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achieving diversity goals



Since about 1980, one of the most commonly repeated themes during the faculty interview process is the need to make sure that a finalist pool is sufficiently diverse. At times, this emphasis on diversity assumes a level of importance that nearly equals the attention given to the credentials and experience of the applicants. To be sure, higher education's intense focus on diversity sometimes seems unusual to people who work outside of academia. "Sure, we all want to follow policies that aren't discriminatory when we build a workforce," someone might say, "but diversity almost seems like an obsession to college professors today. Why can't you just decide to hire the best applicant regardless of race, gender, country of origin, or any other factor that's irrelevant to the requirements of the job?" But hiring the best applicant is precisely what higher education's diversity goals are all about. So, as an initial step in increasing the diversity of an applicant pool, let's begin by reminding ourselves why this goal is important to us in the first place.

The first reason why a diverse faculty (as well as a diverse staff, administration, and student body) is important at colleges and universities is to *correct past injustices*. For many years in American higher education, the vast majority of the professoriate consisted of White males of European ancestry. People who didn't fit that profile were discouraged—sometimes blatantly, sometimes subtly—from pursuing

an academic career. Moreover, for most of their history, a significant number of institutions enrolled only a single gender, with the result that men's colleges and universities had an almost exclusively male faculty, and even most women's colleges and universities had a faculty that consisted mostly of men. The existence of historically Black colleges and universities meant that some schools only admitted White students, whereas Black students were often encouraged to attend the historically Black institutions, even when all universities were technically open to them. The result was that most institutions had a faculty that was almost exclusively White, and historically Black institutions had a faculty that was almost exclusively Black. Following the ruling of the US Supreme Court in 1954 in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, it was increasingly recognized by professional educators that the doctrine of "separate but equal" wasn't working at *any* level of education. Most universities became more integrated racially throughout the 1960s, and then, in the early 1970s, a large number of men's colleges began admitting women.

Those historical injustices may seem like ancient history now, but they've had a lasting effect. In 2014, 77.4% of the US population was White, 13.2% was Black, 17.4% regarded themselves as Hispanic or Latino, and 50.8% were women (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). As the National Center for Education Statistics has reported,

In fall 2013, of all full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, 79 percent were White (43 percent were White males and 35 percent were White females), 6 percent were Black, 5 percent were Hispanic, and 10 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander. . . . The percentage of all faculty who were female increased from 39 percent in 1993 to 49 percent in 2013. (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.)

So, although there's been progress in promoting the representation of women on the faculty, the percentage of Blacks and Hispanics still lags significantly behind their representation in the population overall. These matters are of concern at colleges and universities because institutions of higher education view themselves as sources of opportunity

and positive social change. If even the people who are most vocal about providing fair representation in employment are not achieving their own goals, what hope can there be for the rest of society to do so? As a result, members of search committees often feel that they're under a moral obligation to make the faculty more diverse than it already is.

The second reason for considering matters of diversity when building faculty positions and conducting searches is that it *adds significant pedagogical value* to a program. The world in which graduates of our institutions will live and work is highly diverse. They must feel comfortable working alongside people who look at the world very differently from how they themselves view matters, come from very different social and economic backgrounds, and want very different things from their lives. Students become more adept at negotiating their way through a diverse world by being exposed to a diverse educational environment from prekindergarten through graduate school. Moreover, a diverse faculty is likely to challenge students' thinking in ways that a more homogeneous faculty won't. By reflecting on their basic assumptions about how projects that benefit humanity are selected for funding, how to find balance and meaning in their own lives, and how best to provide for their families without promoting inequity for other people's families, students gain in critical thinking skills, learn to defend their values more effectively, and understand when it becomes necessary and acceptable simply to agree to disagree with others.

Because providing a diverse intellectual and social environment for students is so important in higher education, is it also important to add positions and conduct searches in such a way as to attain a faculty that's diverse in terms of its political views? Certainly, the criticism is often made that the US professoriate is far more liberal than society at large. Books such as Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals* (2008) and Ben Shapiro's *Brainwashed* (2004), along with films such as Evan Coyne Maloney's *Indoctrinate U* (Maloney, E. C., & On the Fence Films, 2004), argue that liberal elites at colleges and universities perpetuate themselves by teaching students to think exactly like them and only hiring other professors who share their beliefs. Isn't it hypocritical of the

academy, therefore, to claim that it's committed to diversity when it comes to race and gender but not when it comes to ideology, the very area that an institution supposedly devoted to advanced learning should care most about? Shouldn't we be pursuing political diversity as well?

