

# URGEO

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



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## Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for Washington and Lee University

This is what was found by Washington and Lee University Geology Pod at Washington and Lee University 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.*

**Note:** W&L is an undergraduate liberal arts college and a School of Law. This document addresses undergraduate admissions only.

- **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>?**
- **Hiring:** W&L's Equal Opportunity Statement appears in all job postings: "Washington and Lee is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As such, we are interested in candidates who are committed to high standards of scholarship, performance and professionalism and to the development of a campus climate that supports equality and diversity in our faculty, staff and student body. Job description requirements are representative, but not all-inclusive of the knowledge, skill, and abilities needed to successfully perform this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable qualified individuals with disabilities to perform essential functions."
- **Hiring:** W&L's Statement of Commitment to Diversity appears in all job postings: "Washington and Lee affirms that diverse perspectives and backgrounds enhance our community. We are committed to the recruitment, enrichment, and retention of students, faculty, and staff who embody many experiences, cultures, points of view, interests, and identities. As engaged citizens in a global and diverse society, we seek to advance a

<sup>1</sup> R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, [blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples](https://blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples), (2017).

<sup>2</sup> <https://careers.who.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/>

<sup>3</sup> K. Cobb, #GRExit Resources, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13215461.v1>, (2020).

<sup>4</sup> J. Posselt, Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjghw8s>, (2016).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html>

<sup>6</sup> K. Griffin, J. Bennett, T. York, Leveraging Promising Practices, Washington DC: Aspire Alliance, (2020).



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positive learning and working environment for all through open and substantive dialogue.”

- Hiring: A link to Information about accommodations and Title IX appears in all job postings
  - Admissions: The University’s abbreviated EEO statement appears on all UG admission publications: “Washington and Lee University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran’s status, or genetic information in its educational programs and activities, admissions, and with regard to employment. See complete statement at [go.wlu.edu/eoo](http://go.wlu.edu/eoo).”
- € **Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?**
- € Hiring: We post faculty positions to HigherEdJobs (plus proactive diversity and inclusion emails), DiversityJobs.net, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, AGU, GSA, and AWG online job listings. Position announcements are sent to geoscience department heads at HBCU and HSCU and majority servicing institutions with graduate programs in geoscience. Washington and Lee is a member of the [Consortium for Faculty Diversity](#).
- € Admissions: Admission staff position openings are advertised in a number of industry specific, regional and national association sites, in the Chronicle, Inside Higher Ed, through W&L’s Office of Career Development and on W&L’s HR site.
- € Admissions: Student recruitment: University admissions is an ongoing multi-pronged, multi-year operation that includes marketing campaigns targeting desirable students and their parents through direct mail, email, social media and digital marketing; virtual and (in ordinary times) in-person engagement with individual students and their families by professional admission staff, alumni and student volunteers, and W&L faculty and staff (this can include off campus events like college fairs, high school visits or information sessions, as well as on campus presentations, tours and open houses); relationship building with students and administrators at hundreds of high schools in the U.S. and abroad, selected both for their potential to be sources of students who fulfill institutional priorities as well as on the basis of past application & enrollment patterns; and aggressive financial aid and scholarship programs aimed at minimizing the role that W&L’s cost plays in students’ college choices. Students targeted through these efforts frequently self-identify as having interest in learning more about W&L. In addition, we purchase and/or acquire the contact information of students having the potential to fulfill institutional priorities from partner sources such as the College Board and QuestBridge.



