
Session 5 Deliverable

Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University/Organization

This is what was found by South Dakota Mines Pod at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology 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.

In this deliverable, we are *focusing primarily on graduate student applications*, but include details on faculty/staff and undergraduate applications where relevant.

- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?**
 - **Findings:**
 - Diversity statement from job advertisement: “South Dakota Mines does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, gender identification, transgender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status in employment or the provision of service.”
 - There is a general inclusion and diversity statement that is publicly available on the SD Mines’ website:
 - “South Dakota Mines is committed to cultivating an inclusive learning environment where faculty, staff, and students can grow and succeed. We value the diversity of unique backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and talents within our community. It is our goal to promote a culture of respect, honor, understanding, integrity, and collaboration. It is through this diversity and inclusion that we find our strength.”

- **Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?**
 - **Findings:**
 - Two recent searches (posted 2020 for start Fall 2021) for tenure-track faculty positions in Geology and Geological Engineering:
 - *Geology*: posted to the South Dakota Board of Regents employment opportunity database, Geological Society of America (GSA), Association

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).



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of Women Geoscientists (AWG), American Geophysical Union (AGU), Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), various listservs, personal Twitter and Facebook accounts

- *Geological Engineering*: posted to the South Dakota Board of Regents employment opportunity database, Association of Environmental and Engineering Geologists, American Geophysical Union (AGU), Geological Society of America (GSA), AcademicKeys.com, various listservs, personal Twitter and Facebook accounts
- **Recommendations:**
- Continue to be mindful of where advertisements are posted—are these databases free and open or do they incur a cost to access? Do these reach a broad demographic?
- Require diversity statement for all job advertisements (many applicants submitted one for one of the two recent searches in GGE without requiring)
- **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?**
 - **Findings:**
 - For UG: \$20 fee; GPA 2.75 to 4.00; [BOR requirement 2.60 GPA minimum]
 - Lab-based science class requirement
 - Do all schools have AP courses? Cost of AP tests? Math-heavy? Do all schools have resources for laboratory component to science classes?
 - SD allows for dual-enrollment in HS and college courses and it is affordable (\$43.33 per credit hour, or 1/3 of the cost of a credit hour) (<https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/ReducedTuitionDualCredit/Pages/default.aspx>)
 - Gen Ed requirements at all 6 regental institutions, includes distance-learning
 - Juniors and Seniors (including homeschooled students) are eligible to enroll
 - For Grad: \$35 fee; 3 letters of recommendation; statement of intent; optional resume or CV; official transcript; NO GRE [#GRExit]; specific courses for each degree path; potential advisor identified (students encouraged to reach out ahead of time); GPA of 3.00 or greater*
 - *Holistic review of application materials, and if borderline GPA, do not get removed from pool automatically
 - Potential for bias in favor of students we know, such as former UG at SD Mines or biased against student
 - Unconscious bias about personality possible and potential for subjective bias



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- For international students, additional requirement of TOEFL, certified transcripts
- Grad student applicants, specific course pre-requirements by degree track:
 - GEOL MS:
 - Calculus I and II
 - Statistics
 - General Chemistry I and II
 - General Physics I and II, or General Biology I and II
 - Stratigraphy/Sedimentation
 - Petrology/Mineralogy
 - Structural Geology
 - Field Geology (expect 6 credit traditional field course)
 - GEOE MS:
 - Calculus I, II, and III
 - Differential Equations
 - General Chemistry I and II
 - General Physics I and II
 - Stratigraphy/Sedimentation
 - Petrology/Mineralogy
 - Structural Geology
 - Statics
 - Mechanics of Materials
 - Fluid Mechanics or Rock Mechanics
 - PALEO MS:
 - Calculus I and II
 - Statistics
 - General Chemistry I and II
 - General Physics I and II, or General Biology I and II
 - Stratigraphy/Sedimentation
 - Petrology
 - Structural Geology
 - Field Geology
 - GEOL/GEOE PhD (same as respective MS requirements listed above)
 - Notes:
 - We typically decline admission if three or more courses are missing from the UG transcript. Prospective advisor will indicate if any missing coursework is a deficiency and needs to be made up in the first semester of enrollment as a graduate student. In this case, the coursework at the UG-level does not count towards graduate degree or the 9 credit minimum for full-time enrollment.
- **Recommendation(s):**
- More guided prompt for statement of intent to counter effects of less UG mentoring (top priority)
- More guided prompt for selection of letter writers to include those that can speak to academic and research potential



