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DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: HIRING  
POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO DIVERSIFY FACULTY IN  
THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AT A MIDWESTERN  
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DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: HIRING POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO  
DIVERSIFY FACULTY IN THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AT A  
MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

By

Rozmina Akbarali Jaffer

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## ABSTRACT

### DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: HIRING POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO DIVERSIFY FACULTY IN THE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AT A MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY

By

Rozmina Akbarali Jaffer

As the nation experiences a major shift in demographics, higher education institutions are faced with the need to increase diversity on college and university campuses to better serve today's student population. Consequently, universities have a greater sense of urgency to diversify their faculties and achieve an all-inclusive campus environment. Universities generally support and believe that diversity better serves the needs of today's demographically different student population. However, despite the general support for an increase in minority faculty, progress has been slow, suggesting persistent challenges. One explanation for such slow progress is the culture and climate that is resistant to change in embracing diversity. Consequently, the problem is that diversification of faculty continues to be a challenge. Though there is significant research about many obstacles faced by faculty of color and women in higher education, there is a dearth of studies examining personnel practices at the department level in the context of espoused theories of the university in support of diversity. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of the tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university.

This study emerges from two previous studies implemented at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at a Midwestern university. Through the use of a qualitative case-study approach, open-ended and semistructured interviews were

conducted with search-committees members and administrators, followed by a focus group. A review of university archival documents and hiring policies provided background information. This study provides “best practices” for policy recommendations to improve the hiring of tenure-track faculty.

The findings revealed several factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of tenure-track diverse faculty in the college: (a) Minority faculty and women feel a lack of support for success, feel isolated, and believe their work is devalued or marginalized, thus leading to the feeling that the climate is “chilly” and unwelcoming in the college; (b) ineffective “mechanical” hiring policies and practices continue to challenge diversification of the faculty in the college; (c) top leadership support is lacking for a diversified campus; and (d) members of the search committee lack training in understanding hiring policies and practices or affirmative-action programs, and therefore myths continue to erode efforts to create a diversified faculty pool. The results of this study highlight the impact on the ban of affirmative-action programs in the state and the continued struggle minorities and women experience in higher education institutions. Little research in the area of tenure-track faculty recruitment and search committees has been conducted; therefore, this study is important, as it is unique in the state.

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Dedicated to my beautiful daughter,

Jasmin Akabarali Jaffer-Jones

For her love, support, and success

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

As the nation experiences a major shift in demographics, higher education institutions are equally faced with the need to increase diversity on college and university campuses to better serve today's student population. Consequently, diversification of faculty is receiving a greater sense of urgency for achieving an all-inclusive campus environment. Universities generally support and believe that diversity better serves the needs of today's demographically different student population. However, despite the general support for an increase in minority faculty, progress has been slow, suggesting persistent challenges. One explanation for such a slow progress in diversity is the deeply imbedded culture and climate in higher education that is resistant to change (Kayes, 2006; Miller, 1999). It has been argued that while higher education administrators have the knowledge and expertise to attract and retain faculty of color, they have been passive in their actions to implement changes (Clark, 2006). Despite these challenges, most postsecondary institution administrators believe that campus diversity results in many benefits to students, faculty, and staff alike.

#### Introduction

There are a number of scholars who claim that faculty in postsecondary institutions are not representative of the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the student body. Research suggests that there is a need for postsecondary institutions to proportionally reflect the nation's population of diversity. According to Turner, Myers, and Creswell (1999), over one-half of the current U.S. college population is female and 30% are minorities of various races and ethnicities. However, faculty on U.S. colleges

and universities continue to remain predominately White, with Caucasians holding 91.7% of all faculty positions (Colby & Foote, 1995). The racial and ethnic faculty profile is as follows: 2.6% African American, 1.0% Mexican/Chicano, and 3.3% Asian American (Quezada & Louque, 2004).

Faculty play a pivotal role in shaping the learning and development of students through classroom teaching, curriculum development, mentorship, and advising, and they provide important network and referral resources for students. Several scholars have discovered that minority faculty members are essential in the classrooms as they engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning in their instruction methods, and implement active teaching and learning methods. They introduce diversity issues in the classroom, promote experiential and cooperative learning, facilitate more student centered and active learning methods, and are role models to many of the minority students (Gandara, Orfield, & Horn, 2006; Hurtado, 2001; Milem, 2001). Furthermore, minority faculty members engage in research of race, ethnicity, and gender at a greater degree than their White counterparts, thereby impacting the transformation of knowledge beyond traditional views (Antonio, 2002; Hurtado, 2001; Turner & Myers, 2000; Wilds, 2000). This suggests that a diversified faculty is needed to better serve the needs of a diverse student population and promote many of the ideals of the scholarship of teaching, learning, and research shared in the classroom.

Gordon (2004) indicated that while the pipeline and supply of qualified graduate students may be used as an argument for the alleged difficulty in recruitment of minority faculty, the real problem lies in resistance of leadership and faculty in implementing changes in the faculty search process. In addition, Moody (2004) made a compelling

argument that cross-cultural mentorship is paramount in the success of minority graduate students since they are less likely to receive mentoring from White faculty in predominately white institutions. In addition, literature suggests that students have enriched learning experiences through their contact with a greater spectrum of ethnicities and races among faculty, staff, and students on college campuses. This suggests that a multicultural campus is essential to the success of all students. There are several benefits in having a diverse faculty workforce, as they bring different and varied perspectives both in the classroom and in mentoring and advising students. This study is therefore significant because a diverse faculty workforce is essential to the academic success of students and their development of cross-cultural competencies as they prepare for today's highly diversified workforce.

### Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to explore factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university.<sup>1</sup> This study focuses on three major themes as follows: (a) Understanding and uncovering what faculty hiring policies and procedures exist in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern university; (b) analyzing and understanding how university faculty hiring policies and procedures are understood, interpreted, and implemented at the college and department level; and (c) exploring the beliefs, assumptions, and values individuals hold that may impact faculty hiring outcomes especially in light of restrictions on affirmative-action programs. The background information in this study from the focus groups and the electronic surveys

---

<sup>1</sup> The researcher made a special effort not to identify the respondents in the study. However, due to the sensitive nature of the topic of diversity, and for a number of reasons, a majority of the researcher's graduate committee highly recommended that special attention be given to protecting the identity of the state, university, college, dean of the college researched, and references produced by the university.

that were implemented highlights the nature of climate that impacts the College of Agriculture and the university. By focusing on the three major areas identified above, this study explores a deeper understanding of the climate that fosters or inhibits diversity in College of Agriculture. Finally, by identifying factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of tenure-track faculty workforce, this researcher offers some policy and procedural recommendations for “best practices” in increasing the diversification of tenure-track faculty.

The demand for access to higher education is on the rise. Students are graduating from high schools in greater numbers than ever before, and they desire to attend colleges and universities across the nation (Altbach, 2001; Rodriguez & Nettles, 1997; Ruppert, 2003). In addition, there are major shifts in student demographics, reflecting increased diversity that is likely to impact postsecondary institutions in many ways. According to Rodriguez and Nettles, “By 2050 the White population is expected to decline to approximately 53% of the total U.S. population, while Latinos will increase to over 21%, African Americans to 15%, and Asian Americans to 10%” (1997, p. 248). These data further suggest that there is a greater sense of urgency calling upon postsecondary institutions to respond to these changes in student demographics that are resulting in an increased demand for higher education impacting student enrollments. These data also suggest that higher education institutions may be faced with a challenge of accommodating a greater number of students, which may result in an increase in infrastructure or a need to build more colleges and universities across the nation. This shift in demographic changes will likely impact the way public research universities

operate, specifically in hiring faculty who are better able to serve the needs of today's highly diversified student population.

### Gaps in the Literature

There is a distinctive gap in the literature about the availability of successful best practices of faculty hiring policies and procedures at the department levels. While there is significant research about the many obstacles faced by faculty of color and women in higher education, little exists in the actual examination of personnel practices at the department levels in context to the espoused theories of the university in support for diversity. According to Turner (2002), "Efforts to diversify the faculty continue to be amongst the least successful elements of campus commitments to diversity" (p.14). Previous literature suggests a need to further examine the effectiveness of hiring policies/practices and the low success rates in recruitment of faculty of color in postsecondary institutions. Universities continue to hire as they did over 40 years ago with greater emphasis on research and low emphasis on teaching (Indiana University, 2004; Trower & Chait, 2002). As a result, universities limit their pool of potential candidates for faculty positions who may poses diverse teaching and learning techniques.

A few studies have discussed the roles of search committees and the myths members hold about faculty of color. Additionally, gaps in the literature exist in exploring the level of holistic approach utilized in screening job applicants based on, job descriptions, resumes, letters of references, balance of teaching versus research, and diverse engagement experiences. Gordon (2004) argued that there is a need for a diverse faculty workforce. However, progress has been very slow largely due to unsuccessful recruitment and hiring strategies (Hale, 2004). A major problem exists in the traditional

faculty search process conducted largely by senior faculty who are often White in a predominately White institution and who have control over final hiring decisions (Gordon, 2004).

According to Kayes (2006), most high level administrators believe that search committees do not possess any biases, but the slow progress in higher education to diversify faculty and staff is largely due to the personal biases of the search committee members that taint the search. This suggests that though higher-level university administrations may advocate diversity on their college campuses, in reality such desires maybe more complex and difficult to achieve possibly due to a high degree of resistance to change. Literature suggests that the lack of training of search committee members is also a major obstacle in the hiring process (Gordon, 2004; Hale, 2004; Kayes, 2006). Furthermore, there is a huge gap in the literature about the policy implications on recruitment and hiring of faculty. In addition, previous literature demonstrates the problems of affirmative action policies as discussed in Chapter Two, specifically that affirmative-action policies are interpreted with a high degree of variability by higher education institutions due to varied understandings of the relevant laws. Therefore, this study is significant as it contributes to the understanding of the aforementioned underlying problems that are evident in minority faculty hiring and searches in postsecondary institutions.

Previous literature suggests that this country has taken a step backward from the progress that was made from when Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and affirmative-action programs were first mandated. The effectiveness of these programs has deteriorated due to lack of government support, resulting in a weak enforcement of



affirmative-action policies, which was especially evident during the Regan and Bush presidential eras (Gandara et al., 2006; Hayden, 1997). Finally, though it is beyond the scope of this study, future studies should evaluate the effectiveness of employment laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and their current lack of enforcement capabilities. For example, it is no secret that discrimination cases are hard to win, and the window of opportunity for filing such complaints is limited. Furthermore, when an organization is cited for discriminatory practices, the punishment is often minimal. The government may impose corrective measures only to address past or current discrimination, and fines charged to employers cited in violations of Civil Rights Act are uncommon. Consequently, the government has imposed hiring goals and timelines to rectify discriminatory practices. However, this has created stereotypes and myths that are damaging to minority candidates. These myths extend well beyond suggestions that minorities are unqualified for jobs, have lower educational levels, have a lack of fit for desired positions, that availability is minimal, and that hiring standards will have to be compromised if a minority candidate is hired. Myths continue to foster views that minority candidates have lower credential and standards (Gordon 2004; Kayes, 2006). This falsely suggests that high academic standards cannot be achieved by hiring minority faculty. Hiring managers have not addressed these stereotyping issues nor have they made any changes in their practices in promoting a more positive working environment for an all inclusive workforce.

As the twenty-first century begins, previous research shows a continued pattern of underrepresentation and a presence of biases towards minorities as a result of the persistence in discrimination across the nation (Abramson, 1995; Chang, Witt, & Hakuta,

2003; Hao, 2002, 2003; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). This is a serious problem facing higher education institutions today that must be addressed in order to respond to the increased demand for higher education as well as the changing needs of the today's student population. According to Astin, Antonio, Cress, and Astin (1997) and Turner et al. (1999), faculty of color continue to experience subtle discrimination in postsecondary institutions, such as degrading their academic work or passing them up for promotions and tenure. According to Johnson (2002), privilege and oppression was not only prevalent in the past but continues in the present. He argued that postsecondary institutions do very little to address this problem. Moreover, previous studies have addressed an unwelcoming climate and culture. However, they fail to thoroughly discuss how institutions are addressing these concerns or why these conditions persist in higher education today. This study will add to the previous studies in an attempt to understand the underlying reasons for the slow progress in hiring faculty of color and by providing a deeper understanding and analysis of the issues of access for faculty of color in postsecondary institutions.

Workforce diversity is essential for colleges and universities just as it is important in corporate America today (Bye, 2007). Moreover, there is greater access to higher education through distance learning and online learning, providing a wide spectrum of curriculum options and programs. As a result, U.S. colleges and universities are bound to be impacted by global competition (Duderstadt, 2003). In addition, many businesses and companies desire to hire a diversified workforce, hence increasing the demand for minority student graduates. Therefore, an increase of minority faculty in postsecondary institutions is essential to the future success of U.S. colleges and universities.

### Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the current body of literature about the topic of diversity among the tenure-track faculty by providing a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist in hiring to diversify the tenure-track faculty positions. While there is a great deal of literature written about the slow response of higher education institutions, this study addresses a significant gap in the literature, suggesting some of the reasons why higher education institutions have made such a slow progress in diversifying their faculty pool. There is a significant gap in the literature about what hiring policies and practices exist around diversity of tenure-track faculty positions. The findings of this study highlight not only the current hiring policies and practices that exist at the institution level but also provide a better understanding of how those involved in the decisions to hire understand, interpret, and implement policies and practices to diversify faculty hiring.

A few studies in states such as California, Washington, and Texas have explored the impact and the ban on affirmative action in hiring of tenure-track faculty. However, no such studies exist in light of the recent ban on affirmative action in the state in 2006. Therefore, this study adds to the understanding of challenges Midwestern universities have faced relevant to the impact on the ban of affirmative-action programs.

Finally, this study provides policy and procedural implications at the university, college, and department levels on the “best practices” in hiring for tenure-track faculty and creating diversity in higher education. It is hoped the study will encourage university administrators to re-evaluate their hiring practices and policies to foster a more

welcoming climate, breakdown barriers that marginalize minority faculty in the hiring process, and promote overall diversity in higher education today.

### Statement of Problem

Although university administrators generally promote diversity on their campuses, there is a continued struggle to increase faculty diversity in postsecondary institutions. The problem is the lack of success in diversifying tenured faculty through current hiring policies and practices. This is due in part to unsuccessful hiring policies and procedures at the department level to support the university-wide established policies and standards for promoting campus diversity in the tenured faculty ranks. Additionally, university hiring policies are not clearly understood or interpreted at the department level. Therefore, the current tension between the desired (espoused theory) hiring outcomes of universities that promote inclusiveness and the slow progress higher education institutions have made (theory in use) in diversifying their faculty is the focus of this study.

As the university's student population continues to become more diversified, the demand for a more diverse faculty workforce will be equally important. According to Turner (2002), "By 2015, for example, 80 percent of the anticipated 2.6 million new college students will be African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian. Nationwide, the number of undergraduate minority students enrolled in colleges and universities will increase from 29.4 percent to 37.2 percent" (p.1). Consequently, the increase in a diverse student population is likely to drive an increased demand for faculty of color. Faculty of color add to the enrichment of the educational learning experiences and development of all students through their contributions as role models, service

engagement/outreach, mentorship, advising, and in promoting a supportive climate for students on college campuses (Chang, 2005; Clark, 1997; Inoue, 2005).

### Research Questions

This study explores the following primary question: What are the factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of a diverse tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university? The following three subquestions guided this research:

1. What policies and practices exist around diversity in faculty hiring at the College of Agriculture?
2. How do those involved in the faculty hiring decisions in postsecondary education understand, interpret and implement policies and practices to diversify faculty hiring?
3. What impact does a recent ban on the state's affirmative-action programs have on changes of current policies and practices in hiring diverse faculty?

This study emerges from two previous studies implemented in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern university. Through the use of a qualitative, case study approach, open-ended and semi-structured interviews were conducted with search committees members and administrators, followed by a focus group. A review of university archival documents and hiring policies provided the background information needed. In addition, this study provides best practices for policy recommendations to improve the hiring of tenure-track faculty.

### Terms and Definitions

There is a great body of research that suggests that the following terms have been misunderstood by those involved in the hiring of faculty in higher education and therefore deserve clarification. In addition, an understanding of Title VII of the Civil

Rights Act of 1964 which has guided the affirmative-action programs will be defined. For the purpose of this research, the following terms will be defined: *diversity*, *multiculturalism*, *affirmative action*, *equal employment opportunity*, and *inclusion*.

### *Diversity*

Diversity is defined broadly across disciplines, and the literature suggests that there are many definitions of diversity; however, for the purpose of this dissertation, the following definition is offered:

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual. (University of Oregon, 2006)

### *Multiculturalism*

Multiculturalism is defined both in the terms of adaptation and integration (see Chapter Two for details of these terms). A multicultural person is one whose essential identity is inclusive of life patterns different from his own and who has psychologically and socially come to grips with a multiplicity of realities. This person is not just sensitive to other cultures as described to be in adaptation stage, but instead, the person is in the

“process of becoming a part of and apart from a given cultural context;” the additional act of defining one’s relationship to cultural context is the key identifier of integration stage of development (Alder, as cited in Paige, 1993, p. 59).

### *Affirmative Action*

The Department of Labor's Employment Standards Administration's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) enforces the Executive Order 11246. These laws ban discrimination and require federal contractors and subcontractors to take affirmative action to ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity for employment, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability or status as a Vietnam era or special disabled veteran.

Non-construction (service and supply) contractors with 50 or more employees and government contracts of \$50,000 or more are required, under Executive Order 11246, to develop and implement a written affirmative-action program (AAP) for each establishment. The regulations define an AAP as a set of specific and result-oriented procedures to which a contractor commits itself to apply every good faith effort.... The numerical goals are established based on the availability of qualified applicants in the job market or qualified candidates in the employer’s work force....the goal-setting process in affirmative action planning is used to target and measure the effectiveness of affirmative action efforts to eradicate and prevent discrimination. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002)

### *Equal Employment Opportunity.*

Affirmative action is further defined as “voluntary and mandatory efforts undertaken by federal, state and local governments; private employers; and schools to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunity in education and employment for all” (Crosby, Iyer, Clayton, & Downing, 2003, p. 94). Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is simply a system of providing equal opportunities to all individuals without discriminating. EEO is not enforceable; it is strictly voluntary.

### *Inclusion*

During the university President's 2005 Founder's Day Address, *inclusiveness* was defined as follows:

Providing opportunity for learners from all backgrounds--bringing their passion and talent to join a vibrant, intellectual community built on mutual respect to experience and to multiply the benefits of the power of knowledge throughout their lives. (Institution<sup>2</sup>, *Inclusion Defined*, n.d., p.

1)

### Scope of Research

This study is limited in scope to addressing ethnically, racially, and gender-based diverse categories as described in the definition for diversity above. Furthermore, the terms *minority* and *faculty of color* are used synonymously to describe ethnicity, race, and national origin. Recruitment and retention are two important strategic goals in successfully attracting the best candidates in this globally competitive era. However, it is beyond the scope of this research to fully explore both; therefore, this study will focus on

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<sup>2</sup> To protect the identity of the Midwestern University, all information (including citations and references) that might compromise confidentiality have been eliminated. The university will be generically referred to as “Institution,” and all copyright dates changed to “n.d.”



the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty in higher education. As a result, discussion about retention issues, such as promotion and tenure, will be limited to discussions about hiring policies and practices.

### Rationale for the Study

This study that examines recruitment strategies of faculty of color is very important in higher education, as faculty play a pivotal role in the development of all students in the classroom instruction, in curriculum development, and in research, outreach, and service. Furthermore, faculty members are important to the advising and mentoring of students; thus, a diverse faculty enriches the educational experiences of all students.

### *Benefits of Diversity in Higher Education*

Several scholars in the field have explored the benefits of a diversified student population on college campuses. However, research on the benefits of faculty diversity is limited. The underlying themes of this empirical research has uncovered that there are clear-cut, diversity-related benefits that far outweigh the costs. Such benefits range from directly impacting an individual student and his/her learning to the overall positive impact on society as a whole, resulting in a “public good.” These benefits include enriched student learning outcomes, improved quality of education, enriched classroom experiences, positive institutional climate, diverse student mentors and role models, global readiness, competitiveness of students who are better prepared to work with people of difference, enhanced peer networks, and enhanced leadership skills (Antonio, 2001a, 2001b; Cox, Matthews & Associates, 2006; Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004; Gandara et al., 2006; Maturana, 2005; Milem, 2001; Phillips, 2002; Whitley, Orfield, Siren,

Teperow, Howard, & Reede, 2003). In addition, there are many benefits to having diversity in the classroom, such as promoting critical thinking and problem solving skills (Gandara et al., 2006).

A study conducted by presidents of two Ivy League institutions revealed that diversity was essential to higher education teaching and learning paradigms of students. The study that involved 45,000 students from 28 prestigious universities revealed the benefits of social integration and enhanced skills in relating with members of different races and ethnic groups (Bowen & Bok, 1998). These scholars suggested that students discover themselves and others around them at an accelerated level while they are in college and are better prepared to enter a diverse workforce. Therefore, universities are pivotal in shaping the development of young adults for the nation's future. A study by Chang, Denson, Saenz, and Misa (2006) further confirmed these findings. The study revealed that students who are open to diversity have greater cognitive and self-confidence development and thereby have larger gains in their ability to accept different races and cultures than those students who are not exposed to a diverse college environment.

Additionally, Kezar and Eckel (2002) interviewed 30 seasoned college and university presidents and concluded that university strategies should make hiring faculty of color an institutional priority to ensure the success of students of color. In turn, a diverse student body improves learning outcomes through greater development of students' cognitive skills, critical thinking, promoting classroom discussions with greater viewpoints, resulting in an overall enhanced student learning experience.

Moreover, students are affected by the level of intercultural engagement through their contact with a diverse workforce in postsecondary institutions. A multicultural campus positively impacts the quality of campus services such as administrative services, advising services, faculty mentors, leadership support, quality of classroom learning, and professional development opportunities. These are all important aspects of services and support in postsecondary education as they help shape student development, learning, and outcomes. This suggests that there are benefits to a diversified student and faculty population on college campuses; therefore, institutions should balance their representation appropriate to the available pool in their geographic location. Moreover, it can be inferred that an increase in diversity among the student population will result in more demand for diversified faculty who can provide services to the varied needs of today's student population. Thus, a diverse and increased ethnic representation of administrators, faculty, and support staff is paramount to the student learning outcomes, graduation rates, and student development. The following section discusses the obstacles and challenges in higher education institutions.

#### *The Need for Affirmative Action Programs in Hiring*

Affirmative action programs have been challenged in recent years through controversial viewpoints. Affirmative-action programs were enacted nearly two decades ago to give racial/ethnic faculty and women equal employment opportunities. However, faculty of color continue to be underrepresented in postsecondary institutions, which are predominately comprised of White males (Aguirre, 2000; Astin et al., 1997; Blackshire-Belay, 1998; Harvey, 2001; Pavel, Swisher & Ward, 1994; Phillips, 2002; Trower & Chait, 2002; Turner & Myers, 2000; Smith, Turner, Osei-Kofi & Richards, 2004).

Scholars argue that the level of resistance of a new faculty member is a direct result of biases and perceptions that the university community assumes when a racial and/or ethnic faculty member is hired. The racial bias that racial/ethnic and women faculty are hired as a result of affirmative-action programs and not because of their job qualifications further contributes to an unwelcoming and unsupportive work environment in higher education (Aguirre, 2000; Turner et al., 1999).

The biggest problem with affirmative-action programs is that many administrators and search committee members do not have a good understanding of the purpose of this program. Additionally, some may argue that this is largely due to resistance to accepting people of difference, thereby creating an unwelcoming climate. This resistance due to lack of understanding of affirmative- action programs is a very serious problem in higher education today, as it negatively affects minority and women candidates largely due to resentment from those making hiring decisions.

There are several myths that impact hiring decisions, including the myths that scholars have reinforced. Ward Connerly argued that affirmative-action programs were implemented at the federal level to provide preferential treatment for minorities (2000). This is the main rationale that Connerly made as the supporter and leader of the ban on affirmative-action programs in California, Washington and most recently, Michigan (Sataline & Hechinger, 2006). Connerly argued that affirmative-action programs quite often result in reverse discrimination for Whites and that they affect minorities in a “negative light,” assuming that they get jobs because of their race and not their qualifications. This notion that affirmative-action programs were intended to give preferential treatment is a widely misunderstood phenomenon. Connerly failed to take

into account other types of hires such as spousal hires, target hires, and in-network referrals that might benefit the majority Caucasian populations. Additionally, Connerly failed to consider the potential for discrimination in higher education even today.

Supporters of affirmative-action programs argue that a ban on these programs, such as the most recent ban in Michigan, is likely to affect postsecondary institutions by setting back in the progress already made in the recruitment of faculty and underrepresented students in postsecondary institutions. This is evidenced by the current data available due to the ban of affirmative-action programs in California and Washington. These campus populations have been affected negatively in states where affirmative action has been banned and the level of impact varied among states (Gandara, et al., 2006; Gorchow, 2006).

After the passage of Proposition 209 in California, there was a decrease in the number of minority and women faculty hired as well as a decrease in the number of minority students admitted at the University of California (Schneider, 1998). Recent studies have identified the differences in the interpretation and understanding of the state and federal laws in California and in Washington that have resulted in different impacts and outcomes in the results of diversity on college campuses. For instance, after the passing of California's Proposition 209 in 1996, which banned "preferential treatment" on the basis of race, color, ethnicity or national origin in the public employment, contracting and education has had a direct impact on the drop in the numbers of faculty of color by nearly 50% (Maturana, 2005). This suggests that the postsecondary institutions in California most likely misinterpreted the ban on affirmative-action programs; as a partner of federal contractor, they are still obligated to the affirmative-action programs.

Therefore, the reduction of minority faculty hires suggests that they most likely violated the federal laws guiding hiring practices under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and affirmative action hiring practices for institutions receiving federal grants (U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission (US EEOC, 1997).

Comparatively, the results on the number of faculty hires at Washington State University have had minimal impact (Healy, 1998). Based on the U.S. constitution, state laws cannot override federal laws. Therefore, the requirements of public universities that are provided with federal contracts and grants to confirm to the affirmative action hiring practices are enforceable even in states that have banned affirmative-action programs. The impact of the ban on affirmative-action programs will most likely be based on how policymakers and public universities understand, interpret, and implement the changes. Consequently, university administrators are obligated to engage in affirmative-action programs and practices in hiring minority and women faculty on their campuses despite state legislations. Universities are obligated to abide by federal affirmative-action laws that prohibit discrimination in personnel practices on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, or national origin (US EEOC, 1997). This means that when hiring candidates for faculty positions, the relevant labor market of a university is the U.S. pool of Ph.D.s in its geographic area. Therefore, the faculty hiring pool should represent the availability of candidates within a given geographic area based on the demographics. The bigger challenge is to identify a sufficient hiring pool as a representative of the population availability. If that criterion is met, then the federal affirmative-action laws do not apply in mandating fairness and equality. All things being equal, diversity should be one consideration among many in hiring decisions. However, the employment climate in the

state is likely to impact the success in hiring minorities as evidenced by the state of California. This suggests that institutions will likely experience even greater difficulties in creating all-inclusiveness on their campuses, and a similar difficulty is likely to be experienced by minority and women candidates seeking employment.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter highlights, analyzes, and presents previous studies and literature in the following main areas of scholarly research that illuminate scholarly work related to this study: (a) Demographic changes of student and faculty populations, (b) climate and culture of postsecondary institutions, (c) challenges in recruitment of diversified faculty, (d) effectiveness of current hiring policies and practices, (e) leadership and support for success in hiring, (f) employment laws and affirmative-action programs, (g) Proposition 209 in California, (h) Initiative 1-200 in the state of Washington, and (i) University of Michigan court cases.

