SUCCEED Committee
Supporting UIC’s Commitment to a Community of Excellence, Equity & Diversity

Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science Faculty Search Committee Workshop
Tuesday, September 9, 2008
Who We Are

- **Constantine Megaridis**, Chair
  Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
- **Sharad Laxpati**, Co-Chair
  Electrical & Computer Engineering
- **Mark Adams**
  Physics
- **Cynthia Jameson**
  Chemistry, Chemical Engineering
- **Martin Newcomb**
  Chemistry
- **Ludwig Nitsche**
  Chemical Engineering
- **8 additional facilitators from S & E departments**
SUCCEED’s Mission

Supporting UIC’s Commitment to a Community of Excellence, Equity & Diversity

To support UIC’s commitment to creating a community of excellence, by assisting search committees identify, recruit & hire talented and diverse faculty
UIC WISEST Efforts

- NSF & UIC funded initiative since 9/03
- Provost chairs the Executive Committee comprised of Deans, VC for Research, VP for Faculty Affairs & other campus leaders
- WISEST Facilitators from 11 S&E Departments
- Departmental action plans, start-up packages for women faculty, WISEST Postdoc program
- Activities:
  - Data gathering
  - Leadership seminars
  - Policy Recommendations
  - Faculty Search Committee training
What’s the Issue?

- Over the last thirty years, the proportion of women PhDs in the pipeline has been increasing steadily (e.g., chemistry 1/3).
- There has not been a commensurate increase in the percentage of women in tenured/tenure track and leadership positions in US academic science and engineering departments.
Percent of PhD's Earned by Women in Selected Fields, 1980 to 1998

(Compiled by AIP Statistics. Source: NRC Summary Report, various years. The data cited for physics PhDs earned are from the AIP Enrollments and Degrees Report.)
Common Beliefs

- We simply hire the best available faculty based on objective assessment of their accomplishments; the gender or race of the candidate doesn’t matter.

- If women behaved like men, they would succeed at the same rate.

- Discrimination is only practiced (actively) by a small set of ignorant people.
Common Perceptions

- The lack of women in leadership positions will fix itself over time

- Since many of the problems encountered by female faculty are minor, recent emphasis on remedies to improve the climate is an over-reaction
What the research shows...

- Unconscious gender-based assumptions and stereotypes are deeply embedded in the patterns of thinking of both men and women.

- Women (and work performed by women) consistently receive lower evaluations than men (and work performed by men) by both men and women evaluators.

- These cumulative disadvantages impede women’s progress toward full participation in academia.
Concepts that Search Committees Must Understand

- Lack of Critical Mass =>
- Gender Schemas =>
- Evaluation Bias =>
- Accumulation of Disadvantage
Lack of Critical Mass

- When women make up ≥30% of an applicant pool, individual women are judged more positively by evaluators
  

- When women make up ≥30% of a work group, their work is judged more positively by evaluators
  

- When there are fewer women (or minorities), stereotypes (schemas) have more influence in evaluation
  
What are Gender Schemas?

- Non-conscious hypotheses about sex differences that guide everyone’s perceptions and behaviors
- Expectations or stereotypes that define “average” members of a group
  - Men are instrumental, task-oriented, competent
  - Women are nurturing, emotional, and care about relationships
- Schemas are necessary
- Both men and women have the same schemas
- Problems arise when schemas that define the aggregate, influence the evaluation of an individual’s capability and their work:
  **Evaluation Bias**

“Blind” auditions can explain 30% of the increase in female proportion among new hires, and possibly 25% of the increase in the percentage of females in orchestras from 1970 to 1996.


University psychology professors prefer 2:1 to hire “Brian” over “Karen” even though the application packages are identical

Steinpreis, Anders & Ritzke (1999). Sex Roles, 41, 509

Letters of recommendation for women hired at a large academic medical center differ systematically from those for men hired. They were shorter and used gender terms & stereotypic adjectives. They had more grindstone adjectives and fewer standout adjectives

Schemas in Action: Competency Bias

Swedish Postdoc study:

- 114 applications for prestigious research postdocs at the Swedish MRC (52 women; 46%)

- 4 of 20 (20%) went to women

- Standardized metric developed based on publication record, research plan, etc. => impact points

What Can Search Committees Do?

Faculty Search Toolkit
– Procedures and recommendations

“Supply side”
– Proactive approach to recruiting outstanding faculty applicants
  (case history – Chem and ChE faculty searches)
What Can Search Committees Do?

Before the Search:

- Department Head should ensure that the committee members are sensitive to gender and diversity issues
  - Ensure that members are aware of the self-study data
  - Familiarize committee members with research findings on gender schemas, critical mass & evaluation bias
  - Discuss what have been some obstacles to increasing diversity in the department in the past
  - Develop strategies for ensuring a diverse pool and shortlist
What Can Search Committees Do?

