

Activity: Bias in Faculty Job Postings

Unquestioned assumptions about the nature of the work and the characteristics of the ideal candidate can introduce unintended bias into job postings.

As you read through this sample job posting, identify biases (including omissions, overstatements, misrepresentations, systemic biases, and others). What would you suggest to create a posting that invites highly qualified candidates from diverse backgrounds and is open to non-traditional as well as traditional candidates?

Tenure Track Faculty - Faculty of Academic Discipline

The University of Victoria has a strong commitment to excellence. The Department invites applications for an exceptional opportunity with a tenure track position. The appointment will be made at the rank of Assistant Professor.

Requirements

Looking for a charismatic, hard hitting researcher who can position the department as a world leader. The department cultivates a competitive environment where hard work is expected and excellence is rewarded. Ambitious, aggressive and inspired academics who can stand up and speak out loudly and clearly will thrive here.

Applicants are expected to have an earned PhD in the Discipline at the time of appointment and at least five years experience in industry or academia. Successful candidates are expected to initiate and lead an exceptional, independent research program of international caliber and to teach both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The successful candidate will also actively recruit high quality students with potential for success. Candidates should have demonstrated excellence in research and teaching. Excellence in research is evidenced by peer reviewed publications of high impact and strong endorsements by referees of international standing. Excellence in teaching will be demonstrated by strong student reviews and a sample lecture. The following are the requirements of a candidate for the position:

- Excellent research record, including high-value grants and high-impact publications, ideally as lead researcher and lead author
- Demonstrated expertise in the core priorities of the discipline
- The ability to effectively teach courses in the core of the discipline.
- Ideally, carrying a grant into the start of the position
- Self-reliant, independent and ambitious
- Able to fit in quickly with our hard-working, aggressive and direct culture

Please submit a cover letter and relevant materials showing research excellence to UVic.

Creating an unbiased job posting: Questions to ask

These tips can help you reduce unintended bias in your job posting:

- Did you draft the core criteria first and include them in the job posting?
- Did you include information about the territory acknowledgment; commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion; welcoming initiatives; and any other information that will identify the department and UVic as good places to work for marginalized persons?
- Did you use language that is inclusive, ungendered and unbiased?
 - E.g., move from masculine-focused language (excellence, exceptional, independent, superior, lead) to more feminine-coded language (collaborative, supportive, inclusive, cooperative, together, enthusiastic, interpersonal, understanding). Male-coded ads deter female applicants, while female-coded ads draw a more balanced ratio.
 - E.g., Avoid able-bodied language and language that excludes English as an Additional Language speakers (“stand up,” “speak clearly,” etc.)
 - E.g., emphasize collaborative aspects of the job as well as independent aspects
 - Did you run the job ad through a [Gender Decoder?](#)
- Did you ask applicants to identify their strengths and experiences in increasing equity, diversity and inclusion in their previous institutional environment, in their interpersonal interactions, in their research, in their teaching and supervision, and/or in curriculum?
- Did you account for non-traditional areas of research and/or research outputs? This can include professional work or contributions, measures of excellence aside from impact factors, and attention to the wide variation in how excellent research appears such as community-based research, Indigenous research, and applied work.
- Did you ask for competencies in working respectfully and effectively with diversity in research (including lab management and meaningful, respectful engagement with research populations), teaching (disciplinary content and working with diverse students), and collegial relations (respectful interactions, collegial orientation, ability to participate in administrative work)?
- Did the requested application materials allow for non-traditional materials or evidence?
- Did the requested application materials ask candidates to address their track record with equity and diversity?
- Did the requested application materials ask for evidence, and from a diversity of sources and perspectives, rather than simple assertions of excellence?
- Did you post only the qualifications and skills necessary for the job rather than overstating the requirements?
- Did you include the UVic equity statement?
- Did you include a statement that recognizes the potential impact of career interruptions and asks applicants to explain their impact if they wish?
- Did you include a statement that invites people to contact the office regarding accommodations during application and hiring?
- Did you have the posting reviewed by a diversity of persons?