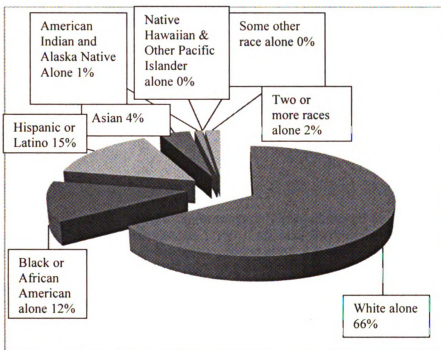
The literature review in qualitative research can take a number of different forms. Overall, the literature should position the topic in the context of a larger dialogue, summarize significant literature related to the study, and identify gaps which may exist in previous literature (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Specifically, Creswell (2003) indicated that the purpose of reviewing literature is to address and contextualize the problem to be studied “within the ongoing dialogue in the study” (p. 81). There are several relevant studies that have been identified which position the problem within the context of the bigger picture.

#### Changes in Student Demographics

Over the last 20 years, there has been a major shift in the population demographics in the United States, resulting in a higher level of diversity in respect to race, ethnicity, and gender. The major shift in demographics in the U.S. population in recent years has resulted in increases in the number of Hispanics, Asians, Native



Americans, and African Americans. This shift in the U.S. demographics has impacted the U.S. economy in many ways, specifically increasingly greater availability of a diverse labor force. Based on 2006 and 1990 data (see figure 1 and 2), the largest trend is that the Hispanic/Latino population has increased at a greater rate from (9% in 1990 to 15% in 2006) than any other population while the White population has been steadily declining from (from 75% in 1990 to 66% in 2006) (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2006).

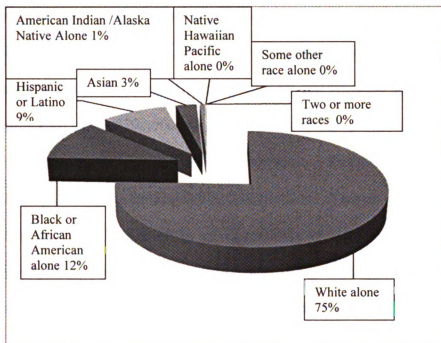


*Figure 1. 2006 U.S. Population Demographics.*

From U.S. Census Bureau. (2006 July 15). *Annual estimates of the population by race alone and Hispanic or Latino origin for the United States and States: July 1, 2005 (SC-EST2005-04)*. Washington D.C.: Author.

Another trend in 2006 is that the race categories have been expanded to allow individuals to report more than one race as indicated on the first pie chart below, suggesting a trend of a higher number of individuals with multiple race memberships. This suggests that the increases from 1990 to 2006 in U.S. demographics will most likely

increase the availability of diverse candidates for faculty positions. Therefore, universities today should reflect the composition of the U.S. population.



*Figure 2. 1990 U.S. Population Demographics*

From U.S. Census Bureau. (1990). Difference in Population by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, for the United States: 1990 to 2000. Retrieved April 30, 2008, from <http://factfinder.census.gov/home/en/datanotes/expplu.html>.

According to Rodriguez and Nettles (1997), “By 2050 the White population is expected to decline to approximately 53% of the total U.S. population, while Latinos will increase to over 21%, African Americans to 15%, and Asian Americans to 10%” (p. 248). In addition, a recent study by the Education Commission for the States reported that enrollment nationwide is projected to reach 27.6 million American citizens by 2015 (Ruppert, 2003). Furthermore, it is estimated that the current enrollment capacity for 2015 will be 19.6 million (Ruppert, 2003). These data suggest that a high number of qualified students of all races and ethnicity will be denied access to higher education in the near future. However, despite the increase of minorities in the U.S. population today,

the number of minority faculty in higher education has not kept pace. Moreover, this suggests a huge emerging crisis of access in the forthcoming years of postsecondary institutions' ability to effectively address the increased demand for a college education. Swail (2002) argued that by 2015 White students will continue to be overrepresented by more than 400,000 students, while African-American and Hispanic populations will be underrepresented by over 200,000 and 500,000 respectively (p. 19). It can be argued that a lack of qualified candidates may not be the real reasons for the lack of diversity.

Perhaps the bigger issues today may be problems of supply and demand, resulting in the continued struggle of equity to get access to higher education for minorities. Consequently, a smaller pool of minority students in higher education would most likely impact the pipeline issues of recruitment of qualified diverse faculty. Furthermore, these data suggest that there will be a need for additional infrastructure and universities in the U.S. to accommodate the increase demand for a college education.

#### Demographic Changes Impact Availability of Faculty Pool

According to Chapa (2006), the trend of underrepresented minority faculty continued only with small increases well into 2000. In 2000-2001, African American represented 5% in faculty ranks of the 6.1% (1,656) of the total U.S. African-American Ph.D. population; and Latinos represented 3% in the faculty ranks of the 4.2% (1,157) of Latinos U.S. Ph.D. population (Chapa, 2006). These data suggest that the arguments about lack of qualified minority candidates and low availability are in part supported. Though these data suggest that there is an underrepresentation of racial and ethnic groups in faculty positions, there are major gaps in the literature explaining the nature of these disparities. Additionally, the increased level of diversification of students in higher

education institutions today will most likely increase the availability of a diversified labor market in hiring faculty, staff, and administrators in postsecondary institutions.

While there is a significant body of the literature addressing diversity in higher education that focuses on issues of women and African Americans, research is limited that addresses issues of other racial and ethnic groups such as Asians, Hispanics, and Native Americans. Quezada and Louque (2004) asserted that a major problem in recruitment of faculty of color is the lack of a pipeline due to insufficient levels of minority students in graduate programs. Additionally, Lowell and Long provided data that revealed that, although women constituted 25% of the sociologists employed full time by U.S colleges and universities in 1975, today they represent only 27% despite the increase in Ph.D.s awarded to women (as cited in Roos, 1997). According to Cantor (2001), only 4.9% of U.S. college teachers are Black. Even though the number of women in faculty positions is much greater than minorities, these data suggest that there is a slow progress made in the inclusiveness of women and racial and ethnic faculty in higher education.

Similar trends are identified across the nation that highlights the disproportional representation of the general population to the population makeup of colleges and universities. For instance, in 2001 the University of Illinois ranked 42nd among flagship universities in relation to the Black faculty hires, with African Americans making up only 2.6% of the total faculty pool (Hamilton, 2004). A recent study by Nelson (as cited in Hamilton, 2004) revealed that women and underrepresented racial and ethnic students are graduating with doctoral degrees in record high numbers. In 2000, women received 45% of all doctoral degrees and racial/ethnic graduates received 19%. Nelson argued that

while women and racial/ethnic students are graduating in record high numbers, the number of racial/ethnic applicants appears to be decreasing in the candidate pools for tenure-track positions. This disparity between qualified women and racial/ethnic groups and their representation in higher education is apparent among major universities and colleges.

### Climate and Culture of Postsecondary Institutions

The growing body of literature on racial/ethnic diversity places great emphasis on increasing the representation of women and racial/ethnic faculty. A study by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) called for organizational change in adjusting the curriculum, tenure hiring practices, reward and incentives, and admission practices in order to make diversity an inclusive idea to achieving excellence (Adam, 2006a). Adam (2006a) further revealed that current efforts to increase diversity on most campuses are unsuccessful. Consequently, universities are faced with many challenges. A study by Turner, Myers, and Creswell (1999) conducted at eight Midwestern universities found evidence of isolation, alienation, and racism towards faculty of color. This was largely due to the assumption that racial and ethnic faculty members were hired without sufficient qualifications and credentials. However, Quezada and Louque (2004) argued that the criteria for “collegiality” emphasizes “favoring... candidates with backgrounds, interests, and political and social perspectives similar to one’s own” (p.215). This suggests that if one’s credentials and qualifications do not mirror those of the recruiter, then the candidate is screened out as unqualified and eliminated for further consideration. Furthermore, it stands to reason that if diversity is

valued in higher education, then individuals with diverse backgrounds hold diverse experiences, and those experiences and qualifications should also be valued.

According to Aguirre (2000), even though racial and ethnic groups and women have been graduating in record numbers with bachelor and graduate degrees, the representation of racial/ethnic and women in faculty ranks has remained unchanged. In addition, there are many concerns about the availability of qualified faculty candidate pool. As previously explained, there are several scholars who argue that this is due to the “chilly climate,” resulting in isolation and exclusion faced by racial, ethnic, and women faculty in higher education and not due to lack of qualified racial and ethnic candidates (Aguirre, 2000; Turner et al., 1999). This suggests that recruitment efforts to attract qualified racial and ethnic candidates are not effective due to unwelcoming climates for racial and ethnic faculty. According to a study by Turner et al. (1999), a chilly climate was described by respondents as

being denied or overlooked for the tenure and promotion process, being held to standards higher than those for White faculty, having color be more important than credentials, being a “token” faculty member, being expected to handle racial and ethnic affairs, and, overall, expected to be the diverse spokesperson for the department. (p. 9)

Quezada and Louque (2004) stated that, although generally faculty of color engage in a high level of service to the community and spend a great deal of time to mentoring students of color, their efforts are not recognized as important in evaluating their overall performance for tenure consideration. Additionally, this suggests that university members of the community may not be welcoming of racial and ethnic faculty,

as their workload may hinder their tenure success. Though there is a great deal of literature about the climate and culture challenges in higher education, not much has been written on what institutions are doing to change the nature of the “chilly climate.”

### Challenges in Recruitment of Diverse Faculty

Universities are faced with many obstacles in their faculty recruitment efforts such as lack of top leadership commitment to support diversity, lack of training provided to search committees in regard to the importance of actively hiring for a diversified faculty, lack of understanding of affirmative action and the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, perceived shortage and pipeline problems, lack of clear expectations of policies and procedures in hiring for diversity, lack of congruence between job description and qualifications, low recruitment efforts exerted in hiring faculty from diversified posting sources to improve candidate pools, and a hostile climate for faculty of color. In addition, there is a persistent need for postsecondary institutions to hire individuals who “fit in,” thereby leading to the hiring individuals who think, act, and look like the rest of their academic environment. Gordon (2004) and Hale (2004) argued that search committees find ways to circumvent the affirmative action system, including the appointment of a woman or minority as “tokens” on the search panel so they can pass the affirmative action requirements. It can be argued that if universities only hire those who “fit in,” then nothing will change in the overall make up of the current population on college campuses, which continues to favor Caucasian males. This is supported by statistical data that show that 80% to 90% of faculty and staff are primarily Caucasians at most colleges and universities (Turner, 2002).

Although higher education institutions have exerted a great deal of effort in improving diversity overall, there are still major shortfalls when hiring and promoting racial and ethnic faculty and administrators on college campuses (Ataiyero, 2006). In a study by Turner et al. (1999), 77% of respondents indicated that diversity was a priority at their institutions; however, a very small percentage of those institutions had any form of policy or procedure in place to support racial and ethnic retention efforts. In the same study, the survey revealed a major disconnect between the desire for institutions in the recruitment and retention of faculty of color (77% respondents) and the low structural support to achieve these goals (p.10). The study further revealed that only 1% of those surveyed had allocated funding for racial and ethnic faculty recruitment. This suggests that support from top leadership is paramount to increasing diversity on college campuses.

Furthermore, Turner et al. (1999) revealed that recruitment of racial and ethnic faculty presented three main obstacles: a lack of qualified minority candidates, low representation of racial and ethnic groups on campuses, and incompatible salary offers to racial and ethnic candidates. However, a different study by the same scholars uncovered that most of the institutions surveyed in the Midwest reported that a high number of Ph.D. graduates transferred to other parts of the nation (Turner, et al., 1999). These data further indicated that the most challenging barrier to recruitment efforts is the myth that racial and ethnic faculty are unavailable in the Midwest, when in reality they are leaving the Midwest, perhaps due to lack of job offers. In a report by Trower and Chait (2002), data revealed that though there has been a steady increase of students of color and women in higher education, faculty of color have not increased at the same rate in the United



States. Yet a different report from Indiana University revealed that while there have been great increases in the number of minority doctoral recipients in certain fields of study, the representation of minority faculty remains constant (Drake, 2004).

In 2002, 1019 (19.4%) of the total U.S. doctoral recipients were minority in education, with only 10.6% representation in Big Ten universities; 358 (13.2%) were in Psychology, with only 5.1% in Big Ten faculty representation; and 79 (13.3%) were in Business and Management, with only 2.7% representation of minority faculty in Big Ten universities of all minority doctoral graduates in the U.S. (Indiana University, 2004). These data suggest that minority faculty in the Big Ten universities are underrepresented compared to the availability of doctoral graduates in the U.S. However, several opponents of affirmative-action programs argue that faculty of color are not qualified. Although based on the above data, this argument can no longer be supported because there are more qualified diverse candidates available for hire in the market today than ever before (Borden & Brown, 2006). In addition, these data suggest that even in the Midwest, where there are sufficient qualified candidate pools, faculty recruitment efforts are ineffective and hold a lower priority despite university beliefs about the importance of diversification of their workforce. Thus, the availability of qualified candidates in any given geographic location is often a reason given for not hiring a minority candidate not substantiated.

Today, compared to 20 years ago, an increasingly large number of students are graduating with both a master's and a doctoral degree, including students of color (Chang, 2005). However, myths about lack of qualified minority faculty candidates continue to erode the efforts needed to diversify the search process. Based on data from

the American Association of University Professors (AAUC), today there are more candidates with graduate degrees than ever before, yet underrepresentation of faculty of color persists at the university level. Using the National Center for Educational Statistics data, Quezada and Louque (2004) found that (of all the full time appointments) 84% of faculty positions are held by White males compared to 5.5% Asian Americans, 4.9% African Americans, 2.6% Hispanics, and .4% Native Americans.

Another explanation for the low minority faculty representation is a disconnect between the desired goals of public research universities in balancing the triad mission of teaching, research, and service. Yet, actual recruitment objectives focus heavily on research. Many faculty of color tend to have greater experience in teaching and engagement in service; yet, universities rarely give any substantial weight to these two missions (Hayden, 1997). Consequently, there is lower value placed on teaching and, therefore, undergraduate education holds a lower priority in most research institutions (Altbach, 2001).

According to Miller (1999), academic climate and culture does not support diversity among students, faculty, or staff. The lack of diversity on college campuses is most likely impacting students who lack role models and networks that can help them succeed in pursuing their careers in academia. Miller (1999) argued that this has resulted in a revolving door problem of retentions, both for students and faculty, as neither group finds the climate welcoming on college campuses. This suggests that the lack of diversity in the student and faculty body can have negative impacts on the success of minority students and faculty of color in academia. According to 2003 data reported in the *Digest of Educational Statistics (2004)*, only 15% of the total U.S. faculty in colleges and

universities were minority faculty--of which 6% were African American, 5% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% were Hispanic, and .5% were Native American/Alaska Native (2004). These data further revealed the disparity between faculty of color hired in faculty positions and the availability of candidates in a given geographic location. The same source also revealed that nearly half of the faculty were White males (47%) and 36% were White females. In addition, according to Stack (1991) women and racial and ethnic professors make considerably less than their White male counterparts. These data revealed that (with all things being equal), women make on the average about 6% less than White men, and minorities make about 8% less. Here again, all things being equal, the above data suggest that despite Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and affirmative-action policies, minorities and women continue to earn less in salary than their White male counterparts. As this salary disparity continues, so will the treatment of women and racial and ethnic minority groups, compounding the issues of access and equity in postsecondary institutions.

Higher education institutions are faced with many challenges in recruiting a diverse faculty workforce. These challenges are not limited to ineffective recruitment efforts, lack of pipeline and partnerships with the K-12 system, lack of effective admissions policies, and lack of clear hiring standards. According to the majority opinion of the *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) case, access to higher education for an all-inclusive diverse student population will continue to be a challenge for the minority students until improvements are made to the K-12 system. The U.S. Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) asserted that inequality and inadequate readiness for college of minority students will continue especially in lower quality schools of K-12 school systems

(Gandara et al., 2006). These scholars argue that postsecondary institutions need to partner with K-12 school systems, maintain close relationships to improve the pipeline, and assist to enhance their education standards and quality. The lack of effective recruitment policies in higher education admissions, poor educational standards in K-12 schools, and absence of effective pipelines in preparing undergraduate students for graduate studies (and eventually for faculty jobs) further damages the availability of qualified faculty of color.

Previous research suggests that the shortage of faculty of color is due to the low numbers of doctoral students in higher education (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002; Phillips, 2002; Smith et al., 2004). The lack of academic pipelines is one explanation given for the underrepresentation of minority faculty in higher education. According to American Council on Education, of the 482,256 master's degrees in 2001-2002, 17% were awarded to minority students, and of the 44,179 doctoral degrees, 13% were awarded to minority students (Ataiyero, 2006). Moreover, institutions are ranked based on their elite status; therefore, a degree from a prestigious institution is most likely to result in employment at a prestigious institution. This is problematic for minority graduate students who aspire to become faculty members. For example, since the representation of African American students in high prestige doctoral programs is low, there tends to be a low percent in hiring of African American faculty at those elite institutions (Allen, Epps, Guillory, Suh, & Bonous-Hammarth, 2000). While there is a continued lack of effective pipeline strategies to address the need to improve diversity in higher education, students of color are graduating in greater numbers today than ever before. Despite the increase in students of color earning doctoral degrees, faculty of color

remain underrepresented in higher education (Aguirre, 2000; Opp & Smith, 1994; Roach, 1999; Smith et al., 2004).

It is a well documented fact that African-American faculty in U.S. colleges and universities are underrepresented (Allen et al. 2000). In addition, Smith et al. (2004) argued that even in fields where there is a large pool of faculty of color such as psychology or education, faculty demographics are not diverse. This suggests that the recruitment and hiring policies and procedures are ineffective in reaching out in diverse job posting sources for attracting qualified faculty of color in higher education. Postsecondary institutions are unique in that they can affect the supply and demand of faculty as they educate students and then hire them for faculty positions. Therefore, it can be inferred that they have the ultimate control over who eventually make the faculty ranks.

#### *Hiring Policies and Practices*

In the last 10 years, there has been an increase in efforts among universities to hire more faculty of color in predominately White intuitions. Despite these efforts, government data revealed that little improvement has been made in diversifying faculty (Kayes & Singley, 2005). This suggests that efforts to hire more minority faculty have been ineffective. Kayes and Singley (2005) recommended that higher-level administrators convey their expectations of the hiring process more explicitly with search committees, but unfortunately such discussions are rarely a part of search process. The authors argued that universities make several assumptions when search committees are identified and

that members of the search committees will not bring biases in the selection process.

Another assumption is that search committee members are well trained and well qualified to engage in the recruitment of faculty. However, these assumptions continue to erode the hiring of a diverse workforce. According to Kayes and Singley (2005), the hiring committee needs professional development training in order to understand how one's own stereotypes can undermine the hiring of faculty of color and how to create a diverse candidate pool. Furthermore, the key to a successful search is the involvement of faculty in the hiring process.

In a different study, Knowles and Harleston (as cited in Holcomb-McCoy and Bradley, 2003) reviewed 11 major research universities and uncovered that department chairperson and search committees lacked the proper training in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty. The study concluded that it was not surprising that universities have not been successful in hiring, retaining, and increasing diverse faculty as a result. There is a large body of research highlighting the many obstacles and predictors of minority underrepresentation (Holcomb-McCoy & Bradley, 2003; Opp & Smith, 1994). Phillips' (2002) study of 12 American universities revealed that hiring policies may require review. According to Richard Tapia, professor of Computational and Applied Mathematics at Rice University's George R. Brown School of Engineering, "Faculty hiring is the most traditional, most conservative, and most out of date of processes of any process we use in universities" (Phillips, 2002, p. 20). In the same study, surveys indicated overwhelmingly that search committees were not well trained and lacked the human resource skills necessary to conduct effective searches for candidates. This suggests that hiring policies and procedures need to be reviewed and updated to

address the new evaluation criteria that can better reflect a variety of experiences and skills that candidates possess today.

While the literature is extensive with respect to the challenges women and racial and ethnic faculty face in higher education institutions, studies on racial and ethnic faculty recruitment on the effectiveness of hiring policies and practices are limited. Policies and procedures vary greatly among the various higher education institutions, and there is no set of “best practices” in hiring or promotion of faculty that has been proven to be effective. A study of 300 participants undertaken by Tierney and Bensimon revealed that the standards and criteria that institutions use--both in selection of tenure faculty and tenure promotions--lack standardized process and have created procedural problems in academe (Aguirre, 2000). They contended that it is not unusual for individuals to be hired or promoted to a position without a search, even when they are not qualified. This practice passes established policies in place. This suggests that a search committee may ignore established policies and procedures when opportunities exist for hiring referrals, thereby bypassing posting requirements, which may further put minorities at a disadvantage.

#### *Recommended Best Practices in Hiring Diverse Faculty*

Opp and Smith (1994) suggested that institutions that are successful in the recruitment of diverse faculty engage in the following practices: (a) Search committees are comprised with a minority professional, (b) diverse job posting sources are utilized, and (c) the process is linked to a strong network with other universities to assist with referrals. Furthermore, higher-level administration support is imperative in the success of hiring and retaining diversity in the faculty ranks. Furthermore, there have been few

empirical studies that consider the hiring conditions under which a diverse faculty is hired. A study by Smith, et al. (2004) suggests that there are three main conditions under which minority faculty is hired. These are (a) the job description used to recruit faculty where diversity is a compelling unit interest, (b) special hires waive the search and/or offer opportunity for targeted hires or spousal hires, and (c) the search is conducted by a diverse search committee. This suggests that without the existence of one of these conditions, diverse faculty may have difficulty being hired through the regular hire process. It is important to note that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has developed clear, standardized procedures for such issues as faculty appointments, faculty evaluations, and student evaluations (Adam, 2006b). Twenty-eight years have elapsed since AAUP made the recommendation to use affirmative-action programs as a means to achieve diversity in the faculty ranks in higher education; however, women and ethnically diverse faculty remain underrepresented (Cockrell, Mitchell, Middleton & Campbell, 1999; Dooley, 2003). Despite these established guidelines, scholars suggest that these policies are not utilized in the hiring process, thereby resulting in disparity between the desired goals to diversify and the actual outcomes of a hiring process.

There are several challenges associated with leveling the playing field of fostering and creating a diversified workforce in higher education. Many argue that recruitment should be focused on hiring the “best qualified” candidate. It seems, however, the criteria for the “best qualified” is subjective and varies widely among search committees. Springer and Baez (2002) argued that “hiring a well-qualified minority candidate who brings the additional quality of a different experience, rather than an



equally qualified White applicant who does not bring that added benefit is not discrimination; continuing a system that consistently replicates the overwhelming White composition of the faculty is.” (p.1) This suggests that although universities often have campus-wide hiring policies, hiring at the department level may be lacking such policies, or the policies may not be explicitly stated.

### *Leadership Support for Inclusiveness*

Hiring policies and practices are effective when they are supported and implemented by university leadership at various different levels throughout the organization. Without strong leadership support to embrace an all inclusive climate, faculty success and retention is likely to be affected. According to Aguirre (2000), there are several scholars who found that racial and ethnic faculty felt supported and were generally satisfied with their academic workplace. In contrast, other scholars argued that diversity among faculty, staff, and students is not supported on college campuses (Miller, 1999). Moreover, some argue that this unwelcoming climate is evidenced by the increased levels of employment discrimination law suits in recent years that suggest that the academic environment is not supportive to the racial and ethnic faculty.

### *Key Employment Court Cases*

Several court cases have resulted from perceived lack of support. This is highlighted in the case of *Marcy Wand v. University of California at Berkeley* (1990) where Ms. Wand, an Asian-American faculty member, was denied tenure twice with no concrete reason. The university settled for a \$1 million out of court (Wong, 1996). In a similar law suit, Professor Clark was awarded \$1.4 million in a race discrimination lawsuit for disparate treatment in tenure promotion (Leap, 1995). In these cases, the

courts recognized that the subjective nature of the tenure process in the evaluation of academic personnel creates a higher probability for race and other illegal forms of discrimination in higher education. In another case, an associate professor at University of Texas filed a lawsuit against the university because she was declined tenure and was bypassed for a promotional opportunity. The plaintiff claimed that the university's policies in granting tenure and promotions was not consistent with current practices and lacked clear standards of measurement resulting in discrimination. In this case (pending resolution), the university argued that the plaintiff was not qualified for the promotion because she was not a full professor. She asserted that the university promoted a White female who was also an associate professor to a chair position in the College of Communications. The data further revealed that 83 similar cases against the university were filed through EEOC (Evans, 2002).

Similarly, a professor and chairperson of the English department at Mills College was denied tenure. The faculty member filed a lawsuit with charges that no African American had been granted tenure in the college's 145 years (Norris, 1995). Many other lawsuits and cases have been filed against various public universities where the universities' recruitment, tenure, and promotional policies and processes were subjective and inconsistent, which resulted in disparate treatment to racial and ethnic faculty and administrators (Din, 2002; Peabody, 1998; Sundaram, 2000a; Sundaram, 2000b; Weiss, 2001). Major compensatory damages were awarded to plaintiffs in the above cases. It is also likely that cases of discrimination go unreported; faculty may not always report instances of discrimination in hiring practices due to obvious reason of repercussions.

Faculty of color may face racism and sexism. Haag (2005) indicated that an institutional climate that fosters a sense of isolation and lack of collegial support is the main reason for this form of blatant discrimination. According to Shoop and Dunkee (2001), “The majority of litigations are based on failure to know relevant laws and practice sound management based on an understanding of existing court decisions” (p. 13). Though universities need to recognize legal implications, employment practices should reflect a fair and equitable system. Unfortunately, despite past employer violations, the courts have traditionally supported universities that claim “lack of collegiality in a candidate” as the main reason for discharge with the claims of not “fitting in” (Shoop & Dunkee, 2001). This suggests that postsecondary institutions have a great deal of work to do in creating an all inclusive fair and equitable climate. A strong top leadership that can be supportive is essential in achieving good practices and in establishing a welcoming climate for all individuals.

#### Employment Laws and Affirmative Action Programs

Affirmative-action programs have been long established to aid in taking corrective actions to prevent discrimination in hiring practices. Affirmative action was intended to provide equal employment opportunity to individuals regardless of one’s race, sex, ethnicity, or national origin in regards to the recruitment, selection, employee benefits, promotions, and hiring practices. Although affirmative-action programs were intended to prevent past effects of ongoing discrimination, there are many misconceptions about the intention of these programs (Blanks, 2005; Heilman, Block, & Stathatos, 1997). This is largely due to government-mandated compliance requirements of establishing “reasonable goals and timetables” when contractors or universities

receiving grants were cited with discriminatory practices. Consequently, there are many negative opinions of such requirements, forming misconceptions of goals as quotas and preferential treatment given to minorities and women and resulting in controversial debates about the effectiveness of these programs (Blanks, 2005).

Today, enforcement of violations are uncommon, mainly because affirmative-action programs are often misinterpreted to give “preferential treatment or quotas” to minorities and women, which some claim to resulting in reverse discrimination (Muchinsky, 2000). Despite such controversies, many United States presidents have recognized the need to enact laws and or policies that could address the high levels of inequality among citizens in the U.S. President Kennedy in 1961 and President Johnson in 1965 enacted executive orders (Order 10925 and Order 11246 respectively) to address equality in hiring for government contractors and others receiving government funding including universities.

Johnson’s Order 11246 required all contractors securing federal contacts, including universities who secure research contracts and grants, to sign an agreement to not discriminate in hiring of applicants for employment based on race, color, religion, or national origin. Based on the need to enact this order, it can be inferred that racial discrimination was prevalent and necessitated affirmative-action programs. On October 1968, sex was also added to this provision via Executive Order #11246 (Department of Labor, 2002). The order impacted all government contractors with 50 employees or more and who received \$50,000 or more in funding. All government contractors were required to develop and implement affirmative-action programs to be monitored by the Federal Compliance Agency. Executive Order 11246 specifically required affirmative action in

order to insure employment neutrality in hiring practices in regards to one's race, religion, sex, color, and national origin.

