Conducting Inclusive Faculty Searches

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UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

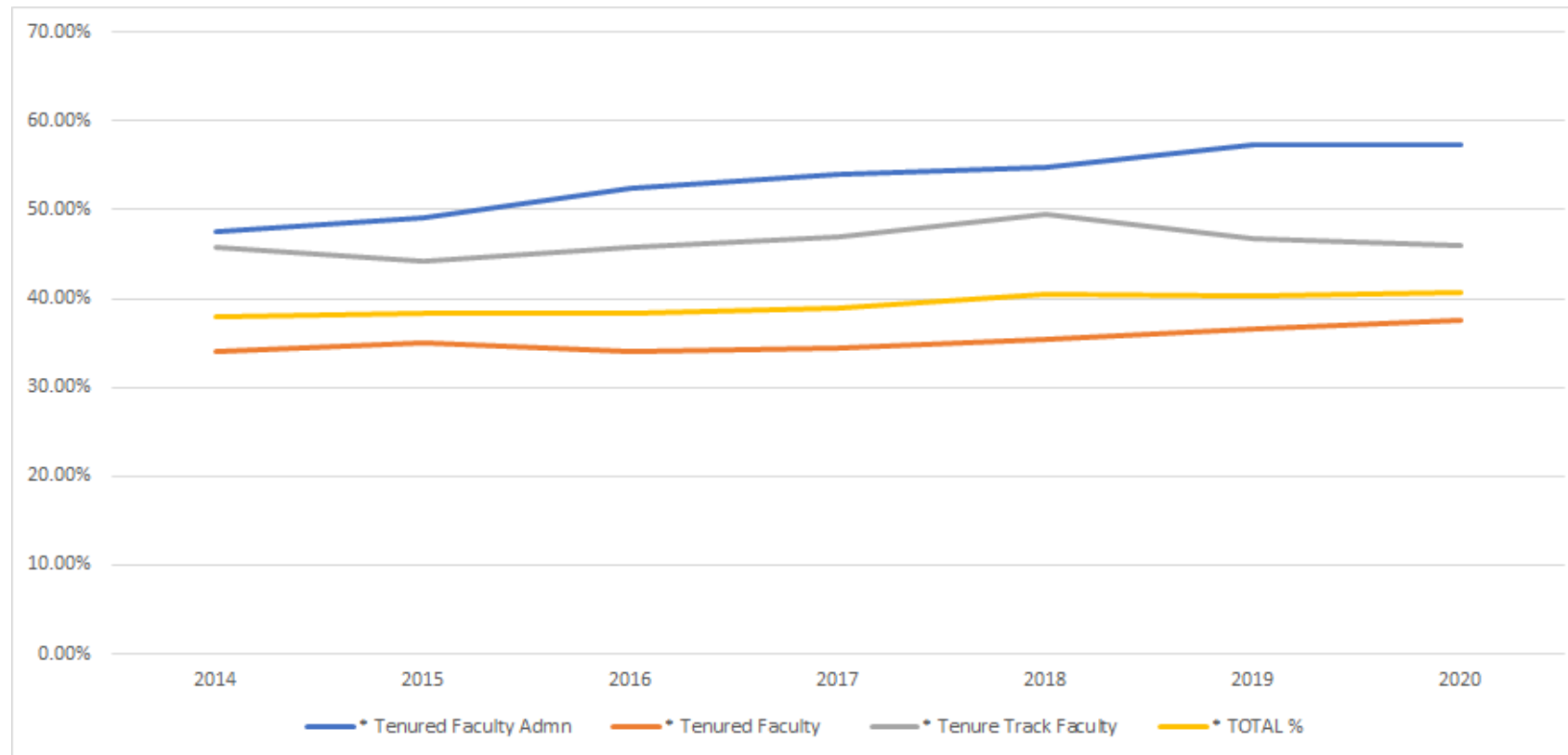College of Arts and Sciences

PRINCIPLES

- **Diversity:** [The broad range of] Individual differences (e.g., personality, prior knowledge, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)

- **Inclusion:** The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions

- **Equity:** The creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion

-- American Association of Universities & Colleges, "Making Excellence Inclusive"

