
AC 2011-2228: EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATING FOR DIVERSITY AND EXCELLENCE IN FACULTY SEARCHES USING FILM

Coleen Carrigan, University of Washington ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change

Coleen Carrigan's research interests focus primarily on the socio-economic, historical relations of power which determine the value of women's labor. In her undergraduate and graduate studies, and in her positions at the Women's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Labor and University of Washington ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, she has performed independent and collaborative research on women's labor value, the sexual and racial divisions of labor as well as institutional transformation and best practices for the advancement of underrepresented groups in academia. She has communicated her findings in research papers, grant proposals, public presentations, short films and in journal publications. Her work is funded by the National Science Foundation, the Luce Foundation and the University of Washington Labor Center. She earned a Masters in Socio-Cultural Anthropology for her work on the historical and social relations of reproduction in Bahia Brazil. In her doctoral research in Socio-Cultural Anthropology at the University of Washington, she continues to engage feminist critical race theory and participatory, ethnographic methodologies in her examination of unexamined bias and politics of reproduction in cultures of technology.

Effectively Advocating for Diversity and Excellence in Faculty Searches Using Film

Coleen Carrigan

University of Washington ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change

Introduction

Recruiting for a diverse faculty is a multi-step process, in which evaluation plays a major role. We like to think that faculty are objective and able to impartially evaluate others' abilities and potential. However, the next generation of scholars is chosen through evaluation processes that can underestimate the qualifications of groups historically underrepresented in the academy. Search committee skill-building opportunities are important. The University of Washington (UW) ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change has created a short film, titled "Interrupting Bias in the Faculty Search Process," to empower faculty members and department chairs to interrupt common forms of unconscious bias that occur in faculty searches. These biases inhibit the hiring of members of underrepresented groups and deny the talents and perspectives of diverse members of scientific communities. Grounded in the case study method, the UW ADVANCE film provides live action material that viewers can both relate to and analyze from an objective perspective. Specifically, this film builds search committee skills by helping faculty members uncover the subtle biases that crop up in evaluation processes. Skill-building efforts must not only demystify subtle discrimination, but also empower faculty members to identify it and engage their colleagues to reexamine assumptions of competence and fit. The goals of the film are to give participants the tools, resources, and skills to serve as change agents in the diversification of the scientific workforce and to demonstrate how successful search processes can occur while simultaneously implementing best practices for diversity. As Richard Tapia has noted, the hiring process is one of the most traditional, conservative processes in academia today. This film is intended to transform it.

University of Washington ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change

The University of Washington (UW) is an urban research institution with two branch campuses, almost 40,000 students and more than 3,000 tenure track faculty as of fall 2010. Thirty-one percent of the tenure track faculty is female and 14% is faculty of color. The university hires over 200 new faculty members per year. Diversity is considered a key priority by the university's Board of Regents and many initiatives are in place to aid in recruitment and retention of diverse students and faculty.

In October 2001, the University of Washington was one of eight institutions to receive a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation award to advance women faculty careers in science, engineering, technology and mathematics (STEM). The five-year cooperative agreement with NSF allowed UW to build on existing programs and catalyze institutional transformation. With the grant, the UW created the Center for Institutional Change (CIC). (See www.engr.washington.edu/advance for more details.)

The CIC's vision is a campus in which all STEM departments are thriving, all faculty are properly mentored, and each STEM faculty member is achieving his or her maximum potential. A key premise of the UW ADVANCE program is that cultural changes that are designed to help

underrepresented groups invariably improve the environment for everyone. While the CIC's efforts have been focused on 19 science and engineering departments in the College of Engineering and the Science Division of the College of Arts and Sciences, each initiative is evaluated to determine how it can be institutionalized throughout the UW campus.

The CIC's six focus areas are: (1) leadership development for current deans and department chairs, (2) SEM department cultural change, (3) policy transformation, (4) mentoring women in SEM for leadership, (5) transitional support for faculty in SEM, and (6) visiting scholars. Recruitment and retention are key lenses through which to examine these six focus areas. For example, when cultural change efforts challenge underlying assumptions or traditional practices, recruitment and retention processes evolve. Training faculty on interrupting unexamined bias in the faculty hiring process is an effective way to increase the participation of underrepresented faculty STEM disciplines. For example, since receiving a National Science Foundation ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant in 2001, the University of Washington ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change has placed programmatic emphasis on eliminating bias against women in the faculty search process. By 2008, the number of women faculty in science and engineering departments had increased by 38%.

