Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University of Minnesota Duluth

This is what was found by the University of Minnesota Duluth pod on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

*Note: We acknowledge this information is not always accessible to students and even staff. If you do not have access to this information, please reflect on your own experience and outline what admissions and/or hiring should be like to foster a diverse and inclusive community.*

- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement**¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?

The standard EEO statement for the Swenson College of Science & Engineering at UMD is:

The University recognizes and values the importance of diversity and inclusion in enriching the employment experience of its employees and in supporting the academic mission. The University is committed to attracting and retaining employees with varying identities and backgrounds.

The University of Minnesota provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. To learn more about diversity at the U: [http://diversity.umn.edu](http://diversity.umn.edu).

The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Veterans and individuals from underrepresented groups are encouraged to apply.

- Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?

For graduate student recruitment in Chemistry, we contacted previous letter of support writers from previous applicants, recommending our program. We did see an uptick in applicants. In Earth & environmental sciences, there is little recruitment, or PIs recruit individually to their programs. For some larger programs that span departments, students are recruited and then applications that apply to professors’ research programs are forwarded to them.

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² [https://careers.whoi.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/](https://careers.whoi.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/)
⁵ [https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html](https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html)
What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?

In Chemistry graduate admissions, a rubric for admissions was implemented for the first time this year as DGS based on one she found online. GRE is optional.

In Earth & Environmental Sciences, there is a system of priority (which excludes GRE scores). It prioritizes students who want to work with early-career faculty rather than certain qualities in their files. It’s mostly based on TA allocation more so than student features – few TA spots in that department mean that incoming cohorts are small.

Method for larger interdisciplinary programs: Admissions committee screens for folks who meet standards for admission, then faculty are contacted thereafter for interest in students & funding availability. Due to small recruitment pools, most admissible students are admitted (as many offers are made as possible based on funds).

How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?

Some programs use rubrics, but these are individually applied in each program and there is no college-wide rubric used. So the process tends to be very different program to program and therefore not necessarily equitable. Very little discussion of potential bias and as far as we know, aside from programs that have instituted rubrics there are basically no explicit strategies used to address biases.

Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?

Generally, graduate committees led by Directors of Graduate Study select students for admission. Final decision about whether a faculty member will fund a student is made by that faculty member. There are a lot of variations on the weight of faculty member priorities vs DGS priorities program to program.

Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?

No outside evaluations have been done to our knowledge. The process for changing it would be department to department (or program to program) specific. There’s very little high-level control over how these decisions are made.

Has your university or company implemented or considered strategies like cohort hiring, mentoring, dual career support and partner hires, re-visioning your work culture, or other considerations outlined in “Leveraging Promising Practices”? 
In general the onboarding process for faculty at UMD is abysmal, no one hired in the last 5-10 years has had anything good to say about orientation or early mentoring. We are supportive of dual career hires as we recognize we are located in a small city with few career opportunities for spouses. Mentoring exists in a very hit-or-miss fashion with mentoring programs ramped up and then abandoned as new leadership rotates into the dean’s office. Some young faculty report having a good mentoring experience, others have poor experiences, and others have none. Very little to no training exists for the mentors and there is no real oversight of the program, so mentee experience varies widely.