Certainly, search committees should be cognizant of these issues as they design their positions and plan their searches. But it's also important to understand the context in which certain claims and counterclaims are being made. A number of surveys do suggest that the US professoriate is more liberal than the public at large (see, for example, Hurtado, Eagan, Pryor, Whang, & Tran, 2012; Jaschik, 2012; and Kurtz, 2005). But there are several important factors that skew these data:

- The population that chooses to attend a college or university identifies itself as more liberal than the population that chooses other paths in life (see Jennings & Stoker, 2008). Because a college faculty is, by necessity, a subset of those who attended a college or university, it is all but inevitable that college professors will be more liberal than the population at large.
- Because college professors belong to a public service segment of the economy in which salaries are traditionally lower than in the corporate world, more liberals (who value advancing the good of society over personal gain) than conservatives (who value personal freedom and success over social welfare projects) tend to be attracted to academic life.
- Neil Gross (2013) argues in *Why Are Professors Liberal and Why Do Conservatives Care?* that American conservatism in the post-William Buckley age has frequently defined itself in terms of its opposition to liberal intellectual elites. As such, we shouldn't expect many neo-conservatives to be seeking employment in the academy because that would be tantamount to joining forces with "the enemy."

Moreover, despite the fact that professors tend to be more liberal than the population at large, if their goal is to indoctrinate the youth, they've proven themselves to be singularly bad at it. In study performed

by Mack Mariani of Xavier University and Gordon J. Hewitt of Hamilton College (2008), it was discovered that the shift toward liberalism that occurs among traditional-aged college students is no greater than that which occurs in general among the population aged 18 to 24. Does all this information mean that search committees can be blithely indifferent to the question of ideological diversity on the faculty? Absolutely not. Students should—and, I would argue, *do*—receive exposure to a full range of political perspectives during their college careers. But it's just as unreasonable to expect that the percentage of conservatives on a college faculty will reflect that of the general population as it is to expect that the percentage of creationists in a biology department will reflect that of the general population. There may be a larger pool of conservative humanists than there are creationist biologists, but the same factors we previously outlined make that pool fairly small in any case. Our goal, therefore, should be to avoid *excluding* a qualified candidate from our finalist pool simply because he or she differs from us in political ideology rather than to try to construct some sort of affirmative action program for conservatives (who would probably be philosophically opposed to that idea anyway).

The third reason why diversity needs to be considered in matters of faculty recruitment is that it *provides students with a broader range of role models*. No one would deny that all good college professors want to serve as positive role models for all their students and that many students have role models who differ from them in race, ethnicity, gender, and other ways. In fact, one strength of a highly diverse educational environment is that students *do* begin to see people who are very different from them as mentors and examples to emulate. Nevertheless, it does send an unintended message that a certain field or profession doesn't really welcome people of certain backgrounds if students never see a member of their own race, ethnicity, or gender working in those positions. For this reason, colleges and universities often make diversity one of their goals in faculty searches as a way of encouraging the broadest possible range of students to consider various options for careers, fields of study, and ways of life.

- affirmative action and equal opportunity

One of the most common misunderstandings in faculty searches is how the concepts of affirmative action and equal opportunity relate to an institution's diversity goals. The first area of misunderstanding arises from the assumption that affirmative action and equal opportunity are the same thing. They're not. Providing equal opportunity relates to what institutions *shouldn't be doing* in its searches; affirmative action relates to what they *should be doing*. In other words, although equal opportunity offers *passive protection* ("We consider everyone equally, no matter who they are."), affirmative action strives for *active inclusion* ("We take steps to make sure our applicant pools are suitably diverse."). Providing equal opportunity means that applicants for a position won't be discriminated against because of factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and the like. Participating in affirmative action means that an institution is making a conscious and systematic effort to undo the lingering effects of past discrimination, ensure that all applicants have an equal opportunity to be considered for a position, and base its hiring decisions only on valid, job-related criteria.

