Welcome!
The webinar will start at 2:30 p.m.

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Effective Practices for Assessing Faculty Application Materials

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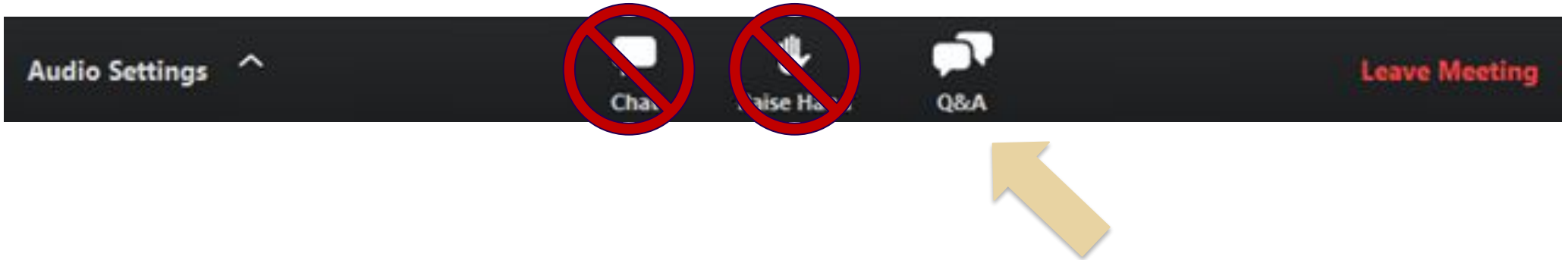
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Tech Check: Participation



Use Q&A to pose questions to Chad and Joyce

Ex: Can you say more about _____?

Workshop & Webinar Sequence

Preparing for Next Year's Hiring (Spring)

- Forming and informing search committees
- Drafting job ads and rubrics
- Planning for outreach

Effective Practices for Assessing Faculty Application Materials (Fall)

- Brief review of bias in assessment
- Committee dynamics and high functioning teams
- Criteria consensus
- Prevention strategies
- Records management

Effective Practices for Interviewing (Fall – Nov. 5, 9:30 – 11 am)

- Preliminary Interviews
- Final interviews and campus visits

Today's topics

- Review of current policy, political and legal climate

- Brief review of bias in assessment
- Committee dynamics and high functioning teams
- Criteria consensus
- Prevention strategies
- Records management

- Questions and discussion

Legal & Policy Contexts: Recent Developments Federal, state, and university

National in scope:

- Supreme Court ruling on Affirmative Action in admissions
- Challenges to DEI offices, advocates, policies, and practices
- Increased scrutiny of DEI efforts in higher education
- Federal Executive Orders

The Dynamic Context of Federal Guidance

- **Government contractors** must take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment protected veterans and individuals with disabilities (but no longer on the basis of *race*, *creed*, *color*, or *national origin*).

- **Title VII** prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin.

Legal and Policy Contexts: State

- **Washington's I-200** was enacted through popular initiative in 1998:

  "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting."

- **Washington State Law RCW 49.60:** "law against discrimination"

  elimination and prevention of discrimination in employment due to race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, families with children, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability

Legal & Policy Contexts: University

- Ongoing discussions about best practices
  - Defining “excellence”
  - Assessing required DEI statements
  - Assessing “lived experience”

- Are practices consistent with Executive Order 81?
  - Replaced EO 31
- Do practices align with the Civil Rights Compliance Office Checklist?
  - “Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist”

UW Executive Order 81: Nondiscrimination

"The University prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities, including education, employment, and patient care, based on an individual's actual or perceived protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include race, color, creed, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, pregnancy, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Upon learning of conduct that may constitute discrimination, the University will take prompt and effective action to address it, remedy its effects, and prevent recurrence."

https://policy.uw.edu/directory/po/executive-orders/eo-81-prohibiting-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/

https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/

Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

Permissible	Not Permissible
Assessing applicants based on job-related criteria	Considering applicants' protected characteristics in any way
Asking questions about leadership, unique perspectives, or other job-related factors	Asking questions about how applicants' protected characteristics have shaped their identity

https://www.washington.edu/civilrights/policies-and-guidance/compliance-checklists/employment-practices/

Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

DEI statement prompt that does not conform to Checklist

[Specific unit] has a very diverse student population. We request that each candidate write a statement about a demonstrated commitment to diversity in research, teaching, mentoring, and/or service. The statement should detail the applicant's experience or plans for supporting the success of students from racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds that are underrepresented in their academic field.

