

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for the ESRC-OPAL-SSC at UNH

This is what was found by ESRC/OPAL at University of New Hampshire on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

Organizational Information:

ESRC, OPAL, and SSC are centers at the Institute for the study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS), an institute at UNH. Tenure-track faculty members and students in EOS are affiliated with academic departments at the university outside of EOS that are in charge of the hiring and admissions process. EOS centers play some role in the department hiring process as well (e.g., Participating in interviews, providing startup funds, etc.) In addition, EOS centers directly hire non-tenure track faculty and research scientists who may or may not have an affiliation with an academic department.

Tenure-track faculty members and students in EOS are primarily associated with the Department of Physics and Astronomy or the Department of Earth Sciences (ESCI) in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (CEPS), or the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (NREN) in the College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA). EOS also includes affiliate faculty in additional departments throughout campus including the College of Liberal Arts.

Graduate Admissions play a big role in EOS research faculty/staff. EOS has a strong commitment to recruiting and retaining UNH Graduate Students. The opportunities provided by working in EOS are disproportionately afforded to students that successfully complete graduate education in a related department. Therefore, the graduate admissions process and policies at UNH and in the affiliated departments and colleges have an oversized effect on advancing greater representation in the geosciences. For further information about the graduate admissions in these related programs, we are interacting with other URGE Pods: UNH Earth Sciences, UNH NREN, UNH Ocean Mapping and Engineering.

- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?**

“The University actively promotes a dynamic learning environment in which qualified individuals of differing perspectives, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds pursue

¹ R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples, (2017).

² <https://careers.who.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/>

³ K. Cobb, #GRExit Resources, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13215461.v1>, (2020).

⁴ J. Posselt, Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjghw8s>, (2016).

⁵ <https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html>

⁶ K. Griffin, J. Bennett, T. York, Leveraging Promising Practices, Washington DC: Aspire Alliance, (2020).



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academic goals with mutual respect and shared inquiry. The UNH Diversity Resource Guide with information and programming available in the seacoast area, New Hampshire and the region can be found here: <https://www.unh.edu/hr/diversity-resource-guide>"

University System of New Hampshire (USNH) which UNH is a part of has this EEO statement:

"The University System of New Hampshire is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access/Affirmative Action employer. The University System is committed to creating an environment that values and supports diversity and inclusiveness across our campus communities and encourages applications from qualified individuals who will help us achieve this mission. The University System prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, or marital status, genetic information, and political orientation. Application by members of all underrepresented groups is encouraged. Hiring is contingent upon eligibility to work in the U.S."

Furthermore: the USNH HR policies defines an Affirmative Action Plan:

"4. Affirmative Action Plan

4.1 The purpose of affirmative action plan is to create a workforce that is an accurate reflection of the demographics of the qualified available workforce in the relevant job market and includes additional efforts to recruit, hire and promote qualified women, minorities and individuals with disabilities. An affirmative action plan covering the University System and each of its component institutions is adopted each year by the Administrative Board and posted on the USNH website."

<https://www.usnh.edu/policy/usy/v-personnel-policies/b-affirmative-action>

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

OPAL: Job ads (faculty and grad students) are sent to online portals (e.g., professional society job pages) -- note that OPAL has research faculty and ESCI tenure track faculty that fall under the departmental rules (search committees etc.).

UNH is a part of the University System of New Hampshire (USNH). All USNH job ads are posted here: <https://jobs.usnh.edu/>

- ⊘ **What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores³/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?**



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OPAL: requirements for faculty searches: CV, research and teaching statements, letter of recommendations – there are no obvious barriers in this process.

SSC (Physics) faculty: The application package should include a cover letter, curriculum vitae, brief summaries of teaching interests and future research plans and the names of three references. Please apply directly online at: <https://jobs.usnh.edu/>.

SSC (Physics) grad students: **The Department of Physics and Astronomy no longer requires the GRE or Physics GRE; it is optional. Application fee:** \$65 (I think people can ask this to be waived, but this is not obvious from the website) Transcripts, letters of recommendation, Prepare a brief but careful statement regarding:

1. Reasons you wish to do graduate work in this field, including your immediate and long-range objectives.
2. Your specific research or professional interest and experiences in this field.

Earth Systems Research Center (ESRC) and EOS more generally have no specific information about hiring process for research staff or faculty independent from the affiliated departments, UNH, and USNH. Documenting hiring processes for research staff and faculty is a potential place where explicit policies may be needed. ESCI and NREN both have URGE Pods and we understand these groups are summarizing hiring processes for those respective and affiliated departments with respect to hiring TT faculty and admissions.

€ **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?**

OPAL: applicants for research faculty positions are evaluated by faculty search committee that is traditionally comprised of OPAL faculty only; for research staff there are no search committees in place; searches for OPAL research faculty are to the best of my knowledge not public. In the future, it would make sense to invite faculty outside of OPAL to help with faculty searches to bring in outside expertise during the search and hiring process.

SSC (Physics) students: A committee reviews the applications. All physics faculty can view and comment on applications. Two years ago the committee included a black woman and LGBTQ faculty members that conducted a targeted recruitment of minoritized students. They found students were more likely to accept if they came in as a cohort. However, they also found that it took them a significant amount of time that placed a large burden on these pre-tenure faculty members.

ESRC Research Faculty: Since research scientists are generally “self-funded” through grants, the ability to apply for and be awarded funding from federal agencies and private foundations



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plays heavily into appointments. Creating more diverse proposal teams could help provide support for increasing the federal funding rates of BIPOC individuals

- € **Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?**
- € **OPAL:** thus far only OPAL members were on search committees – Institute director gets ‘recommendation’ on hiring the final candidate.
- € **SSC (Physics) faculty:** interviewees meet with all physics department and SSC faculty, research scientists, and students via colloquium, seminar, and one-on-one or group meetings. Input from all members is provided to the search committee.
- € **ESRC:** For ESRC-only positions (not departmental positions), members of ESRC are on the committee. For affiliate faculty positions, the ESRC PIs vote by hand at a PI meeting on whether or not to approve affiliation.

- € **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**
- € **OPAL:** the process has not been evaluated by outside consultants.
- € **SSC:** no outside evaluation

- € **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”⁶?**
- € OPAL: this is in place for tenure track faculty but not for research faculty
- € UNH has just announced an opportunity hire for increasing diversity with a process to hire a cohort 3-4 faculty across the university. The provost requested names of potential individuals be submitted by departments to their college deans. Each college can select up to 2 names to be submitted to the provost. There is some indication that this opportunity will be offered multiple times to provide multiple hiring cohorts.
- € UNH has just announced a plan to implement cluster hires.
- € UNH offers some dual career support.