how the differential power/status of committee members shapes group discussions [29].

9. Use an inclusive rather than an exclusive decision-making process (such as considering why a candidate should be granted tenure or promotion rather than why they should be denied). This will cause evaluators to pay more attention to the merits of individual candidates and less attention to their membership in a specific demographic group [4].

10. Periodically evaluate the criteria being used during the review process and the manner in which the committee implements the review process [4]. In the process, develop better criteria for the measurement of faculty members' impact in teaching and service.

11. Hold tenure and promotion review committee members responsible for fair and equitable evaluations [4]. In addition, hold them responsible for decisions based on concrete information, not on vague assertions or assumptions [4].

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Other Resources:

- AdvanceRIT Project Resources on Career Success and Benchmarking
  - https://www.rit.edu/nsfadvance/
- Gender Equality in Engineering – Advocacy Tips, A National Imperative, NDSU
  - http://wied.asee.org/AdvTips.html
- "Solving the Equation" – AAUW publication
  - http://www.aauw.org/research/solving-the-equation/
- Facebook, Managing Unconscious Bias
  - https://managingbias.fb.com/
- Implicit Association Test, Project Implicit, Harvard University
  - https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html
- The Impact of Implicit Bias from Ohio State University, Part 1 Bias and Schemas,
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZHxFU7TYo4&feature=plcp
- Video: AAMC, "What You Don't Know: The Science of Unconscious Bias and What To Do About It in the Search and Recruitment Process"
  - https://surveys.aamc.org/se.ashx?s=7C7E87CB561EC358
- NCWIT Checklist for Reducing Unconscious Bias in Job Descriptions/Advertisements
  - http://www.ncwit.org/resources/ncwit-checklist-reducing-unconscious-bias-job-descriptionsadvertisements
- How Can Reducing Unconscious Bias Increase Women's Success in IT?
  Avoiding Gender Bias in Recruitment/Selection Processes (Case Study 2):
  - http://www.ncwit.org/resources/how-can-reducing-unconscious-bias-increase-womens-success-it-avoiding-gender-bias
- Video: Unconscious Bias and Why It Matters For Women & Tech
  - http://www.ncwit.org/resources/unconscious-bias-and-why-it-matters-women-and-tech
- Students: How Do Stereotype Threats Affect Retention? Better Approaches to Well-Intentioned, but Harmful Messages (Case Study 1)
  - http://www.ncwit.org/resources/how-do-stereotype-threats-affect-retention-better-approaches-well-intentioned-harmful

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References

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[26] Carnes, M., Devine, P. G., Isaac, C., Manwell, L. B., Ford, C., Byars-Winston, A., Fine, E., & Sheridan, J. (2012). Promoting institutional change through bias literacy. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 5(2), 63-77.

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[28] Fiske, S. T. (2002). What we know now about bias and intergroup conflict, the problem of the century. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11(4), 123-128.

[29] Adapted from Wadia-Fascetti, S., Isaacs, J., & Jones, G. of the ADVANCE Program at the Northeastern University. Workshop on Faculty Recruitment for Diversity and Excellence. May 13, 2013. Retrieved from http://www.northeastern.edu/advance/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/2016-17-STRIDE-Search-Committee-Presentation-FOR-WEB-1.pdf

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