

Northwestern University Diverse Candidate Slates Policy Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why was this policy created?

This policy fulfills one of the June 2020 [social justice commitments](#) by University leadership. The policy establishes procedures that will support equitable and inclusive recruitment processes, broaden existing sources of talent for recruitment, mitigate the historic adverse impact of bias on underrepresented groups in the recruitment and selection process, and ensure leadership accountability in upholding the above-referenced commitments.

2. What is a Diverse Candidate Slate?

A Diverse Candidate Slate is a group of qualified candidates that includes individuals who are underrepresented within a job group throughout the University.

3. How is the availability of minorities and women in the job market determined?

The US Census Bureau American Community Survey performs tabulations broken down by race, ethnicity, job codes/categories, and regions. Northwestern pulls data from the US Census Bureau report for each of our job categories based on what would be considered a reasonable recruitment area for each job group (i.e., nationally or local).

4. Why is underrepresentation not determined at the department level?

Analysis to determine underrepresentation is conducted for the University as a whole and is not broken down by school, unit or department, as this is a requirement of both our Affirmative Action Plan (AAP) and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP). Northwestern is a federal contractor and as such complies with OFCCP regulations.

5. What is a Good Faith Effort?

Diligent honest effort to proactively attract applicants from diverse and underrepresented groups.

6. How do I show evidence of a Good Faith Effort?

Evidence of good faith efforts include outreach to diverse populations or organizations that support various dimensions such as age/generation, disability, race, ethnicity, gender identity, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Outreach examples include posting of NU job opportunities on those organizations' job boards, meeting with or presenting at diverse membership organizations, participation in diversity recruitment events, proactive communication, and engagement with Northwestern and other college and university affinity groups. Your Talent Acquisition partner will be glad to help you in such outreach efforts.

7. How will I know if a job opening is or is not required to be posted?

Any new or existing vacant position that you would like to fill with either an internal or external candidate must be posted. If there is no vacant position, and an existing position with an incumbent will be reclassified to a new salary grade and/or job title, posting is not required as no vacancy exists.

8. In the past, jobs were to be posted for a minimum of five business days. What is the minimum number of days jobs are required to be posted now?

All job openings should remain posted no less than 5 business days. Job openings within a job group that has an underrepresentation will remain posted until there is a diverse slate of qualified candidates available to interview.

9. If my job opening has an underrepresentation of minorities or women, does that mean that I am required to hire an individual from the underrepresented group?

No. An underrepresentation does not mean that you are required to hire an individual from an underrepresented group. We are not establishing quotas and we are not lowering hiring standards. We are broadening the sources that we use to identify qualified talent. Only the candidate deemed most qualified for the job should be offered the position, once the organization undertakes good faith efforts to diversify the slate of qualified candidates for the open position. Managers are expressly prohibited from taking into consideration an individual's protected characteristic(s) when making hiring and/or promotion decisions. Such protected characteristics include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation.

10. How will my Talent Acquisition Partner recommend a diverse slate of candidates to interview for my open position?

When screening resumes, your Talent Acquisition Partner will identify which candidates are recommended for your diverse interview slate by placing candidates into be "route recommend" status in eRecruit. You, as the hiring manager in partnership with your Talent Acquisition Partner, may add or remove candidates from the recommended diverse candidate slate. Changes to the recommended interview slate should still result in a diverse slate of candidates for interview.

11. What is the minimum number of candidates that must be interviewed per open position?

There is no minimum number of candidates that hiring managers are required to interview for open positions. However, if the open position is within a job group that has an underrepresentation, the candidate interview slate must include at least one (1) qualified candidate from the underrepresented group. The policy establishes some exceptions for rare circumstances in which qualified underrepresented candidates are not available or identified despite the organization's good faith efforts.

12. Is there a minimum number of underrepresented candidates that must be included in an interview slate?

No, there is not a minimum number of underrepresented candidates that must be included in an interview slate, unless the position is within a job group that has an underrepresentation (see question above).

Even if a position is in a job group that does not have an underrepresentation, it is recommended that whenever possible, more than one underrepresented candidate is included in the interview slate. A [Harvard study](#) suggests significantly improved outcomes in terms of equity when more than one underrepresented candidate is added to an interview slate.

13. If my job opening is not part of a job group that has an underrepresentation of minorities or women, do I still need to ensure that my recruitment strategy includes outreach to diverse groups?

Yes. The University expects good faith efforts to diversify our staff and to make all our talent acquisition processes more inclusive, including the creation of applicant pools.