The Case Study

In 2006, the University of Washington received a grant from the National Science Foundation ADVANCE program to continue this series of national leadership workshops for STEM department chairs and emerging faculty leaders. All three of these annual workshops, called LEAD (Leadership Excellence for Academic Diversity), were heavily oversubscribed and attracted more than 200 faculty from around the country. LEAD focused on advancing women and underrepresented minority faculty members in STEM. UW ADVANCE created these leadership workshops as a vehicle by which to help chairs and faculty be better prepared for their responsibilities and create a more supportive environment for women, faculty of color, and all faculty. UW ADVANCE believes that cultural changes that are designed to help underrepresented groups invariably help all groups and improve the environment for everyone.

The workshops were designed to be highly interactive, an environment that is facilitated by its modest size (approximately 70-80 participants), and included multiple case studies that incorporate gender equity elements. Detailed information on the LEAD program, resources, and materials is available on the project website (<http://www.engr.washington.edu/lead/index.htm>). Case studies are increasingly being used to empower chairs and deans with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively meet the demands of leadership (Buller 2006; Chu 2006; Higgerson and Joyce 2007; Jones 2006). The case study method allows participants to understand the complex phenomena contributing to the marginalization of underrepresented groups in the academy and still "retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" (Yin 2003). Case studies are designed to synthesize experience and wisdom from diverse sources, including participants themselves (Scholz and Tietje, 2002). The scenario-based learning design establishes a framework for discussion and debate among participants. Problem-solving with peers facilitates the sharing of best practices and strategies, enabling administrators to implement transformational change at the departmental and institutional level.

The faculty search case study, used at LEAD 2007 and LEAD 2008, proved to be highly successful. Evaluation feedback suggests that participants appreciate hearing from each other as

to what works well for them and where they have found opportunities to make improvements. For the 2009 LEAD workshop in Fayetteville, Arkansas, UW ADVANCE worked with the UW Drama department to turn the faculty search case study into a short film, titled "Interrupting Bias in the Faculty Search Process." Coleen Carrigan, Research Associate for UW ADVANCE, wrote and directed the film, and facilitated it in Fayetteville. The session began with a review of the research on unexamined bias and cognitive errors that underestimate the qualifications of groups underrepresented in science and engineering disciplines, thus stalling efforts to diversify the faculty in these fields. To prepare participants for a critical viewing of the film, eight specific cognitive errors were analyzed. After the film was shown, participants broke out into small groups and, using scenario-based learning methods, establish a framework for discussion and debate so that participants could problem-solving with their peers on how best to implement changes that will improve faculty diversity at both the departmental and institutional level. The film and the facilitated discussion were very well received at the 2009 LEAD workshop (mean score of 4.26 out of 5).

Dissemination

In 2010, a Luce Foundation grant funded the creation of supporting material for this film. An accompanying facilitated discussion guide, written in the spirit of "train-the-trainer," has been adapted for widespread dissemination. Over three hundred film and facilitation guides have been disseminated to diversity advocates on campuses across the country since November 2010. The film has also been facilitated at national workshops, including:

- National Science Foundation ADVANCE Annual PI Conference (October 2009, Washington, D.C.)
- Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences Seminar for Department Chairs (July 2010, Chicago, IL)
- Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences Seminar for Department Chairs (Oct 2010, San Diego, CA)
- Keeping Our Faculties of Color Conference (November 2010, Minneapolis, MN)

Additionally, it has been used to train search committees in both the College of Arts & Sciences and the College of Engineering at the University of Washington. Finally, a companion website has been created to solicit requests for the film and provide more resources to facilitators who wish to use the training tool at their institutions. Please see <http://www.engr.washington.edu/lead/biasfilm/>.

References

J. Buller, "Five Case Studies in Administrative Dilemmas," *The Department Chair: A Resource for Academic Administrators*, Spring Issue, pp. 25-28, 2007.

D. Chu, *The Department Chair Primer: Leading and Managing Academic Departments*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, 2006.

M. L. Higgerson and T. Joyce, *Effective Leadership Communication: A Guide for Department Chairs and Deans*. Bolton: Anker Publishing Company, 2007.

T. Jones, B., *The Missing Professor: Informal Case Studies*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, 2006.

R. Scholz and O. Tietje, *Embedded Case Study Methods*. Boston: Sage Publishing, 2002.

R. Yin, *Case Study Research*, 3 ed. Boston: Sage Publishing, 2003.