-- CAS Diversity Statement – CAS DEI webpage

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Inclusive Searches: Best Practice Steps

1. Assess the need for faculty diversity in your department.

2. Start a productive search.

3. Select and prepare search committee members.

4. Increase awareness of conscious and unconscious bias, and its impact on the search process.

5. Recruit a broad and deep group of candidates.

6. Evaluate candidates fairly.

7. Implement informative and helpful campus visits.

8. Select finalists that reflect inclusive excellence.
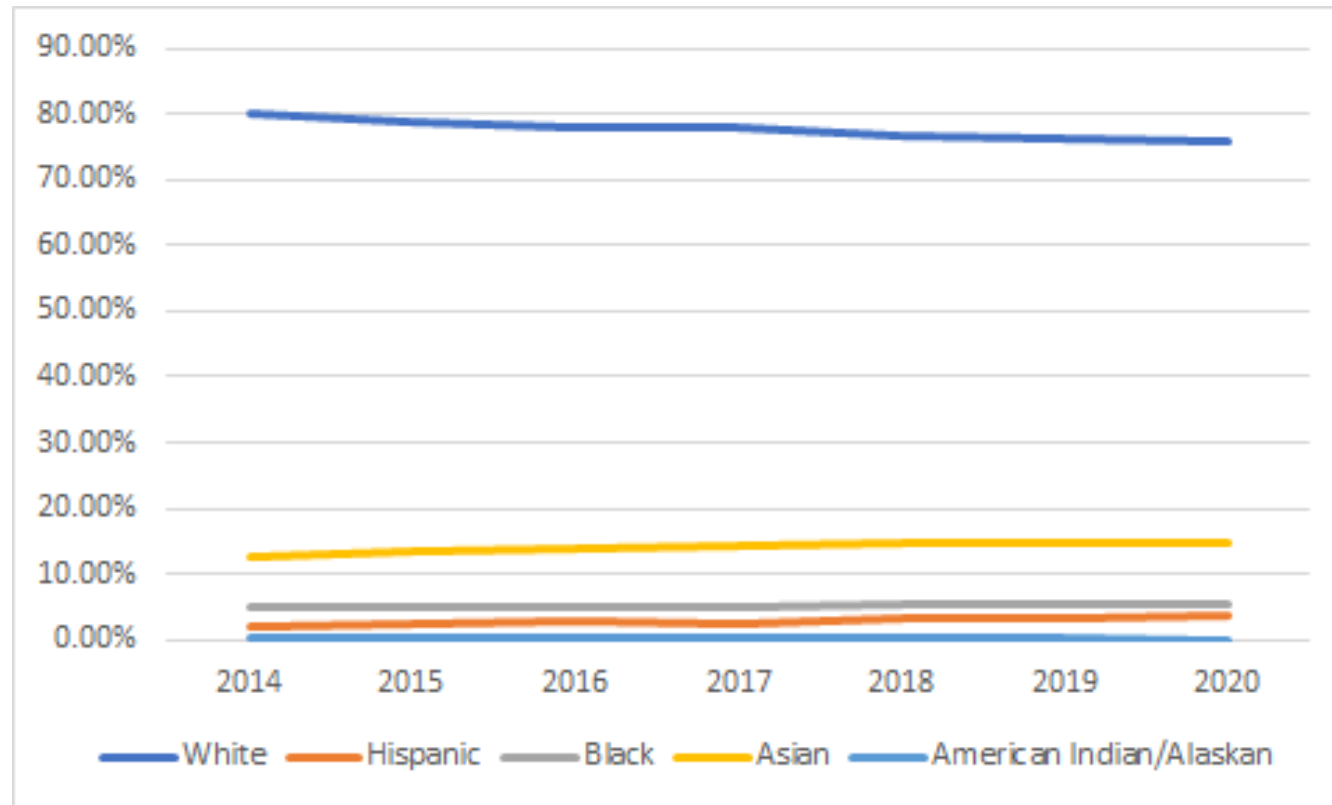
9. Develop an initial mentoring plan.