Executive Order 11246 required employers to take additional action to assure recruitment, employment, and promotions of qualified individuals who were previously excluded. In addition, the order required higher education institutions to address the problem of underutilization with the development of affirmative-action programs with specific goals and timetables to overcome underutilization of minorities and women. The executive order defines underutilization as "having fewer women and minorities in a particular job than would reasonably be expected by their availability" (Department of Labor, 2002). Beneficiaries, such as universities of federally supported contracts and grants, are expected to exert a good faith effort to monitor compliance of affirmative-action programs at their institutions. This is due to the alleged systematic institutional exclusions and discriminations in higher education. These orders were effective during the Kennedy and Johnson era, yet they lost their impact during the Bush and Reagan eras because of the change in from a Democratic to a Republican political party.

Previous studies suggest that the Executive Orders and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including Equal Employment Act of 1972, have not been effective in achieving their intended goals and objectives. This is largely due to the misinterpretations by the proponents and opponents of affirmative action and inconsistencies of the laws (Brett, 1992; Hill, 1987; Jenkins, 1999; Rhodes, 2001). Moreover, government laws and Supreme Court decisions in the area of diversity have failed to provide a clear-cut guide to addressing these controversial viewpoints (*Gratz v. Bollinger*, 2003; *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). Many of the laws were implemented to address the societal pressures

during any given era of the nation. Such was the case with the challenge of “separate but equal” opportunities and facilities to African Americans in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896). In this 1896 Supreme Court decision, the Supreme Court ruled against Louisiana’s Constitution Civil Rights Act of 1875, which promoted “separate but equal” railway car accommodations (Jenkins, 1999). In addition, the court maintained firm “separate but equal” laws guiding the nation for almost 20 years. Although racial tensions continued to erode equality through the “Jim Crow” laws in different states where “facilities provided for Negroes, particularly in the crucial field of free public education, were separate but not equal” (Latham, as cited in Jenkins, 1999, p.8).

According to Jenkins (1999), these “separate but equal” laws worked until another controversial case landed on the Supreme Court, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), wherein the African American plaintiffs from various states (Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware) challenged the “separate but equal” through the use of the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees equal protection to all Americans. The Supreme Court of Delaware ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, stating that “separate but equal” was in reality not equal, thereby overturning the lower courts’ decisions. Delaware’s Supreme Court ruling stated that students in public schools should be granted equal opportunity and access to quality education without being discriminated against. The *Brown v. Board* (1954) decision along with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 guided the nation for well over 40 years without major incidents in higher education. This is evidenced by several court decisions, which upheld the Brown decision endorsing equal opportunities and protection for citizens in the United States without regard to their race, sex or ethnicity (Jenkins, 1999).

Federally-mandated laws including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were enacted to prevent discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion and national origin (Shoop & Dunklee, 2001). The provisions of this act extend to the following organizations:

- a. All private employers of 15 or more employees;
- b. All educational institutions, public and private;
- c. State and local government agencies;
- d. Labor unions with 15 or more employees; and
- e. Joint labor-management committees for apprenticeship and training.

(Wingfield, 1982, p. 17)

There are many problems with Title VII. For one, the burden of proof for discrimination rests with the employee; therefore, such cases are hard to prove and take a long time to resolve. This could be one reason why President Johnson implemented the affirmative action order in 1965 right after the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In addition, the following laws have been enacted to prevent discrimination in employment: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prevents discrimination based on one's disability when reasonable accommodations can be provided; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) prohibits illegal employment discrimination of individuals over the age of 40; and the Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits wage discrimination of individuals who perform the same job duties (Shoop & Dunklee, 2001). These laws have been enacted to assure that all individuals are afforded equal employment opportunities, and they have addressed the impacts of disparate treatment or disparate impact. Disparate treatment is a result of unlawful discrimination by an employer in the hiring, promotion,

salary or benefits of employment based on race, sex, color, religion, or national origin; it is the result of employer policies, which have an adverse impact on the protected group (Wolkinson & Block, 1996). In addition, employment tests and requirements set by the employer may affect a minority group in an adverse manner, thereby influencing his/her chance of being hired.

Discrimination cases are extremely hard to prove and can be a costly undertaking for plaintiffs. Two cases court cases--*Griggs v. Duke Power* (1971) and *McDonnell Douglas v. Green* (1973)--are landmark cases that have guided discrimination court cases in recent years. These cases were filed through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alleging discrimination based on the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In *Griggs v. Duke Power* (1971) the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the plaintiff that the intelligence test used in reemployment screening had a disparate impact on African Americans and therefore was discriminatory. *Griggs v. Duke Power* set a standard on the use of employment tests that adversely impacted minority candidates in acquiring a job. Unlike in *Griggs v. Duke Power*, the Supreme Court ruled against the plaintiff in the *McDonnell Douglas v. Green*. The employee's protest actions against the employer who had laid him off resulted in a defeat even though the employer discriminated against Douglas. While the plaintiff had a strong case, he lost the case due to retaliatory actions against the employer. In both cases, the burden of proof is on the employee to establish a prima facie case demonstrating without a doubt that the employee was discriminated against. Under the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the plaintiff must establish the prima facie case, defined in the *McDonnell Douglas v. Green* (1973) case as follows:



- I. He/she belongs to the racial minority group;
- II. He/she applied for a job for which they were qualified and for which the employer was seeking applicants;
- III. He/she was rejected for the position despite their qualifications;
- IV. The employer continued to seek for candidates to hire for the position that the person is suing about.

This standard is applied even today in discrimination cases. The order defines affirmative action in the context of equal opportunities to all candidates: "The contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color or national origin, and the employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin" (Cose, as cited in Wolkinson & Block, 1996, p. 33).

According to President Roosevelt, "Sooner or later, affirmative action will die a natural death" (Wolkinson & Block, 1996, p. 14). This is due to the sentiments of many individuals that programs based on racial preferences--even though they are intended to bring fairness and equity into the employment and recruitment arenas-- often result in a disparate impact on the protected group (Wolkinson & Block, 1996). In addition, several court cases have challenged the affirmative-action programs and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by asserting the notion of reverse discrimination. Such was the case in *University of California Regents v. Bakke* (1978), wherein the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the White male student candidate who challenged the quota system in the university's medical school. However, the Supreme Court supported the higher education

institution in using race as a “plus factor” and as one of many factors in admissions. It also provided a strong opinion that a diverse student body of many races is a compelling government interest.

### Affirmative Action Programs Challenged

During the same time period, affirmative-action programs were also being challenged in the private sector via *United Steel Workers v. Weber* (1979). Though the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the employer’s affirmative-action program to achieve a certain number of blacks in craft, the craft’s training program was legal in order to achieve parity with the labor pool. However, the plan was only approved for a short period to rectify the disparate impact of past discrimination in craft trades. Furthermore, the court affirmed in both *United Steel Workers v. Weber* (1979) as well as *Johnson v. Transportation Agency* (1987) that no White employees shall lose their jobs as a result of affirmative programs, and this program was approved for short term duration only. The courts generally supported affirmative-action programs that provided evidence of need of such programs to provide remedies for past discrimination in a very narrowly tailored manner. Even then, the courts were reluctant to support affirmative-action programs.

This is highlighted in several Supreme Court decisions including in the case of *Wygant v. Jackson* (1986), wherein the court rejected the Jackson Board of Education. Jackson Board of Education’s argument was based in support of their collective bargaining agreement which provided for layoff of a more senior White employee over the less senior minority employees on the grounds that minority students needed role models. There was no evidence of prior discrimination for the court to support a race-based remedy in this case. The courts hold a strict test to allow affirmative-action

programs with very specific exceptions. To remedy present effects of past discrimination, programs cannot negatively impact non-minorities, and the programs have to be short lived (*Hopwood v. State of Texas*, 1996; Jenkins, 1999). The test of affirmative-action programs was further challenged in the case of *Middleton v. City of Flint* (1996) in which an affirmative-action program was implemented in the city of Flint, Michigan, to allocate 50% of all promotions to minority police officers (Jenkins, 1999). The city argued that minorities were underrepresented in higher level positions; however, the court rejected the argument, stating that underrepresentation does not necessarily mean discrimination. The city had failed to establish the strict and narrowly tailored test based on current effects of past discrimination. Additionally, data reflected that the city was making progress in promoting minorities; therefore, affirmative-action programs were not supported by the court. It is evident as in the case of Flint that the courts impose very narrowly tailed tests to qualify for affirmative-action programs; in this case the court imposed a five-prong test, which, if because it was not met, did not gain the support of the court.

In addition, the courts have not been consistent in their approach to addressing the percent of representation in a firm of any given group to reflect the labor pool as in the case of *Podberesky v. Kirwan* (1994), wherein the court argued that one can make the comparison to achieving parity of the labor pool to one's own organization in respect to unskilled labor. However, when a job requires specific skills, then the relevant labor pool is individuals who are qualified. This suggests that affirmative-action programs may have been more effective in unskilled labor pools, but these programs may not have been enforceable in the skilled labor nor were they supported in the court room.

## Impact of Proposition 209 in California

Proposition 209 in California negatively impacted student admissions and subsequently has impacted minority faculty hires. Generally, in the absence of affirmative-action programs, there is a higher degree of disparate impact on the minorities, especially in student admission in higher education as evidenced by the consequences of Proposition 209 in California. In 1995 just prior to Proposition 209, of the 7.5% graduating African American seniors, 4.3% were entering University of California. After the passage of Proposition 209, 2.9% African Americans were admitted at the university. Similarly, Chicanos (Mexican origin) while they made up 26% of high school graduates only 11.1% entered University of California after Proposition 2; this number dropped to 8.8% (Brett, 1992; Gandara et al., 2006). The second major impact of Proposition 209 was a greater enrollment of minority students in 2-year community colleges; thus, California State University (CSU) and the University of California (UC) have become engaged with developing effective transfer agreements with community colleges (Gandara et al., 2006). These data suggest that the decrease in minority student enrollment specifically in prestigious institutions is likely to result in the lack of pipeline in the recruitment of faculty of color at public research universities.

Experts assert that the impact of the ban on affirmative-action programs in a state will likely be determined by how the state's local government and public universities handle those programs that may be impacted (Gorchow, 2006). For instance, in California, several areas of public employment, education, and contracting were impacted by the affirmative-action ban, whereas in Washington, recruitment and outreach programs remained intact (Gorchow, 2006). Quezada and Louque (2004) reported that

California State University is comprised of over 22,814 faculty of which 76% are White, 13% Asians, 7% Latino, and .6% are Native American in the tenure-track system. This suggests that the outcome, impact, and changes in affirmative-action programs depend on the views of current leadership and their interpretation of the law, both at the state levels as well as the institutional level.

Furthermore, opponents of the affirmative-action programs claim that the programs gave an unfair advantage to minorities and women, resulting in reverse discrimination. However, supporters claim that the nation has not reached a point in time where one is judged on his/her own merits without regard to color or ethnicity. Therefore, the current ban of the affirmative-action programs has not resolved many of the problems facing the nation today. Specifically, the issues of discrimination resulting in disparate treatment and disparate impact need to be resolved as many policies have an adverse impact on the minority group. Decisions in some states, including Michigan, have been made to ban affirmative- action programs, yet no solutions have been provided regarding how these issues can be addressed. The issue of disparate impact is a major topic of discussion among policy makers and education administrators alike. Many have argued that the U.S. has not resolved the imbalance of equality in regards to the quality of education in K-12 that will likely impact access in higher education for diverse students. This continues to result in an unfair playing field for minorities and underrepresented groups alike; they often come from underprivileged school systems with poor education systems, yet they are expected to have the same credentials, such as test scores that are weighted heavily in admissions (Bowen & Bok, 2000; Marable, 1995). Some may argue that the college entry exams have an adverse impact on students from low socio-

economic backgrounds and who attend poor K-12 education system. Moreover, these students are unable to compete with students from well-to-do families who may have experienced a high quality education system. For instance, students who attend good schools may have access to computers in school, whereas students from poor neighborhoods may not have had access to technology.

In the last 10 years, the courts have resisted granting awards in favor of affirmative actions on the basis of providing remedy to past impact of discrimination. This is largely due to allegations of reverse discrimination. However, there have been several cases involving higher education that have been challenged with the changing demographics, resulting in increased debates over access and equity in higher education. For instance, in the case of *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996), unlike in Bakke case, the Circuit Court ruled against the Texas education system and stated that diversity is not a compelling government interest, especially when race in itself is used to diversify the student body. In addition, the court asserted that state universities and law schools must evaluate students on an individual basis rather than resorting to quotas to increase diversity. This approach, however, fails to adhere to the state's compelling interest to diversity as established through strict scrutiny.

#### Impact of Initiative 1-200 in the State of Washington

In November of 1998, residents in the state of Washington voted to approve to ban affirmative action by 59%. By spring of 1999, the impact was already evident as college officials started to see a drop in the Black student's applicants at the university's law school by 41%, Filipino students by 26%, and Hispanics by 21% from the prior year (Healy, 1998). Prior to the passing of the initiative, the president of the university,

Richard L. McCormick, announced, “We would be taking a step backwards and turning our back on a tool that’s been so productive in transforming society” (Healy, 1998, p.2). It is evident that without affirmative-action initiatives, access to higher education is problematic for all citizens.

### University of Michigan Court Cases

The two most recent Supreme Court landmark cases at the University of Michigan have paved the way to the future policies and practices that will affect the way higher education institutions address the issues of access and equity both in student admissions and faculty hires. The Supreme Court rulings in *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) have most likely altered how public research universities address current admissions policies regarding the recruitment of minority students (*Gratz v. Bollinger*, 2003; *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). In *Gratz v. Bollinger*, the Supreme Court ruled that the use of point or quota system as part of the institution’s affirmative-action initiatives in undergraduate admissions is likely to result in reverse discrimination. However, in *Grutter v. Bollinger* the Supreme Court supported the benefits of diversity as a compelling government interest in higher education. The use of diversity as a “plus factor,” one of the many factors in considered in law school admissions was therefore legal. As a result, concerns about affirmative-action policies that influence access and equity are likely to continue in the years ahead. This chapter concludes with Bennett’s Model (1993), a conceptual framework considered in this study.

### Conceptual Framework

Bennett’s (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity provides a lens to capture the most applicable theory in analyzing and evaluating the successes or

failures of hiring practices. Bennett's theory provides three levels of intercultural sensitivity in examining the hiring processes: (a) the acceptance level, (b) the minimization level, and (c) the defense level (Kayes, 2006). Bennett's theory also provides a perspective to better understand the level of acceptance or resistance to diverse hiring. The theory provides a lens for reactions towards candidates (applicants) to explain why individuals are accepted or avoided by others in a selection process based on their personality (e.g., ethnicity, race, sex, and national origin). It also explains the avoidance of persons who are different from themselves with respect to race, religion, or political philosophy. Consequently, candidates may be denied employment opportunities because of their national origin rather than job qualifications.

#### Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Bennett's (1993) model of intercultural sensitivity provides an overview of the various stages of an individual's development (see Table 1). Bennett's theoretical lens has great potential in identifying reasons why certain candidates that apply for jobs may have a better chance of being hired over other candidates. The level of acceptance or rejection of a candidate due to their ethnicity or minority status can be explored. The theory will further aid in addressing disparities in pay offers, levels, and promotions of candidates who are hired and accepted in an organization versus those candidates who are not welcomed in an organization. Therefore, Bennett's theory has many applications in analyzing and explaining the factors that inhibit or enhance final tenure faculty hiring decisions, as well as identifying the level of resistance evident in organizational culture or climate.



Table 1

*Bennett's Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*

THE ETHNOCENTRIC STAGES			
Denial	Isolation	Separation	Rejection
Defense	Denigration	Superiority	Reversal
Minimization	Physical Universalism	Transcendent Universalism	
THE ETHNORELATIVES STAGES			
Acceptance	Respect for behavior difference	Respect for value difference	
Adaptation	Empathy	Pluralism	
Integration	Contextual Evaluation	Constructive Marginality	

From Bennett, M.J. (1993). A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R.M. Paige (Ed), *Education for the Intercultural Experience*, p.29. Boston: Intercultural Press.

*The Ethnocentric Stages*

Bennett's ethnocentric stage is defined as "assuming that the worldview of one's own culture is central to all reality" (1993, p. 30). Any deviation from one's own culture results in a variety of meanings learners attach to the cultural differences from complete denial, rejection of a different culture, to minimizing the existence of one's culture and its importance. Therefore, someone who may be in the complete ethnocentric stage is likely to not consider any cultural differences of another. Bennett asserted that physical isolation is likely to occur among a homogeneous population, thereby leading to a preference to distance oneself from others who are different. The isolation stage results in separation of oneself from difference when confronted: "The term defense refers to a posture intended to counter the impact of specific cultural differences perceived as

threatening” (1993, p. 34). Bennett suggested that culture is likely ignored in the defense and denial stage. However, individuals in denial ignore issues and hope they will go away, while individuals in the defense stage of development normally recognize cultural differences but choose to ignore them by putting up defenses. The defense stage occurs within three categories: (a) denigration, (b) superiority, and (c) reversal. According to Bennett (1993), denigration occurs when individuals counter their defense against cultural differences by evaluating it negatively or engaging in negative stereotyping. The superiority stage of defense occurs when individuals perceive other cultures as occupying to a lower-status position. On the other hand, the reverse stage is the beginning stages of development where individuals help others achieve the superiority status and embracing of host-culture (reversal). This stage also help individuals in recognizing that one’s own culture may not be all too superior after all.

The move away from defense to the development stage occurs when individuals perceive some general good in all cultures. According to Bennett (1993), the last stage of one’s view of superiority of one’s own culture is the stage of minimization. Minimization occurs when other cultures are trivialized even when cultural differences are recognized; they are labeled as unimportant compared to the acknowledgement of cultural similarities. In this stage, differences are minimized and similarities are reinforced. Minimization can be categorized as physical universalism and transcendent universalism. In physical universalism, similarities are recognized that everyone has to eat, work, and so on, by emphasizing physical similarities among individuals. Individuals in this stage fail to consider cultural context as they view the world from their own cultural framework in making general assumptions about human beings. In the transcendent universalism,

general universal statements are made in an attempt to find common ground among cultures (e.g., We are all children of God; Bennett, 1993).

### *The Ethnorelative Stages*

In Bennett's ethnorelative stage, meaning-making of cultures can only be understood within the cultural context (1993). In adaptation, appreciating cultural differences is essential in recognizing that there may be good or bad differences. Cultural adaptation may occur based on cultural behaviors. This stage of development emphasizes one's development in recognizing that there are good and bad people in all cultures, and that one's own culture is not superior or central to the reality of the worldviews. Understanding the reality of what individuals have by virtue of their own culture helps the development of empathy and a sense of respect for reality and experiencing the world differently. Pluralism is defined through the perspectives of intercultural sensitivity, which suggests that "culture is not only different, but that such differences must always be understood totally within the context of the relevant culture" (p.55). This means that cultural differences are better experienced and understood within one's cultural frame with two or more cultures. Therefore, pluralism is better understood when categorized based on "bicultural" or "multiculturalism" (p. 55). The development of multiculturalism is gained through in-depth experiences, such as living with another culture for an extended period of time. Pluralism is achieved through internationalization by having more than one cultural frame of reference, and it is completely achieved when an individual reaches the point of development where he/she respects his/her own culture and the culture of others.

Finally, Bennett claimed that integration occurs when the person experiences true multiculturalism. "Integration occurs when a person understands that his or her identity emerges from the act of defining identity itself. The goal is not to re-affiliate with one culture, nor is it simply to reestablish comfort with a multiplicity of worldviews" (1993, p. 60). Integration is fully achieved through both contextual evaluation and constructive marginality. "Contextual evaluation is a development beyond adaptation where one attains the ability to analyze and evaluate situations from one or more chosen cultural perspectives" (p.61). Constructive marginality, on the other hand, is understood by describing "marginality, where someone who operates outside of normal cultural boundaries" (p. 63). Bennett describes an individual's development in this final stage as someone who is outside all cultural frames of reference, one who can see things from many different perspectives and therefore has no natural cultural identity.

According to Bennett, intercultural sensitivity is not a natural phenomenon. However, with some education and training in intercultural communication, individuals can move towards changing and accepting other cultures. According to Hoopes, "Intercultural learning is not the fullness with which one knows each culture, but the degree to which the process of cross-cultural learning, communication and human relations has been mastered" (as cited in Paige, 1993, p. 20). Bennett asserted that cultural competences can be developed by having more exposure to individuals of different cultures, thereby increasing one's cognitive development in cultural sensitivity. This suggests that hiring a diverse workforce will most likely increase one's cultural development and competences. Other opportunities of one's cultural sensitivity and development occur when by comparing and contrasting worldviews or bicultural

experiences. This form of sense-making of the world aids in understanding cultural differences. Finally, making meaning and sense of one's own identity increases one's experiences as constructs of oneself by increasing one's consciousness of others. The end results are a greater sense of respect for other cultures, values, and behavior differences, thereby leading to the acceptance stage of development. In the acceptance stage, cultural differences are recognized and respected (Bennett, 1993).

This chapter provided the relevant literature that exists in the area of diversity, affirmative action, and hiring policies and practices. Additionally, the chapter highlighted the challenges faced by postsecondary institutions and the way they are coping with the evolving and changing of state laws in reference to the affirmative-action programs. The chapter concluded with an introduction of Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity that would most likely impact recruitment efforts.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This study focuses on three major themes: (a) understanding and uncovering what faculty hiring policies and procedures exist in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern university; (b) analyzing and understanding how university faculty hiring policies and procedures are understood, interpreted, and implemented at the college and department level; and (c) exploring the beliefs, assumptions, and values of individuals that may affect faculty hiring outcomes, especially in light of the most recent ban on affirmative-action programs in the state. By studying the three major areas listed above, the study uncovers the climate issues as well as provides recommendations for best practices in hiring tenured faculty. This chapter is organized as follows: research design, contextual framework, methods, role of the researcher, and limitations of the study.

#### Research Design

The primary question is as follows: What are the factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of a diverse tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university? The following sub-questions that were utilized to guide this research are as follows:

1. What policies and practices exist around diversity in faculty hiring at the College of Agriculture?
2. How do those involved in the faculty hiring decisions in postsecondary education understand, interpret, and implement policies and practices to diversify faculty hiring?
3. What impact does a recent ban on the state's affirmative-action programs have on changes of current policies and practices in hiring diverse faculty?

This study used a case study design through qualitative method for data collection and analysis. A single case study approach was used to gain a deeper and more complete understanding of the phenomenon (Yin, 2003) by focusing on a college within the university. A qualitative approach in data gathering, data analysis, site selection and participant selection enriches the study by concentrating within a specific discipline at a Midwestern university, thereby capturing participants' deeper feelings about issues of diversity through the use of thick, rich description to strengthen the overall study (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2003).

### Context

This study was situated on the campus of a Midwestern university at the College of Agriculture. There are a total of three departments within the college that were used for data collection through semi-structured interviews followed by a focus group. The following background information will serve as a context for the study.

#### Midwestern University and College of Agriculture

The institution is well known for its global outreach and applied research while providing over 200 nationally recognized programs on campus (McGlynn, 2006). The university actively engages in federally-funded research and outreach activities though its affiliates with federal agencies, such as the National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. In addition to the experimental station, the College of Agriculture is also well recognized for its international and extension engagement and partnerships. The land-grant mission of teaching, research, and service was established through the Morrill Act of 1862. As a land-grant institution, the university is well known for its contributions to the nation and

the world in scientific discoveries ranging from anti-cancer prevention drugs to plant and animal pesticides and disease control including but not limited to wheat, cherry trees, and Christmas trees (McGlynn, 2006).

Today, the institution continues to value the core values of the university emphasized by its current president, who inspires to move the university from a land-grant institution to a globally-focused institution. The university's ongoing, integrated initiatives are to improve and develop innovation in teaching, research, and public service with an emphasis on social responsibility. Based on the Institution's registrar data (*Institution Facts*, n.d.), in the fall of 2007 enrollment reached 46,045, of which 34,018 or 73.9% were Caucasian, 7,414 or 16.1% were minority, 3,869 or 8.4% were international students, and 744 or 1.6% were other. Of the 7,414 minority students, 3,408 were Black, 400 Chicano, 909 Hispanic, 329 American Indian, and 2,368 Asian/Pacific Islander. While international student enrollment increased 9.7% over last year, national student diversity decreased by 19.1%. This is most likely due to the impact from the ban of affirmative action in the state in 2006.

The university strives to embrace diversity not only in the student population but also in its faculty. According to the Institution (*Office of Planning and Budget*, n.d.), in fall 2005 the university employed 2,621 ranked faculty, of which 71.2% of its total faculty was comprised of full-time tenure-track faculty. Minorities comprised of 19.6% and women 44.1% of new faculty hires in 2005-2006; however, this percent includes visiting international scholars. In fall 2006, the College of Agriculture had a total of 287 tenure-track faculty in 2007-2008 school year of which 23.7% were women and 14.6% were minority tenure track faculty. In fall of 2007, a total of 19 tenure-track faculty were



hired in the college, of which 15.8% or 3 were women and 5.3% or 1 was a minority tenure-track hire.

### College of Agriculture: Two Prior Assessments

Two prior studies<sup>3</sup> were conducted in the College of Agriculture and were utilized to provide a fundamental contextual framework for this study. First, in 2006, eight focus groups were utilized to gather preliminary data through structured conversation to assess the diversity needs of the college. Second, in spring 2007 as a follow-up to the focus groups, an electronic survey of the entire college was distributed. These two studies were conducted by the Office of Diversity and Pluralism in the College of Agriculture to assess the needs of the college constitution and to assess the challenges of diversification in the college. The themes that have emerged from the two studies highlight many of the obstacles and opportunities the college continues to experience in diversifying its faculty, student, and staff population. This study has emerged from the key findings from these two studies. As one of the main researchers in these two studies, this researcher has access to the data in both studies.

### Methods

Creswell (2003) suggested that a researcher should utilize a data collection method that is most appropriate in answering one's research question and intended analysis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that a researcher's approach to data collection will ultimately affect the outcomes and analysis of data in answering the

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<sup>3</sup> The researcher was on the team that implemented both the focus group diversity study, and the college wide electronic surveys.

research questions. Therefore, a qualitative, case study approach was utilized in collecting a rich, thick description of the phenomenon in the study.

#### Location

A Midwestern university was purposefully selected based on its past experiences with the issues of diversity, size, and the triad missions of research, teaching, and service. Data were collected from three primary departments within College of Agriculture, which will remain nameless for the purpose of this research, as follows: (a) Department A; (b) Department B; and (c) Department C. Moreover, the site was purposefully selected given the ease of access and entry to the information and the participants due to this researcher's position as the diversity specialist in the college. This case study was conducted in the College of Agriculture at this institution, and the preliminary findings through two studies executed during 2006-2007 school year that set the contextual framework for the study. In addition, the two most recent Supreme Court rulings about the University of Michigan are likely to impact postsecondary institutions that are now grappling with changes to university policies and procedures to comply with to the court decisions. Site location and participants were purposefully selected to explore a deeper understanding of the research problem and in addressing the research questions (Creswell, 2005).

Several characteristics of the American public research university define its character: "substantial size, prominence of research, significant graduate student enrollment, and success in attracting external, especially federal, funding" (Rhodes, 2001, p.22). A three-pronged mission of teaching, research, and service has made the American public research university the most important institution in the creation and distribution

of knowledge (Altbach, 2001). Public research universities are viewed as a public benefit to society, promoting the ideals of access and affordable education to all students. Therefore, a public research university like this one is an appropriate research site for this study.

### Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized a two-phase approach in collecting the data. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted in three of the college's departments. Next, a small focus group was utilized through semi-structured conversations to validate the interview findings as well as collect additional information about the study.

#### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

A qualitative, case study design was utilized to explore the factors that inhibit and enhance the hiring of a diverse tenured-faculty workforce. In phase one, indepth, face-to-face, individual interviews provided a deeper understanding of a general phenomenon while enriching the data (Creswell, 2003; Yin, 2003).