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- € **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?**
- € **Hiring:** Requirements vary but letters of recommendations, degree level, experience, content studied and taught are all factors listed in the position announcements. Transcripts are not requested and there are no fees charged to apply for teaching positions at Washington and Lee University. In the future, we intend to solicit from candidates a statement on diversity and inclusion, and will add language to advertisements emphasizing that a successful candidate will demonstrate commitment to working with a diverse population.
- € **Admissions:** the main vehicles to apply for UG admission are the Common Application or the QuestBridge application. Both instruments, as well as W&L's admission policies, are highly sensitive to and responsive to the concerns related above. For more information about application requirements, here are a few sites with helpful information:
  - <https://www.wlu.edu/admissions/applying/requirements/first-year-applicants/>
  - <https://www.wlu.edu/admissions/applying/requirements/standardized-tests/>
  - <https://www.wlu.edu/admissions/applying/requirements/>
- € **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?**
- € **Hiring:** Criteria are chosen by which to evaluate the candidate, including level of education and how closely they fit the stated area of expertise the department is looking to hire, whether or not they understand that teaching and student-centered experiences are the focus at W&L, teaching statement and experience teaching, research statement and publication profile. If selected to be of consideration, letters of recommendation are requested from individuals the candidate named for this purpose.
- € **Hiring:** For tenure-track positions, Human Resources provides an EEO report to the Dean for her review of the full list of applicants. For the Dean's review of the department's short list, HR provides a comparison of the demographics of the full list to the short list so the Dean can see if the short list is representative of the full list. First-round interviews are about 20 minutes via phone or video call. These interviews include most or all of the search committee (usually 3 people for visitors and the full faculty for tenure-track positions). In an effort to treat all candidates equally, we utilize a list of common questions that are asked in all interviews; one of these questions specifically focuses on the candidate's strategies for fostering an inclusive teaching environment.



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Given our experiences with the URGE program, intend to revisit this entire list of questions – we expect to be able to improve it.

- € Hiring: For tenure-track and visitor positions, on-campus interviews include the candidate meeting with Geology faculty, the Dean of the College, teaching a class, and giving a research talk. Students are asked to evaluate the teaching and the research talk. For tenure-track positions candidates also meet with faculty in other departments whose research has something in common with the candidate's research.
- € Hiring: The rubric the geology faculty use for candidate selection is not public although the qualifications the rubric is based on are in position listings.
- € Hiring: Do our processes introduce biases? This is an interesting question that we need to spend more time reflecting on. We wonder if we select for more extroverted individuals who are easier to talk with. Perhaps candidates that have a different background than us (we are all white and have similar backgrounds) are less comfortable and more guarded in initial conversations. We will work to be more cognizant of such biases in the future.
- € Admissions: Annually the admission office conducts training for new and returning staff members concerning the applicant review. This includes orientation to both public-facing and internal policies and guidelines, rubrics, institutional priorities, and legal and ethical responsibilities. Our rubrics are not public, but our routine admission information presentations include discussion about our admission and financial aid processes and time for Q&A with an admission officer.
  
- € **Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?**
- € Hiring: Geology faculty are on selection committees. The full Geology faculty and the Dean of the College make final decisions. As far as interacting with extending offers and negotiations, the Dean of the College will extend the official offer and the Department Head will often call the chosen candidate to say the Dean will be calling. The Dean and the candidate discuss salary and all other contractual terms of the hire. The hire will work with HR after a contract is signed.
- € Admissions: The larger applicant review is broken down into many smaller steps. Committee members for these processes varies by the population being considered, but in all cases include professional admission staff. Depending on which populations are being evaluated, additional participants can include seasonal application readers and – for Johnson Scholarship decision-making – W&L faculty.
  
- € **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**



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- € Hiring: Faculty Recruitment Protocols were developed in collaboration between the Academic Deans and Human Resources. The new protocols were implemented in 2019 and the document is reviewed annually to update and revise as needed.
- € Admissions: Our process has been developed and refined over a period of years, by our own experienced admission professionals. It has not been evaluated by outside consultants, but it does undergo annual review and refinement by admissions senior leaders. W&L's Office of General Counsel is occasionally consulted as needed.
  
- € **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>?**
- € Hiring: Washington and Lee offers dual career support by helping partners of W&L hires become aware of jobs at W&L and in the area. (W&L is a small school located in a rural part of Virginia.) In the past year HR has made available on the website videos of W&L employees talking about working at W&L, living in the area, and what the cultures are like at W&L and in the area. Recruitment Ambassadors have been created so candidates not yet hired can talk to faculty and staff of different cohorts, a few of which are: those who have children in the school system, have certain religious affiliations, are LGBTQ, are Asian-American, are African-American. There is not a formal mentoring program but mentoring does occur, usually at the request of a Dean.

<sup>1</sup> R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, [blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples](http://blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples), (2017).

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