JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY
TASK FORCE ON RACIAL EQUITY

ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
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Recommendation Title:
FULL-TIME JMU EMPLOYMENT RECRUITERS

Problem Statement/Issue

It is often challenging for JMU to attract diverse candidates to vacant positions. This inability to attract pools of qualified and diverse applicants reduces the likelihood that JMU will successfully diversify its employment ranks beyond current levels.

For the last couple of years, Human Resources (HR) Recruitment has been measuring and reporting the diversity of applicant pools to faculty search committees. It is common for applicant pools to lack diversity based on the established standards as indicated by the following data:
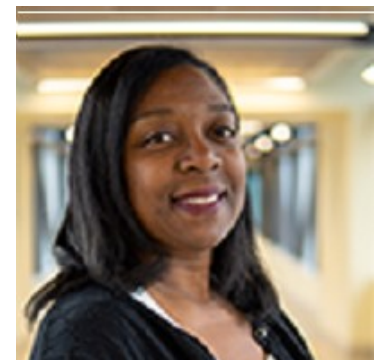
WORKING GROUP LEADERSHIP

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*Gender and Race Diversity of Recruitment Pools from 1/1/21 to 6/3/21:

Pools Diverse by Gender	Pools Not Diverse by Gender	Pools Diverse by Race	Pools Not Diverse by Race
52% (63 of 122)	48% (59 of 122)	7% (8 of 122)	93% (114 of 122)

*Gender and Race are the only factors provided by applicants to determine diversity of pools. The source is the state employment applications submitted by applicants.

*This table includes combined data for A&P Faculty, Classified, and Wage positions for Administration & Finance, Access and Enrollment, Office of the President, Student Affairs, and University Advancement.

This practice and any discovery that applicant pools for specific open position are homogenous force many search committees to attempt last-minute efforts to improve results. Typically, such efforts do not yield many additional diverse applicants.

Virtually all search chairs and search committees are made up of existing full-time employees. In addition, many departments must fill positions on short notice. Departing employees often provide ample notification to allow JMU to prepare for a successful transition, but many do not. Short-notice departures of existing employees combined with already-busy search chairs and committee members impede JMU's ability to identify and reach diverse employment candidates. Of course, robust succession planning in anticipation of vacancies could mitigate this problem, but such work also requires the already-busy faculty, staff, and department heads to cultivate and recruit candidates well before they are needed. The reality is that serving on search committees alone is time consuming and allows little extra time to actively recruit candidates.

The inability to actively plan and recruit for open positions in anticipation of the departure of existing employees reduces JMU's ability to attract diverse applicants with the hope of increasing the diversity of the current employee population. The recommendation described below is an approach that we believe will go a long way toward enhancing JMU's ability to find and attract qualified candidates who are Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) to fill open positions.

A&P WORKING GROUP—FT JMU EMPLOYMENT RECRUITERS

Recommendation:

The A&P and Classified Professional Development Working Group recommends that JMU hire full-time employment recruiters to help identify and attract employment candidates to fill open positions.

The working group envisions initially hiring at least one of three full-time people to recruit for instructional faculty, A&P faculty, and classified positions. JMU would require the recruiter(s) to become familiar with the campus (including culture, history, organizational structure, areas of need, etc.) to be successful in the role. Eventually, based on average hiring demands, we recommend that JMU consider hiring at least three full-time recruiters to focus on each of the three major employment classifications (instructional faculty, A&P faculty, and classified staff).

The build-out of a three-person recruiter team could be phased over a two- to three-year period. These employees could report to the Human Resources Department (HR) and be assigned by division or by employee type (Our working group is open to considering other reporting lines for recruiters).

The cost of a full-time recruiter is approximately $85,000 per year, which includes benefits. The total estimated cost for a single recruiter would be $104,500 for the first year, which includes $7,500 for office setup and $12,000 for conference travel. For three recruiters, including office setup, the cost would be approximately $255,000 per year with an initial one-time expense of approximately $7,500 (each) for office furniture and computers. A travel budget would be required and would cost an additional $12,000 per year for each recruiter for a total of $36,000 annually. The gross expense for each recruiter hired would be $104,500 the first year. That cost would drop to $97,000 for each subsequent year excluding pay increases. We recommend that a single recruiter be hired so that initially, JMU may learn how best to make use of such a position, hone systems, and measure results. If positive results are achieved, JMU should consider phasing in additional recruiters to meet the prevalent demand.