#### *Focus Group*

In phase two, a small focus group was held in order to validate interview data from phase one, and additional data were collected as it emerged. Conversations were semi-structured to discuss general themes that emerged from the individual interviews. One member from each of the three departments who was interviewed in the first phase was identified for the focus group; a diversity representative from the college and a search committee chair were utilized in phase two to further clarify the findings of this study. The use of a focus group promoted for the triangulation approach to qualitative

research, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings through the use of the member check techniques (Creswell, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### *Participant Selection*

Participants were selected based on their role in hiring faculty and in the College of Agriculture to gain a deeper insight into the obstacles and or opportunities that may exist within each department. It is standard practice at most higher education institutions that faculty search committees are established to conduct most faculty hires. Search committees affect most decisions including determining job descriptions, posting announcements, screening applicants, granting interviews, and making final recommendations for hire (Hill, 1987). Participants were identified by utilizing the institution's academic hiring website that lists current and past faculty job postings, by the university's affirmative action hiring forms, and by referral from participants.

The institution's academic website was utilized to identify three departments within College of Agriculture that had recently engaged in faculty hires in different disciplines. In addition, departments were identified by consulting with the diversity advocate for the college, who provided some insight information to the level of difficulty departments experience when hiring diverse faculty. Moreover, university administrators who influence faculty hiring decisions were consulted. The sample was purposefully selected for this study: the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2 Associate Deans for College of Agriculture; 3 department chairs, 3 search committee chairs, 12 search committee members, 6 diversity advocates, 1 college-wide diversity advocate, the university's diversity representative, the university's academic human resource vice president, the College of Agriculture's Extension director, and the College

of Agriculture's Experiment Station Director. A purposefully selected sample was the best approach as it aided the researcher in understanding the research problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2003). A total of 32 participants were interviewed through the semi-structured interviews (see Table 2). Miles and Huberman (1994) asserted that,

A conceptual framework Explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied the key factors, constructs or variables--and the presumed relationships among them. (p. 18)

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) a visual map can explain the key constructs and relationships within a study. Without a visual map, it is difficult for the reader to understand how the researcher's conceptual framework adheres to the criteria used in the selection of the sample or how the results connect to her research questions and purpose statement.

Participants were selected through a formal letter describing the purpose of the study, procedures, and steps taken to assure confidentiality and anonymity of data. They were also informed of the availability of the feedback report upon completion of the study. The interview protocol was utilized in order to seek to address the main question followed by probing sub-questions. Specifically, this study explored the main question to uncover a deeper understanding of the factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of a diverse faculty workforce at the college. Open-ended sub-questions and probing questions were developed in an attempt to get rich, thick, descriptive data (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The sample instrument is described in details in Appendix A.

Table 2

*Study Participants*

College of Agriculture		Participant Pool		
Categories	Dept A	Dept B	Dept C	Total
Department Chair	1	1	1	3
Search Committee Chair	1	1	1	3
Search Committee Member	4	4	4	12
Dept. Diversity Advocate	1-2	1-2	1-2	3-6
College of Agriculture Diversity Advocate				1
Dean				1
Associate Dean				2
Experimental Station Director				1
Extension Director				1
Human Resource Administrator				1
Diversity Administrator				1
Total Study Participants				32

*Analysis of University Documents*

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), documents include any personal or public written records, recordings, or physical communications both audio and video. For the purpose of this study, personal records were utilized such as resumes, cover letters, job applications, references, research portfolios, and other information of personal nature.

Due to the hiring policy implications and nature of the topic of recruitment, it was essential to utilize various university documents including hiring forms, hiring policies, procedures, affirmative action and compliance forms, the university's mission and vision,

procedures, affirmative action and compliance forms, the university's mission and vision, and personnel data and archival documents to gain a holistic perspective on the research topic. General university information, such as the mission and values of the university, provided a deeper understanding of the past and future goals, values, and beliefs of the institution. Equally important, this information helped the researcher get a better understanding of the campus climate and culture in regards to diversity. Similarly, university policies and procedures aided the researcher in the development of the research questions and overall survey instrument. Information such as documents, policies, procedures, access to information should not pose a problem due to the Freedom of Information Act. However, when this researcher requested the affirmative action results document for the last 3 years, the request for access to data was denied by the institution's Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives.

### *Data Analysis*

The data were gathered from field notes and through the use of audiotapes of the interviews with participants in to assure greater accuracy and reliability of information gathered. The audio taped data were transcribed in a verbatim form, sorted, and organized based on the major themes from the study. First, the data were recorded verbatim from the participants. Next, through the use of ATLAS software, the data was sorted, coded, and categorized based on the major themes that emerged from the face-to-face interviews and from the focus group interview. The transcribed interviews were coded, and subcodes emerged in the details of words, phrases, and key words relevant to the major themes. This thematic approach to data collection was appropriate for the inductive nature in qualitative research (Patton, 2002). Additionally, field notes, university affirmative action

documents, university hiring forms, university historical and archival data, and budget and personnel data were utilized in analyzing the data.

Creswell (2003) suggested the use of supplementary documents as a way to validate, enrich, confirm, reinforce, and gain a holistic view of the problem. In addition, observational techniques were effective during the interviews due to the sensitive nature of the topic of diversity as captured in participants' feelings, emotions, and expressions. Through the use of observation techniques, nonverbal signals and voice elevations were captured as they related to the participants' comfort levels and power relations in discussing issues and sensitivity due to the topic on diversity. This approach was used to further understand and interpret meanings and in analyzing how participants make sense of the world around them.

### *Triangulation*

In qualitative research, a researcher's study is strengthened by discussing limitations of data, specifically interview biases, reliability or validity (Creswell, 2003; Patton, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, while collecting and analyzing data, Creswell's (2003) eight-step process was utilized as appropriate for maximum data validity, including member checks, peer debriefing, and researcher limitations and biases.

The use of triangulation in qualitative research further aides in limiting researcher biases. This also increases the chances for greater data validity and reliability, and increases the accuracy of data interpretation. In addition, a thick, rich description of participant responses in regards to their real life experiences further aides in the accuracy of the data in the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, this study utilized several different methods and resources in gathering data. Through the use of peer debriefing



techniques, the emerging themes and interpretation of the data were adjusted to avoid the researcher's personal biases due to her status as an Asian-American female. Finally, through the use of audit trails (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), detailed records were kept about the participants, interview dates, times, field notes and participant e-mails during the study.

### Role of the Researcher

At the start of this dissertation, the researcher was employed with the College of Agriculture in the Office of Diversity and Pluralism. It was critical that her role as a researcher was not influenced by her role as a staff member of the college. Therefore, it is important to address the potential conflicts of interest between the role of researcher and the role of staff member of the college. In order to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants in the college, the data gathered, collected, and analyzed will in no way be utilized in the college.

As an Asian American, East Indian woman in the capacity of a diversity specialist in the college, this researcher has seen and experienced subtle forms of disparate treatment in the college and on this campus. Because of the researcher's experiences as the employee of the university for over 23 years in various different units on campus, it is difficult to approach this study from a totally neutral viewpoint. Based on this researcher's experience on campus, although in the past, the institution has exerted more efforts to build campus diversity, today diversity does not appear to be an important institutional commitment. This lack of structural support for diversity is also evident among the sentiments of the Asian members in this researcher's role as the President of the Asian Pacific, Asian American, Faculty Staff Association (APAAFSA). Therefore, it

was imperative to utilize the opinions of other colleagues and faculty, so that the researcher's biases were checked against the data that were collected and analyzed.

### Limitations of the Study

In qualitative research, it is essential for a researcher to discuss limitations (specifically weaknesses of the study) and to address interview biases and methods used for reliability or validity check (Creswell, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). There are several limitations of this study based on the nature of the study. First, while recruitment and retention are both major components of any hiring practices and one has a direct impact on the other, this study only focused on faculty recruitment. Second, while it is essential to understand the state and federal laws that govern hiring practices in a public university, it is equally important to analyze the effectiveness and impact of such policies when studying human resource functions, such as the hiring of tenure-track faculty. This study is limited in scope to the analysis of current state and federal hiring policies and practices. Third, due to the shear nature of the topic of diversity in higher education and the researcher's identity as an Asian American female, certain interview questions were a source of discomfort for the participants and therefore were not thoroughly answered, as the participants were not willing to fully disclose their true emotions and deeply-rooted feelings. In addition, some participants refused to participate in this study or failed to respond to requests for their participation in the study. Fourth, this study was limited to only 3 of the 13 departments within one college. While the College of Agriculture is deeply rooted in the university, it may not be representative of other colleges in the university or other institutions in the United States. Fifth, the participant selection was limited to only 3 of the 13 departments in the college and

comprised only of the search committee members or administrators, thereby limiting the perspectives of the candidates themselves or others who might also impact searches such as graduate students and staff. Finally, the availability of minority faculty was limited especially in regards to minority females in the college.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### KEY FINDINGS

*“I have a dream...that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character” (King, 1963).*

This chapter presents the findings that emerged from the interviews regarding the recruitment of tenure-track faculty in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern university. The primary question informing this study is: What are the factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of a diverse tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university? Although the study found that diversification of faculty is a major challenge in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern university, it is important to note that many of the issues reported are probably not unique to that institution. The thematic findings from this study have provided the answers to the following three main subquestions:

1. What policies and practices exist around diversity in faculty hiring at the College of Agriculture?
2. How do those involved in the faculty hiring decisions in postsecondary education understand, interpret, and implement policies and practices to diversify faculty hiring?
3. What impact does a recent ban on the state’s affirmative-action programs have on changes of current policies and practices in hiring diverse faculty?

## College Level Policies and Practices

The study uncovered several factors that continue to enhance or inhibit the hiring of diverse tenure-track faculty in the college. This chapter is organized around the major themes that emerged from the subquestions. Two major themes emerged from the first subquestion: (a) diversity defined and (b) college-level diversity.

### *Diversity Defined*

Most study participants expressed that diversity is an essential ingredient for the future success of the college. However, the study revealed significant variations in the definition of diversity among participants. This was not surprising given that preliminary data from the college's eight focus groups and electronic surveys conducted the previous year, suggested that a number of participants really did not have a common understanding of what is meant by diversity. Higher level administrators appeared to hold the broadest interpretation of diversity. For most of the minority and women participants, diversity corresponded to race, ethnicity, and gender differences, whereas, to some Caucasian participants, diversity was referenced solely in terms of White women. Yet to others, diversity meant diversity of differences in intellectual perspectives, research, personalities, life experiences, teaching styles, outreach, and service. Following is a definition of diversity provided by a Caucasian male participant:

You've got to define that better because I think there are probably seven or eight "diversity" considerations. We need diversities of experience, need diversities of personalities. We need diversities of ethics and faith

and all kinds of structures because that's what graduate school's all about.

(Larry)<sup>4</sup>

As the quote above demonstrates, the meaning, understanding, and value of diversity can vary significantly. Most of the participants at the administrative levels agreed that the college should reflect a diversified climate that welcomed all races, ethnicity, experiences, and viewpoints. However, when asked to describe their diversity experiences in the department, many of the participants made reference largely to White women in the college. Some participants defined diversity to include women, foreign students, and foreign faculty. One participant described his perspective in the college on diversity as follows:

Typically, here diversity is female, White female or international. And not to diminish the impact that females or international individuals have within the department, but it certainly lacks the diversity and inclusion from the perspective of people of color or underrepresented groups within the U.S. continent. (Don)

While the institution has a broad definition of diversity to encompass inclusiveness, it was evident that women and foreign faculty have made greater progress in the college. The findings from this study are similar to the findings from the college-wide electronic survey that diversity is a widely misunderstood phenomenon. Based on the institution's electronic survey in 2007 (Public Sector Consultants, 2007), 11% of the deans and 8% of faculty disagree that diversity can be defined by age. Additionally, the definition and understanding of diversity among the participants of the electronic survey

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<sup>4</sup> Names that appear at the end of the quotations in this chapter have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the participants.

(deans, faculty, academic/support staff, and graduate students) varied uniformly. There appears to be a lack of common understanding of diversity which could result in misunderstanding of other cultures, and races that could affect the success of hiring a diverse faculty. For example, below is a quote from a participant who explained misunderstandings of diversity in race and ethnicity:

I think that people have the interpretation that diversity means. Well, if it's African Americans from Louisiana versus an African from Ghana, I think people tend to lump that all into one and count that as diversity and Black. I think to a same degree from the people from here, Mexican Americans, which really is the largest concentration of Hispanics in the United States, is Mexican Americans. ... They bring people from Columbia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and you classify them all as... I can't say Americans, but they're classified as a race. (Hank)

While these misunderstanding about people from different countries and their race/ethnicity may appear to be a minor problem, it has a great deal of influence on hiring policies and practices of tenure-track faculty, especially when goals are established for underuse of one group over another. Additionally, how diversity is defined will most likely mean different things to different committee members, thereby adding to the challenge of achieving diversity in the department. This challenge about participant's understandings about the meaning of diversity may also affect their lack of knowledge about the current university policies on diversity. An overwhelmingly large number of participants did not know or understand the university's policies on hiring. In addition, most of the committee members were not sure if there were any department or college

policies when asked about the knowledge of the tenure-track hiring policies of the department, college, or university. Tom, a department chair, stated,

I do not know the content of the policies and procedures; that was not in my purview as member of the committee. There are three persons charged with applying the policies and procedures: the chairperson of the department, the chair of the search committee, and the person (specialized in diversity procedures) assigned to the committee by the university.... and that it was the job of the diversity representative to make sure of compliance. ... Were I appointed to be a head of a search committee, I would learn of all the regulations, among them those pertaining to diversity, that I needed to know. (Tom)

The above response is typical of many of the participants when asked what policies exist at the department, college, or university level. Additionally, a diversity advocate commented on his understanding of the hiring policies:

I'm not sure what the policies are. I'm not sure what the policies are both at the department level and even at the university level. I don't have the time to find out what the policies are, what the university's policies are. I really have not looked them up because I just don't have that kind of time to be able to do this type of research. (Peter)

Many of the participants in this study were not knowledgeable about affirmative-action policies or the university's hiring policies. The consensus was that someone on the search committee must have a good understanding of all the policies, but most participants did not understand all of the policies as they relate to faculty hiring. This



suggests that while the university has extensive policies for hiring and promoting diversity on campus, search committees members are often unaware of such policies. Hence, the lack of understanding of university policies is likely to impact the effectiveness of the recruitment process, especially in terms of increasing diversity. The various meanings and understanding about diversity may explain the current low level of diversity in the college, as described in the next section.

### *College Level Diversity*

The findings of this study are consistent with earlier findings from two studies (focus groups and college-wide electronic surveys) that the level of diversity among faculty, staff, and students continues to be a challenge for the college. The faculty profile compiled from the institution's budget and planning website indicated the makeup of the current faculty by race, ethnicity, and gender in the College of Agriculture, including all departments (see Table 3). This data reflects a slight increase in diversity in the college.

According to the data from the U.S. census bureau, the White population in United States in 2006 was 66% while the college's White faculty population is currently 81% in 2007–2008. In addition, the college's White faculty has decreased from 91% in 1995–1996 to 81% currently. This suggests that while the college has made some progress, it continues to struggle to diversify its faculty pool to reflect demographic changes in the U.S. population. For instance, based on the Census Bureau, the U.S. demographics for the Hispanic/Latino population in 2006 was 15% and African Americans composed 12%; however, in the 2007–2008 school year, College of Agriculture faculty was comprised of 1% (4) Hispanic and 4% (11) African American members. The overall level of diversity among these two groups in the college is below

their diversity level in the U.S. population, suggesting a need to increase their representation in the college.

Table 3

*Tenure-Track Faculty in the College of Agriculture at a Midwestern University*

Faculty and Staff	1995-996 Numbers	1995-996 %	2007-2008 Numbers	2007-2008 %
Faculty-Total	265		297	
Faculty-Men	237	89%	231	78%
Faculty-Women*	28	11%	66	22%
Faculty-White	241	91%	242	81%
Faculty-Black	8	3%	11	4%
Faculty-Asian	11	4%	25	8%
Faculty-Hispanic	3	1%	4	1%
Faculty-Nat American	1	0%	4	1%
Faculty-International	1	0%	11	5%

\*The count indicated for women consists of predominately White women.  
From "The Office of Planning and Budget at [Institution]," by [Institution], n.d., retrieved January 7, 2008 from [website withheld for confidentiality]

Additionally, the largest demographic increase in the college over the period from 1995 to 2008 has been among women, an increase from 28 to 66 women, and among international hires, an increase from 1 to 11. These data suggest that while the college has made some progress in hiring women, Asians, and international scholars, it has fallen short of achieving overall parity with the U.S. population.

### Hiring Policies and Practices

This section addresses the themes that emerged in response to the second sub-question in this study. The university has extensive policies and practices around hiring tenure-track faculty; however for the purpose of this study, discussions emphasized how search committees understood, interpreted, and implemented policies throughout the

hiring process. Next, themes from this study highlight challenges in faculty recruitment practices. Discussion addresses the composition of the search committee because of its importance, emphasized by study participants with respect to the overall hiring process.

#### *Composition of a Search Committee*

The composition of the search committee is critical in the hiring process because search committees generally make final recommendations for hiring tenure-track faculty. Additionally, search committees often engage actively in the administration and implementation of policies and procedures for hiring faculty. However, one of the major challenges facing search committees is the availability of ethnic and racial minority faculty to serve on such committees. As indicated earlier, 81% of all tenure track-faculty in the College of Agriculture today are White; therefore, the representation of diverse faculty on the search committees is typically minimal. Consequently, the few minorities who are in the college often serve on several search committees, as indicated by one participant:

Well, the idea (was that) they needed a minority. So, there weren't many minorities around. So I had a full time job, being on search committees. ... so I had two jobs: One to be the minority representation on all these committees...committee work is a lot of work; you don't get much credit for it. But I was a team player. (Fox)

This study found that the composition of the search committees is likely to have a major influence on the outcome of the tenure-track faculty hires. Most of the participants felt that there is currently a lack of enough minority faculty in the college to effectively participate on search committees. This is likely to influence the effectiveness of current

affirmative-action policies because individuals often interpret such policies from different perspectives. Fox, a participant from the College of Agriculture, also described how the composition of the search committee influences the final outcome of the search:

Usually your search committees are a certain way, that's what you're gonna get, in terms of the (candidate) pool. If it's all European, American males, or if the committee has a female or minority. ...well, the pools are going to be slanted that way. What you're not going to get is many minorities that will be able to make the pool or to make the final pool, because they are going to be excluded. ... that's one of the sad commentaries in terms of search committees. ...And for someone to think that they can have a fair shake with a committee that does not represent the population in the state, they have their heads in the sand, literally.

(Fox)

Such statements suggest that the composition of search committees could have a direct affect on the success rates of finalists in hiring diverse faculty. This also suggests that if the committee is predominantly White, minorities are likely to be underrepresented in the final pool. Here is a reflection of a committee member's experience in a search:

Our conversation went to in a search committee that if your search committee reflects diversity, that's more than just one person of difference sitting at the table. That the end result of that search could be better aligned with a commitment to diversity because those individuals--again, it's got to be more than one--those individuals are able to then talk directly about their experiences when it comes to questioning the person's, you

know, experiences. They can most directly speak to how this person might fit into the department related to their research, or their publications, or whatever. (Don)

The selection of the finalist for a faculty position may be the result of discussions of fit, hence, if the search committee members are predominately White, it is likely that their selection will unintentionally mirror those who are most like themselves. These findings correspond with a study by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) that revealed that government contractors (advertising as equal-opportunity employers and promoting affirmative action in their job description) often engaged in the practice of using race as a factor in screening candidates and were most likely to engage in discrimination practices in recruitment than were their private-sector counterparts.

*Always a Search Committee Member, Never a Chair*

Another major challenge facing search committees in the College of Agriculture is that the faculty are predominantly older Caucasian males. The percent of faculty aged 45 and older in the College of Agriculture has increased from 67% in the 1994–1995 school year to 78% in 2006–2007. As a result, search committees are typically composed of members from this one group (see Table 4).

Based on the data in the table below, over 60% of the faculty in the College of Agriculture was between the ages of 50-65 in 2006-2007. This is likely due to low levels of retirements among the faculty in the college.

Table 4

*Tenure-Track Faculty by Age in College of Agriculture*

Age of Faculty	1994-1995	2006-2007
Percent Tenure System Age less than 35	2	3
Percent Tenure System Age from 35 to 40	12	7
Percent Tenure System Age from 40 to 45	19	12
Percent Tenure System Age from 45 to 50	17	19
Percent Tenure System Age from 50 to 55	20	21
Percent Tenure System Age from 55 to 60	13	15
Percent Tenure System Age from 60 to 65	11	15
Percent Tenure System Age 65 or older	6	8
<b>Percent Tenure System over Age 45</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>78</b>

From "The Office of Planning and Budget at [Institution]," by [Institution], n.d., retrieved January 7, 2008 from [website withheld for confidentiality]

Similarly, many participants expressed concerns that the committee chair had access to many covert discussions (unwritten rules) about candidates and were privileged to information that might not be disclosed to others on the committee. A member on committee stated,

See, when you're a chair to some extent you can control the outcome. You can't control, maybe not the selection, not in all cases, but you can control, become a main contact person and you have access to information about what goes on behind closed doors. ... that goes on, you know, behind the scenes. Information such as why a candidate may be a great candidate, one that may not be a candidate. What you have, you don't have, and you don't have everything that men talk about. It's like having a meeting after the meeting. You've heard that before, huh? (Fox)

When asked if Fox had ever served as a committee chair, he replied, “No, never.” Fox also indicated that although minority faculty were often asked to serve on search committees, they were rarely appointed as the committee chair. It is likely that the availability of minorities and women to serve on the search committees is limited, and in turn it is feasible that a decision to appoint a chair is made prior to identifying a diverse committee. A tenured faculty member, a Caucasian female, had similar experiences on search committees:

It is a judgment call on the people that are on the search committee. One of the issues that continues to be a challenge in the hiring of faculty of diversity, of faculty for tenure-track positions, is that that there is not enough representation of women in higher administrative positions who can have a stronger say on who is selected at the various different stages of the interview. I am a good example of that for search committees. I am always asked to be a member, but never a chair. This is very similar to being bridesmaid, but never a bride; because I am a woman, my voice is not heard as strongly as the other White males’ in the final decision making processes. (Nancy)

If minority and women faculty are rarely appointed as the chair of the search committee, it is likely that their influence on the overall final hire is also limited. Consequently, it is feasible that the majority rules in the final decisions, thereby, possibly resulting in a continuous cycle of hiring a homogenous faculty in the college.

## Policy Interpretation and Implementation

The section continues to address the second research question of how participants' understand, interpret, and implement hiring policies and procedures. This study revealed that the institution has an extensive set of policies and practices in place for the hiring of all academic personnel; these policies have been established to aid departments with greater opportunities enhance hiring practices at the college. Additionally, the current hiring process involves a number of key stages, some of which are discussed in depth aligned with the major themes that emerged in this study:

- (a) faculty recruitment policies and practices (job postings, job description, candidate qualifications, selection process, availability of diverse faculty in the pool),
- (b) affirmative action policies and effectiveness of the diversity advocate, and (c) student demographics and pipeline challenges.

### Faculty Recruitment Policies and Practices

This study uncovered persistent challenges in hiring of a diverse faculty on campus, thereby suggesting problems emanating from ineffective recruitment practices. These challenges were highlighted in the following major themes that emerged in this study: job postings, job descriptions, job qualifications, selection, and availability of a diverse candidate pool.

#### *Challenges in Job Posting*

The availability of a tenure-track faculty position is submitted by the department to the dean for approval. Upon approval, the department chair facilitates the advertising of faculty positions. In addition, according to the university's academic human-resource posting requirements, most of the positions are to be posted through the university's



hiring website and elsewhere at the discretion of the department chairs. Many of the participants in this study assumed that postings were also advertised in popular journals. One male Caucasian department chair described in detail how tenure-track jobs are posted and candidates recruited:

Well, yeah, that's college policy that we have to advertise in women's journals. So we're advertising in venues and periodicals way beyond our normal science. So, if for example, I have a horticulture position, faculty position to hire...sure we will go ahead and advertise in the *American Society for Horticulture Science*, periodicals of the *American Society for Horticulture Science*. I will go to the *American Society for Horticulture Science* meeting, advertise it and talk to potential candidates. We'll advertise in ... *Crops and Soil Science*...so these are all the science journals and organizations, but we will also advertise at the various institutions, making sure that they know that we have a position open, so it goes way beyond the normal journals so sometimes it will catch an eye....and internationally as well. (Sam)

In recent searches, the university's affirmative-action forms reveal that some openings were minimally advertised. For instance, based on the institution's affirmative action hiring form (#AAR0901), Department A posts job announcements primarily through networks and organizations such as the American Agriculture Economic Association, the Committee on Women in Agriculture Economics, Agriculture Economics, department chairs at other universities, Jobs for Economics, and Institutions' Minority Faculty/Staff Association resources (APAAFSA, BFSAA, ChiLa, EAGLE,

NAIFSA). In addition, Department A claims to have advertised faculty jobs through their minority faculty and staff associations. As the President of the Asian Pacific, Asian American Faculty Staff Association (APAAFSa) on campus, this researcher has personal knowledge that job postings in recent years on behalf of Department A had not been requested, contrary to what was submitted on their affirmative-action form. This suggests that a closer monitoring of actual practices may be in order. This lack may also violate the federal affirmative-action program requirements, where a “good faith” effort to promote equal employment opportunities to all candidates is encouraged (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002). A counterargument about inadequate posting efforts is presented below by a diversity advocate on the search committee, claiming

Effort ... is not sufficient. And it's not because of just postings. They post in diverse issues in higher education. It's because we haven't extended ourselves and really gone out and recruited personally at these institutions. We should be going to institutions that have a predominate number of people of color, you know, the Hispanics, the African-American institutions. And we don't. (Hank)

Many participants felt that in order to recruit qualified individuals, search-committee members must engage in vigorous recruitment and networking efforts with other universities to be more successful. A Caucasian female expressed her concerns that final applicant pools are often largely composed of Caucasian applicants despite the department's claims of posting in various sources in an attempt to access diverse candidates: “We post in various and different sources, we get a variety of applicants in the applicant pool, but in reality what ends up on the interview pool, the first interview

pool is mostly White males” (Nancy). It is likely that these traditional posting sources may need to be evaluated for effectiveness in recruitment for a diverse candidate pool.

A recurring theme that emerged in this study was that many believe minorities have a serious disadvantage because they are not in the mainstream of professional networks, are not publishing in top journals, and are not engaging in mainstream research, whereas their White counterparts have more access to top-tier research universities and top-tier publication venues, resulting in more publications in desired journals and publications. One participant described the challenges facing faculty of color, acknowledging

Yeah, yeah, that’s where the pool is coming from, and so I’ve sat on enough committees to hear. ... If you are not in the network ... know that major faculty person at that particular college doing research in that particular discipline, which tends to be dominated by White males and networks of White males. ... If your experience as a graduate student doesn’t get you into what a faculty person or hiring committee sees as a top notch school, a top notch researcher, doing research with their primary area of interest then you are at a disadvantage. ... Because one of the other factors that seems to be a determining factor about moving through the process is also whether or not you are publishing in primary journals and whether or not your area of specialization is connected to a leader in the department. (Don)

While networking to recruit candidates was suggested by many as illustrated by one participant above, a problem that also needs to be addressed is how institutions can

provide minorities and women a better network so they feel more connected to mainstream professionals in the field.

### *Candidate qualifications*

One of the most controversial topics related to hiring tenure-track faculty is the notion of what constitutes a “qualified candidate.” Teaching, research, and service are the core values of the university’s overall mission. Research experience is a major qualification requirement at any public research institution, however, equally important should be the need to emphasize candidates who can teach. By primarily emphasizing research in every job posting for tenure-track faculty positions, a large number of candidates with diverse skills and talent are excluded from consideration. Opponents of affirmative action strongly oppose preferences based on race and gender, desiring the use of meritocratic criteria that emphasizes scholarship and teaching ability to promote a perspective that is undisputed (Cahn, 1993). However, the above notion suggesting that minorities and women cannot compete in a meritocratic system of selection further deteriorates the recruitment efforts.