Human Resources and Employment Practices Checklist

DEI statement prompt that conforms to Checklist

[Specific unit] is committed to creating a community where individuals from all backgrounds and experiences have equal opportunities to participate, succeed, and feel a sense of belonging. We request that each applicant write a statement about their experiences in helping to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for research, teaching, mentoring, and/or service. The statement should detail the applicant's experience or plans for supporting the success of students from all backgrounds.

Questions?

2 Key Takeaways from Research on Bias in Assessment

- People who assert “objectivity” often do a worse job . . .

- We are most susceptible to biases in the form of “quick thinking,” “knee-jerk thinking,” or “stereotypical thinking” when
  - we feel tired, overworked, overwhelmed, rushed, or
  - we are unsure of exactly what we are supposed to do, or
  - we have ambiguous or incomplete information

. . . all conditions of serving on a search committee . . .

Bias in Assessment

- Bias can take many forms
  - We tend to focus on forms of “negative” bias, but bias can also be “positive”
  - “Positive” bias reflects our tendency to gravitate towards the familiar
- Working with incomplete information
- Reviewing large numbers of applicants

Bias in Assessment

- Tempting cognitive and decision-making shortcuts
  - We are tempted to focus attention on the familiar . . . and to ignore the unfamiliar
  - We are tempted to base decisions on a single data point
- Our default is to hire for “sameness”; hiring for “difference” requires deliberate effort

- Our goal is prevention and mitigation of common forms of bias

Committee Dynamics and High Functioning Teams

Cautions:

- Time pressure and sense of urgency
- Power imbalances and dynamics
- Lack of consensus about criteria and/or process

Committee Dynamics and High Functioning Teams

Characteristics of High Functioning Committees:

- Every member understands the task at hand
- Work as a team with clear roles and responsibilities
- Create a shared understanding of assessment criteria
- Use structured processes
- Anticipate challenges and articulate strategies to address challenges in a timely manner

Structured Process Example

Components	Example
> Roles	> Non-voting facilitator > Primary/Secondary reviewers
> Tools	> Bias literacy check-in > Focused discussion questions > Speaking order strategy > Consistent time per application > Regular breaks (e.g., after 5-8 applications)
> Timeline	> Phased evaluation

Assessments Don’ts and Dos

Don’t:

- Allow biases to proceed uninterrupted
- Engage in prohibited practices (e.g., asking illegal questions)

Do:

- Seek consensus on the criteria before beginning evaluation
- Explore key terms (e.g., what do we mean by “excellence,” “impact,” “unique perspectives”)
- Emphasize structure and use systems to promote consistency and fairness
- Create a strategy for check-ins (e.g., use a calibration round, decide what will happen if the criteria are not working well)

Human Resources
EOAA
Mission and vision
Affirmative Action program and placement goals
Equal Opportunity statements and reasonable accommodation
Pre-employment inquiries
Affirmative Action data form guidance
Search waiver request policy
Frequently asked questions
Community
HR Programs
HR Tools
Workplace policies
Professional Staff Program
Nonpermanent employment
HR News
Workplace posters
UW holiday calendar

Guidelines for pre-employment inquiries

Last updated: September 22, 2023

Pre-employment inquiries which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, protected veteran or disabled status, or genetic information are prohibited by the University of Washington's policy and state and federal laws. Further, pre-employment inquiries which objectively convey to a reasonable person that the information will be used in connection with a discriminatory purpose are prohibited. Hiring officials must ensure that all pre-employment inquiries made of job applicants, whether written or oral, are lawful and fair.

Department administrators/search committees should take the following steps to comply with the University's equal opportunity policy:

- Direct all individuals who participate in any part of the hiring pre-employment process to comply with the guidelines provided below.
- Review all hiring procedures and related forms for compliance with these guidelines.
- Direct all individuals who make inquiries to obtain candidate information or recommendations to comply with the guidelines below.

