Searching for Excellence

Equipping search committee members to achieve a successful outcome.
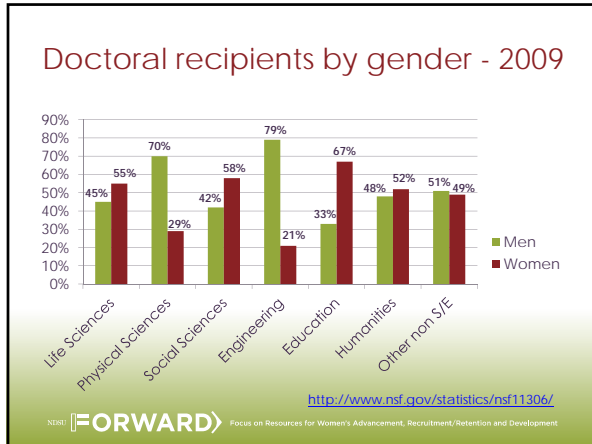
NDSU **FORWARD**

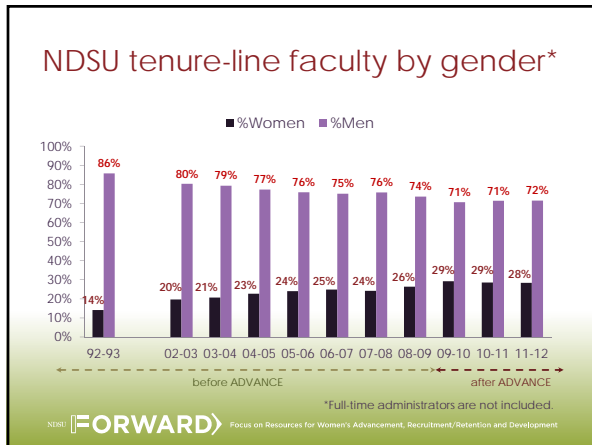---

To be an effective/efficient search committee member:

- Be aware of the institutional context.
- Understand unconscious bias.
- Use effective AND efficient search practices.
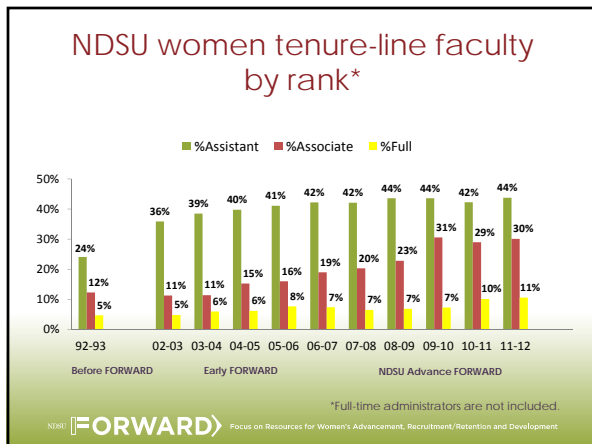
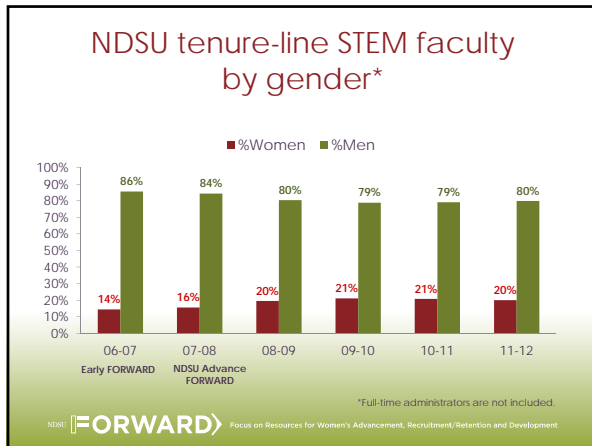NDSU **FORWARD** Focus on Resources for Women's Advancement, Recruitment/Retention and Development

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The institutional context

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Doctoral recipients by gender - 2009

Men
Women

http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf11306/

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NDSU tenure-line faculty by gender*

■%Women ■%Men

before ADVANCE   after ADVANCE

*Full-time administrators are not included.