A Caucasian male participant below captured the emphasis of teaching over research in academia, stating, “The other thing is that we can’t forget teaching, and, increasingly, I think, throughout the college if not throughout the university, teaching is taking a lower and lower priority. ... Administrators reward research more than good teaching” (Fan). Like their Caucasian counterparts, faculty of color may excel at researching their respective interests through their engagement of diverse research topics. Additionally, it is likely they excel at instruction with experiences in diverse active methods of teaching and learning, community and outreach services (Antonio, 2002;

Gandara, Orfield, & Horn, 2006; Hurtado, 2001; Maturana, 2005; Quezada & Louque, 2004; Turner, 2000 & 2002; Wilds, 2000). Therefore, minority faculty are likely to add a dimension of diverse research, teaching methods, and instruction in higher education. In addition, Boyer emphasized the need to look beyond the traditional lecture styles to a more creative ways of teaching, such as active learning, service learning, and creative thinking (Boyer, 1990; Turner, 2000). Hence, job qualifications should reflect a diverse set of job duties, research interests, and outreach, rather than focusing strictly on mainstream research expertise. This would likely increase the pool of candidates qualified for tenure-track faculty positions.

#### *Job description*

The results show that job descriptions posed several challenges in the recruitment process. There appeared to be tension between the specialized needs of the college in filling a gap or position and the complexity of the needs to address normal operational issues, such as diversification of faculty. At the college level, job descriptions are generally developed by faculty, reviewed by the department chair, and forwarded to the dean for approval. According to several participants, job descriptions are written with very specific requirements, as depicted by Sara:

The best thing to do is to write a job description that is broader so that it can attract a wider range of diversity in the candidate pools. There was one instance where the first round of applicants for the first interview was all White males. And when she (a colleague search committee member) voiced this concern that maybe, perhaps, a White female should be given an opportunity for the interview, the department chairperson called her

views ridiculous and stupid. He said that she did not understand what kinds of qualifications are needed for the candidates. She was very shocked because in her opinion the female was just as qualified, equally qualified...just had a different range of experiences.

This suggests that search committees can be resistant to changes in the traditionally narrow focus on job descriptions, which is likely to have a continuing negative effect on women and minority candidates. Many participants suggested that a broader range of skills and accomplishments should be considered during selection because no candidates are ever the same in variety or the level of experiences they bring to the job that is being posted. The following is a sample of a job description written for a faculty position in Agriculture Economics:

Research 70% and Teaching 30% ... to develop an international reputation for scholarship in agriculture economics ... enhance the department's outreach commitment to state, national and global stakeholders ... develop a well funded program that results in high quality journal publications ... expected to focus on experimental economics and game theory ... with contest theory, probabilistic contests ... spatial models of price competition, anti-trust policy, and risk attitudes. However, specifics of the research program will largely depend on the individual's expertise and interests, as our overriding objective in this search will be to appoint an individual who enhances our outstanding faculty and programs.

(Institution, Academic Human Resources, n.d)

Although this job description appears to be written broadly, in reality the resulting applicant pool was very limited. One explanation could be that the job description is broad yet requires very specific skills, such as game theory, contest theory, and spatial model of price competition, thus, is likely to limit the candidate pool. One participant felt that job descriptions are narrowly prescribed and often restrictive:

Job description, we look at a vacant position and then we write a very tight job description such as, we want people working with fruits and vegetables but then we ask for people who have worked in cherries. Then we ignore fields where women are more prevalent, but we stay away from those areas when hiring. Some of our job descriptions are so narrow we look at them and say, “That’s not what we do.” We write the job description so narrow that we don’t get too many applicants. (Ed)

In many cases, positions are posted to fill a specific gap in research or teaching, thereby creating competing interests between a desire to increase the candidate pool and filling a gap for the department. The study found that an overwhelming number of participants felt that a job description should be written broadly (highlighting general skills) to attract a large number of diverse applicants. In a culture that promotes faculty freedom, a high degree of flexibility is feasible, hence, job descriptions could be written with more latitude. Selection and job qualifications are equally problematic, as discussed in the next section.

### *The selection process*

Many of the female and minority participants indicated that the interpretation of one’s qualifications was problematic due to inconsistencies in adherence to the specified

job description. This study supports previous literature: while the institution's hiring policies are established to promote a fair and equitable system of hiring, actual practices may be unintentionally biased in some cases. This was supported with testimonials from participants that the screening process suggested discriminatory practices, stating

Now the thing you want to remember though is sometimes they go through these searches and can't find a person that meets that job description. What they'll do if they find another person they think has great skills ... They'll hire that person, and the job description becomes secondary. But through the process of putting the job description together, that group of people can't get that person's expertise in the job description. ... They don't give up, they go through a process and they weed out people, you know. They may not like the color of their hair and/or like the color of their skin. They may not like their philosophy. Remember, the person that they really wanted all along was here. And then they say, well we couldn't find anyone that was, based on the job description, but we do have the person over here that has these great skills. And I've seen that happen. ... You know, again, now this person was always in the background. ... That there was some means they waived to get this person floated up and, sometimes, even hired. (Fox)

Another participant described the unfair practices in the use of job description in the recruitment for tenure-track faculty positions as follows:

They changed the job description based on who applied. What a lot of times departments will do is they will cast this net to see who will apply,



and then, they will say, “Oh, this person looks interesting,” so they will change the job description or qualifications based on who applied. ...Had they stuck with the original description, I think the outcome would have been different in terms of who was hired. (Randy)

The aforementioned hiring practices indicate that, whether intentional or unintentional, selection biases may exist. Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) revealed that with all things being equal, a White male candidate is more likely to be granted an interview over an African-American candidate. Their study revealed that African American candidates were often eliminated based on their names on the resume.

As previously described, participants pointed out cases where candidate qualifications requirements were occasionally tailored based on who applied for the job, as evidenced by a participant’s testimony below. The type of practice described is problematic, as it undermines the core intentions of affirmative-action programs that were initiated to assure a fair and equal employment opportunity to all candidates. In the example below, not all faculty on the search committee agreed with the final selection, who was a Caucasian male and a recent doctoral-student graduate, while there were at least three other candidates who had extensive experience as faculty at other universities. One participant describes the selection, stating

Two of which, you could consider minorities because they were women and three were White males. One was from China and then the other woman was an existing faculty member at a public research institution. She was originally Russian but was a U.S. citizen. ... One was a person

who was a successful applicant, was a White male, a Ph.D. student, actually, originally from (University X). ... He was finishing his Ph.D. at the time. I knew the person (potential faculty candidate), not well, but I knew him in flora culture and I knew his major professor very well. What I would say was a solid flora culture background. ... So, that was important, for me. Now for a couple other committee members, it was not, but it was for me. So, even though he didn't have the track record, he had the expertise in terms of flora culture, and we thought he had the skills to be successful. Another person was an existing faculty member at a university in (state name). And the last person was an existing faculty member at (University Y). (Fan)

In the preceding example, despite the lack of solid research track record or grant-writing experience, a White male doctoral student was hired largely because he knew someone in the department and was in the mainstream of the networks between his university and this institution. In the search referenced above, not all faculty on the search committee agreed with the final selection (a Caucasian male and a recent graduate); this was largely due to the tension in selection based on qualifications and network referrals.

In the same selection process, the decision to eliminate a female candidate in the following example was based on whether she would act and behave like others in the department.

We had some concerns. Her seminar was interesting. She was, on paper, a very strong candidate. When she interviewed, to be honest, what really

hurt her most was her personality. ... She wouldn't be a team player ...

it's a big commitment. (Tammy)

This suggests that in addition to job qualification, other subjective forms of screening are used, which could be problematic. It is nearly impossible to totally eliminate subjectivity in the selection process; however the level of subjectivity can be minimized if candidate's skills, knowledge, and abilities are reviewed holistically in the evaluation process. For example, journal articles written for lower tier publications do not necessarily indicate a lack of ability to write or publish journal articles.

A participant noted that the job description matched well with the qualifications of an African-American candidate, but this candidate was still deemed unqualified by the committee. He stated,

We had this African-American female. She had [a] great resume, great transcript, you know. So, first of all, the chair of the committee called me and he said, "Fox, I like this candidate, but ... she's an African-American male, ah, female," he said, "I like this candidate, but she didn't have any farming experience." I said to him, "The job description didn't say anything about farming experience. She doesn't have to be a farmer; you're not looking for a farmer. You're looking for a scientist." So he got upset and hung up the phone. Then, the chair of the department called me. "Fox, I like this candidate, but she doesn't have any farming experience." I said, "Now, there's nothing in the job description that talks about having farming experience" So he got pretty intense. He left the country for a while, when he came back, somebody in the administration in the college

made a decision and hired her. ... But they were trying to find some reason not to give her the job. (Fox)

Some of the participants interviewed asserted that the screening criteria were much stricter for diverse candidates, compared to the standards applied to Caucasian candidates. The above discussion from Fox depicts how the candidate met the job qualifications; however both the department chair and the search-committee chair attempted to expand the minimum qualifications stated in the job description. This was captured in one participant's testimony about an offer letter that was sent to an African-American candidate for the department-chair position:

This position was for a chairperson ... There were six (committee) members. ... One was a woman, me ... Caucasian and three other men, all White. There was some diversity of age. The other two were senior professors. I think the junior faculty was a diversity rep. Tenure and a professorship was the open position—so we are looking for a senior person. ... In addition, we as a committee, we directly contacted candidates of faculty in economics across the country. ... So we focused on bringing in a large diverse pool. A White male was hired. The person we offered it to first, turned us down, he was an African American. ... He already had a program of his own, and he was offered a counter offer at ... I think some of the faculty in the college and even at the department went out of their way to make him feel unwelcome. He was working internationally and he worked in the South in agriculture co-ops. He had a

strong foundation in his own scholarship and background; he got his degree from here. (Charlie)

Other biases in the selection process are depicted above, suggesting that search-committee members may reject candidates who have different experiences from theirs. Diversity is usually not a consideration in the selection process, but the challenge is to give unbiased consideration to all candidates based on their qualifications. It is a disappointment to see that even though a concerted effort to diversify the candidate pool was exerted, the minority candidate was probably discouraged. Moreover, participants felt that candidates should contribute a rich and diverse research and publication portfolio to encourage a variety of topics, including issues that are central to minorities and women.

#### **Affirmative Action Compliance: A Mechanical Process**

While most participants in this study believed that the university's hiring policies are extensive, many felt that they were ineffective. According to the university's diversity-office administrator, audit checks to monitor the accuracy of the data are not conducted. Rather, information is checked to see whether or not the department lists diverse sources on the forms simply to pass the diversity office's requirements. As a result, based on the findings of this study, the hiring policies are interpreted as a "mechanical" process at best because there is no way of knowing if the postings are actually placed at the various sources indicated on the forms.

Many participants suggested that to successfully recruit a diverse pool of candidates, universities must exert extra effort to build relationships and networks with a

diverse set of universities rather than a select few. The diversity advocate commented on the efforts in posting for a tenure-track position:

The policies are not working in reality; they are more mechanical at the university level than anything. As long as departments are posting, for instance, in diverse posting sites then they can pass the stages required by ... But the institution does not follow through to see if the hiring is effective and diverse candidates fall through the cracks and do not make it in the finalist or in the selection pool. If you work a little harder, you can find a qualified candidate who is diverse. ... We put the job announcement in places where you'd say, "Well that looks pretty diverse." You know the women's network and the Black network. And a big place you put 'em for agriculture economist, but if you actively picked up the phone talk to people, you get a more diverse pool. ... So then this idea of, cause I've heard some people say there is just not enough candidates out there.

... That's a crock! (Rose)

Departments seem to post repeatedly in the same sites, which includes networking with the same universities. Unable to break out of the patterns of job posting recreates predominately, if not exclusively, Caucasian pools for interviews.

#### *The Role of a Diversity Advocate*

Another challenge in the recruitment process is the role of the diversity advocate. The role of the diversity advocate is to provide assistance in the hiring process, act as an advocate for diversity, and provide a perspective in identifying potential qualified candidates. It is evident from this study that the role of the diversity advocate is

ineffective due to the lack of importance placed on the role. When asked when a diversity advocate is assigned in the search process, many participants responded that there was no consistent procedure of assigning a diversity advocate. Although university policy clearly encourages the presence of a diversity advocate in the job-search process, some search committees do not have a diversity advocate identified at the beginning of the process; the assignment often evolves during the process. Other committees simply assign a diversity advocate in order to adhere to the policies; however, generally the diversity advocate does not have a vote in the selection of the final candidate. Diversity advocates described an environment in which properly completed paperwork “passed muster,” and additional justification for actions was typically not required. A typical response from participants is captured below:

The university policies to me come across (as) “very surface.” ... I would call them mechanical. ... It’s very mechanical, it’s very mechanical. I’ll be a head of the search committee; I will say where did I advertise? I make sure that a couple advertisements must use the word “Black” or “women.” Maybe Hispanic, if I’m lucky. I will justify that. Then I will get my final candidates and send them over. If there’s a woman or a Black or Hispanic on the list, the Diversity Office doesn’t bother me. If there isn’t, they ask me to justify why there isn’t. I can write anything I want. Nearly as I can tell and feel I can go ahead and search. ... They cover the ground, but they don’t do much. (Rose)

This remark validates the findings from this study that most diversity advocates and a great number of female faculty believed that the affirmative-action compliance

paperwork was not effective in addressing the lack of diversity in any department. When asked if the diversity advocate had a voice (a vote) in the final selection, the above advocate said, “No.” Below is yet another diversity participant’s view of hiring procedures and policies described as mostly a compliance issue:

Making sure we had the right verbiage in the position description. ... Well the reasons that the policies get followed is that paperwork has to be submitted. ... Oftentimes what my experience is that the committee wants me there and wants me to assist with the paperwork because it’s, to them, an issue of compliance. That’s an issue of just wanting to sure that they dotted the *is* and crossed the *ts* so that the process isn’t scrutinized any differently and the process is able to move forward in a smooth fashion. So that we always had some paperwork in case we were ever challenged, establish a paper trail. (Phil)

The diversity advocates felt that their presence was requested on the committee to help process the affirmative-action paperwork to assure compliance and so that any lack of diversity efforts would not be challenged by the university’s affirmative-action officer. Perceptions that the diversity advocate’s presence is only to fulfill a formality would seem to erode the effectiveness of the hiring process and risk mitigating the effectiveness of the diversity advocate on search committees.

#### *Availability of Diverse Faculty in the Pool*

One of the strongest arguments made by many of the participants in this study concerns the lack of availability of faculty of color in the hiring pool. There are several challenges in creating a diverse pool of available instructors. Based on the review of the



institution's most recent affirmative-action hiring forms, the college and some of its departments hired from only a select few universities. In addition, data provided on affirmative-action forms indicated that while departments claimed to post job positions in departments such as horticulture, they do not identify at which universities positions are posted. Yet, this passes the affirmative-action requirements of the institution's diversity office. Similarly, a study revealed that Midwestern universities are among the sample of 12 level-one research universities that typically recruit for tenure-track faculty from only 20 to 30 select U.S. universities out of 236 that grant doctoral programs (Hayden, 1997). While this may be partially due to the limited number of universities that offer agriculture majors, it is evident that recruitment efforts could be expanded to include those universities currently not engaged.

Additionally, based on the institution's affirmative-action forms, institutions that have a high number of minority doctoral students are often not considered (Hayden, 1997; Turner, 2002). One explanation maybe that research universities do not recruit from lower tier institutions. This is likely to result in qualified faculty being left untapped. Additionally, it may limit students with majors in the fields of Agriculture Science and Natural Resources who may be available at universities where positions are not recruited. Table 5 highlights universities offering subfields (majors) in various areas of Agriculture and Natural Resources and identifies the concentration of doctoral graduates in 2004 by race. While the data collected from this study suggests some departments are exerting efforts to recruit from these institutions, overall the college is likely to recruit for faculty positions only from a few universities (see Table 5).

These data identify graduate students by race and ethnicity and are useful in the recruitment of a diverse faculty.

Table 5

*2003-2004 Institutions Awarding Ph.D.s in Agriculture by Race*

University	American Indians	Asians	Hispanics	African Americans
University of California –Berkeley	X	X	X	X
Texas A & M University	X		X	
Washington State University	X		X	
University of Mississippi	X		X	X
North Carolina State University				X
University of Florida		X	X	X
University of Georgia			X	X
University of California-Davis		X	X	
Yale University		X	X	X
University of Arkansas				X
Iowa State University				X
Connell University-NY	X	X	X	X
Ohio State University		X		X
University of Washington	X	X	X	X
University of Wisconsin		X	X	
University of Maryland		X	X	X
University of Minnesota		X		X
University of Hawaii-Manoa		X		
Mississippi State University				X
University of Michigan		X	X	X
University of Florida		X		

From "Top Degree Producers," 2004, *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 22(11), p. 34-37.

The data (see Table 5) is useful because not only does this data identify student by race and ethnicity, but also by institution. For instance, if an institution desires to increase its pool of African American candidates for faculty positions, then, they should place job postings at universities such as, University of California--Berkeley and University of Mississippi. Alternatively, if an institution desires to increase their faculty candidate pool among the Hispanics, then, they should place job postings at universities such as, Texas A & M University and University of Florida. These data could be helpful in identifying where more rigorous job posting efforts can be exerted, targeting certain institutions based on the needs of each posting.

This study found that the challenge in the availability of faculty in the recruitment pool is related to the availability of a diverse student pool. One major theme discussed below was the dearth in the number of students in the pipeline that affects the availability of candidates for faculty positions. Discussions begin with the availability of diversity in the U.S. population.

### *Student Demographics*

The increases in the population demographics of students attending and graduating from colleges today should provide greater opportunities for the College of Agriculture to diversify their students, faculty, and staff populations. Mabokela (2007) emphasized, "Colleges and universities need to actively pursue opportunities to recruit and retain faculty members who can meet the needs of this diverse student population" (p. 3).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES; Borden & Brown, 2005), there has been a steady increase of minority graduates with doctoral

degrees (see Figure #3). The trend shows an increase in the last 10 years of all minorities earning doctoral degrees, especially African American students, with the largest percent increase in American Indian students. Based on the census data provided in Figure #3, between 1993 and 2003, African American doctoral-student graduates have increased 48%, Asian Americans have increased 57%, Hispanic students 46%, and American Indian 19%. The findings of this study support earlier findings that reveal an increase in the diversity of graduates both with masters and doctoral degrees, suggesting greater availability of qualified faculty candidates (Chang, 2005).

Figure 3

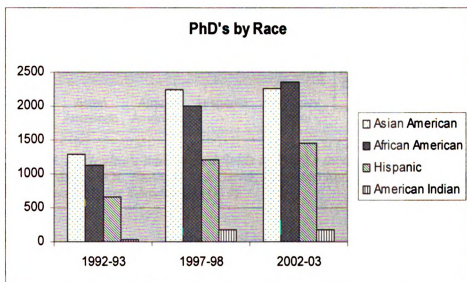


Figure 3. U.S. minorities with Ph.D.s.

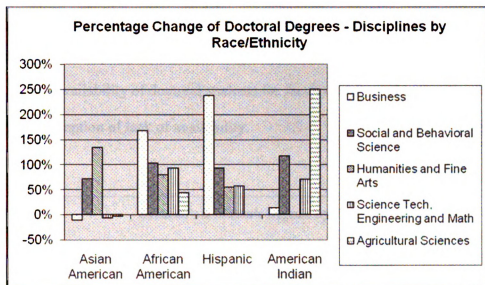
From "The Top 100: Interpreting The Data," by V. M. H. Borden & P. C. Brown, 2004, *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 21(12), p. 34-93.

#### *Doctoral Student Graduates in the Field of Agriculture*

Recent trends show an increase among all races, sexes, and ethnicities among Ph.D. students graduating from U.S. universities (See Figure 4). African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans have had the greatest increases in degrees awarded in Agricultural fields, yet this increase is not reflected in this college's faculty pool.

Recent trends show increases of all races, sexes, and ethnicities among Ph.D. students graduating from U.S. universities (See Figure 4). Suggesting the need to assess the effectiveness of student recruitment policies, and practices in higher education and the availability of minority students for doctoral programs

Figure 4



*Figure 4. Agriculture and related fields of Ph.D.s awarded in 2004.*

From Borden, V.M.H., Brown, P.C., & Garver, A.K. (2005 April 14). The top 100: Interpreting the data. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 22(11) 35.

Figure 4 shows increases in recent years among the African American and American Indian students with Ph.D.'s in agriculture Science. In addition, for example, in the 2006 National Opinion Resource Council (NORC) survey of earned doctorates, students self-reported "economics" and "agri-business" as majors under the "business" category listed above, thus, there is an increase of African American and Hispanic students in these categories. But these doctoral candidates are most likely not in the faculty recruitment pool for future positions since the department does not recruit from the above categories. According to the human-resource representative, some departments,

such as Department A, limit their field codes or categories to one (i.e., Agricultural Science) when recruiting doctoral students for faculty position. Consequently, the availability data reflect lower numbers of minority candidates for tenure-track jobs, which results in less likeliness of attaining affirmative-action goals.

In addition, based on the 2005–2006 data presented in Figure 5, even though there has been an increase of diverse undergraduate-student graduates, students graduating with master's degrees are progressing slowly. This comparison is useful in assessing the current availability of doctoral students for faculty positions because there continued to be a perception of lack of availability.

Figure 5

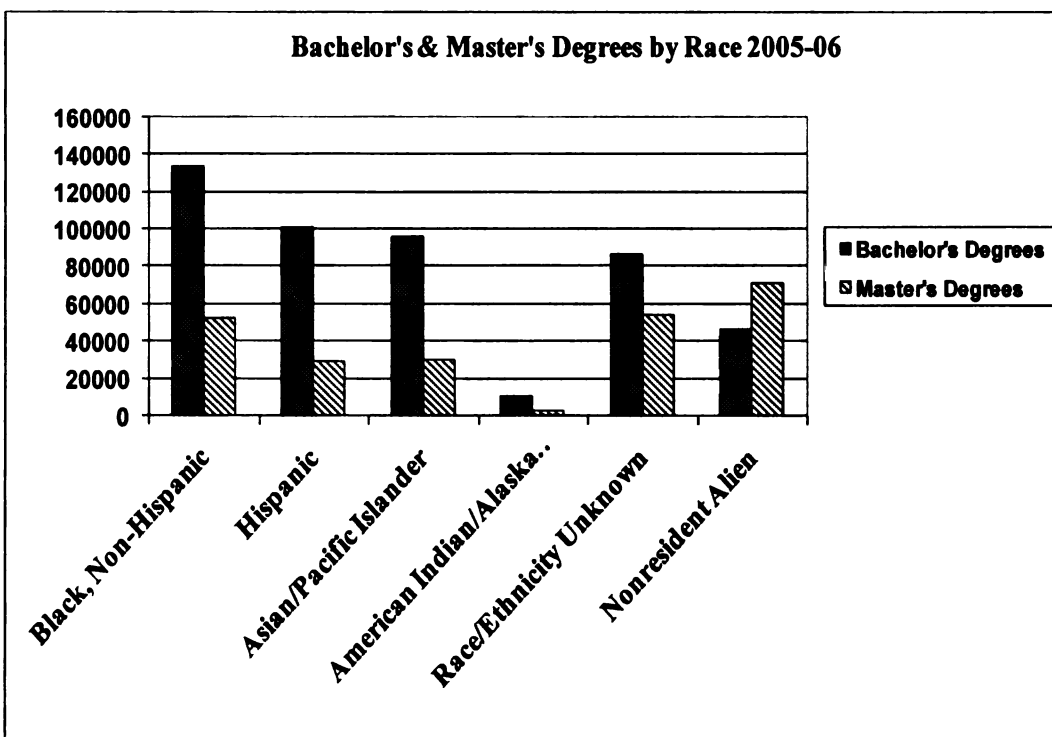


Figure 5. Bachelors and master's degrees by race, 2005–2006.

From *Postsecondary institutions in the United States: Fall 2006 and degree and other awards conferred: 2005–06*, by U.S. Department of Education, 2007, Washington, DC: Author.

While these increases reflect the U.S. population increase over the past decade, unfortunately the same increase is not reflected in the recent trends for the College of Agriculture, especially in diversifying U.S. minority students. There is a general trend in the increase of noncitizens or international students in the master's programs. As indicated in Figure 5 above for school year 2005–2006, 71,761 master's degrees were awarded to nonresident aliens compared to 51,795 master's degrees awarded to domestic minority students in the U.S. Based on the data presented above, this suggests persistent challenges in recruitment of domestic diverse graduate students in higher education institutions.

#### Lack of Pipeline: Need to Grow our Own

Another major theme that emerged repeatedly from this study was the lack of an effective student pipeline for diverse graduate students in the College of Agriculture, which is likely to have a direct affect on the availability of candidates for tenure-track faculty positions. Because universities are both producers and consumers of graduate students, equally important in the faculty-recruitment process is the need for the recruitment of a diverse student population. This section highlights the major themes that emerged from this study about challenges in the recruitment of diverse graduate students who are potential candidates for faculty positions.

Most participants expressed that there is a shortage of diversity among graduate and undergraduate students in the college. This challenge in lack of diversity among the student population is likely to affect the availability of the diverse faculty for positions in the field of Agriculture. One department chair argued that this shortage is due to lack of

effective graduate-student recruitment efforts. He suggested the following to address the pipeline shortage:

Yes, there is a problem with the pipeline and it is not just here at ... It is everywhere. Some of it is systemic and generational. We need to expose students to programs such as MAP, AIMES (high school) or 4-H. We need to reach younger age groups. We need to expose them to the college environment and let them see it is safe here and we need to expose them to all the 15,000 programs we have, show them all the opportunities and then recruit them.

There is a disconnect; the dean's office should not be getting involved in the recruiting of graduate students. It is the departments that have the responsibility. The departments may not support the efforts of who is recruited at the dean level. I think the department should be doing the recruitment of graduate students. (Charlie)

This college's diversity office is separate from the institution's diversity office and is located in the college. Currently, the college's diversity office takes the lead in recruiting a diverse body of graduate students. Some participants argued that this is not the most effective way, given the resistance from individual departments described above, especially because departments have to work closely with students once admitted. The participant's comment above describes the sentiment of many of the participants in the study—that the college's efforts to recruit graduate students will continue to be ineffective without acceptance in the departments. This suggests a need for a more



collaborative recruitment effort between the college and the department, especially because funding comes from both places.

*Pipeline Challenges in Recruitment of Graduate Students*

Similar to the national data presented in Table 6, this study found that a high number of international students are in the college, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Based on the university data below (see Table 6), there has been a steady increase of international graduate students from 38% in the 1995–1996 school year to 42% in the 2007–2008 school year. This data comparing national trends with college trends, shows similar trends in the increase of international students, suggesting that most universities may be facing similar challenges in the recruitment of domestic minority students. Stricter requirements on visas for international students do not appear to have affected international student participation in U.S. colleges and universities.

Table 6

*Graduate Students in the College of Agriculture*

<b>Student Background</b>	<b>1995-96 Numbers</b>	<b>1995-96 %</b>	<b>2007-08 Numbers</b>	<b>2007-08 %</b>
Masters	364		297	
Doctoral	353		297	
Total Graduate Students	717		594	
Graduate International	269	38%	249	42%
Total Graduate Caucasian	372	52%	282	47%
Graduate –US Minorities	74	10%	49	8%
Graduate Other & Blank	2	0%	14	2%
Graduate Caucasian Men	215	30%	135	23%
Graduate Caucasian Women	157	22%	147	25%

Data is based on fall 2007 counts.