Note: The guidelines chart applies to inquiries made of any applicants to the UW. This includes contract covered, classified, professional, academic, nonpermanent, student, or any other employee type within the University.

Chart for Fair and Unfair Pre-employment Inquiries

Search:

Subject	Fair Inquiry	Unfair Inquiry
Age	Inquiry related to birth date and proof of true age.	Any inquiry not necessary to establish that applicant meets a minimum legal age requirement, including any inquiry that implies an age preference for persons under 40.
Arrest/Conviction	Request criminal conviction history information in compliance with UW practices.	Other inquiries concerning convictions and imprisonment will not be considered justified by business necessity if they do not reasonably relate to the job duties.
Citizenship	Whether applicant can be lawfully employed in this country because of visa or immigration status; whether applicant can provide proof of legal right to work in U.S. after being hired.	If the applicant is a citizen; requirement before hiring that applicant present birth certificate, naturalization, or baptismal record; any inquiry into citizenship that would tend to divulge applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, or birthplace.

https://hr.uw.edu/eoaa/pre-employment-inquiries/

Fair and Unfair Inquiries

- Subjects with Fair and Unfair Inquiries
  - Age, Arrest/Conviction, Citizenship, Credit, Disability, Family, Military/Veteran Status, Name, National Origin, Organizations, Photograph, Pregnancy, Relatives, Residence
- Subjects with No Fair Inquiries
  - Height/Weight, Marital Status, Race or Color, Religion or Creed, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression, or Gender Identity
- What if the applicant raises identity-related information in their application?

Compliance with EO 81 and I-200

- EO 81 and I-200 **prohibit discrimination and preferential treatment** based on identity.
- Search committees cannot use identity markers such as race, ethnicity, gender, or national origin as a **criterion or factor in evaluation**.
- Assessment ***criteria*** and assessment ***processes*** should be uniform for all applicants, candidates, and finalists.

Seek Shared Understanding

- Generate early conversations about values, goals, and process
  - What is the goal and purpose of this position?
  - What does our unit value?
  - How are our values reflected in this process?

- Decision making
  - What do we need to know to advance candidates to the next stage?
  - What should be evaluated and when?
  - What if an important criteria was missed?
  - What is our decision-making process?

Criteria Consensus

- Identify and calibrate criteria
  - What are we actually evaluating, and how will we make assessments?
  - What do we mean when we say _____?
  - Do the criteria exacerbate bias or privilege some groups over others?

- Provide structure for better decision making
  - Avoid moving targets
  - Align with long-term strategic plans
  - Align with goals and values

- Focus discretion and flexibility
  - Promotes purposeful discretion and flexibility
  - Promotes articulation of reasons for choices

Example 1: Teaching criteria and assessment

What kind of prompt did you provide in the job ad?

When you say “will contribute to the unit’s teaching mission,” do you mean

1. an ability to teach specific courses in specific ways, or
2. an ability to create new courses or develop new pedagogies, or
3. an ability to work with specific student populations, or
4. something else?

Have you considered relevant contexts for your candidates?

e.g., career stage, relevant training, prior teaching requirements or opportunities

Example 2: “DEI” criteria and assessment

What kind of prompt did you provide in the job ad?

When you say “will contribute to the university’s DEI mission,” do you mean

1. a basic knowledge of the university’s DEI goals, or
2. a concrete record of prior relevant actions, or
3. concrete plans for future relevant actions, or
4. something else?

Example 2: “DEI” criteria and assessment

How might “leadership, unique perspectives, or job-related experience” factor into your criteria?

- identity-based responses vs job-related responses

Have you considered relevant contexts for your candidates?

e.g., career stage, location of school or program, opportunities

What should you do if you have concerns?

- You feel the rubric doesn't effectively assess essential job-related skills and competencies
  - Should the rubric be modified at this point in the process?
  - How should the rubric (criteria) be modified—while maintaining fairness?
  - What happens next?

- Possible actions you could take
  - Propose revised criterion
  - Stop assessing and call a meeting to discuss and recalibrate the rubric
  - Design an opportunity to better assess the criterion at the next stage of evaluation

What should you do if you have concerns?

