

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION – Committee Report

Members of the committee – Suzi Billington, Alisa Goolsby, Hoey Graham (co-chair), Angela Helmke, Mo Hendrickson, Laura Hutchinson, Jesse Martinez, April Preston (co-chair)

Summary: The Staff Recruitment and Retention Committee began by reviewing the University’s diversity numbers, which confirm the need for the Diversity Council’s work.

Women and people of color are notably under-represented in executive/administrative and managerial positions. Only 19 of 60 positions are held by women (32%), and 3 by non-caucasians (5%) (4 unreported). While women are well-represented in technical and paraprofessional (64%), and clerical/secretarial (90%) positions, and reasonably well-represented in instruction/research assistant (40%) and “other professional” positions (45%), they are poorly represented in the skilled crafts (12%) and service maintenance fields (29%). Non-caucasian numbers are low across the board, ranging from 1% in the skilled crafts, to a high of 13% in instruction/research assistant positions and 12% (158 unreported) in “other professional” positions.

The Committee focused this semester’s work on improving recruitment practices in the short-term. We concluded that longer-term retention efforts will require better data on the reasons women and people of color find the University a desirable place to work and, conversely, why they leave. A well-constructed climate survey would serve this broader effort well, with specific attention to improving the quality of information from diversity applicants who withdraw in the recruitment process, and from those who later leave the University for other positions. We view these data as key to identifying and removing barriers to diversity in the long-term.

Short-term goals

After reviewing resources available to search committees at the University, and comparing them to those developed at peer institutions and others, the committee concludes that our ability to attract and hire highly qualified applicants will be improved by a comprehensive best practices guide to strategies for increasing diversity, from writing the position description to welcoming the new hire into the University and local communities. The committee has gathered materials from the University’s existing resources, from peer institutions, and from other sources, on which it will build to complete the guide/brochure. Following is a draft outline of the guide/brochure:

Title – Strategies and Resources for Increasing Diversity

Subtitle - Recruitment of Staff

Table of Contents

Introductory paragraph – President’s statement regarding importance of and commitment to diversity at UI.

Position Description Language – (diversity as an element)

Search Committee Composition

Job Announcement Language (incl. commitment to diversity)

Recruiting and hiring

Recruitment plan

Advertising Resources – building a diverse pool (incl. targeted advertising)

Active Recruiting (incl. personal networking)

Evaluation, Selection, & Interview of candidates

Screening

Sample questions

Reference Checks and Background Checks

Ambassador Program Concepts/Guidelines – keeping the top choices in the pool

Dual Career Services

Housing

Schools

Childcare

Churches/organizations, etc.

Period of Offer to Acceptance

Closure - closing out the search process, incl. communication with candidates not selected

Recommendations/needs

Short-term

1. Draft guide/brochure
2. Develop enhanced training for search committees and chairs – implementing best practices – incl. video
3. Define, build and staff the ambassador program

Long-term

1. Climate survey/assessment
2. Improve exit interview questionnaire and accessibility of data
3. Produce recruitment video – selling U of I as the employer of choice
4. Develop resources to assist new hires in adapting to and settling into the community (extension of ambassador program)
5. Diversity education - training for all employees