DEMOGRAPHICS – ASSESSING DIVERSITY

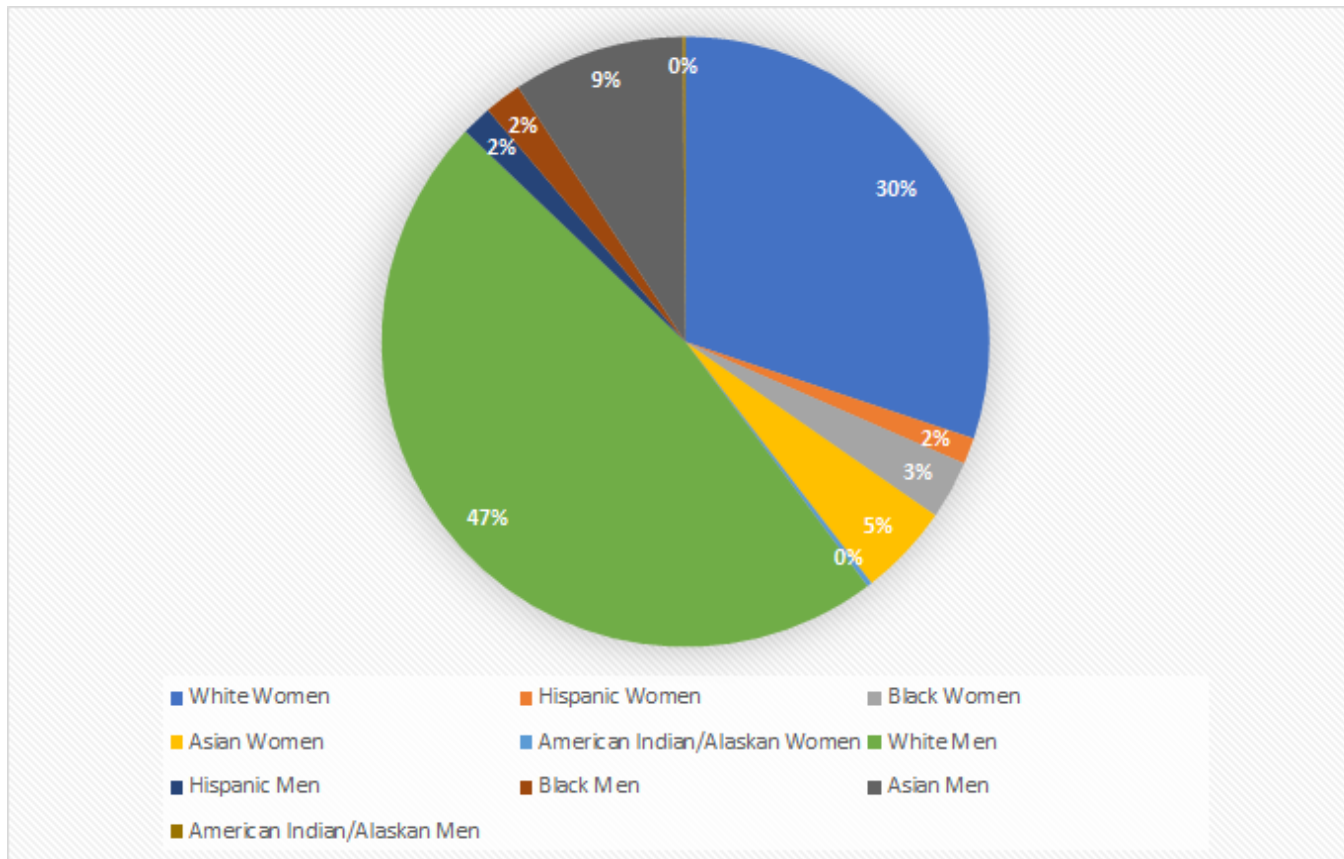Women as CAS Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty, 2014-2020, across categories

DEMOGRAPHICS – ASSESSING DIVERSITY

CAS Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty, 2014-2020, by race/ethnicity

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DEMOGRAPHICS – ASSESSING DIVERSITY

CAS Tenured/Tenure Track Faculty, 2014-2020, by race/ethnicity and gender average percentages

To request assistance in finding data trends for your department, contact CAS Human Resources – Director LaTasha Robinson – latashar@mailboxsc.edu