Affirmative action is thus a more highly structured process than simply offering equal opportunity to all candidates for employment consideration. In the United States, affirmative action began as a series of executive orders under presidents Kennedy and Johnson that required government agencies and other entities holding federal contracts to be systematic in giving due consideration for employment to members of various groups who had previously faced discrimination. The groups included in affirmative action policies evolved over time, eventually addressing issues of race, gender, creed, color, and national origin. Different laws protect other groups that are not explicitly addressed under federal affirmative action laws, such as veterans, people with physical challenges, and those over 40 years of age. Some of these laws similarly require employers who accept federal contracts—at times, the laws specify that this regulation applies only when the federal contracts are of a certain minimum size and when the hiring institution has a certain minimum number of employees—to engage in systematic efforts to hire

people from these additional protected groups. As public institutions, colleges and universities are generally viewed as venues where affirmative action must be applied. But technically speaking, unless an institution accepts federal contracts, it's not *required* to engage in affirmative action, even though it may choose to do so for other reasons. For this reason, the notion that all institutions of higher education are required to have affirmative action plans in place constitutes the second major misunderstanding about affirmative action and equal opportunity.

The third misunderstanding occurs when people believe that the expression *protected class* means something it doesn't. In higher education, this expression can be used in three (not always synonymous) ways. First, there are *federal protected classes*. These are the groups who are protected from discrimination by laws that apply everywhere in the United States. By chronological order in which these laws were enacted, it is against federal law in the United States to discriminate against anyone for the following reasons:

- Race
- Skin color
- Religion
- National origin
- Sex
- Pregnancy status
- Family status
- Disability status

In addition, for employment purposes, it is illegal to discriminate against people because they belong to one of the following groups:

- Veterans
- People over the age of 40
- Citizens of other countries, provided that they are legally eligible to work in the United States
- Predisposed to any illness or health condition because of genetic factors

The second category of protected classes consists of *state-designated protected classes*. For example, in the state of Maryland, protected class status is extended to matters of sexual orientation and gender identity (State of Maryland Commission on Civil Rights, n.d.). In California, this classification includes matters of an applicant's AIDS/HIV status, political activities or affiliations, and status as a victim of domestic violence, assault, or stalking. Because states vary somewhat in the groups included in their categories of protected classes, it's a good practice for search committees—particularly if they include members who have relocated from other states—to become familiar with all state statutes on discrimination that apply to a search.

The third category of protected classes are those mentioned in an *institution's nondiscrimination statement*. It's not usual for colleges and universities to provide protection that extends far beyond what state and federal laws require. For example, they may provide protection not merely on the basis of gender identity (which could be a matter of state law) but also gender expression, transition status from one gender to another, transgender status, and gender nonconformity. Complicating this entire issue is that private institutions may be exempt from certain of these policies if an issue relates directly to their mission and identity. In this way, an evangelical Christian college could give priority to or even require applicants to be evangelical Christians. A women's college might give preference to applicants for faculty, staff, and administrative positions if the applicants are women. So, even though people in searches will often speak of the need to take "protected classes" into account when the search is being conducted, they may not be aware of which classes are truly protected in that search. Particularly in the case of institution-specific versus federal- or state-mandated protected classes in employment, the problems that can be caused by failing to follow a requirement could vary considerably. After all, it's one thing to receive a stern reprimand from the institution's president and another thing entirely to discover that you may be liable to stiff fines and imprisonment.

- the problem with unnecessary specialization

Given that colleges and universities are required to avoid discrimination in hiring and usually are quite eager to diversify their faculty, what are some effective ways of achieving these goals? Some institutions think it's enough to include in their advertisements a line such as "Women and minorities encouraged to apply." or "An affirmative action/equal employment opportunity institution." Although better than nothing, those efforts are unlikely to get the schools very far in their efforts to diversify their applicant pools. Successful diversity efforts begin with the design of the position itself, not the phrasing of the advertisement. Here are a few factors to make sure that your chair and dean are aware of as they approve how faculty vacancies are defined:

