

# Creating a More Inclusive Search Process for Recruiting and Hiring Faculty

Session 2

# Pre-workshop readings/handouts

- Implicit Associations Test – Harvard University’s Project Implicit and related materials: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/iatdetails.html>

## Some quotes to set the stage...

Insanity is doing the **same thing** over and over again but expecting **different results**.

~ Rita Mae Brown (or Alcoholics Anonymous, or Ben Franklin....)

Even the most well-intentioned person unwillingly allows **unconscious thoughts** & feelings to **influence** apparently **objective decisions**.

~ M. Banaji

# Goals and format

## Goals for next two sessions

- Focus on infusing awareness of diversity throughout search process
- Identify impact of unconscious biases and cognitive errors on variety of aspects from reviewing materials to the conclusion of the hiring process
- Identify best practices and options for enhancing search process

## Format

- Providing information
- Looking for active, engaged discussion as a result of interactive exercises and information they will have reviewed before this session
- Including opportunities to share experiences and skills they bring to the table

This is not about “fixing” individuals, but about enhancing our process.

Essential question: How do we make the search process a more effective one for all, and an inclusive one for underrepresented, non-majority groups?

# Strengths of UC for diverse and underrepresented groups

- What do you see as “selling points” about Utica College for incoming candidates?
- Examples of what we saw and heard from others as strengths:
  - Small school size
  - Diversity of the student body
  - Opportunity for involvement in variety of ways on campus
  - Opportunities for community connections and involvement
  - Mix of faculty and staff with long term commitment to the college and newly arrived members of the community
  - Focus on teaching
  - Location relative to major cities and outdoor activities
  - Diversity of community - MVCFR, MWPAI, diverse college communities...

# Barriers

- Reality is that barriers to attracting, hiring and retaining candidates who are female, people of color, or other groups that are not in the majority (members of the LGBTQ community, individuals with disabilities, etc.) exist, as they do in other educational institutions, the corporate world, and other areas.
- What, from your background and experience, can you see as potential barriers for these applicants at UC?

# Some of the feedback we've received

## General concerns

- Teaching load
- Availability of professional development opportunities
- Potential isolation - looking for peer groups
- If relocating, career opportunities for significant other
- Perceptions of community in terms of activity in the area, diversity of communities, existence of more subtle forms of bias related to race-ethnicity, LGBTQ identification, etc.

## Specific concerns we've heard from those leaving the College

- Some of the application language can sound like 'code' to members of the LGBTQ community - does family friendly mean all families, for example, or is this part of a 'family values' approach?"
- "I experienced a lot of racism on this campus....mostly from fellow faculty"
- "The lack of women of color in staff, faculty and administrative positions made my work life difficult"
- "Faculty were friendly, but that does not mitigate the issues of racism and sexual harassment on this campus"
- "Faculty and administrators were constantly making verbal remarks that should not be tolerated in a work environment--sexist, racist, closed-minded remarks. It's absolutely unacceptable, and yet widely tolerated at Utica College."
- "The first step is admitting you have a problem. I left because problems were so easily dismissed and ignored."

# Myths About Intentional Processes for Hiring a More Diverse Faculty

While an intentional process to hire and retain a more diverse body of faculty members isn't easy, there are assumptions that often get in the way of putting in place, or following through on, such a process. Even if not explicitly articulated, those "myths" may include:

- We cannot compete for candidates who are highly sought after by the corporate sector.
- Faculty of color do not want to come to a particular campus or a region of the country because it is not diverse or not urban enough.
- Minority faculty will ultimately leave for a more desirable position as soon as they make tenure (or are offered more money, or have the opportunity to work at an HBCU....).



# Additional assumptions may include....

- A strategic effort to recruit more faculty of color perpetuates "reverse discrimination," undermining efforts to hire the best candidate for the job.
- We are focused on quality as our criterion for hiring. Adding diversity means compromising quality.
- Relatively few qualified women or minority candidates are available, and these are highly sought-after, so we are unlikely to be able to recruit them.
- The problem will solve itself as more women and minorities move through the pipeline and the “old guard” retires. (Corollary: We really don’t have to do anything new or different now.)

