



Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for Pacific Lutheran University

This is what was found by **PLU Geosciences** at **Pacific Lutheran University** on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve:

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

Our most recent job advertisement included the following statement:

At PLU, diversity is intrinsic to the vitality of learning, resilience and growth. The university is committed to active recruitment of a diverse faculty, staff and student body from all religions, races, socioeconomic groups, sexual orientations, and gender expressions and from all over the world. For the 2018-19 academic year, 42 percent of incoming first-year students are the first generation in their families to attend college; 41 percent self-identify as students of color; and 33 percent are Pell Grant eligible. PLU is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from members of historically underrepresented and minoritized groups, women, veterans, persons with disabilities, and others who would bring broadly diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds in educational, research or other work activities.

The University's Diversity Statement and other information related to Diversity and Inclusion is available [here](https://www.plu.edu/diversity-inclusion/): <https://www.plu.edu/diversity-inclusion/>.

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

In the past, we have advertised differently depending on if the position is tenure-track. Tenure-track positions are advertised through our professional organizations (AGU, GSA, and NAGT), and we typically post the position with affinity groups such as the Association for Women Geoscientists (AWG), the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), and the National Association of Black Geoscientists (NABG).

For some tenure-track searches, we have hosted interviews at national conferences.

For non-tenure-track searches, we advertise via word of mouth and list-servs.

All jobs are also posted on PLU's website, and often Human Resources posts position descriptions through the Chronicle of Higher Education and Higher Ed Jobs.

- **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?**

Job applicants are asked to submit a CV, a Cover Letter, a Teaching Statement, a Diversity Statement, and Letters of Recommendation. Interview questions are distributed to candidates in advance of the phone interview. After reviewing our typical interview questions, we want to clarify how PLU defines diversity and inclusion, and we want to connect our questions about teaching strategies to our value of inclusive pedagogy. We hope these questions will help us more effectively evaluate candidates based on their ability to foster an inclusive learning environment.

- **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?**

In recent searches, department members have developed a rubric that is built around the job description, but the rubric itself is not public. Our rubric would benefit from more careful construction, and from clearer definition of the terms or characteristics valued in our rubric. For example, we have categories such as “evidence of commitment to teaching” and “experienced/prepared to teach [class we’re hiring for]” - but we don’t define what we mean by these categories or our standards for them before we read applications and complete the rubric individually. Thus, we may introduce bias when we apply these relatively broad criteria. For example, individual faculty members may make assumptions about *where* an applicant has “experience,” or we may inadvertently weigh different types of teaching experiences differently without assessing or discussing which “experience” we’re valuing more or less. Our hiring process is often extremely rushed because approvals for hiring positions are typically delayed due to budgetary challenges at our institutions. We need to spend more time on rubric development, and to discuss the rubric as a group before we read applications and complete the rubric. We have not tried any additional strategies for reducing bias, but we hope to in the future!

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

The entire department serves on the selection committee, and the final decision is made by consensus or by vote. This decision is then sent to Human Resources and the Provost for approval. All department members interact with the applicant in some capacity. Students, an “external” committee member (a faculty member from another department), the Dean and the Provost also meet with candidates for tenure-track positions, but not with candidates for contingent faculty positions.

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

To our knowledge, our hiring process has not been evaluated by outside consultants. Changing the hiring process would require working with the President’s Council, Human Resources, and the Office of the Provost.

- **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?**

Yes, the University has *considered* these strategies, but has not yet implemented them.

FOOTNOTES

¹ R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eoo-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).