

MBL-Ecosystems Center Pod
Session 5: Racism and Accessibility

Deliverable: Hiring and Admissions

This is what was found by the MBL – Ecosystems Center pod at Marine Biological Laboratory on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve. We decided to separate Hiring and Admissions policies and made recommendations for each area to look at ways to foster a diverse and inclusive community.

Hiring

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

The MBL EEO statement is well articulated on the Employment web page (<https://www.mbl.edu/hr/employment/equal-employment-opportunity-affirmative-action/>) as well as statements regarding MBL's Diversity and Inclusion institutional statement (<https://www.mbl.edu/diversity/>); however, we have found that these statements are not explicitly included in job ads that prospective employees would see for a specific opportunity. There is only the statement "Equal Opportunity Employer/Protected Veterans/Individuals with Disabilities" that appears in the job description on Ultipro (HR management software).

Recommendations:

- To address this, we have arranged to meet with the Director of HR so that MBL's EEO and Diversity and Inclusion statements can be easily found from job ads by including a web link as well as adding a short description of MBL's policies.
- We should include at least a proactive statement that emphasizes MBL's commitment to a diverse workplace. For example: "MBL is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where diverse experiences and perspectives combine to better the advancement of scientific inquiry and discovery."
- Links to the EEO and Diversity and Inclusion statements should be added to job ads that are costly to post, but still retain a proactive statement regarding diversity.

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

Currently, job advertising appears to reside with the person or department placing the job ad, so there is no formal procedure to ensure ads are placed with organizations or agencies that have diverse potential applicants.

Recommendations:

- As mentioned in item 1. above, we will be meeting with the Director of HR to begin formalizing where ads are placed, with the objective of insuring ads target organizations that have diverse potential applicants.
- We have also met with the Chair of MBL's Diversity Advisory Committee, who is also committed to ensuring MBL job ads target organizations that will increase diversity in our job applicants.
- One possible approach we will investigate is requesting that each Center at MBL maintain a working list of organizations where job ads should be sent. This will allow each Center to create and maintain a list that is most appropriate for the disciplines the Center represents. Examples:
 - Twitter and other social media venues (include appropriate hashtags and handles). See list at end of document.
 - Possibly contact job placement centers at universities that have diverse student populations and make them aware of MBL's desire to increase our diversity.
 - Maintain a list of colleagues that are active supporters of diversity enhancement.
 - Forming a small committee to get the processes established might be needed.

3. 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?

For faculty hires, requirements typically include a cover letter, CV, statements of research and teaching, along with a list of three or more references; however, outside recruiters are used to fill top leadership and administration positions with faculty oversight. Recently, MBL also requires a Statement of Diversity Experience and Activities for faculty hires. For research staff, MBL's typical requirements include a cover letter, CV and a list of three references.

All hires must accept background checks, but these are conducted only after a conditional offer of employment has been accepted by the applicant. Some positions also require a per-employment physical, again after an offer is made. This physical includes drug screening.

Recommendations to reduce possible barriers:

- Prompts for writing cover letters should be made available so that applicants have a better idea of expectations.
- Links and statements to culture and life in Woods Hole and Cape Cod. (housing, proximity to Boston, etc.) could also be added to applications. This would also include the proactive statement on diversity mentioned in item 2.

4. 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?

For faculty hires, a committee is formed from existing faculty members with an emphasis on research, teaching or both depending on the nature of the hire. A representative from the

University of Chicago's Diversity and Inclusion committee attends the first meeting of the committee to ensure the guidelines regarding diversity hiring are followed. The search committee develops a set of appropriate questions to ask each prospective candidate to ensure all are treated equally. For research scientists, postdoctoral fellows, and research assistants, hiring procedures depend on the person making the hire. Currently, names are not removed from applications.

Recommendations:

- A set of procedures or guidelines should be formalized for hiring at positions below the faculty level, as there is currently little guidance provided here. This would likely be maintained at the Center level.
 - A rubric for hires at this level should be developed.
- All hiring managers should have training in best practices for fair evaluation in hiring.
- Explain to applicants about how evaluations will be conducted.

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

The MBL is a small institution, and as such, and faculty have a high rotation rate onto hiring committees. As mentioned in item 4, these committees are augmented with other senior personnel as appropriate for the position, and meet with someone from the laboratory's Diversity and Inclusion committee. Selected applicants are interviewed and a short list of applicants are invited to MBL for further interviews and meetings with faculty, postdoctoral fellows, other research personnel and administrators. Applicants are ranked by the committee, who then recommend the highest rank applicant for hire to the Director of MBL.

Recommendation:

- Ensure a mechanism for feedback from research scientists to the search committee.

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

MBL recently affiliated with the University of Chicago and our hiring procedures are being updated as that affiliation matures. Currently, there is no known guidelines for recurrent review of hiring practices. Because of MBL's small size, our administration is rather flat, there is not excessive bureaucracy for changing hiring processes. As mentioned in Item 1., we will be meeting with the Director of HR to review some of MBL's hiring processes to improve diversity in our hires. MBL started using Academic Jobs Online (AJO) to provide feedback on diversity hiring success.