From “The Office of Planning and Budget at [Institution],” by [Institution], n.d., retrieved January 7, 2008 from [website withheld for confidentiality]

Meanwhile, the domestic U.S. minority graduate-student population in the College of Agriculture has decreased in those same years from 10% in 1995–1996 to 8% in 2007–2008 school years. In addition, White male students have decreased in numbers over the years likely due to the recent changes in the U.S. demographic.

Moreover, these data reveal that women are making progress in the college, but minorities continue to be underused. One possible explanation provided by a participant suggests that domestic U.S. minorities are simply not interested in the field of agriculture:

I have to say that our biggest challenge is getting more students coming out of high school be more interested in majoring in an agricultural area of work, and I think you have to understand that if you go to the African American community their ethnic history is so anti agricultural. Because of the experience they've had, they are not interested. They may come from the inner-city. They have no personal experiences other than eating food. So how do they have an interest in Agriculture? It is a real big jump for them. OK ... The Hispanics same thing. ... They possibly were raised in a migrant family ... especially your Mexicans. (Sam)

While Sam suggests a lack of interest by potential minority students, it can also be argued that the college may need to increase its recruitment efforts among the high school students.

#### *Funding Challenges in Recruitment of Graduate Students*

As discussed earlier, many of the participants felt that the lack of a diverse faculty-candidate pool was largely due to the lack of students in the pipeline. This study found that there is a problem with sufficient levels of diverse students in the graduate and

undergraduate programs. One explanation for this decrease is likely due to the lack of funds that were once available to recruit diverse students, which can no longer be used due to the most recent ban on affirmative action in the state (Abdrabboh et al., 2007). These challenges include lack of funding to recruit graduate students due to decreased state funding and scarcity of graduate-student funding resources at the department levels. Below one of the college's top-level administrators spoke about the current funding challenges in the recruitment of graduate students:

Grad students are in low numbers. Grad school for students is a problem.

The problem is funding, we don't have as much in state funds.

Departments are transitioning to moving towards soft dollars and moving away from state funds. ...Some departments have been without support for graduate students for a while now. And some departments are moving to soft dollars. I don't think we have chairs who don't want to support diversity. Some are trying but they don't know what to do. (Darren)

Most women participants explained that the success in being admitted to graduate school is strongly based on the whether students are awarded assistantships and grants to attend graduate programs. This is described below by Caucasian female regarding problems in the pipeline, because student funding is largely controlled by the faculty in the departments:

For instance, here are two examples. ... One student was an African American working on her Ph.D. and that she probably would have never been offered this assistantship had it not been for me supporting and promoting her to get it, because I had worked with this student specifically as an undergrad. This

indicates that graduate students, normally hand-selected, hand-picked and that there are students who may be selected, even White females who have poor grades, but the faculty are normally willing to work with them. (Nancy)

According to the participant quoted above, graduate students are normally selected by the faculty who may have a grant or assistantship to offer students, suggesting that this is likely to adversely impact students of color. A female participant provided a similar argument for lack of student diversity, asserting that the biggest challenge is funding to recruit diverse students:

The best thing that the college can do to change so that we can bring in more diversity is to give opportunities to all students by providing funding for a diverse population of students. No ... the grants and assistantships and stipends are offered by faculty to students that they hand pick themselves. So many of the minority students, students of color do not get opportunities for this type of stipends because faculty have control over who [they] offer these to. Until there is an increase in the diversity of the student population in [the] pool, this is going to be a revolving problem in the recruitment of faculty in tenure track positions. (Nancy)

The graduate-funding shortage is a major problem because students may not be accepted into the college programs without being awarded a grant or assistantship. Additionally, Nancy suggested that lack of funding to attend college is likely to affect a greater number of U.S. domestic minority students. While participants in this study expressed that funding of graduate students is a challenge in recruitment of diverse

students, it is important to note that due to the scope of this research, data have not been presented to verify these assertions.

### The University's Affirmative Action Programs

This section is organized based on the major themes that emerged in response to the third main question: What impact does a recent ban on the state's affirmative-action programs have on current policies and practices in hiring diverse faculty? Four major themes emerged and will be discussed comprehensively in this section: the university's affirmative-action programs, the need for diversity training, the need for leadership support, and the campus climate.

This study found that most of the participants did not know that affirmative-action programs are still a requirement for the university in the hiring of tenure-track faculty positions because the university is still a benefactor of federal funds; therefore, departments are required to adhere to the affirmative-action programs under federal guidelines (U.S. Department of Labor, 2002). Additionally, faculty did not seem to understand the role and impact of the ban on affirmative action in the hiring process.

Many participants in this study did not understand the purpose of affirmative-action programs. As indicated in the diversity-training section below, the university diversity administrator related several negative myths held by many on campus that she attempts to debunk. Negative myths persist that affirmative action requires "quotas" or "preferential treatment" to minorities and women. Based on the literature, myths due to lack of understanding about affirmative-action programs can erode the effectiveness of the tenure-track faculty-recruitment process (Blanks, 2005; Heilman et al., 1997; Kravitz & Platania, 1993). As a result, the college continues to struggle in establishing race-

neutral standards in the recruitment process. “Academic institutions often have extremely explicit processes for hiring tenure-track faculty and resistance to anything that interferes with academic freedom,” said Laura Hertzog, EEO/diversity, acting director at Cornell University (as cited in Hastings, 2008). Therefore, just because the university’s process to recruit for diversity is extensive does not necessarily mean that the hiring practices will result in a diverse faculty.

### *Challenges in Setting Affirmative Action Goals*

Another major challenge found in this study is that the university struggles in setting affirmative-action goals. Part of this struggle could be due to the use of data obtained from the NORC databank in establishing affirmative-action hiring goals. Graduating students self-report their degrees and majors to the NORC data bank as part of their exit survey. According to the administrator who oversees the university’s affirmative action hiring procedures, colleges often look at only a limited number of reported majors when identifying the number of new Ph.D.’s available. These numbers are then used to establish affirmative-action goals for tenure-track faculty hiring. This could mean that goals for recruitment of diverse tenure-track faculty are set below actual availability levels. In addition, the institution’s affirmative-action form reveals that the goals for international hires are often combined with domestic hires, which further reduces the targeted goals for domestic Asian faculty hires.

Misunderstandings about the scope of the recent statewide ban on affirmative action could also affect the views of those doing the hiring. One university administrator described the general lack of understanding of affirmative-action programs:

One of the most common misconceptions is that [the ban on affirmative action] changed something. [The university] is a federal contract and therefore has a contractual obligation for affirmative action. There are some folks out there who think that maybe we don't have to do anything anymore and don't have to conform to affirmative action. (Charlie)

Comments such as this suggest a need for training or workshops about the impact from the ban on affirmative-action programs to inform those making hiring decisions.

### The Need for Diversity Training

An overwhelming number of participants felt that search committee training is needed, given the recent ban on affirmative-action programs in the state. Most participants in this study did not appear to understand the current affirmative-action obligations of their departments in light of the ban on affirmative action in the state. When asked what impact the ban on affirmative action has on hiring tenure-track faculty, one department chair responded

So there has to be a re-education of people to understand that we are an affirmative-action employer, which means we receive federal funds that dictate that we need to be conscious as a steward of federal monies. That we can't discriminate based on race or gender or religion, or ethnicity, and that at the end of the year, we have an obligation to report our processes and how they relate to working for versus working against affirmative action. (Peter)

Many of the participants felt that the university should hold training and information sessions to inform search committees about what is required as an affirmative-action employer receiving federal grants. Search committees are often not

well trained for the recruitment of tenure-track faculty. A Caucasian female candidate described the challenges of affirmative-action programs:

No, I think many people think affirmative action means you might be forced to hire an inferior candidate. I don't think people understand it. I don't think we're trained in what it means. I think if we had an affirmative-action diversity program, which the university puts a lot on, but what happens is [that only] the people that don't need it go. And the people that need it resent it and don't go, don't even care, you know.

(Rose)

Most participants felt that search-committee members believe affirmative-action programs give preferential treatment to minorities or women. Consequently, many participants believed a great deal of resentment exists among faculty toward minority and women candidates who presumably took the place of “a more qualified” candidate. These findings are consistent with previous studies (Holcomb-McCoy & Bradley, 2003; Phillips, 2002). One top-level diversity administrator felt that there are many departments that consistently find reasons and excuses for why they have trouble hiring a diverse faculty body. She felt her job often requires informing or educating people across campus by debunking many of the myths search committee members hold about diversity. She spoke about her efforts in helping the departments diversify the campus:

You have to take the philosophy that whatever arguments that anyone may have why we have not been very successful—that's what we have to go after. ... We have some who say it is [this state] and its too cold here; people won't come. Well, we know that is not true. There is not enough in



the pipeline that is a part of it. Availability is always a concern, but people are out there. There is not a discipline that does not have a labor market, there is a labor market. You may need to think differently about potential candidates to the extent that people do not come from an Ivy League, for example, but perhaps come from HBCU. ... They should be given reasons why it is okay to at least think differently about who you might invite for an interview, and it doesn't mean that you are sacrificing quality because even in the world of affirmative action, before [it was banned], you couldn't say the only reason why I am hiring someone is because of their race or gender. (Patty)

The administrator captured what most participants described as reasons they often heard for lack of diversity in the college. These myths may continue to erode the climate of support on campus unless they are addressed through the various training programs.

#### The Need for Leadership Support

The most repeated concern among faculty and administrators alike in this study was a belief that top leadership was not committed to diversifying the campus or the college. This study found that top-level leadership support is essential to create a greater level of diversity among faculty, staff, and students. Additionally, several participants at all levels (from administrators to faculty) felt that without specific goals and measurable outcomes, diversity advocacy will continue to lack sincerity:

It's lip service; as a matter of fact, I think it's kind of demeaning for the university. When they say that the university is an equal employment opportunity employer, that is false advertisement because it has never

been an equal employment opportunity employer, so the president and her leadership team have to agree on that ... but the commitment at higher levels is not there. (Fox)

Overall, participants at all levels were disappointed in the lack of accountability and commitment to diversity both on campus and in the college. These findings confirm the two earlier studies implemented at the college.

Well, now, you have to understand that diversity has never been a high priority. ... It's never been a high priority. If it was, we would have better gains. See there's, there is not much accountability around diversity. Lots of papers, lots of discussions, lots of talk, lots of meetings, but at the end of the day, you're lucky if you would make a small gain or you might even lose. (Fox)

Several of the participants in this study stated that the dean needed to hold department chairs more accountable for increasing diversity in the departments. This could include goals that are tied to one's performance appraisal for diversifying a department. One department chair expressed that the dean of the college should make diversity a priority, stating

There is nothing within their tenure system and there is nothing that is motivating them that is performance-based. Nothing is putting a value on them diversifying their networks, diversifying their student body, or diversifying those that they would hire, who then become positioned for faculty positions or for research grants or for a number of other measurable things that become the criteria by which we hire people into

faculty positions. So, if our ultimate goal is to have diversity in the finalist pool. ...If I am a faculty person or a researcher, there's nothing that is motivating me or that I'm being held accountable or its part of my performance appraisal that says I will be measured for tenure on your numbers of diverse people in my department or as research assistants or whatever. (Dan)

Comments often revolved around issues of whether there are sufficient incentives to promote diversity on campus. If so, that suggests a disconnect between the desire for diversity and structural support for diversity. The problem with equal employment opportunities on college campuses is that this concept needs to be aligned with the strategic plans, mission statements and initiatives (Hayton & Paczuska, 2002). Incentive programs that are part of the overall diversity initiatives could be an effective motivator in diversifying the college. Previous studies report that leadership support is essential to achieving successful diversity on college campuses, yet it is often absent (Ataiyero, 2006; Turner et al., 1999).

This study also found that while race/ethnic diversity is problematic. To some, it appears that there have been great advances in promoting Caucasian women on campus, reflected in one participant's comments:

Of course women are promoted by design from top to bottom. OK, the president has said, "White women need a voice and I'm going to be their voice." And [the president] has made great gains in that area. But she knows what the constitution says, right? All men are created equal, but she's saying well, White women are created equal too. So I'm gonna

strategically push administrators in the university to hire more White females, and she's had great success in that area. (Fox)

This suggests that the gender gap on campus is being addressed from the top down, hence more progress in promoting women is expected in the near future. The key to success is perceived as the initial support from the board of trustees or president.

### **Policies Are as Good as the Leadership**

Most participants indicated that lack of accountability in the hiring process was one of the major reasons why diversity policies are often ineffective. Specifically, even though improvements have been made in the number of sources departments use in posting jobs, little follow-up appears to be initiated by the university's diversity office with the departments to assure a process free of bias and in promoting fairness. For instance, when a department disqualifies a candidate for lack of fit, the university may not be aware of the reasons. A participant described how the hiring process lacks accountability and fairness:

Basically the university policy around diversity and pluralism is rather weak. There's just not an accountability factor there. So I don't think the university needs any more policies, you can forget that. They can cut the number of policies they have in place and just focus in on leadership to get some results, top to bottom. I mean, I've seen candidates come in here make the final cuts. ... Great people, but then you always hear a thing like, well "fit," maybe was not a "good fit." Well that tells you that man, we gone through all of this, and we have this ludicrous, bogus statement of a fit is not good. ... They might say if it's not fit, they may say, well you

know they haven't had enough experience, the scope of their work has been limited. So rather than a hundred dollars worth of feed, you may need ten thousand dollars worth of feed. So when they talk about scope, that's another ludicrous statement. Yeah. (Fox)

As evidenced by the quote above, some minority participants felt that even when the candidate made it to the final stage, there was always a question of "lack of fit" used as a reason to disqualify minority candidates. Equally problematic is the climate on campus, described in the next section.

### The Campus Climate

This study found that an overwhelmingly large number of participants described the college climate as "chilly" for minority faculty and women. These findings support two internal studies done in the college and create a major challenge to the recruitment and retention of candidates in the college:

It's still a White male's world. It's an old boy's network. There was one incident when she asked [a Caucasian female colleague] the male counterpart about an affirmative-action policy whether that is going to impact recruitment. The White male replied back to her that he will find out the new policy as he has a couple of beers with the "Good Ole Boys." I asked who the "Good Ole Boys" were and my counterpart replied that he was having a beer with the dean of the college. (Nancy)

Several participants also described how difficult it is for minority faculty to be mentored, coached, or supported by others in the college. As discussed earlier, this also suggests that in addition to possible biases in the selection process, perhaps minorities,

more than women, are not as well connected with the proper networks to attain faculty jobs. These challenges are depicted below by one faculty member:

What happens there, especially with so few minorities, is that you get put out on an island in departments, and I have counseled many minority faculty members who are, who have been, out on that island over the years. I've counseled them, helped them form joint support groups. Whether it's the Asian Americans Faculty Association ... so that they know that there are others out there like themselves ... we have to say, "We understand where you are, you're out on an island, let's work together to try to overcome this." And we've done that year after year after year. Probably 10 or 15 people that I knew of, who just don't feel as though they fit, feel as though they are out on an island and don't feel understood or respected. And the other thing that is really reflective of this being out on an island is people not appreciating the research that others of color are doing. (Hank)

The views above express an unwelcoming climate experienced by many minority and women faculty. The lack of proper guidance and mentoring of junior faculty is not unique to this institution, as is evident in many large research universities across the nation (Turner et al., 1999). The findings of this study are consistent with earlier findings of a study implemented at eight Midwestern states, describing the campus climate as "chilly" for minorities and women (Turner et al., 1999). That unwelcoming climate was detected; this study revealed that faculty of color experience exclusion, isolation,

alienation, and racism in predominantly White universities. This is captured by the diversity representative in her statement on the subject:

I have spoken with several faculty, staff and students in this college and at ... at large, and the consistent themes that are emerging are that people of color on this campus are not supported or mentored for success. And they experience feelings of isolation, exclusion, alienation and racism at [the university]. (Sara)

This is representative of the assertions made by many participants in this study that the university climate has regressed in diversifying the campus from the previous decade. The existing literature also supports this study's findings of a "chilly climate" for both minorities and women (Aguirre, 2000; Gordon, 2004; Hale, 2004; Hao, 2003; Turner et al., 1999). Similar concerns about an unwelcoming climate were stated by another female participant:

The trouble with the discrimination with females is it's subtle, and it is not recognized by the people who do it. So they can take the high ground. They can say, "We'll fight for quality. You people are trying to pull us down in this morass of inferiority with this diversity talk. If there had been a superior diversity candidate, we would have hired them. That is their shield." And they believe it. I'm not trying to be too harsh on them, but just trying to break that expectation by saying give me 1 month, and I'll change that pool, and I think I can come up with a candidate that will out compete some of the ones in the pool. But it's a hell of a lot of work.

Yeah, so we have this rural culture we also tend to have the older faculty here. I think if you look at the age of faculty here, many of our faculty are very defensive. I think their time has come and gone. Maybe they were excellent, probably in extension, when extension was what you were supposed to be excellent in, and they feel threatened. And the last thing they want to be threatened with is somebody of color or a woman. ... Yeah, and its basically, it's diversity of any kind, the bulk of diversity, of subject matter, that's why we have this fight in our department, business versus economics. The diversity that moves away from the mainstream culture is resistant. (Rose)

Most faculty may not intentionally promote an unwelcoming climate in the college.

#### Climate Issues in Promotion and Retention

This study found that retention of tenure-track faculty was equally problematic due to potential biases in the promotion and tenure process. While outside the scope of this study, several participants voiced similar concerns about the lack of supportive climate in the promotion and tenure process. Retention has a direct impact on recruitment and the success of a new faculty member, as noted by a participant:

It goes exactly to what I was talking about as far as marginalizing people and their research for promotion and tenure. You didn't publish in this journal or this wasn't a good journal. But I've written five books. Yeah, but they weren't good books. But he didn't write five books. No, he applied to a referee journal, didn't get accepted, but it was a good effort



and a good journal. I've seen people who have chapters in books. ... A lot of weight given to that, but I've seen people who have written books with no weight whatsoever given to it. (Steve)

The above quote is representative of how of the women and minority participants felt that both minorities and women candidates are often marginalized and their research and publication work devalued in the tenure-and-promotion process. These findings are similar to the findings in the previous literature that indicate that minorities and women are marginalized and their work devalued (Turner, 2002). Female and minority candidates are likely to be more highly scrutinized than their White male counterparts. Below is yet another participant who described the nature of tenure politics, pointing out how a "chilly climate" might impact the successes of new faculty:

The tenure process is quite political; you have good people who don't make tenure because some faculty do not like them and they didn't play their cards right. I know this does not happen all the time, as most people who get tenure deserve it. I will tell you this; I was in a tenure track in another institution and was not given tenure. One member on the review board was livid that I was not given tenure; basically they concluded that I had done my job but I didn't fraternize and scratch backs as I should.

(Randy)

Overall, the support, mentoring, coaching, and promotion of faculty of color and women are problematic in the college. If qualified women and minority candidates are recruited for faculty positions but are not supported in achieving tenure, there is a two-way

problem of both recruitment and retention. The success or failure of one's tenure and promotion achievement has a major impact on recruitment efforts.

### Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the challenges and opportunities that exist for the College of Agriculture in diversification. The findings provide a troubling picture of the current climate toward diversity at this Midwestern university and at the College of Agriculture. There were several important findings about the problematic recruitment process and the many challenges facing search committees. Additionally, this chapter presented the major findings of this study on policies and practices at the university. While the college has made some efforts to diversify its faculty, it has far to go to create an all-inclusive and welcoming climate, and in providing leadership and support for diversity in its hiring policies and practices. The overall themes provide a disturbing picture of the current state of the climate, culture, and level of diversity at this Midwestern University in the College of Agriculture. This study found that the climate at the college and at the university at large is unwelcoming, described by many as "chilly" for both minorities and women. As evidenced by the cited interviews, racial/ethnic minorities and women are unintentionally marginalized through the devaluing of their scholarly work or disqualification of their previous work experiences. These findings support earlier findings about the unsupportive academic climate and culture for diverse populations at postsecondary institutions.

The institution struggles to balance its identity as a land-grant institution promoting research, teaching, and service and the desire to achieve elite status in higher education. The problem in recruitment of diverse faculty is also compounded by a lack of

knowledge and misinterpretation of policies and procedures in the hiring of tenure-track faculty positions. Consequently, the hiring process is not effective in the recruitment of diverse faculty. With respect to increasing faculty diversity, the university is currently in a state of transition due to the recent realignment of the mission of the office of diversity, as evidenced by its recent name change, which is likely due to the statewide ban on affirmative-action programs. Top-level leadership is also in search of answers from the state and federal government about the impact of the recent ban on the university's obligations as a federal contractor.

The study has uncovered a general lack of understanding among the members of the search committee about the impact of the ban on affirmative-action programs. Furthermore, the recent ban on affirmative action is compounded by the overall lack of understanding about affirmative-action and hiring policies. Currently, there are no clear guidelines regarding affirmative action or about how departments must deal with the impact of the ban on affirmative-action programs in the state. Consequently, the effectiveness of affirmative-action programs is compromised in the recruitment of tenure-track faculty.

In addition, the study revealed that current university policies are not monitored closely, which is probably due to labor resources that are too limited to manage a large number of search committees on campus at any given time. While the university has good policies in place, they are not followed as prescribed; instead, members of search committees attempt to adhere to the administrative affirmative-action requirements by submitting the necessary paperwork, making the entire process "mechanical" at best. Perhaps what is missing in the process of hiring is a culture or climate supportive of and

committed to a “good faith” effort to diversify the faculty. Participants perceived the single most important problem in the college and at the university was the lack of top-leadership support to hold accountable for diversity those involved in hiring, granting tenure, and giving promotions. This was followed by the lack of sufficient levels of diversity in the college and thereby on the search committees.

While the College of Agriculture continues to struggle to improve its agriculture image, there are many who feel that the greater challenges facing the college are ineffective student-recruitment efforts. However, the recent trend of increases in the overall diversity among the student population in U.S. colleges and universities provides greater opportunities for the college to recruit for a highly diversified student body. Nonetheless, strong financial and academic structural support for a diverse pipeline of students from which faculty may be selected continues to be limited. The next chapter provides policy recommendations and implications based on these findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Recommendations for Best Practices in Hiring Tenure Track Faculty

This study offers several recommendations for higher education institutions that may be applicable to a variety of postsecondary institutions, organizations, and businesses. These recommendations may be applicable to human-resource functions of best practices in recruitment. First, this chapter discusses Bennett's (1993) model of cross-cultural competencies and its application to suggest which hiring practices enhance or inhibit the creation of a diverse faculty. Next, a summary of key findings from this study and discussions of policy and procedural implications are presented. In addition, based on key findings, recommendations for best practices in recruitment of tenure-track faculty are provided. A quick reference guide for best practices in the recruitment of a diverse faculty is also provided (see Appendix B). Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of implications for future research.

#### Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model

Bennett's model aids in understanding the primary question informing this study: What are the factors that inhibit or enhance the hiring of a diverse tenure-track faculty workforce at a Midwestern university? Bennett's development model of intercultural sensitivity (1993) provides a theoretical perspective in the analysis and application in the recruitment of tenure-track faculty. Bennett (1993) stressed several stages of an individual's intercultural development, and it is likely that individuals will be at different stages of their personal growth. His model closely addresses how people understand and cope with people of different cultures, ethnicities, and races. Bennett's model also

describes how individuals may accept or reject others based on their own comfort levels in working with other cultures. Bennett's model also discusses how individuals may accept or reject others based on their own comfort levels in working with other cultures. The basic pedagogical use of this model is to provide training in cultural self-awareness about others in different cultures, intended to aid in improving communications and understanding among diverse individuals. This model is also intended to increase racial, ethnic, and gender awareness about cultural differences of others, in hopes of improving overall success in the recruitment of diversity among tenure-track faculty. Although there are several stages of development discussed in Bennett's model, only the three major stages<sup>5</sup> that match up most closely with the data in this study will be highlighted: (a) minimization, (b) acceptance, and (c) defense. The model below has been developed to demonstrate the application of Bennett's theory in the hiring of tenure track faculty.

Bennett's model of intercultural sensitivity provides a lens to aid in understanding how candidates may be accepted or rejected in the recruitment process of a diverse faculty. According to Bennett (1993), search-committee members may relate to a candidate's mainstream experiences, so if a candidate has different experiences from their own, it is likely the candidate will be rejected. Conversely, candidates who are similar have a better chance of being accepted. Hence, it is likely that some search-committee members are in the defensive stage and therefore are not accepting of minority candidates even when they hold the minimum posted qualifications.

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<sup>5</sup> Bennett's model (1993) is discussed in-depth in chapter 2, pp. 55–57.

## Bennett's Model Applied in Hiring

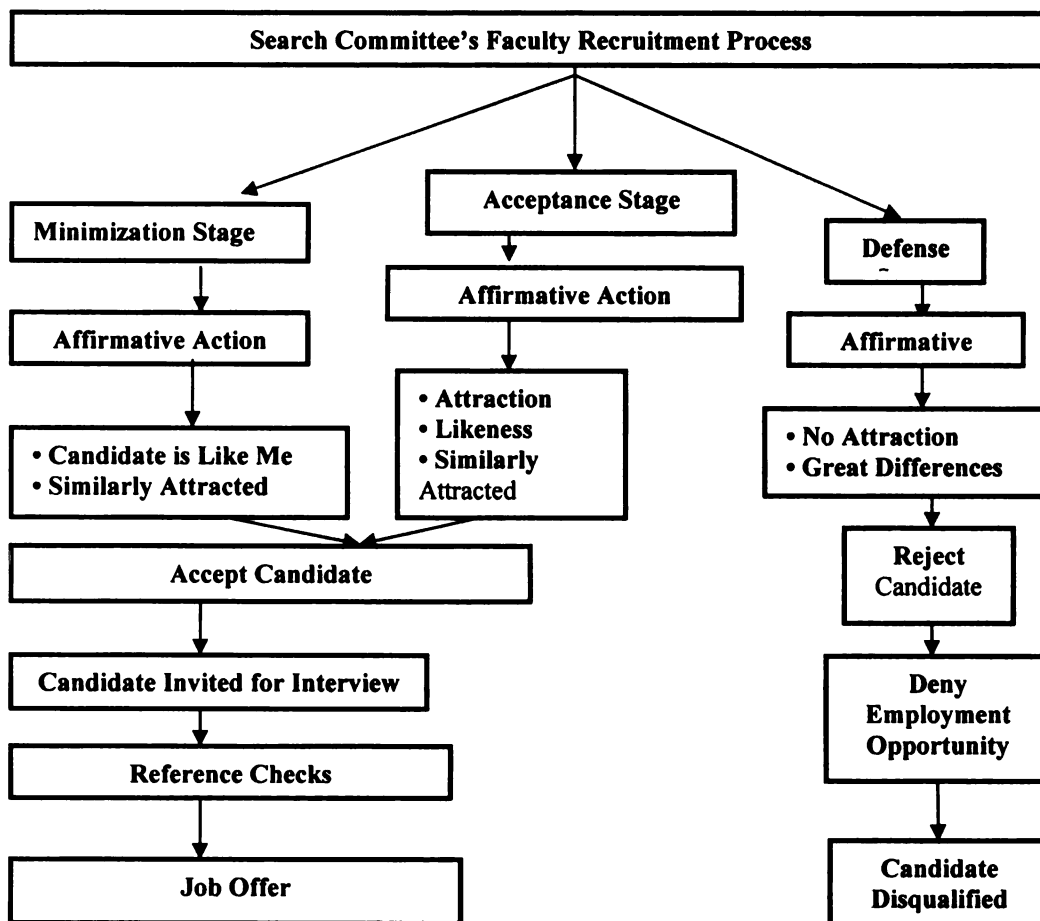


Figure 6. *Bennett's model applied in faculty recruitment at a midwestern university's college of agriculture.*

Research universities often hire tenure-track faculty to fill a specific gap; therefore, the candidates are likely to be screened for specific qualifications, like being an expert in cherry trees. Because of this, it is likely that candidates who have compatible yet differing specialties are eliminated. While many study participants indicated that there may be some positions that demand closely matched skill sets without much flexibility, there are an equal number of tenure-track postings in which the required job qualifications are not as specific or as narrowly defined. Therefore, by identifying transferable skills for qualifications for certain positions, a larger pool of qualified

minority and women candidates may be identified who typically have nontraditional job-history experiences.

