Report of Task Force on Best Practices in the Recruitment and Hiring of Academics

Membership:
Aliqae Geraci, Tobi Hines (co-chair), Susan Kendrick (co-chair), Jean Pajerek, and Gail Steinhart

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, the Academic Assembly Steering Committee (AASC) convened the Task Force on Best Practices in the Recruitment and Hiring of Academics. The task force examined "current recruitment and hiring practices at Cornell University Library (CUL), analogous practices at our peer institutions and elsewhere in the academy, as well as current literature pertaining to recruitment and hiring" – with the goal of producing a set of recommendations and best practices for hiring academics at CUL. We recognize that in some cases these recommendations may not fit a particular situation, and trust that staff will follow the spirit intended in these recommendations. Certainly different situations may call for different approaches.

The task force paid particular attention to the following areas: recruiting and hiring a diverse academic work force; appropriate treatment of internal candidates; scheduling and structure of interviews; and clear communication of expectations of academics within CUL. Because the scope of this project is large, in some cases, our recommendations are limited to further exploration/work by a dedicated task force.

Currently, hiring practices at CUL are guided by Procedure #39, *Search Procedures for Academic Appointments*. Library Human Resources (LHR) also provides a number of supporting documents to search committees including a recruiting checklist, a search committee guide, and a list of places to advertise postings. Additionally, LHR often meets with search committees at the beginning of a search to share these documents, discuss the process, and answer questions. Our goal was not to replace current practices, but rather to see where in the hiring process improvements might be made.

The task force strived to create, in as much as possible, a document of actionable recommendations. These include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that job postings are well-written and qualifications are realistic; this will help assure both a pool of well-qualified, diverse candidates as well as establish fair and reasonable evaluation criteria

- Striking a balance between an expeditious search and not cutting corners

- Having a regular CUL presence at job fairs at ALA, ACRL, and other major librarian conferences

- Training on professional conduct for all staff involved in academic searches at CUL, not just the search committee (e.g. confidentiality, professional conduct, etc.)

- Requiring and making available unconscious bias training for all CUL staff either serving on or interested in serving on a search committee, as well as hiring managers

- Articulating a diversity and inclusion strategy

- Creating a centralized clearinghouse of search-related materials, such as email templates and a question bank, which can be reused by search committees

- Providing additional guidance to search committees regarding timely communications and maintaining strict confidentiality with internal candidates in a candidate pool

METHODOLOGY

The task force consulted a range of scholarly and practitioner-oriented sources on recruitment and hiring in higher education, academic libraries, and at Cornell University. We reviewed diversity and inclusion initiatives across Cornell, including University as well as School/College policy and practice documentation. Within the CUL context, we consulted the policies governing the hiring and appointment of academic librarians and archivists, and met with LHR to discuss the mechanics and practice of ensuring search process compliance with equal employment opportunity (EEO) and Cornell requirements. We surveyed all CUL employees regarding their experiences as internal candidates for academic positions and as participants in academic search processes, and conducted follow-up interviews with willing internal candidates to collect more detailed narratives of experience and perspective. A list of sources is cited and linked in the appendix with the exception of detailed survey and interview results.

CURRENT HIRING GUIDELINES

Association of College & Research Libraries Guidelines

In 2017, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) adopted revised *Guidelines for Recruiting Academic Librarians*. Acknowledging that institutional differences abound, the standards provide an outline encompassing best practices and responsibilities for libraries of all types, and note, "It is the responsibility of the senior administration of the library and Human Resources staff to establish an environment where fair, effective, and transparent searches are possible."

In the ACRL guidelines, the search committee manages recruitment across the hiring process and makes decisions as delegated by the hiring authority. The search committee chair retains overall responsibility for managing a "proactive, timely, fair, and legal search process," ensuring compliance as well as modeling best practices for engaging with applicants. Search committee composition should mirror "a body representative of the constituencies affected by the position," and members should disclose conflicts of interest.

Search committees can support a fair, equitable, and legal process by standardizing submission requirements, evaluation criteria, and prioritizing evidence-based decision-making grounded in measurable questions that are the same across candidates. Communications with candidates should be similarly standardized.