Recommendation:

- A procedure for reviewing hiring success should be established that is conducted with some periodicity, such as every 3 to 5 years.

7. 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?

Cohort and similar hiring practices depend strongly on funds available for each particular hire but are a component of negotiations when possible.

Recommendations:

- Dual career appointments could be increased by formalizing an agreement with all Woods Hole institutions that would increase the likelihood of supporting dual careers hires in the Woods Hole community.
- Links and statements on culture and life in Woods Hole and Cape Cod.

Admissions (Semester in Environmental Science Undergraduate Program)

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

No inclusion statement is currently listed on the SES website or admissions brochures and posters.

Recommendations:

- To the Program and Education Directors: Include an EEO and inclusion statement and link to a broader diversity statement when hiring for SES Teaching Assistants and other staff. Include an inclusion statement or link on SES website and materials for outreach if this is a firm commitment by leadership to make diversity a priority. For example: “MBL is committed to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment where diverse experiences and perspectives combine to better the advancement of scientific inquiry and discovery.”
- Provide and display specific information on scholarships as there is a cost barrier associated with the program for underrepresented groups. Focus can be on scholarship information on SES admissions website and advertisements, (and if possible on the application) with links or more information: “Special scholarships are available for members of groups underrepresented in the sciences.”

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

Recruitment for SES is typically handled by a recruiter who visits schools, study abroad fairs and by Program Director who communicates directly with students, faculty and advisors at consortium institutions. This past year, SES and Education had virtual booth presence at SACNAS.

Recommendations:

- Look to other opportunities for recruiting and advertising. An internal list has been started of underrepresented groups for job advertisements and PEP program institution participants (see attached). Similar list could be created for SES for outreach.
- Leverage social media channels to extend reach to more groups.

3. 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?

The following are requirements of the SES application: General application with personal statement, 2 letters of recommendation and/or recommender form with rubric, official transcript, other supplemental materials for college credit approval, financial aid, etc. , no test scores, no application fee.

Recommendations:

- Commit to a holistic review of applicants and consider placing less weight on letters of recommendation which tend to be subjective and more on materials like the Personal Statement on the SES application. Personal statements can be more valuable in evaluating student because network access could be a barrier to securing materials such as letters of recommendation. Improvements can be made with specific prompts for personal statements that are more useful for the reviewers for holistic review of the applicant. Some prompt and language examples can be found on University of Washington's graduate admissions [statement of interests](#) on application.
- Provide more guidance for Evaluators on their Recommender Form regarding bias and ways to use less coded language, watch for pronouns, use of formal titles as suggested in Advanced Research Training Courses guidance examples. One sample question that could be asked is "How will the student contribute as a leader in their community?" Consider using less deterring language that may warn potential applicants away when describing the program as "challenging" on evaluator instructions.

4. 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?

Applications are evaluated with the following: application with personal statement, two letters of recommendation and/or recommendation form, official transcript, other supplemental materials for college credit approval, financial aid, etc. The requirements are public but the rubric for evaluation is not.

Recommendations:

- Make rubric or criteria public on SES website for transparency and to provide more information to the applicant on the evaluation criteria.
- There is space to create Equity Checks in this process because discretion exists with currently only the Program Director reviewing applications. Use of frameworks to guide the process as suggestions to the reviewer such as WEPAN and StratEGIC Toolkit for reminders to include in the process when looking through a diversity lens.

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

Currently, SES has one reviewer but there could be 2 reviewers per application (additional faculty reviewer who is from an underrepresented group?) to more align with URGE goals. (See above).

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

Recommendation:

- Do an annual audit (if, not possible, then with some periodicity, such as every 3 to 5 years) or revisit of the admissions process including SES website and outreach materials with a third-party evaluator (Diversity and Inclusion Committee for example) and invite student feedback.

7. 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"?

Currently, there is development of some new diversity initiatives with regard to faculty and mentoring from HBCU institutions but no guidelines or practices have been established yet.

Diverse Groups and Social Media Channels for Job Ads and Recruitment

| Org/Community/ Group | Twitter handle | # Followers (3/25/21) | Website |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| BlackAFInSTEM | @BlackAFInSTEM | 33,100 | https://linktr.ee/blackafinstem |
| Black in Marine Science | @BlackinMarSci | 8,089 | |
| Black Women in Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Science | @Official_BWEEMS | 1,854 | |
| Black Microbiologists Association | @BlackinMicro | 7,881 | https://blackinmicrobiology.org/ |
| ADVANCEGeo | @ADVANCEGeo | 2,860 | https://serc.carleton.edu/advancegeo/index.html |
| National Association of Black Geoscientist | @NABGSocial | 1,444 | http://www.nabg-us.org/ |
| Marine Science Laboratory Alliance Center of Excellence | @MarSci_LACE | 614 | https://www.marscilace.org/ |
| National Assoc of Black Scuba Divers | @NABSDIVERS1 | 133 | https://nabsdivers.org/ |
| Black Cell, Molecular, and Developmental Biologists | @BlackinCMDBio | 2,231 | https://www.blackincmdbio.com/ |
| Black in Microscopy | @BlkInMicroscopy | 383 | |
| Black in Geoscience | @BlkinGeoscience | 9,114 | https://blackingeoscience.org/ |
| Black Ecologists | @BEcologists | 974 | |
| Black in Neuro | @BlackInNeuro | 19,800 | https://www.blackinneuro.com/ |
| HBCU STEM Network | @HBCUSTEM | 1,056 | |
| | | | |
| Minorities in Polar Research | @PolarImpact | 3,168 | https://www.polarimpactnetwork.org/ |
| | | | |
| SACNAS | @sacnas | 21,100 | https://www.sacnas.org/ |
| Latinx in Marine Sciences | @LatinxMarineSCI | 1,036 | https://latinxmarinesci.com/index.html |
| Latinx in STEM | @LatinxinSTEM | 1,409 | |
| | | | |
| American Indian Science and Engineering Society | @AISES | 5,818 | https://www.aises.org/ |
| Natives in STEM | @NativesInSTEM | 475 | |

