



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University/Organization

This is what was found by the pod at the University of Michigan ClaSP department 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) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?**

- Yes. UM policy is [here](#).
- Sample statement on our last ad is [here](#) (see last few paragraphs).
- **Other resources:**
 - STRIDE [hiring handout](#) (required training for all faculty on search committees).
 - Faculty hiring Standard Practice Guidelines: <https://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.22>

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

- Faculty:
 - Current process: Hiring committee puts out an ad for the position (typically tries to be written for a diverse pool of applicants), the posting is advertised to a broad list.
 - Advertising list depends on the committee chair. AGU Pathfinder is always used, and AMS is normal on climate searches. Many committees spread the open position by word of mouth, as well.
 - Improvements: Standardize the places a job posting is advertised
- Graduate Students:
 - Current process: Students apply on the website. Booths at AGU, AMS, National Society for Hispanic Engineers, National Society for Black Engineers Conferences. GREAT program to encourage applicants.
 - Improvements: Possibility of creating an incoming graduate student “summer experience” program, encouraging faculty to give presentations

at diverse undergraduate institutions. Change language on department webpage to be more inclusive.

- **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?**

- Faculty:
 - Current applicant requirements: Research statement, teaching statement, diversity statement, letters of recommendation, one-on-one interviews with faculty, lunch with students, talk
 - Improvements: include grad student feedback
- Graduate Students:
 - Current applicant requirements: Optional GRE, rackham paperwork, personal statement, statement of interest, CV, transcripts, 3 letters of recommendation, GPA of 3.5/4.0 for Ph.D. (though this is not a strict cutoff), application fee.
 - The GRE requirement on the website is murky. We encourage “good” GRE scores to be submitted; does this mean that the absence of submitted GRE scores will indicate bad results?
 - Improvements: Possibility of completely removing the GRE, posting on the website to encourage students to reach out to faculty members, fee waivers more clear and easy to do (or, per Chloe, a “fee pool” within the department), and rewriting the GPA requirements section on the CLaSP website to explicitly list CoE- versus CLaSP-level standards. If we don’t completely remove optional GRE submission from our website, we should reword it.

- **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?**

- Faculty:
 - Current acceptance process: committee reviews the applications and determines a short-list. Short list is reviewed by Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Engineering (CoE). These applicants asked to have on-site interviews (seminar, one-on-one visits with faculty and students); also outside department evaluation by another faculty member in the CoE. Faculty vote on the applicants.
 - All faculty on search committees required to take STRIDE training (see link above for materials) to reduce bias in the selection process
 - Improvements: make the evaluation of the applicants more transparent to the entire department (those outside of the hiring committee / faculty) so staff and graduate students understand why the hired applicant was selected

- Rubric - one for students, one for faculty? (increasing transparency/accountability)
- Graduate Students:
 - Current acceptance process: committee members rank students (1-3 corresponding to strong, moderate, weak), faculty are notified which students are interested in working with them, faculty decide and notify the students they choose
 - Admitted students are assigned to an advisor upon arrival. This is different from the cohort approach and is the best way to admit more students in each class because students are funded directly by their advisors. The cohort approach would allow for fewer admissions each year.
 - Improvements: remove the ranking system (or design a rubric?), develop a cohort-based admissions system?

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

- Faculty:
 - Current Process: search committee formed when a tenure track position is approved, the committee is approved by the CoE, this committee is approved by the AAPC to make sure there is balanced representation of gender and nationality within the committee
 - Each member must be up-to-date on STRIDE training (link in first subsection).
 - Here is the current “check-list” for faculty hiring procedures and who (departmental administrators and committee members) is responsible for overseeing step output: [Faculty Hiring Sub-committee Checklist TEMPLATE](#)
 - Core milestones and action items in this checklist are dictated by the Provost Office and CoE
 - Other actions/milestones may be set at the discretion of the Chair or the committee.
 - Improvements: allow graduate students to be involved (e.g., student member of search committee), make the decisions public to the department (allow the voting process to be open to the entire department), make sure there is balanced representation between climate and space, gender, and nationality within the committee. Make better use of staff and student feedback in the selection process.
- Graduate Students:
 - Current Process: there is a committee with 4 faculty on it, as of now is not well balanced between climate and space representation.
 - There is no rubric for ranking.
 - Improvements: require more faculty to be involved, make sure there is balanced representation between climate and space, gender, and

nationality within the committee. Because application ranking importance is inconsistent between committee members and other faculty members, it might be a good idea to remove the ranking system from application review.

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

- Faculty: ?
- Graduate Students: ?
- Departments have a lot of latitude in both faculty hiring/grad student admissions. Changes can be made at the department level by committees.

- **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?**

- Faculty:
 - UM has a Dual Career office to help with placement of dual career couples
 - Cohort or “cluster” hiring has occurred under past UM initiatives
 - Mentoring - new faculty has a “Launch” mentoring committee for their first year (includes department chair, two faculty in department, one faculty member out of department aligned with research interests)
- Graduate Students:
 - Have discussed a cohort admissions, though difficult to implement given broad research interests of faculty.
 - CoE Bridge program - one year of funding from CoE to support students who have Ph.D. potential but may not have the requisite background
 - Member of the AGU Bridge program
 - GUSTO has discussed a formal-ish peer mentoring program.
- Improvements:
 - Implement a department organized peer-mentoring program into place for graduate students
 - Possible bridge program for incoming graduate students
 - Improve faculty mentoring committee in the department.