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NDSU women tenure-line faculty by rank*

■%Assistant ■%Associate ■%Full

Before FORWARD   Early FORWARD   NDSU Advance FORWARD

*Full-time administrators are not included.

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NDSU tenure-line STEM faculty by gender*

■ %Women ■ %Men

Year	%Women	%Men
06-07 Early FORWARD	14%	86%
07-08 NDSU Advance FORWARD	16%	84%
08-09	20%	80%
09-10	21%	79%
10-11	21%	79%
11-12	20%	80%

*Full-time administrators are not included.

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NDSU tenure-line faculty by race/ethnicity & rank* (#s)

■ White ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ Asian ■ Native Amer.

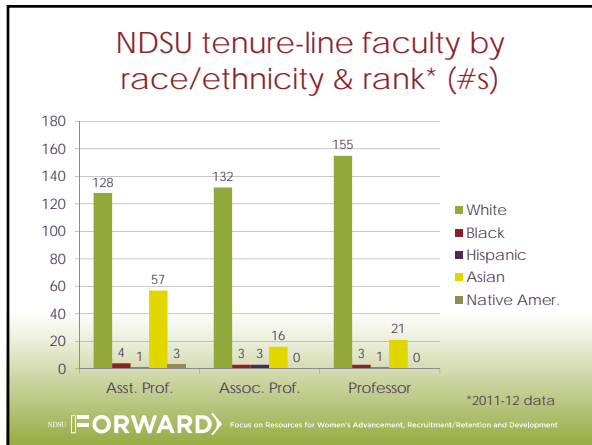| Rank	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native Amer.
Asst. Prof.	128	4	1	57	3
Assoc. Prof.	132	3	3	16	0
Professor	155	3	1	21	0

*2011-12 data

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Data show limited gender and ethnic/racial representation among NDSU faculty.

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## Why pay attention to diversity among our faculty?

- Broadens the "marketplace of ideas."
- Enriches students' educational experience, provides role models, and prepares them for the future.
- Contributes to innovation and productivity.
- Addresses our legal and ethical responsibility to be more inclusive.

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Unconscious bias

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also known as
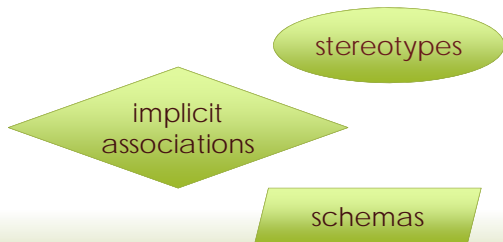
stereotypes

implicit associations

schemas

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Whatever the name, they are

implicit or unconscious assumptions that **influence** our judgments . . .

sometimes about physical or social characteristics associated with race or ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation

OR

about certain job descriptions, academic institutions, and fields of study.

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"Even the most well-intentioned person unwittingly allows unconscious thoughts and feelings to influence apparently objective decisions."

Mahzarin R. Banaji

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Unconscious bias is more likely to operate where there is:

- Ambiguity (including lack of information)
- Stress from competing tasks
- Time pressure
- Lack of critical mass

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Some typical (and unwitting) cognitive errors

- Stereotypes (negative AND positive)

- Raising the bar/shifting the standards

- First impressions

- Assumptions/"psychoanalyzing" the candidate"

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Some typical (and unwitting) cognitive errors

- Self-fulfilling prophecy

- Seizing a pretext

- Premature ranking/digging in

- Momentum of the group

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Cognitive Errors Worksheet

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Overcoming cognitive errors

- Constant self-correction.
- Ground rules & checklist to regulate the process.
- Use of a matrix or other visual to focus on qualifications.
- No overloading or rushing.
- Frequent insistence on "show me the evidence" during the search process.

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Minimize unconscious bias by

- Increasing the **numbers of applicants from underrepresented groups**.
- **Consciously** working to minimize the influence of biases and assumptions.
- Applying evaluation criteria **consistently**.
- Spending **sufficient time** to evaluate each applicant's **complete application**.
- Being able to **defend every decision** to continue or eliminate an applicant.
- Periodically **evaluating judgments** to see if bias has influenced a decision.