# Research on the topic.....

Impact of unconscious/implicit bias and common social assumptions and expectations include:

- Perceptions of height and athletic ability based on gender and race
- Perceived competency for positions based on gender and race
- Rating of verbal skills influenced by race
- Selection for interviews affected by perceived race/ethnicity based on last name
- Assumption of leadership ability based on gender
- Difference in recommendation letters, evaluations of CV's, and funding for grants based on gender and race/ethnicity

Reference: Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions

Back to the essential question of how do we....

a) provide the best possible experience for candidates, and

b) ensure a high quality search that is also inclusive and welcoming for women and members of underrepresented groups (members of non-majority racial/ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, etc.)?

# Discussion Question

Think back to an interview process that was particularly memorable for you (whether or not you were offered/took the position).

- What made it memorable?
- What was particularly terrific or awful about the experience?
- How much had to do with individual interactions and how much was because of the process itself (i.e. the schedule, what you needed to provide, communication between you and the institution, etc.)?

# “The Scholarship” exercise

What is at play when we make choices about individuals their suitability for being recognized in some way?

Using an exercise outside of the interviewing/candidate selection process

- Forced choice
- Candidates with varied backgrounds
- Summary of information for 7 students, need to narrow down to 3 to interview for scholarship

# “The Scholarship”

- What conclusion did you come to?
- What process did you use to choose the candidates?
- What happened in the group discussion – what was the decision making/communication process like?
- What other observations do you have?

**10 Minute Break!**

# Sometimes the smallest things make a difference.....

- Implicit associations/unconscious bias
- Cognitive errors and dysfunctional practices
- Microaggressions, microaffirmations, and microtriggers
- Impact on search process
  - Screening/review of materials
  - Initial interviews (telephone/Skype)
  - Campus visit
  - Evaluation of candidate
  - Making the offer



# Unconscious/unexamined bias and implicit associations

- Definition(s)
- Discussion of IAT and related research
- What was your experience when you took the IAT?
- Examples of how unconscious bias/implicit associations can operate even with those who do this work on a regular basis
- When have they seen this have an impact, here or elsewhere?

# Examples of Micro-Aggressions & Alternatives

## Micro-aggressions

- Interruptions
- Translations
- Misidentifications
- Exclusion
- Marginalization

## Micro-support

- Provide our full attention
- Acknowledge each other's contributions
- Recognize strengths
- Respectfully ask questions for clarification
- Hold each other accountable when we see micro-aggressions
- Break the silence

# Microtriggers and Microaffirmations

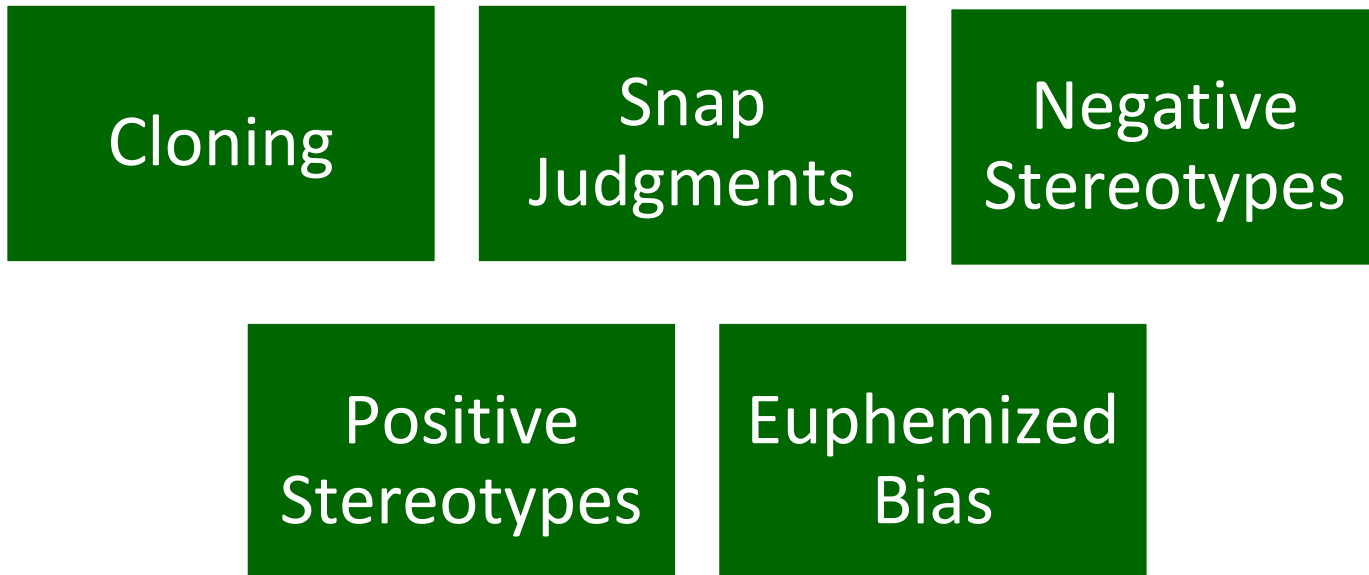
- Definitions and example of Micro-triggers
  - Definition
  - Their examples?
  - If interested in longer discussion, see excerpt from Microtriggers vimeo:  
<https://vimeo.com/105523088>
- Where might you see this happen in the search process?
- Alternative behavior
  - Microaffirmations (opening doors to opportunity, providing support)
  - Used consistently and not in a way that reinforces unconscious bias based on affinity with particular candidates