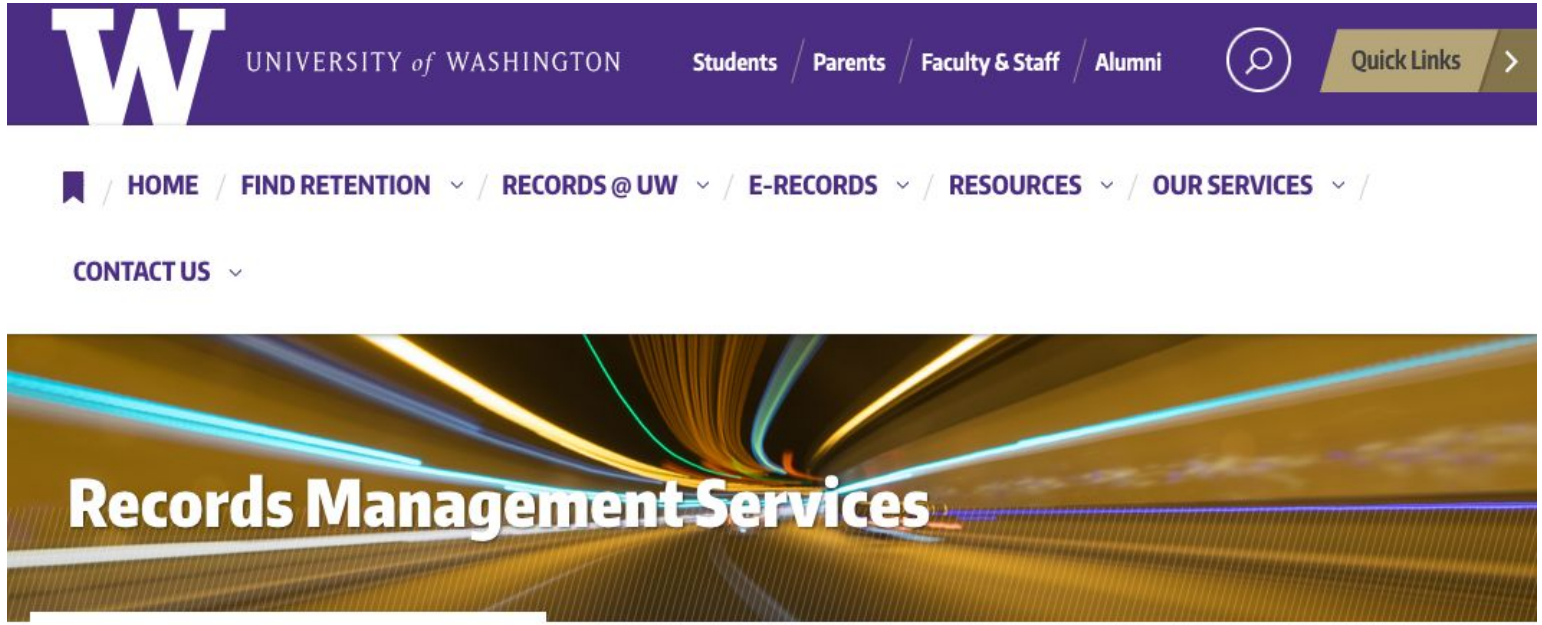
- You disagree with some part of the process
  - What is the protocol for disagreement or dissent?
  - How is disagreement related to our primary job of making recommendations?

- Possible actions you could take
  - designate time during a committee meeting
  - revisit the charge to the committee
  - talk to the chair of the committee
  - talk to the chair of the department or unit leader

What should you do if you have concerns?

- You witness bias in an assessment meeting
  - How can you effectively interrupt bias?
  - How can you steer conversation back to appropriate assessment?