Position description guidelines identify key elements of job descriptions, including required and preferred experience. Initial ranking and evaluation should focus on required qualifications to ensure fair and equitable consideration of the candidate pool. In advertising the position, libraries should specifically market to LIS diversity-focused groups in addition to traditional channels.

Regarding reference checks, the ACRL recommendations state that committees "should only solicit formal references from the list provided by candidate." Candidates should also be afforded an opportunity to provide alternate names if necessary. Regarding informal networks and outside channels, "in the absence of policy guidance, ethical considerations should determine how to handle such information. Care should be exercised that information is not used in an adverse manner to disqualify candidates unless attempts are made to verify the information via credible and appropriate sources."

In the event that there is a failed search, stakeholders should reflect on the search process and consider the salary, position description, required qualifications, candidate and stakeholder feedback, advertising, screening, and evaluation process before reinitiating a search.

Cornell – Faculty Hiring

The [Cornell Office of Faculty Development and Diversity](#) supports faculty recruitment across the university, providing targeted resources for each of four stages in the recruitment process: advertising the position and establishing a search committee, developing a candidate short list, managing the campus visit, and evaluating candidates and extending offers. Supporting documents for these areas are generally brief and synthesize processes and practices drawn from institutional policies and faculty handbooks.

The documents *Planning the Search* and *Sample Language for Advertisement* address committee roster representation, decision-making processes, and demonstrate sample language to encourage women and underrepresented minority applicants. Training on candidate pool development is available from the Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble, and additional documents include *Pool Development*, (encouraging proactive recruitment strategies beyond individual searches), and *Evaluating the Candidate Pool* (evaluation biases in search contexts). Committees are encouraged to interview more than one candidate from underrepresented groups, as research shows that this is more likely to generate a diverse pool of candidates to consider, and write de-selection reports to compare against original criteria.

Managing the Campus Visit provides suggestions for representing the institution as an attractive place for candidates to work. Methods include reiterating interest in the candidate's work, distributing information on potentially relevant policies (e.g. dual career, parental leave, etc.) and retention plan, outlining clear processes for evaluation and promotion, mentoring (particularly for underrepresented groups), using a set of common questions, and to consider providing candidates with a list of elements that could be discussed in negotiations.

In *Evaluating the Search*, committees that successfully hire women and underrepresented minorities are encouraged to consider contributing factors, and to keep a record of good practices and successful searches. If candidate pools are not diverse, committees are asked to consider if the job description could be written in a way to generate a broader pool, if they could have recruited more actively, and if the criteria for the position was consistently not met by women and people of color. If women and underrepresented minority candidates reject extended offers, efforts should be made to document reasons, consider whether the needs could be met in future negotiations, and share information with leadership to include in consideration of future searches.

Examples of local best practices include guidelines from the College of Veterinary Medicine and the College of Engineering. *Best Practices - Academic Search Process - College of Veterinary Medicine* provides a College-specific blueprint of search process stages, including search committee composition (encouraging membership from external departments and colleges), developing a search plan proposal (template provided), use of qualifications templates for ranking candidates, standardization of campus interviews to maximize participation and comparative results, and using a template to facilitate deliberation. *Strategic Oversight Committee for Faculty Hiring - College of Engineering* states demographic goals and timelines, articulates the role of the committee as a mechanism for achieving the goals, outlines representation and decision-making structure, and describes how they will engage with search committees in the hiring process. In requesting searches, departments are asked to submit

recruitment plans, search committee members will have undergone training, and best practices will be communicated. Before candidates are invited to interview, the search committee will demonstrate applicant pool diversity, and similar summaries are provided prior to extension of an offer.

CUL – Academic Hiring Process

CUL Procedure #39, *Search Procedures for Academic Appointments*, outlines the required processes for conducting academic hiring at CUL. A search committee is required for positions ranked Associate and higher, and optional (but encouraged) at the Assistant and Senior Assistant Librarian ranks. Open positions are approved by the University Librarian, and the job description is prepared by the hiring supervisor in consultation with LHR. In addition to advertising the position, LHR coordinates searches to ensure compliance with EEO and affirmative action guidelines, for example, providing guidance on what questions are legal to ask of candidates. The committee reviews applications and identifies candidates based on position requirements, i.e., the criteria listed in the job posting are what candidates are evaluated on. After candidates are interviewed, the search committee makes a recommendation to the hiring supervisor, who often (but not always) makes the final selection. The University Librarian holds authority over all hiring decisions, and (through LHR) authorizes offers of employment. Documentation of interviews and reference checks is required, and must be submitted to LHR, who maintains the search file for three years.