Springer and Baez (2002) recommended that the standards for best qualified candidates should be expanded to include a range of experiences and credentials when evaluating a candidate's portfolio. In addition, Turner (2002) in the book, *"Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees"* had offered several best practices in hiring faculty. This study recommends that faculty résumés be closely reviewed to emphasize a holistic approach to critiquing candidates' qualifications, where one's richness of diverse academic and work experiences are identified for value added to the department. This form of candidate assessment requires a higher level of cross-cultural competency and development among search-committee members, identified in Bennett's model.

Bennett's (1993) model of intercultural sensitivity suggests a need for higher education institutions to implement a variety of ongoing training programs for search-committee members and other university constituents to enhance the climate and culture of the organization through better understandings of diversity. Policy implications and recommendations will be provided in the training and leadership section below.

### Diversity Policies and Practices

This section provides a summary of key findings for the first subquestion in this study: What policies and practices exist around diversity in faculty hiring at the College of Agriculture? The findings in this study highlighted two major themes in addressing the first research question: (a) diversity defined and (b) college-level diversity. Discussions of policy and procedural implications are provided about each emerging theme. Finally,



based on key findings, recommendations for best practices in recruitment of tenure-track faculty are provided, related to each theme.

### *Diversity Defined*

This study confirmed the findings of two earlier college studies that showed that the concept of how diversity is defined varies greatly among college constituents. This lack of consistency in the idea of diversity affects the success of hiring a diversified tenure-track faculty pool. Additionally, while the university has a very broad definition of diversity that encompasses inclusiveness, this study revealed that participants do not have a common understanding of diversity and inclusiveness. Additionally, while the university has extensive policies and procedures regarding recruitment of faculty, there is no evidence of college-level written policies or procedures. Consequently, a lack of understanding and college-level support for diversity policies and practices appears to have affected the hiring policies and practices of tenure-track faculty.

### *College Level Diversity*

This study revealed a continuing struggle in diversifying faculty in the College of Agriculture. The college's level of diversity is not representative of U.S. population demographics. In addition, while the college has improved its international and women-faculty representation, it continues to be underrepresented among other U.S. minority populations. Specifically, an analysis of the degree of representation by Hispanic/Latino, African American, and American Indian faculty in the college revealed low levels in the ranks of tenure-track faculty. This suggests that the college is faced with the challenge of recruiting more minority faculty.

## Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices

The findings of this study suggest that there is an unmet need to foster an inclusive and diverse environment in the College of Agriculture. This will require the collaboration of all stakeholders at the institution in diversity-awareness programs and support for diversity in hiring. As discussed earlier, the policy and procedural implications that emerged from this study are likely to have relevance and application at other similar public-research universities, largely due to the similar challenges faced by those institutions in the recruitment of faculty. Thus, it is likely that the recommendations highlighted in this chapter provide suggestions for enhancement of diversity at other universities; recommendations that address the particular university of this study are applicable to other universities; recommendations directed at the college can also be applicable to other colleges of agriculture; policy implications for university leadership have practical applications at other public-research institutions; and finally, recommendations for the university's diversity office and human resource office are also applicable to other universities with similar departments.

The literature in this study highlights scholars who recommend several hiring policies and practices in the recruitment of faculty in higher education institutions (Adam, 2006b; Bye, 2007; Cockrell, et al.; 1999; Dooley, 2003; Drake, 2004; Haag, 2005; Opp & Smith, 1994; Springer & Baez, 2002). In particular, Turner (2002) offered several recommendations for best practices in faculty recruitment. In addition, the AAUP has developed clear, standardized best practices, procedures, and recommendations in the recruitment of diverse faculty in support of affirmative-action practices. My study supports the work of the above scholars in the field and provides policy recommendations

and implications for higher education institutions, consistent with previous literature, highlighted in the recommendation section of this chapter.

Based on the key findings in this study, the following best practices are recommended to support diversity:

1. The university should celebrate the idea of inclusiveness by providing more university-wide cultural, ethnic, and social events to bring together all groups on campus (faculty, staff, and students) for the purpose of learning and understanding differences, and to promote cross-cultural experiences.
2. The dean should provide incentives to promote effective recruitment strategies and the hiring of a diverse workforce.
3. The dean should review the current policies and procedures regarding recruitment of faculty and graduate students to ensure a fair system of recruitment.
4. The college-diversity administrator should establish goals and require follow-up standards to support the success of faculty/students of color and women in the college.

### **Policy Interpretation and Implementation**

This section provides a summary of key findings from the second subquestion in this study: How do those involved in the faculty hiring decisions in postsecondary education understand, interpret, and implement policies and practices to diversify faculty hiring?

## Composition of a Search Committee

This study found that the university does have extensive policies for hiring tenure-track faculty, but also found that search-committee members' interpretations of these policies influence candidate selection. To address the second subquestion on policy interpretation and implementation, discussion will be focused on search committees. This study found that the makeup of the search committee has a major effect on the final hiring outcomes. As discussed in the previous chapter, search-committee members in this study were highly influenced by the composition of the committee. Having committees composed of homogeneous faculty groupings limited the holistic perspectives of members because it limited the use of diverse perspectives and viewpoints in the selection process. Individuals typically hold personal viewpoints that are likely to result in biases in the selection process (Bennett, 1993). For instance, search committees generally screen candidates for qualifications; therefore, it is likely that a homogeneous search committee will place more value on certain qualifications and unintentionally disqualify a potentially qualified candidate from the pool. Candidates may bring a diverse set of experiences, yet their skills may not resemble the committee's own experiences. Therefore, the composition of the search committee can be a critical factor in the hiring process (Opp & Smith, 1994; Smith et al., 2004).

This study found that one of the biggest challenges faced by the college is that the composition of the present faculty is not very diverse. Several scholars recommend that search committees should be comprised of diverse faculty and professionals (Opp & Smith, 1994; Smith et al., 2004; Turner, 2002). In addition, the study revealed that women and minorities in the college are rarely appointed to be the search-committee

chair, a position that has a great deal of influence in the hiring process. Consequently, progress in diversification of faculty continues to be a challenge for the college.

Another major problem is that even though the college attempts to appoint a diversity advocate on the search committee, this study found that the diversity advocate's role on the search committee is often ineffective in assuring a good-faith effort. In addition, many diversity advocates felt that because they were appointed from within the college but often outside the department, they did not have a strong voice (or vote) in hiring decisions. The perceptions of diversity advocates was that the current process of recruitment is highly "mechanical" at best and erodes the importance of the diversity advocate on search committees.

The study found that there was a lack of top-leadership support for diversity at the college level and therefore the process lacks incentives (financial and/or structural support) to promote an inclusive environment in the college. Additionally, there is a lack of accountability in the college and at the department level to successfully diversify. However, as mentioned previously, the college has recently hired a diversity administrator, so it is hopeful that there will be greater progress to diversify the faculty in the future. To address these challenges, best practices in the recruitment of tenure-track faculty are provided in the next section.

#### Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices

The college and university administrators (dean, associate deans, department chairs, and directors) should provide a set of college-wide goals and objectives in hiring a diverse faculty pool. Additionally, the college dean should provide support to assure diverse representation on the search committee, including women, minorities, and junior

faculty, and make the role of the diversity advocate more central in the decision-making process. Based on the key findings in this study, the following best practices are recommended regarding search committees:

1. Search committees should use the expertise of the college's diversity representative and establish a working relationship with campus-level diversity representatives.
2. The university and the college should consider greater structural support (funding and personnel) to promote diversity by increasing personnel both at the university and college levels.
3. The dean and department chairs should establish a strategic plan that includes goals and objectives in hiring and retention of new minority or female faculty members. The plan should provide assurances for equal-employment opportunities for all candidates, such as diverse search committees that include women, minorities, and junior faculty; broader screening criteria to attract a variety of candidate experiences that may be compatible with needs; expanding beyond only traditional top-tier institutions in recruitment; supporting mentor services; and providing funding support.
4. The college administrator should facilitate the appointment of a search-committee chair who can be a strong supporter and advocate for diversity. Also, college administrators should support a strong voice (vote) for the diversity advocate in a search.

5. The college diversity administrator should be engaged throughout the recruitment process, assist in establishing hiring standards, and follow up with search committees at every step of the hiring process.
6. The diversity director or associate dean should be prepared to stop a search at any stage should it become necessary and hold departments more accountable for their actions. For instance, a search should be stopped when there is no diversity representation on the search committee or if there is no diversity representation in the candidate pool.
7. The dean and department chairs should establish a strategic plan that includes goals and objectives in hiring and retention of new minority and/or female faculty members.

#### Faculty Recruitment Practices

Based on the findings in this study, departments and the college are faced with several challenges in the recruitment of tenure-track faculty and in the university's hiring policies on affirmative action. This study revealed persistent challenges in hiring diverse faculty, suggesting that problems emanate from ineffective recruitment practices in job postings, job descriptions, job qualifications, selection, and availability of a diverse candidate pool.

Institutions have traditionally struggled to diversify their college campuses. This is largely due to the hiring pool of candidates, which is usually recruited from recurring posting sources and recruitment practices among universities. Most universities are both producers and consumers of faculty, competing for qualified faculty and students. While the university's policies promote diversity on paper, implementation is inconsistent and

insufficient. For example, according to the institution's hiring policies, the department chair is expected to pilot a charge to the search committee to consider diversity as one of the many criteria in hiring. This study found that such discussions were infrequently conducted by the department chair. Instead, search committees were often given the charge to hire the "best qualified" candidate, suggesting that quality may be compromised if diversity is considered in the hiring process.

### *Challenges in Job Postings*

As indicated in chapter 4, this study found that departments need to expand their job-posting sources by exerting greater effort to recruit from universities that have awarded greater numbers of minority doctoral degrees and those that offer relevant programs or majors desired for the position.

The college has exerted efforts to expand its posting sources; however, this study found that job postings are typically advertised in the same sources for subsequent job postings. This is partly due to the perception of faculty that recruitment from nontraditional sources such as *Black Issues of Higher Education* will not result in a qualified candidate pool. Consequently, the college has not been very successful in diversifying its faculty pool. Several scholars recommend that job postings should use diverse posting sources (Cockrell et al., 1999; Opp & Smith, 1994; Turner, 2002). This could mean that advertising and networking with nontraditional institutions that produce a higher number of minority and women students in agriculture would likely result in more diverse faculty-candidate pools (Hayden, 1997; Turner, 2002). Additionally, recruitment of faculty in the field of agriculture is challenging because few institutions produce doctoral students majoring in agriculture. However, whenever feasible,



advertising postings and networking with nontraditional institutions that produce a higher number of minority and women students in agriculture would likely result in a more diverse pool of faculty candidates.

Networks are important in academia, especially when a candidate has established relationships with well-known professors and researchers. However, this study found that search committees typically do not have a diverse network system in place to recruit a diverse faculty. Network efforts by faculty and administrators with other institutions are essential; if the search committee is not diverse, it is likely that network contacts are also not diverse.

Networking is a double-edged problem. Another important criterion for selection in higher education is based on how well the candidate is connected with well-known professors or well-renowned researchers. If applicants are not well connect to the accepted academic network, or if they obtained their Ph.D. from a lesser known university, they may not be considered as a serious candidate. Thus, it would be in the institution's best interest to facilitate collaboration with doctoral students and junior faculty.

#### *Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practice*

While the university has extensive guidelines for job postings, the dean, department chair, and associate dean of diversity should provide a set of posting guidelines at the college level to improve the chances of diverse representation of faculty candidates in the hiring pool. The following best practices for advertising positions are recommended:

1. Efforts should be made to post job openings in a diverse set of journals and websites to maximize the number of qualified candidates available.
2. Job postings should be advertised with the institution's various diverse faculty and staff associations and at other colleges, departments, and organizations/offices at universities that support diversity.
3. A diverse faculty representing a wide range of disciplines, race, and ethnicity, from each department should actively network with counterparts at other universities to seek out potential diverse candidates.
4. The diversity administrator should update the information on its Website to provide more accurate information about various campus organizations and diverse faculty and staff associations so that departments have easy access to that information when posting jobs.
5. The institution's diversity office should consider posting jobs on its Website to inform a diverse community about opportunities on campus.
6. The diversity administrator for both the institution and the college should hold departments accountable by closely monitoring loopholes in the hiring process, such as monitoring posting sites used in the hiring process.
7. The dean and department chairs should provide opportunities for women and minority faculty to engage, network, and collaborate with highly recognized faculty in their field to build a field support base and eliminate barriers that create perceptions of "tokenism" and overcome feelings of isolation.

8. Faculty members who represent diversity (diversity advocates and faculty of color) should attend conferences in an effort to build networks and post announcements for job postings.

### *Challenges in the Job Description, Qualifications, and Selection Process*

Another major challenge is how candidates' qualifications are assessed in a meritocratic system in higher education institutions. While meritocracy is an acceptable criteria in screening candidates, most search committees have struggled with the job description as it relates to "best qualified," as this is a complex phenomenon in higher education. One reason for the complexity is that the term *best qualified* can be interpreted in many ways. Wherever possible, job descriptions should be designed to attract a wide range of diverse knowledge and expertise. Scholars included in this study recommend that job descriptions should emphasize diversity as a compelling university interest (Smith et al., 2004; Turner, 2002). Furthermore, the criteria for best qualified should be expanded to include a wide range of diverse candidate experiences (Springer & Baez, 2002). Additionally, the complex system of job postings in higher education often results in each posting being slightly different from the previous one because of the specific gap desired to be filled. Therefore, it is difficult to apply a standard for job descriptions or for screening candidates.

Faculty generally support the notion of hiring the most qualified candidate; however, it can be argued that qualification does not necessarily reflect competency, specifically when assessing women and minorities. A job description written with an inherently biased standard of qualifications can unintentionally create disparate treatment of minorities and women. If the objective is to hire the "most qualified," then it is equally

important is to clearly define what constitutes most qualified. Postsecondary institutions seem to have conflicting and often competing interests in the need to hire the most qualified and simultaneously diverse faculty, especially because many hold the perception that if a diverse candidate is hired, meritocracy is compromised. If true, a review of the criteria of best qualified candidates should be conducted and discussed at the beginning stages of every search, because the criteria of selection can have a “disparate impact,”<sup>6</sup> on the hiring process.

A holistic approach that evaluates the candidate’s diverse experiences and strengths could be an effective strategy in screening candidates for faculty positions. Traditionally, women and minorities have not had mainstream academic experiences and may not have had the opportunities to work with the most recognized scientists or researchers in their field; consequently, they may be disqualified from the search process. Therefore, evaluation of their transferable skills (skills that may be similar and applicable in the new position) is likely to aid in identifying qualified minority and women candidates. A potential problem in the selection of minority candidates is that faculty at most higher education institutions often do not possess the human-resource skills necessary to screen candidates, yet often make the final selection decisions. This lack of expertise unintentionally results in candidate stereotypes, devaluing, and disqualifying the knowledge, skills, and abilities of minorities and women. For example, search committee members may marginalize a hired minority candidate as a token, an “affirmative-action hire,” or by devaluing their research or publications if not in the

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<sup>6</sup> Disparate impact occurs when a given action results in discrimination against a protected class without any intention to discriminate. It occurs when all things are equal with respect to the availability of candidates, and the protected class is represented less than 80% or (less than 4/5ths) of the White male faculty.

mainstream. According to Mabokela (2007), the qualifications of minority women are typically devalued, and minority candidates are often rated as unqualified and passed off as “affirmative action” candidates rather than as qualified individuals who can add intellectual and academic value. This is likely due to a high degree of subjectivity in the screening process.

Ironically, the data presented in the previous chapter uncovered a continuing trend in the recruitment of international faculty, suggesting that perhaps transferable skills are considered in hiring international faculty but not in domestic minority hires. Discussions should include the need to assess cross-cultural diversity competencies presented in Bennett’s model that can be applicable to search-committee members, referencing their ability to review resumes and candidate qualifications from a diversity perspective.

Another major challenge in recruitment is that research universities typically place a high priority on research in the recruitment process (Turner, 2002). This is essential because most research universities desire to maintain their prestigious image and competitive status, recruiting the best and brightest students. Likewise, the College of Agriculture places a great deal of emphasis on research and minimizes the importance of teaching and outreach. Although this emphasis works well for recruiting research-oriented faculty, it does not address the need to hire good teachers and those particularly skilled in outreach. The practice of placing higher value on research and lower value on teaching appears to limit the recruitment pool of candidates for tenure-track faculty positions.

### *Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices*

The university has extensive guidelines for job descriptions and selection. However, the problem is in the interpretation and implementation of those policies. The following best practices for job descriptions, qualifications, and selection are recommended:

1. Job descriptions should highlight a broad set of skills and interdisciplinary ideas, detailing both desired and required qualifications clearly.
2. The dean, department chair, and the associate dean of diversity should establish goals to increase the pool of domestic U.S. diversity in the recruitment of faculty.
3. The dean and the department chair should discuss and address any revealed bias of search-committee members in the selection process when defining “quality” standards.
4. Job descriptions should be a tool to recruit for desired knowledge, skills, and abilities and to screen candidates including evaluation of transferable skills (compatible skills).
5. The department chair should meet with the search committee and reinforce the goal of promoting a fair and equitable hiring process for all candidates.

Discussions should include the use of a holistic approach in screening candidates and sensitivity to one’s own biases in recruitment.

### **Diversity in the Faculty Pool and Student Pipeline**

Participants in this study often voiced concerns that there is a lack of availability of diverse faculty candidates in the pool. While it can be argued that this is partly due to ineffective recruitment strategies in diversifying faculty pools, the study also revealed

that this shortage of faculty in the recruitment pool is partly due to the lack of sufficient students in the pipeline. This study found that the level of diversity in the undergraduate student population subsequently affects the diversity level in the graduate pool, which then affects the availability of a diverse faculty pool. Today, the college has a variety of programs that apply to a wide range of disciplines, yet the advertisements and information about these new majors is limited. Students continue to be uninformed about the college's wealth of disciplines and employment opportunities after graduation.

The lack of an effective diverse student pipeline has a direct impact on the availability of diverse faculty for tenure-track positions. Therefore, the root cause of these challenges in the recruitment of diverse faculty is the continued lack of an effective diverse student pipeline. With the trend to ban affirmative action in several states (Michigan, California, and Washington), higher education institutions are likely to be faced with greater challenges in diversifying their college campuses. The biggest impact from the ban on affirmative-action programs is on student financial assistance, which can no longer be earmarked for the sole purpose of the recruitment of minority students. This is likely to affect access and affordability among a diverse student population that desires to pursue graduate education. Therefore, despite changes in population demographics, competition for diverse faculty talent among higher education institutions is likely to be greater in the future.

This study revealed that the lack of diverse faculty stems from the national lack of diverse students in the pipeline both at the graduate and undergraduate level. Based on the literature in this study, this challenge in student recruitment is not unique to any given institution. The current recruitment practices in the College of Agriculture for diverse

graduate and undergraduate students are not effective in diversifying the domestic minority-student population, largely due to the lack of collaboration between the college and its departments. The college's overall strategic goals should be aligned with the department goals in recruitment of a diverse student pool among graduate and undergraduate students that better represents current population demographics. Data presented in the previous chapter reported changes in population demographics that reflect a trend over the past few years of increased diversity. Therefore, this study recommends collaborative efforts to improve the pipeline of diverse students entering the College of Agriculture both at the graduate and undergraduate level. While the college seeks to attend recruitment fairs to identify quality minority and women graduate students, their efforts often fail, given the actual enrollment rates (see data in chapter 4) of these students in the college and its programs. This may be attributed to the current disconnect between the college and department recruitment efforts.

Based on the findings in this study, faculty currently control funding resources for graduate students and therefore make the final decision on the acceptance of graduate students. In light of the scarce resources for graduate-student funding, funding awards to students should be made in collaboration with the diversity office in the College of Agriculture to assure a fair and equitable recruitment process. This scarcity of financial resources is likely to encourage departments to recruit more international students who arrive at U.S. universities with financial support from their home countries. Additionally, data presented in the previous chapter revealed persistent increases in numbers of international students compared to domestic minority students. Therefore, because funds can no longer be set aside for recruitment of minority students due to the ban on



affirmative-action programs, a review of graduate funding sources and allocations are in order.

### **Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices**

The college administrators (dean, associate deans, and department chairs) should provide a set of guidelines for the recruitment of a diverse student population at the college level to aid in increasing the overall availability of a diverse representation in the pool for future faculty positions across all universities. Thus, the following best practices for student recruitment are recommended:

1. The dean, department chair, and the associate dean of diversity should establish goals to increase the pool of domestic U.S. diversity in the student population, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.
2. The dean should review the current policies and procedures on graduate student funding and recruitment to assure fairness and equity in recruitment.
3. The college should engage in aggressive marketing initiatives to eliminate long-held negative views among students about the field of agriculture.
4. The dean should facilitate a cooperative working relationship between the college and its departments in the recruitment of a diverse student and faculty in the college.

### **The Impact of the Restrictions on Affirmative Action in the State**

This section is organized based on the major themes that emerged in answering the third subquestion: What impact does a recent ban on the state's affirmative-action programs have on changes of current policies and practices in hiring diverse faculty?

Four major themes emerged: The University's affirmative-action programs, need for training, need for leadership support, and campus climate.

### The University's Affirmative Action Programs

This study found that negative myths about affirmative-action programs can erode the effectiveness of the tenure-track faculty-recruitment process. The ban in recent years on affirmative-action programs has complicated the understanding and requirements of a federally supported institution. Based on the literature, myths due to lack of understanding about affirmative action can erode the effectiveness of the tenure-track faculty recruitment process (Blanks, 2005; Heilman, Block, & Stathatos, 1997; Kravitz & Platania, 1993). Additionally, myths such as quotas or preferential treatment granted to diverse candidates will continue to foster resentment among college and university constituents. This lack of proper understanding is likely to result in resistance to diversify the college and the campus at large.

Additionally, the university's current system of setting affirmative-action goals does not sufficiently aid in identifying the true availability of diverse doctoral students who are in the market for tenure-track faculty positions. This is largely due to the limited use of majors, thereby ignoring additional majors or field codes that can add to the potential availability pool for faculty positions. Recent graduate students self-report their majors in various field codes provided by the *National Opinion Research Council* (NORC) data bank; the current practice of limiting field codes reduces the availability of diverse candidates in any given geographic population. Additionally, the availability data in setting affirmative-action goals also do not consider current academic specialists and staff who may be in the market and are qualified for faculty positions. Consequently, the

affirmative-action goals set by the university's academic hiring office may continue to be set below the actual availability levels for the College of Agriculture. This has an affect on the targeted goals for diversifying the college. A summary of policy implications and recommendations about the institution's affirmative-action programs will be offered at the end of the next section.

### The Need for Diversity Training Programs

This study found that a major problem with affirmative-action policies is not the absence of such policies but rather the lack of understanding, interpretation, and proper implementation of these policies when hiring. Kayes and Singley (2005) recommend that committees need professional development training in order to achieve successful diversity results in hiring. According to Bennett's model, training and development are the key to increased competencies of diversity. In addition, search committees should be provided training that will help to eliminate stereotypes and biases, identify obstacles facing the protected groups, and identify problems with the current recruitment process. For instance, how do academic networks impact success for all candidates, especially minorities and women, to make the final cut? If traditional forms of recruitment are practiced, those not in the acceptable networks or schools will continue to be eliminated from consideration. Creating equal-employment opportunities is the mission of most public higher education institutions; however, it is unclear how this mission is implemented in the tenure-track hiring process. Blanks (2005) found that affirmative-action training resulted in higher acceptance of affirmative-action programs by those who make hiring decisions and aided in correcting misconceptions about affirmative action

through that training. Training is likely to help committee members establish a fair, equitable, and just system of recruitment and retention.

According to Bennett (1993), individuals have different levels of understanding and acceptance of minorities who represent different races, ethnicities, and genders. If individual search-committee members are at different stages of development in Bennett's cross-cultural and intercultural model, they will each have different levels of acceptance or rejection of minority and women candidates. For example, a committee member may screen minority candidates through a very narrow, specific criteria rather than looking at their applications and resumes through a diverse lens, identifying transferable skills that would be equally compatible. This means that members will select, accept, approve, reject, embrace differences, promote diversity, and broaden or narrowly select based on their individual level of development in the area of diversity. Training and development programs help confront biases and support discussions that facilitate self-assessment, thereby aiding individuals to respect differences and celebrate similarities. Additionally, training workshops can reduce or eliminate many of the barriers to diversifying college campuses. Today, it is common knowledge that workforce diversity that supports inclusion is essential to employee productivity, innovation, and creativity, and central to business strategies in a globally competitive market.

Based on Ting-Toomey (1999) and Bennett's model, intercultural understanding and communications should emphasize the need to (a) be aware and understand, (b) experience and react positively, and (c) communicate and collaborate with people who may be different from oneself. Training workshops that address these areas would

improve an individual's ability to understand, respect, and support an all-inclusive workforce.

Therefore, the implementation of a three-phase training program at the university is recommended. First, a series of training sessions led by the institution's diversity director and the academic hiring office is recommended for all who are involved in the recruitment of faculty on campus. These sessions would be designed especially for deans, directors, and chairs. Second, mandatory training is recommended for all College of Agriculture faculty and staff in valuing and understanding different cultures and in learning to respect differences in points of view. Finally, a mandatory training program offered by the diversity office for all faculty, staff, and administrators is recommended in valuing and understanding other cultures. This training should include discussions about general issues of harassment (race, hate crimes, or sexual) on campus. Perhaps offering diversity classes to students as an essential requirement of their curriculum may aid in improving the campus climate and better prepare graduates for a globally competitive and diverse environment.

#### **Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices**

The university's diversity office, academic-hiring office, dean, department chair, and associate dean of diversity should provide a set of guidelines for the implementation of various diversity-training programs at both the college and institutional level, in an effort to increase the understanding of the university's affirmative-action requirements in hiring faculty, and in embracing a diverse faculty and student population on campus. The following best practices for training programs are recommended:

1. The Academic Human Resource Office should provide the three-phase training program described above for university stakeholders including search-committee members and others who are involved in the recruitment of faculty.
2. The college should provide diversity-training programs to faculty and staff. In addition, mandatory and voluntary ongoing training programs should address the topics of workplace harassment, discrimination, cross-cultural competency development, and workplace diversity. These training programs should provide opportunities for participants to discuss racial and gender biases and myths that faculty, staff, and administrators may unknowingly hold about women, races, or ethnic groups. Training should be provided to all those involved in hiring tenure-track faculty.
3. The diversity office should provide training and development programs to emphasize cross-cultural competencies in the spirit of inclusion to all university's business.
4. The diversity office should distribute posters of state and federally mandated laws to departments on campus, such as information on fair and safe employment practices regarding Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sexual harassment, federal affirmative-action programs, and best hiring practices.

#### **The Need for Leadership Support**

This study found that strong commitment and support for diversity is essential from top university officials, including the university's board of trustees. In order to achieve success by increasing diversity among faculty in the college, a strong commitment from top-level administrators is essential. The findings of this study support

previous research that diversity in faculty hiring will continue to be a problem at universities unless there is a strong commitment from top-level leadership (Ataiyero, 2006; Turner et al., 1999). University administrators support the idea of diversity on college campuses, but it is often easier to convince academics about the value of diversity for the campus climate than it is to implement change. These changes in support for diversity can be achieved through a strategic plan that is aligned with the university's commitment to diversity by developing goals and objectives. The alignment of the university's overall mission and vision to college and department goals could be developed to assure procedural support that is accountable and measurable.

This study found that underrepresentation of minority faculty continues to persist at this Midwestern University, and findings are consistent with earlier studies conducted at eight Midwestern universities (Turner et al., 1999). In the academic world, the effect of diversity should be measured by the ability to prepare students for success. The college dean should consider a strong support system for new faculty and graduate students that promotes a greater level of teamwork and promotes better network opportunities for new faculty, to assure their success in academia.