14. Am I required to provide feedback on candidates that I have interviewed for an open position?

Yes. When your open position is filled prior to closing the job posting, you or your Talent Acquisition Partner must accurately document in eRecruit why other qualified candidates were not selected for the position. Your feedback is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness and fairness of the recruitment process and records the reason for your decision should it become necessary to revisit at a later time.

15. Am I required to have an interview panel when interviewing candidates for an open position?

No. An interview panel is neither required nor always appropriate when interviewing candidates for a position. However, if an interview panel is appropriate and will be used to screen candidates for an opening position, the interview panel should be diverse and ideally include an interviewer from the underrepresented group.

16. If we want to hire a temporary worker into a regular staff position, do we still have to review other applicants and create a diverse slate?

Subject to the limited exceptions outlined in the policy, all open positions are required to be posted, even if there is a temporary worker being considered for the position. Additionally, absent an approved exception, jobs within a job group that has an underrepresentation of minorities or women will remain posted until there is a diverse slate of qualified candidates available to interview.

17. Am I required to post my job opening externally?

Hiring managers, with support from Talent Acquisition partners, are expected to make good faith efforts in all searches to build diverse slates, regardless of whether an underrepresentation exists. Discuss with your Talent Acquisition Partner the outreach strategy that would be most appropriate based on the position for which you are recruiting.

18. Do hiring managers need to attend a training prior to starting recruitment?

Yes, hiring managers and anyone participating in the interview process must have attended or be actively attending training prior to beginning the recruitment process.

19. What training is required to participate in the recruitment and selection process?

Training on the Diverse Candidate Slates Policy is required for all hiring managers and individuals who may take part in an interview and selection process. The Diverse Candidate Slates Policy training is available as of May 14, 2021 through myHR Learn as an on-demand module. Additionally, the Office of Human Resources will offer facilitated viewing sessions, in which a Talent Acquisition expert will be available to answer live questions as you watch the module. Completion of this module (less than 1 hour) either on your own or in one of the facilitated sessions will satisfy the mandatory training requirement.

20. How can I find out if the staffing or executive search firm I wish to engage has minorities or women within their leadership?

- a. Preferred/Prequalified staffing and executive search firms that are woman or minority owned are identified as such on our [Procurement and Payment Services](#) site.
- b. To determine if non-preferred/non-prequalified firms have diversity within their leadership, you may either review the firm's website or inquire with the firm directly.

21. May I receive the demographics report to better understand where our department currently stands with diversity?

Hiring managers can work with their Talent Acquisition Partner to obtain diversity information specific to a school, unit, or department. Your Talent Acquisition Partner will provide assistance obtaining, interpreting, and understanding how to utilize the data.

22. What is a promotion?

A move from one position to a different (existing or newly created) vacant position that will place the employee into a higher salary grade midpoint resulting in a salary increase following a competitive search process. When a Promotion occurs as defined herein, the individual who is promoted typically leaves a vacancy in the department or unit. The vacancy may be backfilled, reclassified or eliminated through reorganization.

23. If I would like to promote an employee, do I need to post the position?

Yes. All vacant positions must be managed through an open competitive process to ensure equity and fairness in the selection. This means that at a minimum all promotion opportunities must be posted internally to allow similarly situated, qualified candidates across the University to apply and be considered for the role. The Diverse Candidate Slate requirement applies equally to slates made up of internal candidates only, external candidates only, and mixed (internal and external) slates. Please refer to the Definitions section of the policy to understand the distinction between a promotion and a reclassification.

24. What is a reclassification?

The reassignment of an existing position to a new job classification (i.e., job title or salary grade) resulting from an authorized, ongoing, and substantial change of no more than half of a position's current duties requiring the employee to utilize a skillset that differs from what was previously necessary to accomplish the work. A Reclassification may result in placement of a position into a lower pay grade ("downward reclassification"), same salary grade but different title ("lateral reclassification"), or a higher salary grade ("promotional reclassification").

- Reclassifications for positions that have an incumbent require that no new vacancies result within the department.
- Generally, a position with an incumbent employee cannot be reclassified prior to the employee's successful completion of 12 months in the position, and will not be reviewed for reclassification more than once in a 12-month period.
- Incidental changes in the volume or complexity of work alone does not substantiate the need for job audit and reclassification.

25. If I would like to reclassify an existing employee's current position, do I need to post the position?

Employee reclassifications *are not* required to be posted. Please refer to the Definitions section of the policy to understand the distinction between a promotion and a reclassification.