- Although for the purposes of accreditation and the preservation of academic quality it's important for faculty members to be properly credentialed, academic positions are sometimes developed in such a way that their required qualifications restrict them unnecessarily. For example, many advertisements describe a position as requiring a PhD when other kinds of doctorates (such as a DA, PsyD, or EdD) or other terminal degrees (such as an MFA or MLS) would also be appropriate credentials for someone in that discipline. Although some institutions will be flexible enough to let a search committee hire a candidate with an EdD when a PhD was cited as a requirement in search advertisements, others won't. Moreover, a highly desirable candidate with a different type of terminal degree may not even apply for the position when he or she sees the words *PhD required* in the advertisement. Because developing a diverse applicant pool is easier when you put fewer unnecessary hurdles in a candidate's way, list as requirements only what would be *absolutely essential* in order to perform the duties of the position. Using the standards set by your accrediting body or including the words "terminal degree in a field closely related to the discipline" is often preferable to limiting your applicants to only those who have earned PhDs.

- Consider how narrowly the academic field of the candidate truly has to be in order to achieve your area's goals for this position. Suppose that Overly Specialized State University created a position for an economist who specialized in medieval and Renaissance Flemish prenuptial agreements. Would that program truly not be interested in an economist who brought the area greater diversity but who didn't specialize in Renaissance and early modern Flemish prenuptial agreements? Sometimes certain restrictions are necessary: The program absolutely could not teach its curriculum or meet its research obligations unless it hires a faculty member with a very specific set of credentials. But in most cases, the narrow focus of a position stems from the preferences of people in the program, not genuine needs or curricular requirements. Just as it's easier to broaden the diversity of a candidate pool if we broaden the type of academic credentials we seek in a search, so is it easier to expand the pool if we expand a position's academic focus as much as possible while still meeting the program's legitimate needs.
- At other times, we can create diversity in our programs by creating positions in specialties that traditionally have attracted a diverse group of graduate students. Although it's wrong to assume that women are interested in a field only if it's approached from a women's studies perspective or that African Americans are interested in a field only if it's approached from an African American studies perspective, the fact is that the majority of graduate students in most women's studies programs are women and the majority of graduate students in most African American studies programs are Black. So, if it makes sense to do so in your discipline, you can increase the likelihood of attracting a diverse applicant pool by designing positions to include specialties that traditionally attract a diverse group of graduate students.

- support from institutional leadership

Another major factor that can affect the success of a diversity plan is the extent of support the plan receives from the institution's administration. If the president and provost seem indifferent to the notion that faculty

diversity is important—or even if they only give these issues lip service unaccompanied by any concrete action—department chairs and members of search committees are unlikely to regard this topic as a high priority. It can be very useful, therefore, for the school's administration to discuss the contribution that diversity makes to the institution, not merely occasionally (such as when charging a search committee) but repeatedly, whenever there is occasion to talk about the institution's future direction. The concrete actions that the administration can take in advancing the school's diversity goals include the following:

- Funding travel by the search chair or members of the committee to conferences in the discipline that are known to attract diverse audiences. Posting job notices, prescreening possible candidates, and talking about the position with conference attendees can all result in a far more diverse pool than otherwise might be obtained.
- Providing support to successful applicants who add significantly to the institution's diversity. This type of support could take many different forms. For instance, a college or university may be seeking a candidate with a terminal degree but find an otherwise highly qualified candidate from a minority group or protected class who has not yet completed his or her dissertation. The upper administration could authorize the hiring of the candidate, with a research budget but highly reduced workload, until the candidate's terminal degree is granted. The promotion and tenure clock might be stopped temporarily to enable the candidate time to complete his or her dissertation. And assistance might be provided to find employment for a spouse or life partner so as to make the candidate's relocation easier.
- If the faculty member who is hired will be joining a very small community of others who share his or her gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and the like, administrators can be proactive in establishing support groups and contacts within the community who can help the newcomer feel more at home at the institution and less isolated by his or her minority status.

Administrators also make a contribution toward an institution's diversity goals when they help enact policies that require search committees to pay attention to issues of diversity. The most common way of enforcing this requirement is to mandate that all lists of semifinalists and finalists be approved before phone interviews are conducted or invitations to campus interviews are issued. The role of the administration in diversifying the faculty thus has critical symbolic and practical elements throughout the search process. Administrators serve as the face of the institution to internal and external stakeholders, actively shape the policies and procedures that the institution uses to conduct its business, and interpret federal and state requirements to all the institution's stakeholders. As a result, it's all but impossible for a school to achieve its goals of faculty diversity if the administration isn't fully engaged in and committed to the importance of that goal.