During the Search:

- Word the position description so that it conveys the College’s commitment to excellence, equity & diversity
- Engage in **active recruiting** for a diverse applicant pool. Function as a Search Committee, not a Letter-Opening Committee.
- Consider women and minorities who are ‘underplaced.’ Avoid triage by pedigree.
What Can Search Committees Do?

- Avoid discussing individual candidates before an aggregate preferred list is compiled.

- If possible, have >1 woman (minority) on the short list; schemas will have less power.

- Spend sufficient time evaluating each applicant; schemas have less power when more time is spent evaluating a candidate.

- Provide an opportunity for women (minority) candidates to talk to other women (minority) faculty, not on the search committee.
What Can Search Committees Do?

- Know about UIC support policies & programs & provide a handout outlining these to all faculty candidates
- Know about UIC support units
What Can Search Committees Do?

When search is complete:

- Search Committee Chairs debrief with administrators on the search process:
  - What worked well
  - What were the challenges
  - What kind of support would have helped facilitate the committee’s work
Our Message in Brief

- Unconscious assumptions and their influence on faculty candidate evaluation do persist and have been shown to contribute to gender inequity in academia.

- UIC is joining top research institutions across the country in formalizing faculty search committee training and procedures.

- We are prepared to share research findings on these issues and assist in Search Committee training.
Search for Faculty in Chemical Engineering 2006-2007 and Chemistry 2007-2008

- Plan
- Process
- Results
- Post-mortem
Desired attributes of the hiree are well-known. Look for females high in those attributes. Encourage them to apply.
1. Get names of leads:
   a. Top 40 Depts list, personal calls to colleagues, e-mails with WISEST appeal to female faculty, look in web pages for female postdocs/senior grad students
   b. Faculty candidate postings: CACHE, AIChE “Meet the Faculty Candidates Poster Session”, COACCh workshop list

2. Google the leads for CVs, publications, awards, presentations.

3. Turn leads into applicants
   a. Personalized e-mails, phone calls to leads
   b. Interviews at AIChE
Results: Chem E

Chemical Engineering Search
What factors contributed to final outcome?

- Committee members bought into the plan and participated enthusiastically.
- Personalized e-mails
- Full-court-press one-on-one meetings at AIChE
- Applications solicited from highly qualified women raised the bar for male applicants
- Friendly, well-organized interviews
The Search for Faculty in Chemistry 2007-2008

- Dean of LAS authorized a search for one, possibly two hires
- Two sub-committees each with a WISEST facilitator
- Pro-active search plan that worked for ChemE accepted by great majority of members
Personalized recruiting (CJJ) example

- Invited **18** highly-qualified women to apply [10 from the COACH list of 50 Chem women post-docs interested in academe]

- Of these **18**, **7** completed applications [2 from COACH] all of whom were on the list sent to OAE

- **4** of these **7** were among the **10** women invited to interview.
Results

Department of Chemistry Search

- Applied to OAE
- Interviewed
- Hired

URM
Women
Men
Post-mortem Chemistry

What factors contributed to final outcome?

- Chemistry Search Committee members (especially new faculty) bought into the idea that high quality women candidates could be influenced to apply to UIC
- Some effort by most members in getting women into applicant pool
- WISEST template for candidate profile adopted by some members of Com A helped focus on factual across-the-board comparisons
- Applications solicited from highly qualified women raised the bar for comparison with male applicants
What other factors contributed?

- WISEST pressure coming from so many angles: from individuals and the SUCCEED group, from discussions with Chemistry faculty, from discussions with the administration about Chemistry faculty, from WISEST and LAS-sponsored presentations about searches: SUCCEED presentation at LAS heads meeting, Mo-Yin Tam’s dramatic vignettes, LAS Diversity Roundtable

- An executable plan ending with a pool containing many strong women candidates
What other factors contributed (continued)?

- Dean's influence: Chemistry might be able to hire 2 new persons, but the Dean made it clear that the only way they could do that would be to have women or minority hires.
- New faculty members in Chemistry appear to have a much different attitude than the Old Guard.
- Provost's pressure/influence, e.g., the requirement that the Head list his "Affirmative Actions" on annual report.
- The wide distribution of the WISEST Search Toolkit to search committees by SUCCEED, by OAE, by LAS Dean’s Office.
- WISEST Facilitators serving on search committees.
Today’s Message

- There are excellent women and minority faculty candidates out there
- Pro-active recruiting works to ensure a critical mass of otherwise under-represented groups in the applicant pool
- Once you have them in the applicant pool, then carry on as usual and hire the “best”