In practice, search committees may include academic librarians, nonacademic library staff, and other Cornell staff or faculty. Search committee chairs are generally, but not always, the hiring manager. The specifics of search committee procedures may vary widely according to unit or department culture, hiring supervisor preferences, and disciplinary or occupational standards.

DIVERSITY

Diversity Initiatives in Academic Libraries

Academic library associations have addressed employment topics with increasing urgency in recent years, seeking to understand the evolving job market and the diversification of academic library workforces. The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) monitors the demographics of the ARL workforce through the annual Salary Survey (Figure 1). The Diversity and Inclusion Committee (currently chaired by CUL University Librarian Gerald Beasley) participates in the National Diversity in Libraries conference, monitors the progress and success of ARL's diversity recruitment programs, and conducts site visits of ARL libraries. These site visits allow the committee to collaborate on local diversity and inclusion training for search committees and strategic planning initiatives.

Figure 1: Race/Ethnicity of Professional Staff in US ARL University Libraries, FY 2015–2016

Caucasian / Other 85.1%

Asian or Pacific Islander 6.8%

Black 4.7%
Hispanic 3.0%
American Indian or Native Alaskan 0.4%
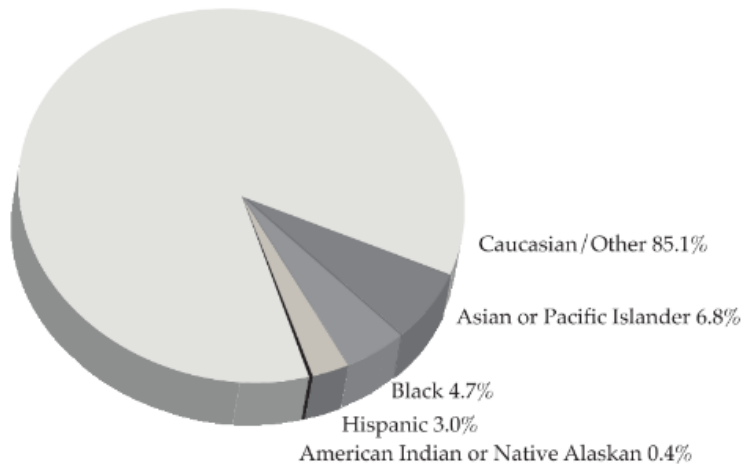
Source: Association of Research Libraries. (2017). *ARL Annual Salary Survey, 2015-2016.* Washington: Association of Research Libraries. Retrieved from http://publications.arl.org/ARL_Annual_Salary_Survey on November 1, 2017.

Demographic statistics on academic and public libraries from American Library Association (ALA) show similar race, age, and gender percentages to the ARL statistics.

National LIS diversity initiatives have largely focused on pipeline approaches, to increase the number of qualified librarian candidates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. ARL sponsors multiple programs, sometimes in conjunction with other organizations. The Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce is a scholarship program for MLIS students. The ARL/SAA Mosaic program targets the archives/special collections workforce. The ARL/MLA Diversity and Inclusion Initiative focuses on academic music and performing arts libraries, while the Leadership and Career Development Program (LCDP) trains mid-career librarians for leadership opportunities in ARL libraries. The now-defunct Career Enhancement Program paired MLIS students with fellowships at ARL host libraries. The ACRL Diversity Alliance comprises academic libraries that have committed to creating and supporting diversity/residency programs.

The ACRL Diversity Standards were developed in 2012 by the Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee of ACRL, and include Standard 7: Workforce Diversity, which states, "Librarians and library staff shall support and advocate for recruitment, admissions, hiring, and retention efforts in libraries, library associations, and LIS programs to increase diversity and ensure continued diversity in the profession." Benchmarks for the culturally competent organization include:

- An action plan to actively recruit and retain diverse staff and librarians

- Obtain and review statistics on underrepresented personnel

- Development and implementation of HR and organizational policies, procedures, and practices that support staff diversity

- Review past policy and practice to remedy inadvertent exclusion or discrimination

- Implement safeguards against exclusion or discrimination, and take corrective action