- composition of the search committee

Another important strategy for attaining your institution's leadership goals can best be achieved by balancing the composition of the search committee. In many cases, when people first learn about this strategy, they think, "The goal here must be to make sure that every search committee includes representation from minority groups and protected classes." Certainly, including this type of representation brings a number of benefits. It increases the likelihood that highly qualified candidates from minority groups or protected classes won't inadvertently be overlooked, sends a message to the candidates being interviewed that the institution values diversity, and provides minority candidates someone to speak with on the committee who is likely to understand their issues and concerns. But there's also a downside to this approach: Because minority faculty members are, by definition, fewer in number than those in the majority, the same faculty members end up serving on committee after committee, sometimes to the detriment of their teaching and research. Black and Latino faculty members (as well as women in fields where they are traditionally underrepresented) often feel that

their service load is exceptionally high, with every committee, task force, and council at the institution needing a minority representative. There is even a term for this type of over-assignment of minorities to committees for the purposes of representation and diversity: *cultural taxation* (see June, 2015). And it's a phenomenon that most members of minority groups on college faculties experience regularly.

How then can you structure the composition of the search committee in such a way that it increases the likelihood of receiving applications from a large enough pool of highly qualified minority candidates without becoming a burden on the minority faculty members already at the institution? One solution that many schools have found useful is to appoint at least one member of each search committee to serve as the group's *diversity advocate*, regardless of whether he or she is a member of any minority group or protected class. For example, the search procedures of George Washington University (GWU) state that every member of the search committee is responsible for helping the institution reach its goals for diversity, but the specially designated diversity advocate on each search committee has special responsibilities with regard to this role. At GWU, the diversity advocate is expected to do the following:

- Be a vocal and responsible advocate for diversity and inclusion keeping in mind the goals and principles of diversity [that the institution has developed].
- Actively monitor each stage of the search process to ensure an equitable and open search that is consistent with the goals established at the outset of the process.
- Facilitate thoughtful exchanges about how diversity can help the department close the gap between the current state and aspirations (e.g., attract a broader mix of majors or graduate students, mentor diverse students, offer different curricular or research opportunities, attract funding, and so forth).
- Lead discussions related to strategies for developing a diverse pool that could lead to attracting and hiring women, persons of color, persons with disabilities, and veterans. Keep the issues at

the center of every strategic conversation and each phase of the decision-making process.

- Assist the committee in self-scrutiny about potential biases towards, for example, identity group or academic affiliations. Encourage search committee members to think about how innate schemas may lead to unconscious and unintended bias in how members relate to individuals/events/information throughout the evaluation and selection process. (The George Washington University, n.d.)

Similarly, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign defines a diversity advocate as the following:

an individual designated on the search form by the department executive officer [at the] time the search is initiated. The individual should be committed to being an advocate for diversity as a core component of diversity in the search process. For tenure and tenure-track faculty searches, the Diversity Advocate must be a tenured faculty member. For academic professional positions, the Diversity Advocate must be a member of the search committee. (Office of Diversity, Equity, and Access, 2015)

As this description makes clear, it's more important for a diversity advocate to be *committed* to the issue of diversifying the faculty than to *be a member of* any protected class or minority group. This diversity advocate provides regular reminders of the importance of diversity at the institution, the availability of highly qualified minority candidates, and the need for the committee to avoid becoming so focused on academic credentials that it fails to see the full range of contributions that each applicant could bring to the position.

- phrasing of the advertisement

The way in which notices about jobs are phrased can also affect the diversity of the applicant pool. As we saw previously, it's not uncommon

to encounter advertisements stating “Women and minorities are welcome to apply.” or even “An affirmative action/equal employment opportunity employer.” But phrases like these have very little value (see Buller, 2015, p. 94). They may, in fact, be counterproductive by conveying the impression that the institution is doing the bare minimum to meet legal requirements about diversity. To potential applicants, stock formulae don’t feel particularly inviting. To the contrary, they come across as cold and legalistic. Far more useful would be a statement that explains *why* the institution is committed to diversity or that *invites* the applicant to discuss a commitment to diversity in his or her application.