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In short, remember . . .

- Biases are often unintentional.

- We *all* make assumptions.

- Decisions made quickly are more susceptible to unconscious bias.

- Acknowledgement of unconscious bias can help overcome it.

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Effective and efficient search practices

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Faculty search-related policies

**All employment decisions are subject to equal opportunity/
non-discrimination laws, regulations and policies**

- **103**: Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings
- **103.1**: Recruitment for Executive/ Administrative/ Managerial, Academic Staff and Other Non-Banded Positions
- **104**: Recruitment Period for Position Announcements
- **112**: Pre-Employment and Current Employee Criminal Record Disclosure
- **304**: Academic Staff and Executive/Administrative Positions– Procedures for filling
- **339:** Policy on Communication Proficiency
    - o Include student on search committee.
    - o Include "effective oral and written communication skills" as minimum qualification.

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NDSU Policy 103.2.1 – interim or part-time appointments for faculty/executive/administrative positions

Any interim **or** $\leq$ .5 FTE appointment that includes a change in title or compensation must be announced internally
- for 10-working days and
- with opportunities for individuals to learn about and apply for the position.

Department must provide documentation to R/CO:
- the announcement and
- review of applications.

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Challenges in the search process:

- Recruiting for excellence.
- Committing the time required.
- Managing/organizing paperwork.
- Addressing unconscious bias.
- Dealing with committee dynamics:
  - motivating members
  - reaching agreement or consensus.

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Search committee members - roles and responsibilities:

- Develop a climate of trust and respect with other committee colleagues.

- Attend all search committee meetings; be prepared.

- Recruit **actively**.

- Read all application materials carefully.

- Use *advertised* qualifications for screening.

- Keep in mind the impact of **unconscious bias** throughout the search process:
  - as you recruit
  - as you review applications
  - as you conduct interviews
  - as you make hiring recommendations

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Steps in the search process:

1. Develop the position description/ qualifications.
2. Recruit applicants – actively.
3. Screen applicants
   - Review applicant CVs and other application materials.
   - Check references.
4. Interview top applicants.
5. Recommend applicant for hire.

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1. Position description and qualifications

- Consider the position description the foundation for the search.
  - *Review with the future in mind; no same-old, same-old.*
  - *Check postings for similar positions.*
  - *Know the market; design qualifications with the market in mind.*
- Include **all** qualifications/characteristics to be used in screening.

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- Use broad descriptions of scholarship, experience, and disciplinary background (specificity works against diversification).

- Label as "preferred" qualifications that are not <u>absolutely</u> required" (maintain flexibility).

- Include *required* EO/AA statement **AND** consider adding:
  - "NDSU is an NSF ADVANCE Institution" and/or
  - "Women and other traditionally underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply."

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Consider including qualifications such as:

- Evidence of ability to work effectively with a diversity of students and colleagues: both women and men and individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

OR

- Ability to interact and collaborate effectively with a diversity of colleagues and students.

OR

- Other options that may be specific to your discipline:
  - curricular innovation re: diversity,
  - experience teaching diversity-related courses,
  - research dealing with aspects of diversity.

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2. Recruitment – the basics

- Effective recruitment is **proactive**.
- **Personal contact** is the most effective recruitment strategy.
- Effective recruitment is **labor intensive**.
- The best applicants may be people who are **not looking** for a position.

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Recruitment strategies to attract high-caliber and diverse applicants:

- Expect *all* search committee members to **actively** recruit applicants.
- **Use personal contacts.**
- Distribute position announcements widely.
- Use on-line forums.

- **Share position information** wherever possible.
- Use resources that target underrepresented groups including individuals with disabilities.
- Attend graduate student presentations at conferences.

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- Recruit at conferences that target professionals from traditionally underrepresented groups (TUGs)
- Contact colleges whose students are primarily from TUGs
- Seek personal referrals from
  – former students/alumni in your field
  – colleagues at other institutions.

Don't buy the myths about lack of applicants from underrepresented groups.