According to various university websites, diversity and inclusion are key ingredients of the university's mission and vision for success. However, there appears to be a lack of clear goals and objectives, suggesting a lack of commitment to achieve these goals. Hence, it is likely that the perception among the campus community is that the university lacks sincerity and that their diversity efforts are simply mechanical, as described by many participants in this study. Therefore, the key to success on college campuses is the support for diversity from top-level leadership.

## Diversity on Campus

There are various types of diversity initiatives that should be considered for successful implementation of diversity on college campuses: (a) diversity initiatives, (b) structure, and (c) diversity interactions. Leadership support at various levels (the institution through the office of diversity and office of academic hire, the college and its various departments, and the board of directors) is essential to a process of diversification, financial support, and cultural support for diversity.

There are various diversity initiatives on most college campuses that require financial and programming support. Strong assessment and follow through of such initiatives is essential in the success of an effective diverse campus. Additionally, diversity initiatives should include goals and objectives to measure the success of such initiatives through the development of measurable indicators and timelines that can help gauge what programs are effective and which programs need to be revised. For example, the use of financial resources in the recruitment of all students should be evaluated for the success of a diverse student body.

The effectiveness of a diversity office on campus is dependent on financial resources for structural support for diversity. Public-research institutions are likely to be similar in their structural support for diversity. Typically, a university has a campus-wide diversity office. The purpose of the office may be slightly different from one institution to another; however, the general concept is the same in support of campus diversity. Some institutions may have an office of diversity that largely engages in diversity initiatives and diversity programming, while others may include compliance and monitoring of diversity personnel practices. Regardless of the purpose, the effectiveness



of the office is most likely dependent upon support from the president and the board. According to Bennett's framework (2003), the effectiveness of the diversity office at any institution is likely to be dependent on the level of cross-cultural competency among the administrators on the college campuses. Therefore, it is not surprising to find various levels of support for diversity among different universities.

Another potential challenge at most postsecondary institutions is the lack of effective structural support due to a perceived lack of sufficient personnel and funding support in the diversity office. Currently, in addition to the director for diversity, there is only one diversity staff person who works closely on all hires with departments across the campus. Based on the amount of paperwork that has to be processed for one hire, it is almost impossible for the diversity office to effectively monitor all concerns in hiring faculty on campus. In addition, while the diversity office should continue to monitor general hiring practices, decentralization of monitoring and administration of the actual hiring procedures at the college level is essential. Therefore, additional staff at the college level should be added for future structural support at the unit level.

Diversity interactions and workshops are essential in confronting myths and misunderstandings about diversity. Based on the findings in this study, it is evident that individuals have much misunderstanding due to the most recent ban on affirmative action regarding how hiring policies and practices have been affected. The university held a few general-informational sessions in 2007. Discussions in these sessions clarified that obligations for federally supported grants and contracts are unaffected by the state's ban on affirmative action in regard to the university's faculty hiring practices. However, based on the finding of this study, those currently making hiring decisions are not

informed about the effects of the ban, and many are unsure and confused about the changes. In addition, unfortunately, the university's diversity office has not provided any clear guidance in hiring faculty in light of the current ban on affirmative-action programs in the state. Therefore, it is suggested that the university and the diversity office establish general, campus-wide diversity training goals and plans.

### *The College of Agriculture*

Leadership support at the college level is equally important in the success of diversifying the campus. A strong commitment and support of top leadership at the college level, specifically from deans, associate deans, directors, and chairs in support of diversity initiatives, is also essential. This requires both structural and procedural changes by the college and departments. The dean must set the tone regarding the importance of diversity and identify advocates who can assist in promoting diversity among all its constituents. A strategic plan is needed to align the college's overall goals and mission in achieving diversity to the goals of the search committee hiring tenure-track faculty. The dean should consider a reward system for those who are supportive of diversity initiatives in the college. However, the college is likely to experience resistance from faculty who may not value diversity as an important ingredient in the success of the college. Because retention is closely tied to recruitment efforts, without support for diversity, the college is likely to experience many faculty members who come and go. Therefore, the reward system and salary offers should be made in a fair and consistent manner to support positive retention strategies. This will require a closely monitored hiring process by the associate dean of diversity at the college. Before such changes can be feasible, development of cross-cultural competencies are essential to embrace diversity.

The College of Agriculture is one of the few colleges at the university to have an associate dean of diversity. This position provides strong structural support for diversity goals for the college and the dean. It is hopeful that the new associate dean of diversity will engage in training faculty and staff in the College of Agriculture. The associate dean for diversity should provide guidance and approvals for hiring at the department level. In addition, this office should be given the autonomy to stop a search at any stage of the hiring process. Participants in this study expressed the need to exert additional effort in recruiting minorities and women from other institutions through the use of networks. However, without the dean's support for diversity, efforts of the new associate dean for diversity may be ineffective. Merely hiring someone to be a diversity representative is not sufficient; changes in top-leadership commitment and support for diversity are essential.

Bennett's model (2003) suggests that the lower the level of cross-cultural competency, the lower the commitment from top leadership to support diversity on college campuses. For example, if the dean is in the first stage of development in understanding, respecting, and welcoming differences among his faculty and staff, it is likely that the structural (reward system) support for diversity is weak. If diversity is truly valued and important in the college, then the dean must be a strong advocate for diversity. This may require structural support (financial), procedural support (goals and plans), and a climate/culture shift (programs for training) in the overall commitment and support for diversity. This study supports the findings of two prior studies conducted in the college indicating that there is a lack of efficient funding support for the recruitment of faculty and students in the college.

Based on the college-wide electronic diversity survey conducted in 2007 (Public Sector Consultants), there is evidence that there is a lack of structural, procedural, and cultural support for diversity in the college. Leadership support for diversity may lead to challenges similar to those identified among search-committee members; based on Bennett's model, leaders may also be operating under various stages of development and thus may hold various levels of understanding, valuing, respecting, and welcoming in creating an environment that supports a diverse community on college campuses. This suggests that cross-cultural and intercultural competency training and development are needed, starting with top leadership and including various stakeholders such as search-committee members and graduate-student recruiters.

*Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices*

The university's diversity office, academic hiring office, dean, department chair, and associate dean of diversity should provide leadership support (structural and organizational) in an effort to increase the acceptance and support of various diverse faculty and student populations on campus. The following best practices are recommended for leadership support in promoting campus diversity and inclusiveness:

1. The institution's administrators (diversity, board, president, provost, deans, and directors) should provide stronger leadership support to promote and advance inclusiveness and commitment to diversity by establishing a set of standards of excellence in support of diversity on campus. Organizational change is needed to set specific measurable goals in achieving the college's vision and mission statement.

2. The university's board and president should consider reviewing their mission and vision strategies to emphasize support for inclusiveness, and to promote and advance both domestic and international diversity in the university's mission statement.
3. The provost and the deans should require the development of goals that can be measured for greater levels of accountability. Structural goals promoting diversity can be tied to incentives, such as salary increases and tenure and promotional opportunities—for example, tracking the number of minority or women students mentored and the success rates of hiring more women or minorities in the department.
4. The provost and the deans should provide diversity funding (structural support) for tenure-track hires, to increase diversity in departments that have low levels of diversity in their workforce.
5. University administrators (Academic Human Resource Office, provosts, and deans) should provide guidance in establishing procedural goals (mentoring and support) for retention efforts once a candidate is hired, to assure candidate success.
6. The Academic Human Resource Office should require follow-up reports from the departments to assure candidates' success once on the job and to assure that departments provide ongoing mentor/support services to new faculty hires to help improve the perceived unwelcoming climate.
8. The Academic Human Resource Office should review the field codes and strongly recommend and/or require that the departments expand the number of

field codes it uses to calculate availability data. Affirmative-action goals should reflect the increases of availability in the workforce and the expansion of majors in the College of Agriculture and other colleges on campus.

9. The Academic Human Resource Office should consider separating domestic affirmative-action hire goals from international ones. Goals should be set and measured for a 1-year period rather than a 3-year overlap.

### Campus Climate

This study found that the college climate is unwelcoming for women and minority faculty. However, the findings in this study revealed that while women have made some progress in academia, recruitment and retention of minority faculty continues to be a struggle. This may be due to a lack of sufficient support for diversity from top-level administrators. Additionally, this study supports the findings of two previous studies implemented in the college that revealed that women and minority students and faculty felt a lack of support in mentoring, networking, and equal opportunities for research and professional development, suggesting unfair treatment. In addition, the findings of this study support earlier studies that faculty of color experience isolation and higher levels of stress due to a greater demand from students of color who request mentoring and advising services, which removes crucial time from their tenure and promotion requirements (Turner & Myer, 2000). Like previous research, this study revealed that minority and women faculty are likely to face many forms of subtle discrimination during their career on college campuses.

It is in the best interest of the university to foster an all-inclusive, welcoming climate and culture to adhere to the various employment laws regarding equal

employment and the civil rights act. Additionally, an organizational change is required in the areas of hiring practices, rewards, support for strong network systems through increased collaborations of projects and research, and incentives for achieving diversity excellence on campus. Faculty generally have a desire for a fair and equitable system in a given college. Thus, this may require an assessment of the workload of faculty to achieve a balance of teaching, outreach, community service, and research responsibilities among the various faculty in the college. Additionally, the climate of the college may be enhanced through the dean's leadership and emphasis on increased support to women and minorities in achieving tenure and promotion and to increase the level of diversity in the college. In addition, the findings in this study support the literature that suggests that the climate at higher education institutions may not be welcoming of a diverse population (Aquirre, 2000; Change et al., 2003; Haag, 2005). The literature in this study revealed that the climate in higher education is "chilly" for women and minorities (Aquirr, 2000; Gordon, 2004; Hale, 2004; Hao, 2003; Miller, 1999; Turner, Myers & Creswell, 1999). One way to improve the climate is to value and better accommodate the voices of all individuals in decision-making affecting university's policies and practices. Organizational change may be needed to implement accountability at the department level to promote and support hiring for diversity, which is critical to the success of diversifying the college. The findings from this study led to recommendations for best practices in the hiring and recruitment of a diverse faculty pool (see Appendix B for a complete list).

## **Policy Implications and Recommendations for Best Practices**

The university's diversity office, academic hiring office, dean, department chair, and associate dean of diversity should provide leadership support at both the college and institutional levels in an effort to improve the culture and climate by increasing the sensitivity and understanding of diverse faculty and student populations on campus. The following best practices are recommended to foster a welcoming campus culture and climate in support for diversity:

1. Search committees should assure that candidate visits promote a positive and welcoming climate that includes information about resources such as support for diversity at the university, housing information, and community events.
2. The dean should set the tone by addressing the need for a culture that supports and promotes an all-inclusive climate in the college.
3. University administrators (board, president, provost, diversity director, dean and department chairs) should implement organizational change strategies that provide standards to align recruitment efforts with retention goals, to assure candidates' success once hired. The dean and department chairs should establish goals and objectives that will provide assurances for candidate success, such as mentoring services, developmental support, and funding opportunities.

## **Future Research**

Future research recommendations that have emerged from this study address the following issues: (a) Tenure-track faculty retention, promotion, and tenure (b) comparative studies of international faculty and U.S. domestic faculty, (c) student



pipeline and funding, (d) effectiveness of affirmative-action programs, and (g) leadership support for diversity.

First, in order to improve diversity among the faculty pool in higher education, the issue of faculty retention must be addressed. It is likely that without good retention practices, recruitment efforts will prove ineffective. Further research could explore how minority faculty succeed in achieving promotion and tenure. This researcher suggests further study of retention, such as the opportunity for promotion and tenure for new hires. An in-depth study may be helpful in understanding how promotion and tenure is granted. What are the requirements for new faculty to achieve tenure and promotions at a public-research university?

Future studies may explore the success rates or failure of women and minority faculty that are hired in a given department at a land-grant institution. Specifically, what structural, procedural, or network support is needed or available in the development of minority and women faculty at a research university? How and with whom do new faculty collaborate on research and innovations? Another major area for future implications is the notion of what faculty qualifications are valued and how can new faculty candidates better prepare themselves for future faculty positions? This line of inquiry may address the value placed on research from top-tier institutions versus other universities, as well as publications in well-renowned publications versus those not so well known. Moreover, how can research universities prepare their doctoral students and new faculty for tenure-track faculty positions?

Second, this study uncovered a greater level of international faculty hires both at the institution and in the college in comparison to U.S. domestic minority-faculty hires.

Thus, future research could explore the career track of international faculty versus U.S. domestic faculty. Specifically, how does international faculty compete in U.S institutions for jobs and what is the key for success for international faculty? How can domestic faculty candidates better prepare themselves to compete globally among the various universities for jobs. What makes international faculty more successful in acquiring jobs over domestic minority faculty? Future inquiries may explore the effectiveness of the current faculty pipeline and the success of faculty-development programs in higher education institutions. Therefore, this study recommends comparative future studies such as comparing how the challenges for international faculty are similar or different from those of domestic U.S faculty.

Third, this study suggests further research regarding the pipeline of graduate students and the challenges minority students face in pursuing postsecondary education and graduate studies. This study disclosed a reduction of enrollment among U.S. minority students in graduate programs, especially due to the recent ban on affirmative action in the state. Thus, future research may explore what obstacles or challenges exist for minority students in light of the ban on affirmative-action programs across higher education institutions. Additionally, as a result of the ban on affirmative-action programs, student funding is no longer available for the recruitment of minority students; further research may explore the current policies regarding funding and recruitment of students. Specifically, how do faculty at public-research universities award funding (assistantships, fellowships, and scholarships) to students for graduate studies? In addition, future studies should explore the effectiveness and impact of current graduate-student funding policies and procedures in the recruitment of a diverse student population.

Third, the findings of this study suggest future-research implications in the area of affirmative-action programs at public-research universities. Future research may comprehensively explore the effectiveness of affirmative-action programs in the recruitment of faculty and staff, and the effectiveness of diversity programs at a public-research university. Specifically, an evaluation and exploration of new policies and practices is called for, to better address the needs of today's demographically different university population. For example, what policies are needed today to achieve an all-inclusive diverse campus?

Finally, this study recommends exploring the level of support for diversity from top leadership (board of trustees, president, and deans) for diversity. This study found that in order to achieve a diverse/inclusive climate and culture, leadership support is essential. Thus, future research may inquire what support systems are available at public-research universities for diversity and inclusiveness? How does the level of support from university administrators and the board of trustees impact the rate of success in diversifying campuses?

### Conclusion

This study explored a Midwestern university's efforts to hire a more diverse faculty. The study, through a combination of interviews and documentation analysis, revealed several challenges facing the institution in areas such as job postings, job descriptions, qualification evaluation, selection, candidate availability, affirmative-action programs, leadership, and climate.

Universities are pivotal in shaping the future of the country, and they take a lead role in training young minds for leadership tomorrow. Student demographics continue to

change significantly, requiring higher education institutions to provide quality education to an increasingly diverse student population. Hence, campus diversity is essential in preparing students to work with a diverse community. Central to these plans is the need to strategically align the mission of the university to the desire to achieve a diverse campus for students, faculty, and staff. Universities must take this task seriously because they are both the producers and consumers of their own workforce in the form of recent doctoral graduates.

This study supported the work of other scholars in the area of hiring practices for tenure-track faculty positions. This study supports the literature that research universities have far to go to achieve sufficient levels of diversity on college campuses. It is clear from this study that if diversity is truly important, it must be valued by those in the university. Most of the study participants, including Caucasian males, females, and minorities, expressed a great sense of disappointment with the current leadership, identifying the institution's diversity efforts as superficial at best. This study found that support from the current university leadership, particularly the president and board of trustees is essential to the success of diversifying the campus and the college. It was disturbing to understand that the climate in the College of Agriculture appears to be resistant to creating diversity and continues to struggle in diversifying its faculty.

The intention of affirmative-action programs was to remedy the effects of past injustices, especially in light of the slavery era. However, the critics of affirmative-action programs have challenged these programs in recent Supreme Court cases, alleging reverse discrimination against White males. These debates raised some controversial perspectives about affirmative-action programs. Consequently, this challenge has been

addressed through the implementation of noncontroversial practices in hiring for tenure-track faculty positions on university campuses. Therefore, the principle of meritocracy in faculty appointments is widely supported in higher education as a safe yet highly competitive system of hiring. Whether such standards are followed consistently and universally is questionable given the high degree of subjectivity in the selection process.

The study found that screening and recruitment practices in the College of Agriculture are somewhat subjective. In addition, job postings are not always effective in the recruitment of a diverse faculty pool. The study revealed that jobs are not always posted at universities that graduate a high number of minority and women personnel. In addition, the standards by which job descriptions are developed, describing a specific gap that needs to be filled, further challenges the number of candidates available to fill that specific gap.

Although the institution has good hiring policies and practices on its Academic Human Resource hiring Website (Institution Academic Hiring, n.d.), regrettably these policies are not always followed as prescribed. It is this researcher's conclusion that current College of Agriculture practices are mechanical in reference to the affirmative-action requirements that insist on "good faith" efforts in hiring, and risk creating an adverse impact on minorities. The composition of search committees is equally problematic. This study found that most search committees are composed of older Caucasian males. Bennett's (1993) theory provides a perspective of how people select individuals based on their race, age, sex, or national origin, which helps in understanding the level of acceptance and rejection in the hiring decision-making process.

In closing, because the study found that availability of faculty candidates is a challenge, not only for this institution but possibly for many other higher education institutions, it highlights a sense of urgency to improve the student pipeline and faculty-recruitment policies and practices. The findings revealed several factors that inhibit the hiring of tenure-track diverse faculty in the college: (a) Ineffective “mechanical” hiring policies and practices continue to challenge diversification of the faculty in the college; (b) minority faculty and women feel a lack of support for success, feel isolated, and believe their work is devalued or marginalized, thus leading to the feeling that the climate is “chilly” and unwelcoming in the college; (c) members of the search committee lack training in understanding hiring policies and practices or affirmative-action programs, and therefore myths continue to erode efforts for a diversified faculty pool; and (d) top leadership support is lacking for a diversified campus. The results of this study highlight the impact of the ban of affirmative-action programs in the state and the continued struggle minorities and women experience in higher education institutions. While it is too early to assess the impact on faculty hires due to the ban on affirmative-action in the state, the institution’s enrollment data suggest that the overall number of minority students has decreased.

## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Questions for Search Committee and Administrators

1. What is your role in the interview process for hiring tenure-track faculty?
2. What is your understanding of diversity? How do you interpret or understand affirmative action plans?
3. What is your opinion about affirmative action programs?
4. What policies and procedures are in effect in your department relating to hiring diverse faculty? What are the university's hiring policies?
5. What is your understanding and interpretation of these policies?
6. How have the recent ban on affirmative-action programs in the state impacted current policies and procedures?
7. What changes if any are being made in the hiring of faculty in your department in light of the ban on affirmative action in the state?
8. How do you plan to address the challenge of underrepresentation of faculty of color in your department?
9. How can diverse faculty workforce be achieved without affirmative-action programs?
10. How do you recruit candidates for faculty positions? What's the process for recruitment?
11. What sources for posting for positions do you utilize?
12. How is the job description established for a faculty position?
13. How do you feel about increasing diversity in the department?
14. Should hiring of diverse faculty workforce be part of the tenure requirement?
15. How should the department be responsible to achieve access and diversity on campus?
16. Do you feel that students are better served with a diverse faculty and staff workforce?
17. Should department administrators be held accountable to assure a diverse workforce?
18. Is diversity of the faculty considered as one of the many important factors in hiring faculty?
19. Should diversity be one of the major requirements or traits in a candidate's previous work history?
20. Should race, color, sex, religion, ethnicity, national origin be considered as one of the many factors in hiring faculty?
21. Should teaching, research and service be given equal priority when recruiting a faculty workforce?
22. Do you feel that one's personal biases may impact a hiring decision?
23. Do you feel that as a nation we are ready to judge individuals on their own merits without the presence of current or past biases in hiring faculty?
24. Do you feel that faculty of color will experience a tougher climate in securing a job in at the university?
25. Is the climate in the college and department welcoming of diversity?

## APPENDIX B

### BEST PRACTICES IN RECRUITMENT OF A DIVERSE FACULTY

#### *Recruitment Practices in Support for Diversity and Inclusiveness*

1. The university should consider celebrating the idea of inclusiveness by providing more university-wide cultural, ethnic, and social events to bring together all groups on campus (faculty, staff, and students) for the purpose of learning and understanding differences, and for promoting cross-cultural experiences.
2. The dean should review the current policies and procedures regarding recruitment of faculty and graduate students to assure a fair system of recruitment.
3. The dean should provide incentives to promote the hiring of a diverse workforce and effective recruitment strategies.
4. The college diversity administrator should establish goals and require follow-up standards to support the success of faculty/students of color and women in the college.

#### *Search Committee Recruitment Policies and Practices*

1. Search committees should meet and utilize the expertise of the college's diversity representative as well as establish a working relationship with campus level diversity representatives.
2. The university and the college should consider greater structural support (funding and personnel) to promote diversity through increasing in personnel both at the university and college levels.
3. The dean and department chairs should establish a strategic plan that includes goals and objectives in hiring and retention of new minority or female faculty



members. The plan should provide assurances for equal employment opportunities for all candidates, such as a diverse make-up of search committees (women, minorities, and junior faculty), screening criteria that is broader to attract a variety of candidate experiences which may be compatible with needs, expanding beyond considering only traditional top-tier institutions in recruitment, supporting mentor services, and providing funding support.

4. The college administrator should facilitate the appointment of a search committee chair who can be a strong advocate and supporter for diversity. Also, college administrators should support a strong voice (vote) for the diversity advocate on a search.
5. The college diversity administrator should be engaged throughout the recruitment process, assist in establishing hiring standards, and follow up with search committees at every step of the hiring process.
6. The college diversity director or associate dean should be prepared to stop a search at any stage should it become necessary and hold departments more accountable for their actions. For instance, a search should be stopped when there is no diversity representation on the search committee or if there is no diversity representation in the candidate pool.
7. The dean and department chairs should establish a strategic plan that includes goals and objectives in hiring and retention of new minority and/or female faculty members.

### *Job Postings and Faculty Recruitment Practices*

1. Efforts should be made to post job openings in a diverse set of journals and websites to maximize the number of qualified candidates available.
2. Job postings should be advertised with the institution's various diverse faculty and staff associations and other colleges and departments as well as with organizations/offices at universities that support diversity.
3. A diverse faculty representing a wide range of disciplines, race, and ethnicity, from each department should actively network with counterparts at other universities to seek out potential diverse candidates.
4. The institution's diversity office should update the information on its website to provide more accurate information about the various campus organizations and diverse faculty and staff associations so that departments have easy access to this information when posting for jobs.
5. The institution's diversity office should consider posting jobs on its website to inform a diverse community of opportunities on campus.
6. The dean and department chairs should provide opportunities for women and minority faculty to engage, network and collaborate with highly recognized faculty in their field to build a field support base and to break down barriers that create the perceptions of "tokenism" and overcome feelings of isolation.
7. The dean and department chairs should provide opportunities for women and minority faculty to engage, network and collaborate with highly recognized faculty in their field to build a field support base and to break down barriers that create the perceptions of "tokenism" and overcome feelings of isolation.

8. Faculty members who represent diversity (diversity advocates and faculty of color) should attend conferences in an effort to build networks and post announcements for job postings.

*The Job Description, Qualifications, and the Selection Practices*

1. Job descriptions should highlight a broad set of skills and interdisciplinary ideas whenever possible. Job descriptions should also detail both desired and required qualifications clearly.
2. The dean, department chair, and the associate dean of diversity should establish goals to increase the pool of domestic U.S. diversity in the recruitment of faculty.
3. The dean and the department chair should discuss and address any revealed bias of search committee members in the selection process when defining “quality” standards.
4. Job descriptions should be utilized as a tool to recruit for the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities and for screening candidates including evaluation of transferable skills (compatible skills).
5. The department chair should meet with the search committee and reinforce the goal of promoting a fair and equitable hiring process for all candidates.  
  
Discussions should include the use of a holistic approach in screening candidates and sensitivity to one’s own biases in recruitment.
6. The dean, department chair, and the associate dean of diversity should establish goals to increase the pool of domestic U.S diversity in the recruitment of faculty.

### *Increase Diversity in the Faculty Pool and Student Pipeline*

1. The dean, department chair, and the associate dean of diversity should establish goals to increase the pool of domestic U.S. diversity in the student population, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.
2. The dean should review the current policies and procedures on graduate student funding and recruitment to assure fairness and equity in recruitment.
3. The college should engage in aggressive marketing initiatives to eliminate long-held negative views among students about the field of agriculture.
4. The dean should facilitate a cooperative working relationship between the college and its departments in the recruitment of a diverse student and faculty in the college.

### *Training and Support for Diversity*

1. The Academic Human Resource Office should provide the three-phase training program described above for university stakeholders including search committee members and others who are involved in the recruitment of faculty.
2. The college should provide diversity-training programs to faculty and staff. In addition, mandatory and voluntary ongoing training programs should address the topics of workplace harassment, discrimination, cross-cultural competency development, and workplace diversity. These training programs should provide opportunities for participants to discuss racial and gender biases and myths that faculty, staff, and administrators may unknowingly hold about women, races, or ethnic groups. Training should be provided to all those involved in hiring tenure-track faculty.

3. The diversity office should provide training and development programs to emphasize cross-cultural competencies in the spirit of inclusion to all university's business.
4. The diversity office should distribute posters of state and federally mandated laws to departments on campus, such as information on fair and safe employment practices regarding Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, sexual harassment, federal affirmative-action programs, and best hiring practices.

*Leadership Support for Diversity and Inclusiveness*

1. The institution's administrators (diversity, board, president, provost, deans, and directors) should provide stronger leadership support to promote and advance inclusiveness and commitment to diversity by establishing a set of standards of excellence in support for diversity on campus. Organizational change is needed to set specific measurable goals in achieving the college's vision and mission statement.
2. The university's board and president should consider reviewing their mission and vision strategies to emphasize support for inclusiveness and to promote and advance both the domestic and international diversity in the university's mission statement.
3. The provost and the deans should require the development of goals that can be measured for greater levels of accountability. Structural goals promoting diversity can be tied to incentives, such as salary increases and tenure and promotional opportunities—for example, tracking the number of minority or women students

mentored and the success rates of hiring more women or minorities in the department.

4. The provost and the deans should provide diversity funding (structural support) for tenure-track hires, to increase diversity in departments that have low levels of diversity in their workforce.
5. The university administrators (Academic Human Resource Office, provosts, and deans) should provide guidance in establishing procedural goals (mentoring and support) for retention efforts once a candidate is hired, to assure candidate success.
6. The Academic Human Resource Office should require follow-up reports from the departments to assure candidates' success once on the job and to assure that departments provide ongoing mentor/support services to new faculty hires to help improve the perceived unwelcoming climate.
7. The Academic Human Resource Office should review the field codes and strongly recommend and/or require that the departments expand the number of field codes it uses to calculate availability data. Affirmative-action goals should reflect the increases of availability in the workforce and the expansion of the majors in the College of Agriculture and other colleges on campus.
8. The Academic Human Resource Office should consider separating domestic affirmative-action hire goals from international ones. Goals should be set and measured for a 1-year period rather than a 3-year overlap.

*Culture and Climate Support for Diversity and Inclusiveness*

1. Search committees should assure that candidate visits promote positive and welcoming climate experiences that include information about resources such as support for diversity at the university, housing information, and community events.
2. The dean should set the tone by addressing the need for a culture that supports and promotes an all-inclusive climate in the college.
3. The university administrators (board, president, provost, diversity director, dean and department chairs) should implement organizational change strategies that provide standards to align recruitment efforts with retention goals, to assure candidates' success once hired. The dean and department chairs should establish goals and objectives that will provide assurances for candidate success, such as mentoring services, developmental support, and funding opportunities.

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