The Office for Faculty Equity & Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley outlines a number of ways in which advertisements for faculty positions can better address the institution’s interest in diversifying its faculty. Among the statements it recommends are the following:

- The school/department seeks candidates whose research, teaching, or service has prepared them to contribute to our commitment to diversity and inclusion in higher education.
- The school/department is interested in candidates who have engaged in service towards increasing the participation of individuals from groups historically under-represented in higher education.
- The school/department is interested in candidates who have an understanding of the barriers facing women and people of color in higher education.
- The school/department is interested in candidates who will bring to their research the perspective that comes from a non-traditional educational background or understanding of the experiences of those under-represented in higher education. (Adapted from Office for Faculty Equity & Welfare, n.d.)

The *Guide to Best Practices in Faculty Search and Hiring* developed by the provost’s office at Columbia University also provides excellent

models for how diversity statements in advertisements can be written so as to be more effective than the formulas commonly used by other schools.

- Columbia University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. The University is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse and pluralistic faculty and staff committed to teaching and working in a diverse environment, and strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, individuals with disabilities and veterans.
- Columbia University is an equal opportunity institution. Because the University is committed to building a broadly diverse educational environment, applicants may include in their cover letter information about how they will further this objective.
- Applicants are encouraged to describe in their letter of intent how their scholarship contributes to building and supporting diverse communities. (Columbia University Office of the Provost, n.d., p. 16)

Moreover, Columbia recommends combining these statements about diversity with others that provide candidates with a better understanding of the institution's culture and commitment to work-life balance.

- The department welcomes applications from individuals who may have had nontraditional career paths, or who may have taken time off for family reasons (e.g., children, caring for disabled or elderly family), or who have achieved excellence in careers outside of academia (e.g., in professional or industry service).
- Columbia is responsive to the needs of dual career couples. (Columbia University Office of the Provost, n.d., p. 14)

Job announcements often provide the first impression that a candidate has of an institution, so it's important when setting ambitious goals for diversity to phrase advertisements in a way that advances, not hinders, progress toward that goal.

- targeted efforts

As important as are all the efforts we've discussed so far, most of them remain passive in nature. They are based on the assumption that, if you take certain steps, the right candidates will find you. But achieving an institution's diversity goals also often requires active interventions, steps that can help put you in contact with highly qualified candidates from protected classes. Among the most effective practices in targeting a diverse pool of applicants are the following:

- *Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs)*. Even though the origins of Black colleges and universities are often associated with systematic discrimination at US institutions of higher education, many minority students still find these schools to be welcoming and highly supportive learning environments. As a result, universities such as Howard, Hampton, Florida A&M, and others graduate a significant number of minority students each year from their PhD programs. By building a constructive relationship with one or more of these institutions, you'll learn about students who will soon receive their terminal degrees, and you may thus have an opportunity to let them know about current employment possibilities. You can follow a similar strategy with respect to women's colleges for fields that have been traditionally dominated by men. Most women's colleges do not, however, grant terminal degrees (except, at times, the MFA), although a number of them do offer master's programs and, depending on the position you have available, could still be a good source of potential applicants.
- *Other institutions with highly diverse student populations*. Because of the importance of diversity in higher education, many colleges and universities have made efforts to attract a highly diverse student body. As a result, graduates of those institutions are familiar with working in a multicultural educational environment and more likely than graduates at many other schools to come from under-represented groups themselves. *U.S. News & World Report* maintains

annual lists of highly diverse colleges and universities—broken down by the schools' focus as a national university, regional university, liberal arts college, or regional college—that are producing the sort of potential faculty members you may want to interview for available positions (see *U.S. News & World Report*, 2016). Similar to HBCUs, these highly diverse institutions could become valuable partners with colleges and universities that are trying to diversify their faculties by providing advance notice of available jobs to current graduate students.

