Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University/Organization

This is what EARTH's URGE pod at the University of Michigan found on Hiring and Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

Summary of undergraduate recruitment
Our unit does not handle admissions for undergraduates but there are many things that we can do to increase recruitment.
Ideas for recruitment (things we do already and we could do better)
- increase mini-course enrollments and offerings
- work on EARTH Camp pipeline
- M-STEM research involvement
- major "fairs"
- working with Newman Advising Centers
- working with Geoclub to promote undergrad involvements
- run ads on buses etc
- Better advertising of our major, etc, in big classes we teach

Things we could do better:
We need better, more inclusive images of people in our department to make our department seem more appealing to more people.

Summary of graduate student admissions process:
We follow Rackham "wheel" of recruiting, admissions etc:
https://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/Circle_of_Recruitment_Toolkit.pdf
We have a Fall Preview program:
https://lsa.umich.edu/earth/graduate-students/apply-for-fall-preview.html
We use a holistic review process with rubric, with faculty input at all stages.

Past efforts: had gone to HBCUs but found that this was less effective than recruiting directly to programs with expertise that overlaps with ours

We run our admissions under the aegis of the Rackham Graduate School. Refer to resources there. Rackham does not require GRE. It does have a minimum TOEFL/IELTS score. Upcoming discussion will review TOEFL requirements (e.g. score threshold, underwriting cost of the test)

Things we could do better:
- Implement an equity check, review of demographics throughout the process to the degree that is legal in Michigan, and add exit interviews
- review process for recruiting, inviting student to apply
- could work with the Rackham MSI office to craft recruiting strategies
- could join the AGU Bridge program (something that Julie Cole and Nathan Sheldon are pursuing)
- see Rackham recruitment tool kit
- develop new programs and get Rackham Recruitment grant money to support it
- Send representative of Admissions Committee (or DEI Committee) to SACNAS and NABG conferences (work with Nikita on this and building a presence, anything that we could bring to them that would be helpful)
- tap into existing programs at UM for getting undergrads involved in summer research (like SROP), or develop an REU; these are golden opportunities to work with undergraduates and recruit
- Change advising structure and/or admissions as a cohort? This is an ongoing discussion.

Summary of faculty hiring process:

Hiring in our department and the UM follows protocols set by the STRIDE program (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence) and covers the steps involving requests for a position made by the Chair (after consultation/vote by faculty), then approved by the Dean, after which a search committee is formed. The STRIDE program outlines the very prescribed sets of interactions and steps in the hiring process that the committee must follow in terms of documenting the process and reporting to the HR office and the faculty.

The search committee evaluates initial applications in detail, rest of faculty can view & give input; then search committee presents their long-list (~8-10 people) to rest of faculty and we discuss who to bring out for an interview (~3-4 people); HR office gives feedback on demographic changes across selection process (shortlist and longlist) but the faculty cannot ask the applicants directly about their demographics.

Faculty applicants are required to submit research and teaching statements, but currently there are no rubrics to evaluate them. DEI statements are not required by the college, so are optional for the department. In the past, we've made them optional. If we require them, we need to make sure to articulate to the applicant and to the search committee how they will be evaluated (e.g. through a rubric).

Students input is often requested after the job talks.

Student input into the process is via anonymous forms they submit and through written and oral feedback provided by graduate student representatives at the faculty meetings associated with the search. The graduate students have structured opportunities to interact informally with candidates during lunches and paper discussions that follow.

Faculty consider student feedback very seriously in votes related to hiring but currently only tenure-track faculty vote. Students contribute their opinions about the candidates to faculty via the student-representative at faculty meetings, however, the degree and mode of student participation in the search process varies from search to search.

We have developed a standard feedback form to contextualize what a person's opinion is based on (attending talk, read file, read papers, met with one-on-one).

Julie Cole ran an inclusive hiring workshop for faculty and we are actively considering ways that we can change our hiring practices to be more inclusive and to make sure we are searching more broadly, taking better advantage of university opportunities (NextProf, future faculty postdoc programs, and new hiring initiatives).

Needs & practices that the department is moving towards:
- We need to articulate the process for hiring and communicate it better to graduate students (e.g. for each new search have an information session for grad students so they understand their role and involvement). Set expectations for graduate student role, formalize how student input is considered and included, find ways to enlist students in the pre-search process and help identify potential candidates, find ways to include students in the process as a way of learning about the hiring process and the multivariate issues that can arise.
- We also suggest forming a standing committee that is focused on hiring; this committee could interact with students about promising candidates and provide ways for them to engage the process. Building lists of promising "rising stars" to invite for talks, visits etc. to promote a diverse pool of applicants, having a standing committee, broader searches.
- Broader searches: proactively shake the tree, using postdoctoral fellowships to recruit
- Standardize what we ask candidates (and give questions to them in advance)
- Use the NextProf, Presidential Fellowships and LSA Fellowships more strategically for hiring
- Ask for DEI statement with posted rubric (ex: https://ofew.berkeley.edu/recruitment/contributions-diversity/rubric-assessing-candidate-contributions-diversity-equity-and)
  - Articulate how we value DEI in our department
  - We should have a departmental DEI statement

- **Other action items/changes we would like to see:**
  - We need to make our department more inclusive to be able to recruit diverse faculty
    - Mentoring programs with identity group matches outside dept
    - During interview visit, make times for socialization
    - Formalize clear expectations in research, teaching, service
  - We need to value diversity in job searches
    - DEI in hiring checklist: all the things we need to do
    - look to NextProf for resources, including a start-up template: https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/nextprof-science/resources/
    - What are our metrics - teaching & diversity need to have clear value
    - Include contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion in job ad