- Possible actions you could take
  - Ask the committee to pause ("I need to take a break"). Then ask a general question about the issue ("Help me understand …" or "Is it appropriate for us to discuss ….." or "What do you mean by …")
  - Direct conversation back to the rubric criteria
  - Articulate your discomfort ("I'm feeling uncomfortable with the direction this discussion is going.")
  - Direct conversation back to the structured process

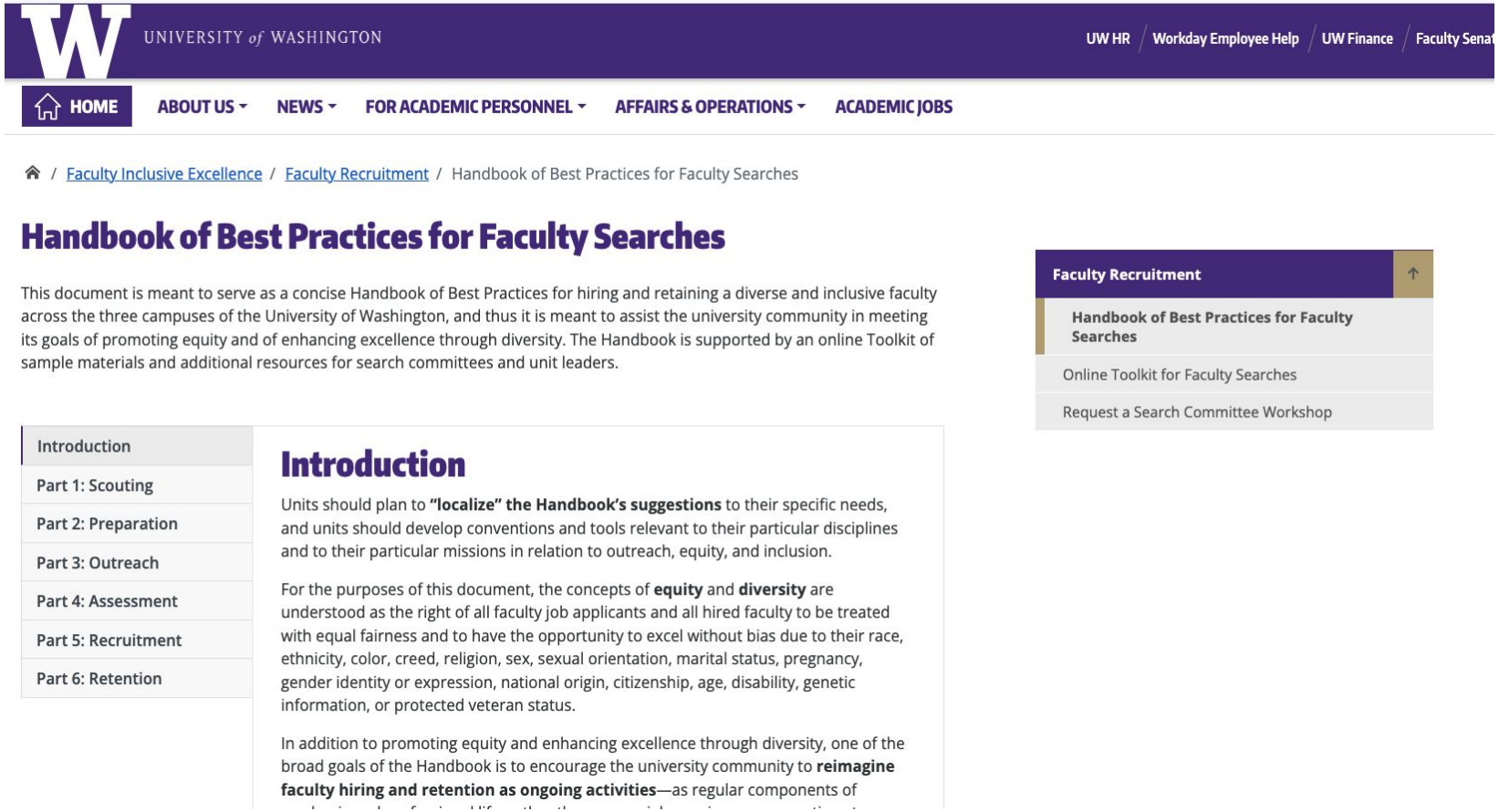


Records Management:

https://finance.uw.edu/recmgt/resources/records-related-faculty-searches

Updated Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches

https://ap.washington.edu/faculty-inclusive-excellence/faculty-recruitment/handbook-of-best-practices-for-faculty-searches/



Questions?

Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- Become familiar with EO 81 and HR Checklist
- Focus on planning and prevention
- Clarify evaluation criteria – and shared understanding
- Develop committee processes – and shared understanding
- Have a plan for how to address potential issues

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