

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

### Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University of Pennsylvania EES Department

This is what was found by the PennEES Pod at the University of Pennsylvania 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<sup>1</sup> is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available<sup>2</sup>?**

#### Job Postings

- In the posted job application for the Earth and Environmental Science department at the University of Pennsylvania, there are explicit statements on the desire to engage and connect with women and underrepresented minorities, see following statement.
- “The Department is committed to building a culturally diverse intellectual community and strongly encourages applications from women and other underrepresented groups in Earth and environmental sciences.”
- There are resources for the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, it should be noted that on our faculty application page the link for the 2011 statement by the university is the only one included. Since then, both the university as a whole and SAS have added and created additional resources or statements. We will ask if these updated documents may also be referenced to. The diversity search advisor is the one reviewing this advertisement, their responsibility to make sure the most up-to-date diversity statement is included.
- The University of Pennsylvania has dedicated a webpage to laying out the approach to diversity and inclusion, a link to this page may be beneficial for applicants to see.
- Link on EES page for statement on diversity and inclusion.

#### Admissions for students posting

- On the website for EES, statements showing the department’s initiatives for diversity, equity, and inclusions are seen.
- While this is a positive beginning, we are hoping to see our website further updated to demonstrate our deep commitment to DEI. Our main website is currently being reworked. As the updates come through, we will monitor this.
- Our department overall does not have their own statement. We have references to the overall university statement and there is one for SAS. But perhaps our CDEIC committee can begin working on forming a statement for our specific department.

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

### **Announcing the Department of Earth and Environmental Science Climate, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (CDEIC)**

The Department of Earth and Environmental Science has established a new committee to ensure that EES be a fully welcoming and supportive work and study environment for all demographics. The committee has a duty to represent the interests of all EES constituent groups and is interested in having an open dialogue about departmental climate, diversity, equity and inclusion with all EES members.

### **About the Department of Earth and Environmental Science**

Recent acts of police violence against black citizens and the ensuing nation-wide protests have prompted the EES community to begin careful self-reflection and assessment of our current departmental climate, and to plan actions aimed at ensuring that EES is truly diverse, equitable and inclusive. The starting point in this work has been the creation of the departmental statement on diversity, equity and inclusion.

[Read more](#)

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

- Conferences like GSA, AGU, EGU, PaleoSoc. Twitter (from the department for faculty and student admissions), some faculty websites, some faculty advertise from personal social media sites.
- Job searches – advertise in numerous publications (electronically) and through professional societies. (some require a fee to put into these places paid by dean's office)
- Job postings put in places where numerous URM people may look more often. This past faculty position we hired for posted well beyond 20 places where diverse candidates would see.

### **What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores<sup>3</sup>/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?**

#### **Job postings**

- CV
- Two page statement of research experience and current goals
- One page teaching statement, to describe teaching experience, planned courses, and plans for recruiting, retaining, and mentoring a diverse student body and research team
- There doesn't seem to be a requirement for a diversity statement on the EES website?
- Short, annotated description of up to five publications
- Three letters of recommendation

#### **Admissions**

- Statement of purpose
- Writing sample
- Three letters of recommendation
- CV
- TOEFL for International students - \$180
- EES has done away with GRE General test scores which cost \$205
- Application fees - \$95

# URGE

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**How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric<sup>4,5</sup> public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?**

- First few times running through lists of candidates and applicants names are removed. This method was used to form a short list. Diversity search advisor needs to approve the list.
- Applicants can put on their application they represent various identities (sexual, gender, ethnic, racial). However, the search committee does not see this in their first reviews. Only the Diversity search advisor has access to this.
- EES asked the DSA to look over the candidates earlier than usual during our recent search. They revealed diverse candidates that may have been missed so the faculty would be mindful of that.
- Candidate evaluation – a rubric was formed to help with decisions asking questions about all aspects of candidates. Thinking toward holistic rubrics. The rubric is not public.

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

### **Job postings**

- Selection committees – This recent search, asked faculty members who wanted to participate – the majority of our faculty were engaged. However, the by-laws state that the search committee is appointed by the chair. Further, an external search committee member is needed not on the standing faculty in the department. (By-laws are undergoing the process of being approved)
- Chair appoints the chair of search committees.

### **Admissions**

- Selection committees – In the biology department, a ranking sheet for the interviews from the 3 faculty members conducting the interview utilized for creating the lists of applicants. EES may be different, we are working on communicating with our grad chair for these procedures.
- Applicants interact with their prospective advisor, their lab group members and are invited to the campus to meet with other graduate students and faculty.
- International students have a virtual meeting with a few faculty members in addition to their potential advisor and members of their lab.

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

- To our knowledge, no outside resource has evaluated the process for hiring and admissions.
- Within our university, we have a diversity search advisor (DSA) outside of individual departments. Our current DSA is from psychology and covers the natural sciences. (This position has been in place for numerous years).

**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”<sup>6</sup>?**

- Cohort hiring – rare to admit faculty from same year/similar ages.
- Cluster hiring – hiring young faculty with something in common together going into different departments.

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Dual career support – does happen within our university. Policy in place to assist with spousal hires (spouse should be at a different school) - updated rules now have support (support comes in a limit of monetary support from provost) within the same school.
- Request to deans who represent for funding new hires to the provost - Targets of opportunity.