Before hiring any recruiters, the implementation champion for this recommendation should research existing best practices associated with using recruiters to diversify pools of qualified applicants. Then, details including qualifications, organization structure, and initial performance metrics could be established prior to the hiring of the recruiter (s).

Rationale

There is a belief that attracting diverse applicants is valued and essential, however, it is not always perceived as urgent until a position is vacated. Despite the fervent desire to achieve a greater diversity of employees, and the importance of recruiting diverse candidates for open positions, it is typically not the case that enhancing <u>diverse</u> applicant flow results in any measurable extrinsic reward for unit heads, search committee members, or search chairs if the positions get filled. In addition, the capacity to do this work in the context of existing daily demands requires a solution representing systemic change that can be deployed *and* show results quickly. Hiring recruiters represents a systemic change that we feel will make a difference.

Therefore, this recommendation is submitted to establish a new and dedicated resource to be applied to the diversification of applicant pools to take some of the work (but not all) out of the hands of unit heads, search committees, and search chairs. Unit heads and search chairs will retain the responsibility for recruiting and hiring and should view access to the services provided by a recruiter as another resource available to ensure success.

It should also be noted that this recommendation will not be successful if JMU <u>only</u> hires recruiters. The recruiters should also be held responsible for obtaining measurable results. For example, employment recruiters should be responsible for increasing the number of qualified and diverse candidates who apply for positions at JMU. The recruiters' performance compensation could be tied to their ability to achieve targets related to the number of qualified diverse applicants who apply.

Once research is completed and funding is approved to hire recruiters (regardless of the number), the implementation champion will be able to act promptly. Rapid implementation is necessary because it will take time for any recruiter to learn about our campus and cultivate enough candidates to obtain results. Given that current pre-planning, succession planning and recruitment efforts in some departments are minimal, we believe JMU will see results that will justify the expense of hiring the recruiter(s).

As noted, this recommendation represents a systemic change in keeping with the mission of the Task Force on Racial Equity (TFRE), and the implementation will demonstrate JMU's alignment of financial resources with a stated priority (to diversify pools of qualified applicants for open positions).

As referenced above, the goal of diversifying candidate pools should not be relegated solely to recruiters that are hired by JMU. It will still be necessary for departments, search chairs, and search committees to do the work necessary to enhance the diversity of applicant pools. The success of this recommendation is dependent on hiring managers continuing to do everything they can to ensure the diversity of applicants who apply for open positions.

Success

The Implementation Champion should establish specific metrics and benchmarks to measure the success of the recruiter(s) and this recommendation. Suggested metrics could include the following:

- **Increase in the average percentage of diverse applicant's vs total applicants.** This statistic could be calculated and categorized by discipline of the vacant position, employee classification, position level, and salary.
- During faculty searches, committees are made aware of the diversity of their applicant pools on two separate occasions. There is an initial report, then a final report. This is done so search committees can act if the first report yields a homogenous applicant pool. Recruiter success could be measured based on **the percentage of search committees that achieve the acceptable percentage of diverse applicants in the first report** *and* **final reports.**
- **The total number of diverse candidates who apply and who are hired (that were initially attracted to the position due to a recruiter's efforts)**.
- **The relationship between the increase in diverse applicants and any observed increase in actual diverse candidates hired.**

Current results obtained by JMU without recruiters should be measured and recorded to determine if later results show improvement. Benchmarks could then be established for each performance measure selected.

To decide if the problem has been solved, applicant pools must measure as being diverse over 80% of the time. This target would have to be researched and substantiated before being adopted.

It will take at least two years (two hiring seasons) from the first date of employment of the proposed recruiter(s) to demonstrate an increase in applicant diversity. Four years (four hiring seasons) would be required to solve the problem. (This timeline assumes three qualified and experienced recruiters could be hired and be competitively compensated.)

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