See **Recruitment/Advertising Sources** at
http://www.ndsu.edu/diversity/equity/recruitment_and_hiring/

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3. Screening

- Develop a *systematic* way to review applicants based on the *advertised qualifications*.
- Record reasons for nonselection as they are identified – don't wait until the end of the process.
- Ask a committee member to be the recorder during committee discussions.

REMEMBER: The best predictor of future performance is past behavior.

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Checking references

Checking references is NOT an optional step in the search process!

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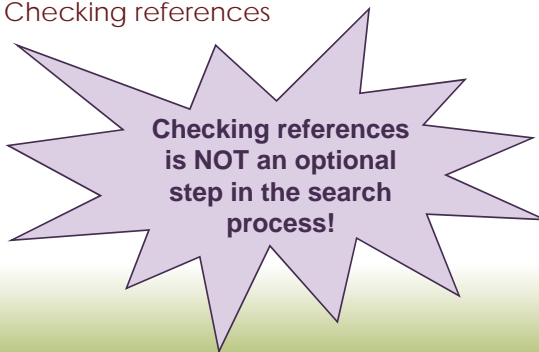
Collecting reference information:
- Letters of reference for all applicants? Only semi-finalists?
- Standard letter or "tailored" letter?
- Letters vs. phone reference checking?
- Named referees **and** nonnamed referees.
- Timing – when to do the reference checks?

Customizing reference checks:
- Identify areas for which more information is needed based on advertised qualifications.
- Develop behaviorally oriented questions.
- Keep notes about who was contacted and summarize the information.

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Effective phone reference checks:

- Focus questions on characteristics that are *clearly* related to the position.
- <u>Listen</u> carefully and ask follow-up questions.
- Keep the questions open-ended.
- Let silence be okay.

See Reference Checking Guidelines:
http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/diversity/ReferenceCheckingGuidelines.pdf

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4. Interviewing – two objectives:

- Collect additional and necessary information about the applicant – usually in person,
  AND
- Market the position, your department and college, NDSU, and the F-M community.

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Planning an effective interview

- Use position description/qualifications as basis for interview questions.
- Structure the interview:
  – Start with rapport building questions.
  – Use open-ended questions (avoid yes/no questions).
  – Ask for behavioral examples.
  – Control the interview.
  – Allow silence.
  – Seek contrary evidence.
- Be consistent but not rigid!
- Review appropriate interview behavior together as a committee, see:
  http://www.ndsu.edu/diversity/equity/recruitment_and_hiring/

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Enhancing the overall interview experience

- Be consistent with all interviewees.
- Organize well; be upbeat.
- Be sure all candidates meet some people who share important personal and social characteristics.
- Actively market the position: your department, college, NDSU, and the community.

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NOTE:
North Dakota open records law

All records related to a search process are open records under ND law including:

- All official documents associated with the search including application materials, reference letters or reference information, interview reports.

- **BUT ALSO**, personal notes you take about applicants as you review materials, do reference checks or interviews and make recommendations for hiring *as long as they exist*.

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5. Recommending an offer

- Develop **evidence-based** recommendations to offer or not to offer.

- Attempt to achieve committee consensus about recommendations.

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Case Study

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After the hire . . .

- Follow-up regularly to help with the transition and to address any concerns – both formally and informally.

- Encourage participation in university's mentoring program and other professional development opportunities.

- Point out new employee information, see: http://www.ndsu.edu/hr/onboarding/

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Resources for the search:

- *Reviewing Applicants (brochure)*
  This and other resources can be found on the FORWARD web page:
  http://www.ndsu.edu/forward/resources

- Resources/guidelines for recruitment, screening, and interviewing
  http://www.ndsu.edu/diversity/equity/recruitment_and_hiring/

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Questions??

Contact:

Angela Bachman, Assistant for Faculty Searches, Office of the Provost at 231-7150

OR

Office for Diversity, Equity and Global Outreach at 231-7708

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Acknowledgments

- STRIDE, University of Michigan
  (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence)

- WISELI, University of Wisconsin-Madison
  (Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute)

- Angela Bachman, Assistant for Faculty Searches
  (NDSU Provost's Office)

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