Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for Minnesota State University, Mankato

This is what was found by Midwest Area Pod from representing multiple institutions 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 available\(^2\)?

“Minnesota State University, Mankato has a long-standing commitment to diversity and is actively seeking to nurture and enrich its underrepresented communities. Women, minorities, veterans and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply. In accordance with USCIS regulations, successful applicants must be legally able to accept work in the United States. Requests for reasonable accommodation of a disability during the application and/or interview process should be made to the Office of Human Resources, 507-389-2015 (V), 800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY). This Vacancy Notice is available in alternative format upon request. Minnesota State University, Mankato is an affirmative action/equal opportunity University and is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System.”

Additional public-facing statements and info:

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\(^2\) https://careers.whoi.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/
\(^5\) https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html
“Minnesota State Mankato is committed to promoting diversity and continues to move forward in implementing this strategic priority at all levels of the University.” And more resources at: https://mankato.mnsu.edu/diversity/

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

The university places ads in the following venues:
- MSU Career Opportunities (Faculty & Administrative) [university website]
- Higher Ed Jobs online
- Employment Opportunities online
- The Chronicle (Faculty)

Additional ads can be placed (for example in professional society publications) at the discretion of the department and dean. University policy on ads:

“Probationary positions must be advertised for a minimum of 30 calendar days on-line or listed in one print version of The Chronicle of Higher Education. The University will continue to utilize The Chronicle as our primary national journal to meet the Department of Labor (DOL) and Immigration requirements. Any international faculty hired for a probationary position will need to present evidence to the DOL and Immigration that the University used a national-professional journal when filling our probationary position(s). The advertisement must include the job title, duties, and minimum qualifications. Failure to comply with this provision will mean that an international employee will not be able to seek permanent residency through the employer sponsored process.”

Additional Info:

https://www.mnsu.edu/hr/search/advertisements.html

Classified ad info:

https://www.mnsu.edu/hr/search/centraladvertising.html

Building diverse applicant pool guidelines:

https://www.mnsu.edu/hr/search/buildingdiversepool.html
In general, departments and search committees have latitude on a recruitment strategy so long as the above procedures are also followed. A recruitment plan/report must be provided to HR indicating locations where ads were shared.

Historically our department (Biochemistry, Chemistry, and Geology) has not recruited or interviewed at national meetings or external fairs. We do not have a graduate program and hence do not participate in recruitment fairs.

- **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?**

Departments and search committees have some latitude to set these requirements so long as university standards are met (link below). Official transcripts documenting degrees are required prior to securing employment. Unofficial transcripts are usually required for application/interview.

Historically our department (and others in the college) does not require recommendation letters up front. Only contact info for references is required. References are usually contacted by phone.

University policy link:

https://www.mnsu.edu/hr/search/vacancynotice.html

- **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?**

Again, university policy dictates basic protocols, which the department has some latitude to interpret. Examples of the forms used are provided at the link below. Our department historically shares interview questions with candidates in advance, and follows a fairly rigid procedure for asking the questions even in the on-campus interview.

The selection process is not blind (no names removed). Bias could be introduced as a result of this, though the process at our institution is generally as transparent as possible within the limits of privacy. A procedure to accommodate for blind initial applicant screening could be considered, though it would likely slow the search process (i.e. labor is required to prepare blind application materials for review).
University policy on applicant screening:

https://www.mnsu.edu/hr/search/1selectionprocess.html

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

  Initial screening is performed by a small volunteer committee followed by review of the entire department, and final selection by entire department. The college dean is the hiring authority and generally follows department recommendations. Candidates typically interact with most or all department faculty, staff, some students, some faculty from external departments, human resources, and a representative from the administration (Dean or Associate Dean).

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

  Neither pod members or the college dean are aware of an outside evaluation of the hiring process. Changing hiring processes would require conversations at the Presidential level of university leadership as the HR director reports directly to the university President, and is a cabinet level position (i.e. equivalent a Vice-President level position).

- **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”?**

  An active conversation is occurring on our campus regarding some of the strategies suggested here. Following a review of the "Leveraging Promising Practices" materials, the following are implemented to some degree on our campus:

  - A peer network of underrepresented faculty is coordinated through the Diversity and Inclusion Office.
  - As a unionized faculty, knowledge regarding the tenure and promotion process is generally well democratized, including professional development plans. Further guidance is provided through department-level governance documents. As a whole our process is more transparent than any other example I am aware of, and offers the candidate ample opportunity to respond to any negative feedback that may be provided during their review process.
Senior faculty in the department are aware of the demands that may be unfairly placed on women and faculty of color, and actively monitor the process surrounding faculty development to ensure that unreasonable demands are not made of junior faculty. These principles will be discussed as part of ongoing conversations at the college level.

The “Leveraging Promising Practices” document will be shared with our college Dean in an effort to further identify and implement practices that are not engaged in at our campus, and strengthen those that are.