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PRODUCTIVE SEARCH

- **Position Description** clear but not so specific it deters otherwise qualified candidates
  - see HR template and "Strengthening Academic Excellence", p. 7
- **Initial Search Plan** see HR guidelines but also think of lists of:
  - Nominators
  - Listservs, blogs, and other online venues
  - Relevant conferences
  - Awards lists
  - Venues for advertisements -- **Affirmative Action Recruiting Sources Guide (from the Equal Opportunity Programs Office)**
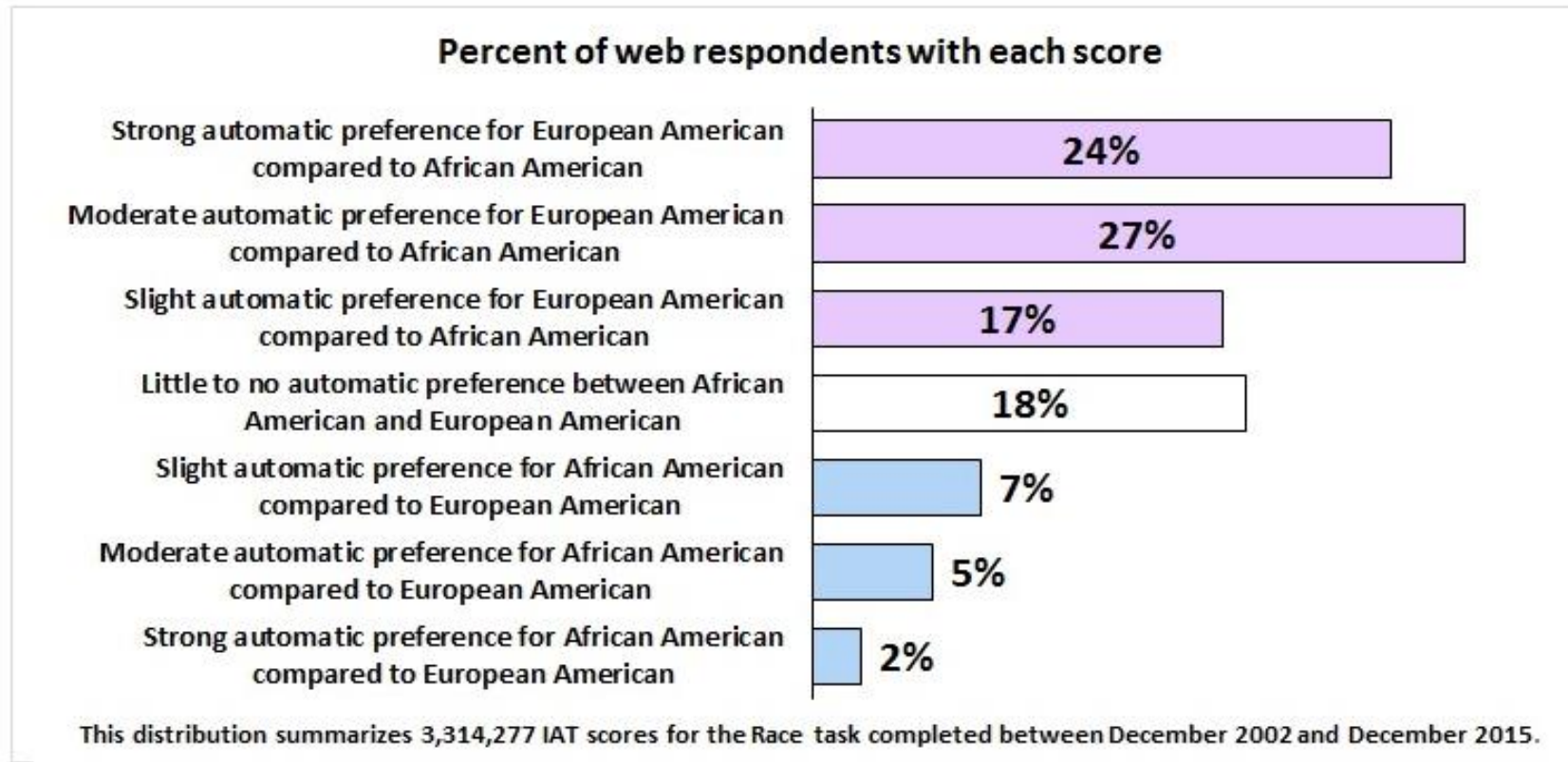- **Search committee** should include faculty from diverse backgrounds
  "Although there is no legal requirements governing the composition of search committees, it is imperative that we insure such committees are representative of the university community's diversity and tenure status."-- "Strengthening Academic Excellence", p. 5.