# Cognitive errors

- Individual/group process errors - Jo Ann Moody's work and research
- Which of these resonate most with you? Why?

# Short Cuts

- Impose “taxes” on underrepresented groups
- Bestow advantages on dominant group members



# Short Cuts - Examples

## Cloning

Similar attributes/  
background

## Positive Stereotypes

Presumptions of  
competence

## Snap Judgments

Judgments with  
insufficient  
evidence

## Negative Stereotypes

Presumptions of  
incompetence

## Euphemized Bias

- Visionary
- Star
- Committed
- Focused

# System issues supporting cognitive errors

- Overloading and Rushing
- No Ground Rules
- Absence of Reminders and Monitoring
- No Accountability
- Lack of Debriefing and Systematic Improvements

## Interrupting Bias in Faculty Searches

What might this look like in practice?

<https://vimeo.com/76718065>



# How do we minimize cognitive errors and remedy dysfunctional practices?

- Utilize parts of the process intended to minimize bias and maximize inclusive hiring practices – for example, composition of the committee, decision-making structure, use of the diversity advocate and community liaison
- Keep information about cognitive errors and implicit associations in mind as you move through the search process from start to finish
- Utilize best practices and tools provided throughout the process (more in session 3). At this point in the search process, focusing on reviewing materials, identifying candidates and organization process for initial telephone/Skype interviews.
- Chronicle of Higher Education article from September 2016

# Tools available for your use and assistance at this point

- Faculty Applicant Screening Tools:  
Screening Checklist  
Screening Matrix
- Sample Ad Text for Faculty Positions
- Diversity Advocate Guide

All available at the following link: <http://www.utica.edu/hr/search/>

# Resources consulted

- Board members CiCi Holloway and Solade Rowe
- Gretchel Hathaway, Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, Union College
- JoAnn Moody's materials, esp. Rising Above Cognitive Errors: Improving Searches, Evaluations, and Decision-Making (2010)
- Interrupting Bias in Faculty Searches (UW ADVANCE film and materials):  
<http://www.engr.washington.edu/lead/biasfilm/index.html>
- CDO Insights - Diversity Best Practices:  
<http://www.cookross.com/docs/UnconsciousBias.pdf>

# Take aways

- “How to Do a Better Job of Searching for Diversity” from The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 16, 2016
- Major Points In Rising Above Cognitive Errors by JoAnn Moody, 2011
- Common Short Cuts (from Interrupting Bias in the Faculty Search)

# Next session!

- Planning campus visit
- Role of the community liaison
- Assessing diversity qualifications
- Evaluating candidates
- Reviewing tools and qualification matrix available to the committee

Thoughts, concerns, questions?