URGEO

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|--|---------------------------------|--------|---|
| Native American Women in Computing and STEM | @NativeAmerWIC | 2,326 | https://www.nawics.org/ |
| 500 Women Scientists | @500womensci | 55,400 | https://500womenscientists.org/ |
| SciAll.org | @sciallorg | 1,412 | |
| LGBTQ + STEM | @LGBTSTEM | 12,900 | https://lgbtstem.wordpress.com/ |
| 500QueerScientists | @500QueerSci | 14.9 | https://500queerscientists.com/ |
| DisabledInStem | @DisabledStem | 4,388 | https://disabledinstem.wordpress.com/ |
| for students, faculty and professional geoscientists with disabilities | @AccessibleGEO | 2040 | theIAGD.org |
| Diversify EEB | @DiversityEEB | 3,777 | https://diversifyeeb.com/ |
| Diversify Microbiology | @DiversifyMicro | 563 | https://diversifymicrobiology.github.io/ |
| Society of Wetland Scientists Multicultural mentoring program | @SWS_Diversity | 61 | https://www.sws.org/swampp/ |
| NOAA Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science | @NOAALMRCSC | 350 | https://www.umes.edu/lmrcsc/ |
| University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Maryland's Historically Black Doctoral Research Institution. | @UMESNews | 5461 | https://www.umes.edu/home/ |
| The Society for Women in Marine Science | @SWMStweets | 1785 | https://swmsmarinescience.com/ |
| Black Girls Dive | @Blackgirlsdive | 290 | https://www.blackgirlsdivefoundation.org/ |
| impact of EDI issues on the geoscience community | @EDlinGeo | 1490 | icrag-centre.org/edig/ |
| offers students of diverse beginnings one extraordinary opportunity after another | @CSUMB | 11,000 | https://www.csumb.edu/ |

URGE

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|---|-------------------------|------|------------|
| Mentoring Physical Oceanography Women to Increase Retention | @MPOWIR | 1085 | mpowir.org |
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PEP Program Participating Colleges and Universities List

Participating Colleges and Universities, 2009-2018

Institutions (92) that have sent students to PEP:
(*Italic= Historically Black Colleges and Universities and/or MSI*)(29)

Amherst College
Arkansas State University (2)
Auburn University
Barry University
Bethune Cookman University (2)
Boston College
Bridgewater State University (2)
Bowdoin College
Bowie State University (2)
Brown University
California Polytechnic State University
California State University of Bakersfield
California State University Chico (2)
Cheney State University
City University of New York
Coastal Carolina University
College of William and Mary
Columbia University
Cornell University (2)
Delaware State University
DePaul University
Dillard University
East Carolina University
Eastern Michigan University
Elizabeth City State University (2)
Fisk University
Florida A&M University (3)
Fort Valley State University
Georgia State University
Green Mountain College
Grinnell College
Hampton University
Harvard University

Howard University (2)
Humbolt State University (13)
Juniata College
Kentucky State University
Loyola University Chicago
Morehouse College (4)
Morgan State University (2)
New York City College of Technology
New York University, Abu Dhabi
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (5)
North Carolina Central University (3)
Nova Southeastern University
Philander Smith College
Rice University
San Jose State University
Savannah State University (4)
Skidmore College
South Carolina State University
Southwestern College
Spelman College (2)
St. Mary's College of Maryland
St. John's University
SUNY Albany
SUNY Maritime College
Syracuse University
Temple University
Tuskegee University (5)
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, San Diego (2)
University of California, Santa Cruz (2)
University of Central Florida
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Hawaii
University of Maryland –Baltimore County
University of Maryland, College Park (2)
University of Maryland, Eastern Shore (12)
University of Massachusetts, Amherst (2)
University of Massachusetts, Boston (2)
University of New England (2)
University of New Haven

URGE

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University of North Carolina, Wilmington
University of Puerto Rico, Humacao (2)
University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez (2)
University of Rhode Island
University of Rochester
University of San Francisco
University of South Carolina, Columbia
University of South Florida
University of Tampa
University of Texas, Arlington
University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley
University of the Virgin Islands (2)
University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point (2)
Virginia Commonwealth University
Wellesley College
West Virginia University
Western Washington University (2)