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- Can graduate education cover the cost for minority students; establish a pot of money for applicants to access?
- International student transcript certification (one-time cost), expensive, but what can we do?
- **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?**
 - **Findings:**
 - *For Grad Students:* No rubric so individual taste or interest in students guides recommendations; current/pending RA support availability from external grants; only students with willing advisor admitted; multiple faculty review applicants, including one faculty member outside of discipline (i.e., one GEOE reviews the GEOL/PALEO applicants)
 - Department Head can veto problematic evaluations
 - *For faculty/staff applications:* We define requirements for consideration (i.e., doctorate or ABD for faculty positions). We evaluate candidates in the context of position stated expectations, typically using a scale developed by the committee.
 - Training for tenure-track faculty hiring search committee members provided/required through HR
 - **Recommendation(s):**
 - *For graduate applications:* Develop a rubric for evaluating applications (need to research this more before just delving in)
 - Develop very carefully to eliminate/avoid bias
 - Training for evaluating applicants overall? (carried out by graduate admissions or HR or at the department-level?)
 - Plan to see if this is something available at our university
 - Only willing advisor in place can be a potential bias, but certain advisors can be overloaded if they have no say in who is admitted. And, admitting students without an advisor leads to students struggling and no plan.
 - Non-thesis MS option for graduate students (under discussion at department-level): will this increase access or create two-tiered system?
- **Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?**
 - **Findings:**
 - *For UG:*
 - Admissions deals with these applications but prospective students can visit campus and meet with a department faculty/staff member
 - *For Grads:*
 - GEOL, PALEO, GEOE review committees BUT all faculty can contribute input/evaluation and can see applications
 - *Graduate Program Committee:*



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- Committee membership 2020-2021 includes four tenure-track assistant professors (one just approved for tenure, two female), one associate professor, one lecturer, two graduate students (one MS and one PhD, one minority and one female)
- One of the roles of this committee is to evaluate TA/RA funding distribution for graduate students
- Also determines scholarship amounts and awards, working to ensure equity among scholarship awards
 - Final admissions decision based on faculty/staff input and ultimately made by department head
- *Who interacts with graduate students:* Interested students typically reach out to prospective advisor and will meet with them via phone, email, Zoom, Skype, etc.; BUT not all students do this—once they apply, interested faculty advisor reach out to setup meeting
- **Recommendations:**
- Continue and maybe expand virtual graduate student visit day
 - Do not have resources to physically bring all students to visit
 - Prospective graduate students (December) and accepted students (April) visit days
 - Prospective visit day would be new for Fall 2021
 - Accepted visit day would continue after initiating in Spring 2021
- **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**
 - **Findings:**
 - Evaluated by State Legislature/Board of Regents rules/regulations
 - Not sure if hiring and/or admissions practices have been evaluated by an outside consultant(s)
 - Outside department?
 - For hiring, HR evaluates what we do on the search committees—need justification if candidate is deemed acceptable or unacceptable for employment based on advertised requirements (i.e., PhD)
 - On faculty searches an outside department member is asked to serve, providing some oversight of processes and ensuring an equitable search
 - A graduate student is also asked to serve on search committees
 - Outside university?
 - **Recommendation(s):**
 - Evaluate what other programs on campus are doing related to graduate application review and admissions—is there something we can learn from other departments?
- **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?**
 - **Findings:**



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- Newly revised and renewed center for faculty development looks at some of these issues, including cohort mentoring
 - Some movement on this front in Spring 2021
- Pending NSF ADVANCE grant focuses on: (1) mentoring, (2) advocates and allies, (3) revision of policies and practices for faculty and staff personnel review (includes P&T)
- *Dual career support, partner hires*: cost so prohibitive that it is not possible at SD Mines and this does create issues (long-distance, forces choice between family and career)
- Providing support for moving costs for new hires is good
- *Mentoring*: within our department (GGE), faculty work with department head to find an outside department mentor, forming an official mentor-mentee relationship for the duration of at least pre-tenure time
- **Recommendations:**
- At the department-level, various efforts are in place that are not widespread across campus, including:
 - Outside department mentor (described above)
 - 3rd year review (P&T dossier prep and review by peers, with potential to seek outside input if desired)
 - Peer-review of teaching (years 2 and 5, pre-tenure) to supplement student evaluations in teaching section of P&T dossier
 - **Note:** some of these activities are going to be implemented across campus, including 3rd year review and peer-review of teaching
- At the university-level, while efforts are moving forward to give new faculty a strong support network on campus, these can be improved. However, many of the efforts would require significant funding (i.e., for dual-hires) that is simply beyond the scope of SD Mines. Buy-in would need to start at the Board of Regents-level.