In September 2017, ARL released [SPEC Kit 356: Diversity and Inclusion](). Contents include survey results from member libraries on current and planned practices, and appendices featuring library and parent institution policy and working documents. With a member response rate of around 50%, the SPEC Kit provides a succinct overview of academic library work on diversity and inclusion, and includes sections from member libraries with detailed information. Seventy-four percent of libraries had a diversity/inclusion plan or were in the process of developing one, and the top three elements included are goals and strategies, a diversity definition, and a mission or value statement, followed by committee charge and organization responsibility/accountability. The two lowest elements included were positions dedicated to diversity/inclusion initiatives, and description of diversity programs for library staff. Eighty-seven percent of respondents reported parent institution-developed initiatives affecting a library diversity plan, and accountability for plan implementation was generally sited in a diversity committee or an HR/personnel officer.

Top programs to promote inclusive workplaces reported were presentations, workshops, programs, and exhibits. Slightly over half of the respondents have funding dedicated to support diversity/inclusion initiatives or programs, with 97% of funding reported as coming from the general library budget. Half reported flat funding, while the other half reported increased funding. Eighty percent reported development of strategies to increase the pool of ethnically/culturally diverse job applicants, including training of search committees, targeting job ads, and supporting ARL initiatives. Around 40% reported hosting diversity fellowships, and comments indicated HR and manager level strategies such as redacting names and personal info from candidate materials to reduce bias, and reaching out directly to diverse candidates to invite them to apply. Responses were relatively split when asked if pools had become more diverse over the past five years, and over 60% reported perceived barriers to recruitment that ranged from homogenous local labor pools and LIS graduate cohorts, internal bias, geographic location, perceived institutional or regional culture, and salaries. Seventy-one percent indicated strategies to aid retention that included onboarding, leadership development opportunities, and mentoring.

Diversity Initiatives at Cornell

Cornell University's diversity and inclusion initiative, [Toward New Destinations (TND)](), augments existing institutional EEO, affirmative action, and diversity and inclusion policies. TND advances a holistic approach to diversity, articulates the university diversity leadership structure, reviews demographic monitoring and climate assessment efforts, and directs community members to resources for reporting, advocacy, and affinity.

Each college and unit annually identifies three diversity initiatives in support of the four TND core principles: Composition, Engagement, Inclusion, and Achievement. These principles are applied to seven constituency groups, creating matrixed goals for each group. For the purposes

of this document, we focused on the post-docs and academic professionals group, which includes librarians and archivists:

TND principles for post-docs and academic professionals	
Composition	Achieve a diverse demographic composition that matches the comparison population.
Engagement	Nurture and expand a culture in which postdocs and academic professionals of all identities and backgrounds experience the full range of dynamic and stimulating exchange across difference with others in all of their Cornell activities and responsibilities, and social, cultural, and personal development and exchange.
Inclusion	Provide and cultivate an environment free of bias in which postdocs and academic professionals of all identities and backgrounds successfully take part in the full range of activities and services available to them.
Achievement	Provide and extend a context in which postdocs and academic professionals of all identities and backgrounds are represented equitably at all the levels of responsibility, and in all the honors, awards, and collegial opportunities available to them on and off campus.

Diversity Initiatives at CUL

CUL did report three TND initiatives for 2016-2017: two LGBTQ-focused programs, a grant for female librarians to advance their careers in digital scholarship, and engaging in a Mellon-funded survey of attitudes surrounding diversity and inclusion. However, CUL does not currently have an articulated diversity and inclusion strategy and previously CUL administration had declined joining the ACRL Diversity Alliance. CUL diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives are localized or ad-hoc. Past and present initiatives include:

- A CUL diversity fellowship sponsored centrally beginning in 2000 and discontinued in 2009 due to cutbacks during the economic recession;
- The Cornell Law Library diversity fellowship program, founded in 2014;
- Mann Library's new diversity fellowship, with the first fellow starting in November 2017.

Staff-initiated efforts include the charging of this Task Force by the CUL Academic Assembly, and the founding of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Diversity. The Ad-Hoc Committee intends to engage staff on the topic of organizational climate and how it can improve, and in October 2017 hosted two staff listening sessions led by Reginald White, Senior Management Consultant with Cornell Organizational and Workforce Development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force has developed both procedural (documentation, process, tools) and behavioral (communication, training, mindset) recommendations to improve the hiring and recruitment of academics for positions at CUL.