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FURTHER SEARCH COMMITTEE PREPARATION

- Discuss Unconscious Biases – extensive literature
  - "[It] demonstrates that actual achievements are often set aside in favor of those who fit some group stereotype of those likely to succeed." -- *Faculty Development and Diversity*, Harvard University, p. 10
  - Take IAT -- Project Implicit by Banaji (2013) *Blind Spot*
  - Types of Mitigation of Unconscious Bias – UofSC Talent Acquisition "Diversity and Inclusion Search Committee Toolkit", pp. 5-6
- Be careful about "fit" justifications -- euphemism for current composition?
  - See "A Bad Fit?" *Inside Higher Ed, July 2020*

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AFTER TODD'S IAT RESULTS

IAT reflects unconscious biases not beliefs/attitudes, *per se.*

Percent of web respondents with each score

Strong automatic preference for European American
compared to African American — 24%

Moderate automatic preference for European American
compared to African American — 27%

Slight automatic preference for European American
compared to African American — 17%

Little to no automatic preference between African
American and European American — 18%

Slight automatic preference for African American
compared to European American — 7%

Moderate automatic preference for African American
compared to European American — 5%

Strong automatic preference for African American
compared to European American — 2%

This distribution summarizes 3,314,277 IAT scores for the Race task completed between December 2002 and December 2015.

https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

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RECRUIT A BROAD & DIVERSE POOL

1. One committee member as "pool development" tracker.
2. Affirmative Action Advocate has clear resources and responsibilities -- "Strengthening Academic Excellence", pp. 6, 11-13.
3. Revisit your department diversity self-assessment. Are peers more diverse? If so, seek their insights.
4. Review success from previous searches (consider successful applicants not selected.)
5. Identify rising stars by reviewing journal editorial boards, award winners among relevant societies and grantors, and journal articles (especially within subfields.)
6. Attend conference sessions, special interest groups, caucuses for female & minority scholars, etc.
7. Consult with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. There is nothing wrong with "cold calls."
8. Use expanded networks – alumni, doctoral students, consortia.
9. Develop a pipeline and keep lists of those "soon to be on the market."
10. Make sure your department website is welcoming to diverse candidates. Images and text.
11. Email and call nominees directly. Personal outreach is most effective!
12. The bottom line -- proactive outreach, don't just "post and pray"

CANDIDATE EVALUATION

1. Several policy resources for non-discrimination and other factors – see [Search Committee Resources.](#)
2. Repeat your IAT discussion (don't share your individual results but share any insights.)
3. Develop explicit evaluation criteria (don't just back into them) for example – scholarly impact, research productivity, ability to attract and mentor graduate students, especially diverse student populations, etc.
4. Use an in-depth review process so that shortcuts don't activate implicit biases.
5. Consider all aspects of diversity.
6. All committee ratings should be shared with chair prior to any "long list" discussion so to assess consistently high or low scores among committee members (calibrate).
7. Ask departmental colleagues to review long list.
8. When moving to "short list" review criteria.
9. Guard against "tokenism" – one woman, one minority.

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CAMPUS VISIT & BEYOND

1. Candidates have impressions of campus visit for years to come.
2. Of course, ensure all know "Guide to Legal and Illegal Pre-Employment Inquiries"
3. Do not assume candidates know unit "reputation" for better or worse. (Be aware of opportunities and challenges, especially for women and minorities.)
4. Be intentional about being inclusive.
5. Ask candidates if they want to talk with communities outside of the department.
6. It is never too early to think about an "Initial Mentoring Plan" -- strong signal of department's commitment.
7. Direct outreach from prospective collaborators, mentors, and peers – also a vital signal.
8. Bottom line: faculty members join communities (plural.)

RESOURCES

We will update this
[webpage](), but many of
the sources listed lead
you to several other
sources.