



Diversifying the faculty is a strategic priority reflected in the Advancing Beyond Boundaries strategic plan. Traditional and innovative methods are needed to attract faculty talent, and recruitment strategies must be inventive, creative, and accelerated given the competitive marketplace for faculty talent. Best practices for recruiting diverse talent must be in place for all faculty searches. This best practice guide is provided to support you through the search process.

Recruitment Basics

- Recruit continuously throughout the year, especially at conferences.
- Join your disciplinary organization's diversity efforts or committees.
- Take note of institutions that seem to be promoting diversity of graduate students and universities with significant underrepresented minority faculty representation.
- Develop pipeline programs.

Assemble the Committee

Build a mission-focused search committee that reflects diversity of race and gender and includes those within the department who have demonstrated interest in and support for equity and inclusive excellence. While you want a diverse committee, be sensitive to not overly burden under-represented minority or women faculty if you have limited gender and racial representation in your department. For this reason, cultivating diversity allies across the unit is important. Other criteria to consider when choosing committee members:

- Have they bought in to the unit's strategic vision for the future?
- Are they actively engaged in advancing that vision through their teaching, research, or service?
- Do they seek out opportunities to learn more?
- Are they open to thinking about their discipline and its scholarship in new ways?
- Are they leading a diverse research team, or mentoring early career faculty?

Follow Process Protocol

The Department Head appoints a search committee chair and a diversity advocate.

- The chair of the search committee is not the individual making the final hiring decision. This separation of roles enhances the autonomy of the search committee.
- The search committee is advisory to the department head/hiring official.
- The diversity advocate is a voting member of the committee. They must be a tenured faculty member for tenured and tenure track faculty searches.

Search committee members take action to learn best practices for equitable searches.

- Every member completes all 6 modules of the required Search Committee Charge Workshop offered by the Office for Equity and Accessibility (OEA). The course is offered online and is valid for 2 years.
- In addition, the search committee explores the resources recommended by OEA including Work-Life Liaisons, the Dual Career Program, diversity recruitment sources, and more.
- The committee seeks tools and resources, such as the Diversity Search Advocates Toolkit, to expand their capacity to conduct an equitable search.

The Department Head empowers the committee, and meets with the search committee chair and diversity advocate (and HR liaison, as available) to discuss:

- A broad, inclusive job description.
- Recruitment strategies that include social media, disciplinary organization listservs, and direct outreach to female and underrepresented minority candidates.
- Requirement of a diversity statement, as well as teaching and research statements from applicants.
- Current representational diversity in the department in relationship to the representational goals established in the Advancing Beyond Boundaries strategic plan and the college and department diversity plan/goals.

The search chair and the diversity advocate are a cohesive team during search process.

- At the first search committee meeting, the search chair introduces the diversity advocate.
- Both support diversity and equity as part of the search process.
- Together, they discuss the diversity of the pool throughout the process with the full committee and ensure that every effort is made to produce a diverse pool.
- Likewise, if the pool of applicants is not diverse at any stage, they will discuss with the hiring official how the search should continue to proceed.

Diversity Search Advocates Toolkit

On a search committee? Enroll in the *Diversity Search Advocates Toolkit* offered through the Professional Development Network.

The course is designed to help you practice being effective advocates for diversity. We present the ways that implicit bias is uniquely coded in academic search deliberations, offer language for intervening and redirecting when implicit bias is heard, and provide scenarios for thinking through and responding to typical situations that arise.

The course also offers resources for developing rubrics, reviewing applicants' Diversity Statements, and improving campus job visits.

Advocate for Diversity

All members of a search committee are considered active advocates for Virginia Tech's commitment to create a diverse and inclusive community. Diversity search advocates are charged with ensuring that this commitment remains at the forefront of the process. This involves speaking up when deliberations reflect bias and redirecting the discussion toward best practices.

View the InclusiveVT Insight:

What is the Role of the Diversity Search Advocate?

<http://www.inclusive.vt.edu/education/inclusive-insights/diversity-search-advocate.html>

Additionally, the diversity advocate:

- Encourages broad dissemination of the position announcement.
- Reviews interview questions and candidate schedule for inclusion.
- Supports the use of clear evaluation criteria.
- Offers guidelines for writing and reviewing the Diversity Statement.
- Maintains a mission-focus in all deliberations.
- Ensures that the faculty liaison is available to discuss work-life policies and caucuses as part of each finalist interview schedule.

Resources for Next Steps

Monitor the [Survey of Earned Doctorates | NCSES | NSF](#) to stay informed of demographic characteristics of recent doctoral candidates in your field.

Visit the [Strategic Planning | University DataCommons | Virginia Tech \(vt.edu\)](#) to track progress toward faculty diversity milestones in your college.

Connect with the [Future Faculty Diversity Program | InclusiveVT | Virginia Tech](#).

Explore research partnerships at the [The HBCU/MSI Research Summit at Virginia Tech | Graduate School | Virginia Tech \(vt.edu\)](#).

Enroll in the [Diversity Search Advocates Toolkit - Self-paced \(vt.edu\)](#) for more articles, rubrics, and best practices related to the academic search.

Questions? Contact Dr. Erica Cooper, Assistant Provost for Faculty Diversity, efcooper@vt.edu.