- *Minority caucuses in professional organizations.* Certain professional organizations either exist primarily for members of minority groups or have committees or caucuses within them that address issues of concern to women and minorities. The Office of Human Resources at the University of Chicago has developed a comprehensive website of these groups (see University of Chicago Human Resources, n.d.). The organizations and caucuses included on the list are eager to provide information about employment opportunities to their members, and so including them when distributing notices of faculty vacancies can help you reach new and experienced academic professionals.
- *Conferences designed for protected classes.* There are also annual institutes, conferences, and workshops for minority students and faculty members that can help provide the search committee with useful contacts. These events include meetings of the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (www.blacksinhighered.org), the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (www.aahhe.org), the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (www.abrcms.org), and similar meetings. These conferences put search committees into contact with a broad network of qualified faculty members, and some of them even offer job-posting boards and opportunities to interview or prescreen potential candidates.
- *Targeted publications and websites.* Certain sources of information about faculty vacancies are designed for use by minorities and women.

Search committees need to exert a certain degree of caution because unscrupulous publishers have been known to develop journals and newsletters that claim to be intended primarily for women and minorities in higher education, charge high prices for advertisements, and have a very low circulation rate. In general, it's best to rely on publications and websites that have a well-established track record, such as *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* (diverseeducation.com), *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (www.jbhe.com), *Latinos in Higher Education* (www.latinosinhighered.com), and *Women in Higher Education* (wihe.com).

- *Programs at other institutions.* It's generally considered to be poor practice to raid other departments of their minority or female faculty members. Nevertheless, there are occasions when you might learn of a faculty member at another institution who is being underused or placed in a position that doesn't take full advantage of his or her capabilities. In these cases, it's not inappropriate to make sure that that person at least knows about any positions you have available. Whether or not he or she applies, of course, is entirely that person's choice.
 - *Your own undergraduate students.* Finally, even though it's a long-term strategy, institutions might think about encouraging their own female and minority graduate students to pursue a career in higher education. By providing fellowships to qualified candidates—perhaps with the expectation that the recipient would then serve on the faculty for a certain period of time—colleges and universities can help diversify their own faculty by transforming the talented undergraduates of today into the professors of tomorrow.
- the positive and negative aspects of fit

At several points throughout this book, I address the importance of identifying a candidate who has the right fit for your program and institution. But when it comes to faculty searches, people sometimes use the word *fit* in two very different ways. The first way, which is how I'll be using this word whenever it appears, has to do with finding someone

who matches what a program *needs*. That need could be a matter of the person's academic discipline, but it could also relate to other highly desirable qualities, areas of experience, and points of view that the candidate can contribute so as to make the program and institution better. The second way of using the word *fit*, which often proves to make it just a euphemism for discrimination, is to regard *fit* as implying "people like us." That's not the kind of fit I ever mean in this book. In fact, candidates who have the right fit in the first sense of the word—bringing to the program a number of important contributions that it needs—often run counter to the second sense of the word. Many times, what our programs and institutions need are people who are decidedly *not* like us, because we can benefit from introducing faculty members whose background, experiences, and pedagogical approach can better address the requirements of an ever-evolving body of students.

It's useful, therefore, for members of a search committee to have a serious conversation about what they as a group mean by the word *fit* at the very beginning of the process. This practice helps prevent institutions from eliminating candidates for reasons such as "she or he just won't fit in here" or "I just don't see him or her as a good fit with the close-knit group we've developed in our department." When people make these remarks, they almost always do so with the best intentions. But, if the assumptions behind them go unchallenged, the pursuit of the wrong kind of fit can undo all your other efforts to achieve diversity for your program.

- putting it all together

As one way of seeing where you stand with regard to faculty diversity, we're going to end this chapter with an exercise that involves the following groups:

- The faculty in each major specialty area within your department or program (such as Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic within a department of foreign languages or North American, South American, European, African, and Asian history within a department of history)
- The faculty of the department or program as a whole

- The faculty of the college or division
- The students at the institution
- The faculty, staff, and administration of the institution
- The general population of the city or region in which the institution is located

Once you've identified these groups, take an inventory of each of them, to the best of your ability, in terms of their breakdown in terms of which are defined as protected classes according to your institution's nondiscrimination statement, your state laws, and federal laws. As you examine this distribution, where are the outliers, the groups in which the distribution of protected classes is noticeably different from the others? For example, you may find that the gender balance of the student body is significantly different from that of the faculty in the department, or that the general population of the city is far more racially diverse than the faculty in one of your department's academic specialties. Having this information can serve as an important first step in guiding you toward where you may need to focus your efforts at diversifying the faculty when you define positions and conduct searches.

