

Strategies for Minimizing the impact of bias in Recruitment

- Start with recognizing the research on unconscious or implicit bias and consider the influence bias and assumptions may have on judgment and deliberation.
- Search committee members can take an online Implicit Association Test (IAT) to investigate their own unconscious thoughts regarding some pervasive social stereotypes in our society.
- Set ground rules for search committee meetings (e.g.: no interrupting other committee members).
- In advance of a search, facilitate structured discussions around the academic criteria for evaluating candidates so that the search committee has a unified conception of what criteria to use, how to weigh them, and how to measure quality within a given domain.
- Use structured evaluation templates for reviewing applications, job talk evaluations, and one-on-one interviews. These templates should include both quantitative rankings of job-relevant criteria and qualitative written information. For quantitative rankings, forms should provide instruction about what type of behavior/achievement corresponds to each level of score.
- Spend sufficient time evaluating each applicant and minimize distractions when reviewing applicant materials.
- Familiarize yourself with the literature on unconscious bias.
- Be aware of your own potential biases.
- Encourage others to call out incidents of bias.
- Use inclusion rather than exclusion strategies in making selection decisions (e.g.: include for further consideration those applicants the search committee deems to be qualified as opposed to excluding those it deems to be unqualified).
- Agree in advance on a set of interview questions that will be asked of each candidate.
- Be prepared to defend each decision to advance or eliminate a candidate.