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

*Note from URGE program: 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\(^2\)?**

Diversity Statement: The University of Maryland, College Park, an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action; all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment. The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, creed, marital status, political affiliation, personal appearance, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment, in all aspects of employment, educational programs and activities, and admissions.

In addition, the University of Maryland recently started the **ADVANCE: Inclusive Faculty Hiring initiative** that the department could consider tapping.

**Action from URGE Pod(1): push for hiring committee to include inclusive hiring statement for future hires.**

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

All jobs are posted at ejobs.umd.edu. There may be other EEO websites/listservers where these opportunities can be circulated.

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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

Action from URGE pod (1): In addition to standard job distribution venues, the department should consider circulate job postings/graduate opportunities to popular venues (see preliminary list under point (4) below.). The department should set aside a certain amount of money (~$1000) to pay for paid posting when necessary.

Action from URGE pod (2): In addition, the department should consider targeted recruitment and partnership building with existing venues that support diversity in the geosciences. This could include reaching out to Geoscience departments at nearby schools (Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Howard University, UMBC) to circulate advertisements. A member from the hiring committees should be made accountable to distribute opportunities for hiring, MSc program, and PhD program to the list of orgs (under point 4, below):

Action from URGE pod (3): Distill the list further such that it is an easy-to-use email/instructions list for each venue. This could be an activity for the GEOG Diversity Committee in 2021-2022.

Action from URGE pod (4): Department can improve digital and social advertising strategies, specifically by recruiting an undergraduate to run socials. Could even be a GAship for business/journalism/communication students. Unified Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn.

- **Associations and conferences**
  - AAG List of HBCU, MSI, AAPI institutions - http://www.aag.org/cs/programs/diversity/msi
  - AGU - Bridge Program: https://www.agu.org/bridge-program
  - AGU - https://findajob.agu.org/jobs/
  - AGU Connect
  - Inclusive Graduate Education Network (IGEN): https://igenetwork.org/

- **Academic News Sites**
  - Inside Higher Education
  - Chronicle of Higher Education
  - The Conversation

- **At UMD**
  - Career fairs
    - GEOG Career and Internship Fair
  - Graduate fairs
    - UMD Virtual Graduate Fair
    - Indeed Graduate Fair
Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Entry level courses within department (emphasis on undergraduate courses on wider GEOG subjects, not just RS / Biogeography / GIS)

- Miscellaneous Platforms
  - LinkedIn - profs/people should post opportunities at similar time
  - Earth Science Women’s Network
  - Professional listservs (ecolog)
  - Black in Geoscience https://blackingeoscience.org/
  - CS-related groups but may still be of interest depending on research topic: Black in AI, LatinX in AI, Queer in AI, Girls Who Code, Black Girls Code, Women in Machine Learning
  - National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE)
  - Ecoevojobs.net
  - 500 Women Scientists

- What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?

**PhD application requirements**

Statement of Purpose; GRE (combined 320); Transcripts; Three Letters of Recommendation; CV/Resume; TOEFL; Supplementary Application 1 (Research experience, work experience); Supplementary Application 2 (Statement of research interests); Writing Sample; Sponsor from the Department

**What barriers could be lowered or removed?**

- $75 application fee could be removed
- Making writing statements more explicit? The University of Washington Department of Atmospheric Sciences spoke on this issue at the URGE interview. Could reach out to them to learn more about this process.
- GRE -> remove? Especially as GRE not required for MSc
- Three letters of recommendation -> 2? MSc only requires 2?
- Sponsor from the Department
- Offer review of applications and question answering by current graduate students? This was done a lot in CS this past year for underrepresented groups - usually called “Pre-application review service” or similar (can show examples from CMU, UW, etc.)
- Link to information about fellowships, scholarships, etc.? (e.g., National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program)
MSc GIS/MSc Geospatial Intelligence
- GPA >= 3.0; Introductory courses in GIS; Transcripts; Cover letter or statement of purpose; CV/Resume; Two recommendation letters

**What barriers could be lowered or removed?**
- $75 application fee could be removed
- No information on MSc funding available [Work in Progress]

**Action from URGE (1):** use this time to pursue removal of GRE as the GRE has been postponed due to COVID-19. Use URGE #GRExit resources. Create a one pager and formal request to be submitted from the DEI committee.

**Action from URGE (2):** dropping application fees for both MSc and PhD applications. Set aside funds to waive fees.

*Continues on the next page.*
How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric\(^4,5\) public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?

Currently, there is no known rubric used to evaluate PhD applications. Every candidate is assigned 3 readers, 1 identified by candidate, 2 others. Each reader uses their own discretion to assess the candidate. It is a non-public process. Possible biases that are introduced into the review process include evaluation varying based on readers with some focusing more on things like GRE and GPA while others focus on letters and personal statements.

**Action from URGE:** Suggest that the admissions process for both MSc and PhD implement one of the following example rubrics for 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10 Example Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... and so forth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table of example rubric Posselt, J. R. (2016). *Inside graduate admissions: Merit, diversity, and faculty gatekeeping.* Harvard University Press.

Additional example rubrics:

- SPH UMD
- UWYO
- Virginia
- Augusta
- URGE Resources
Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?

MS Programs: directors and instructors review, directors make final decisions

PhD programs: faculty review, the Graduate Director makes the final decision

MS/PhD programs: holistic review process that includes directors and instructors/ faculty of both programs

As a recent, prospective graduate student the process was:

- Identifying UMD as program of interest
- Initial email to faculty member who redirected me to another faculty member
- Informal call with faculty member for introductions, getting ‘OK’ to apply
  - Introductions to current students to ask questions, get a sense of department community
- Preparation and submission of application via online system, emailing faculty member to notify them of completed submission
- Final call with faculty member to review application, check interests (not an ‘interview’ in the normal sense of the word)
- Offer letter via email from Assistant Director of Academic Programs and faculty member

Action item from URGE (1): type up the above to include on the department website to convey the typical PhD application process.

Action item from URGE (2): suggest to profs/centers to reserve small amounts of money (transportation + food, does not need to be 100% of costs) to help encourage student visits to get a feel for campus/department culture.

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

No.

What is the process for changing hiring/admissions policies?

Generally, have an organizational sub-committee. Policy changes proposed to sub-committee for approval.

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”?

Action item from URGE (1): more events at both the graduate level and departmental level (e.g., 'Spring Festival', 'Winter Solstice'). For example, peer mentoring networks, research feedback presentations, etc.

Action item from URGE (2): departmental leadership should reach out to existing University-level initiatives (listed below) such as PEARLS to create a partnership/contribute as many of these students take GEOG classes.
  - PEARLS
  - Aspire Ichange Network
  - ADVANCE Professors
  - FAMIL-FACULTY ADVANCEMENT at MARYLAND for INCLUSIVE LEARNING AND EXCELLENCE (following from email, no public announcement yet):
    - A diversity initiative aimed at increasing the number of underrepresented tenured or tenure-track faculty at the university. The total commitment by the University with matching funds from the Deans is estimated at more than $40M over the next 10 years. The goal is to increase faculty diversity and add over 100 new tenured, or tenure-track faculty in departments and units across campus based on demonstrated diversity objectives. This program has three components that have been informed by discussions with the Deans, and presents a uniform approach to the University’s faculty diversity initiatives. These programs include the:
      1. President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (PPFP);
      2. Assistant Professor Targeted Hire Program; and
      3. Senior Targeted Hire Program.