

Elevate Diversity Statements in the Review Process

Early Review of Diversity Statements Creates More Diverse Interview Pools

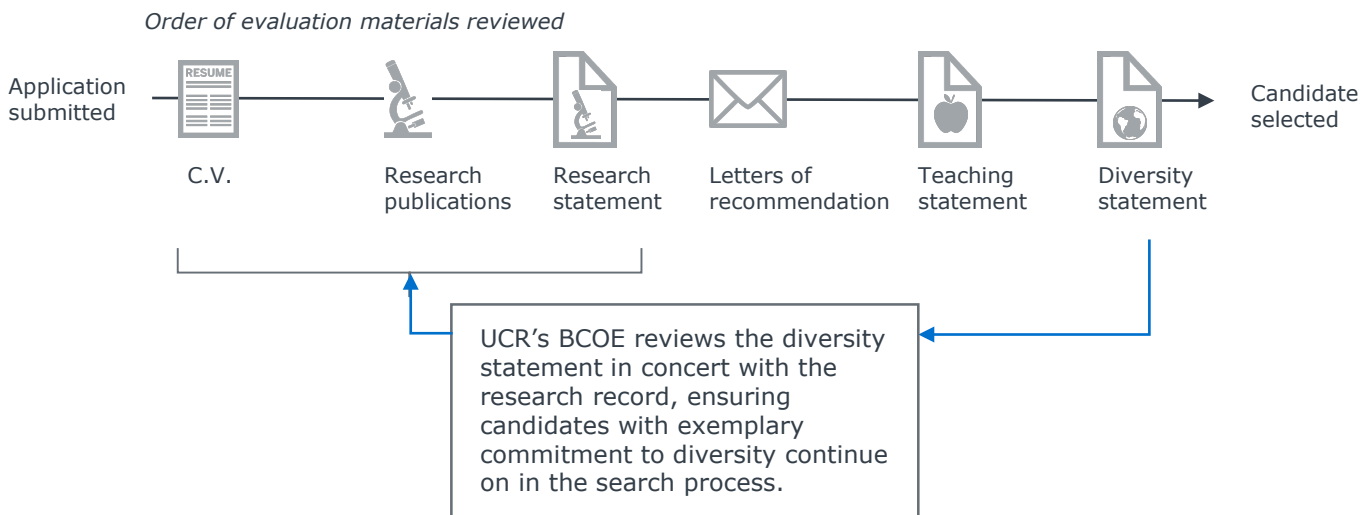
Why It Matters

The inclusion of the diversity statement in job applications can help search committees surface candidates with strong commitments to diversity. However, often these statements are leveraged late in the candidate review process or can be overlooked in relation to other elements of the application. For diversity statements to affect the earlier stages of the process and thereby support the selection of a diverse short list and interview pool, diversity statements must be utilized early in the evaluation process.

Although more institutions are including diversity statements as part of their faculty application processes, the statements are typically leveraged during the final stages of selection, such as to decide between two finalists. As a result, a candidate's commitment to diversity is often overshadowed by other application materials and has a delayed impact on the search process as a whole.

To better identify faculty who would assist in furthering the campus' commitment to diversity, the University of California, Riverside (UCR) evaluated and modified its search process. Recognizing the correlation between URG candidates and an increased dedication to diversity, faculty leaders at UCR's Marlan and Rosemary Bourns College of Engineering (BCOE) allocated more weight to the diversity statement, elevating its review to an earlier portion of the search process.

Reordering Evaluation Materials to Prioritize Diversity



BCOE found that by reordering the use of their application materials, search committees paid more attention to the quality of the diversity statement, allowing candidates with superior diversity statements to sustain through later stages of the search process. The modified search process resulted in significantly greater equity in the candidate pool with 33 percent more female candidates and 12 percent more URM candidates than the previous year's searches.

In the first year of this reordering, the college offered positions to three new faculty members, all of whom were female and from traditionally underrepresented groups. All three finalists accepted the positions and, in some cases, cited the college's commitment to diversity as a factor in their decision.