Ideally, search committees conduct fair, equitable, and legal search processes with consistent and appropriate application of institutional policies, procedures, and relevant laws. This goal can be facilitated by the use of standardized templates for the various types of communication used in searches, including position descriptions, interview questions for candidates, questions for references, evaluation rubrics, interview schedules, feedback forms, and information about CUL, Cornell, and Ithaca.

Within a given search, the search committee should strive to provide similar interview experiences to each candidate and to ensure that their exposure to Cornell, CUL, and Ithaca is equally positive and compelling. Accordingly, staff interactions with each candidate are expected to be conducted with a high level of professional decorum.

Resource Center for Search Committees

We recommend establishing a secure wiki space to serve as a clearinghouse for information related to the recruitment process in general, with sub-pages for each search, providing information about the status of the search. Resources to be stored in the clearinghouse could include:

- Position description template with instructions (based on survey feedback and literature review)
- Suggested search timeline including timing of communications with LHR, candidates, and CUL as a whole
- Question bank for both references and candidates, including guidance about questions that cannot legally be asked
- Template for an evaluation rubric for use by search committee members
- Template for a Qualtrics feedback survey for use by those interacting with candidates during on-campus interviews
- Templates for typical interview schedules
- Information about how to evaluate candidates
- Copies of documents that are shared with on-campus interview candidates
- Information about financial support provided by CUL for moving expenses and funding for professional travel
- List of CUL contacts and roles (e.g. who makes room reservations, travel accommodations, and arrangements to record/stream presentations)
- Copies of Cornell and CUL policies and guidelines relevant to recruitment, including CUL Procedure #13 (Appointment and Promotion of Librarians and Archivists) and Procedure #39 (Search Procedures for Academic Appointments)

- Sub-pages for each search that include non-confidential information pertaining to individual searches, such as the names of the members of the search committee, the names of the candidates coming for on-campus interviews, interview schedules, and search outcomes. These pages would have to be updated as the search progresses.

Composition of Search Committees

The search committee should represent the interests of those with a stake in the outcome of the search. CUL academic search committees often include nonacademic staff members as well as librarians; some committees have included faculty members when appropriate. Numerous survey respondents endorsed the idea of including a representative from Library Human Resources on the search committee, while others suggested more of an ex-officio, consultative role for LHR. Practice varies regarding the inclusion of hiring supervisors on search committees for positions they supervise. While there is considerable flexibility regarding the composition of search committees, it's crucial that all committee members share a common understanding of the duties, responsibilities, and qualifications associated with the position being recruited, as well as a commitment to diversity.

Recommendations for the appointment of search committees include:

- Selecting committee members who are able to adequately represent the interests of those with a stake in the outcome of the search. This may include the hiring supervisor, nonacademic staff, and faculty, in addition to academic peers.
- Ensuring that at least one search committee member (preferably the chair) has experience in conducting an academic search at CUL.
- Ensuring that all members of search committees possess a baseline level of knowledge about the recruitment process, the relevant institutional policies, procedures, and laws, and the importance of avoiding unconscious bias.
    - Training for potential search committee members should be provided on a regular basis to increase the pool of people who are equipped to serve on search committees.
    - Who would lead this training should be up to the AASC and LHR. The Career Development & Mentoring Committee has expressed an interest in providing this training and should be considered a possible sponsor.
    - Training could include something like annual programming as part of Professional Development week or another program open to CUL staff.
    - Committees may want to use training available via Lynda.com such as Unconscious Bias and Interviewing Techniques.
- Keeping the number of search committee members manageable; survey feedback suggests four as the optimal number of members. The larger a committee is, the harder it becomes to coordinate meetings and interviews, often resulting in drawn-out searches during which candidates may withdraw from the search. Invite additional stakeholders to attend meetings with the candidate during the on-campus interview.

- Varying the composition of search committees when possible, such that over time more CUL staff have the opportunity to serve on a committee; i.e., do not overuse a subset of CUL staff to be on searches.

Search Committee Training and Conduct

Suggested training or guidance for search committee members and staff involved in academic searches includes:

- Appropriate processes, legal/ethical considerations, and confidentiality.
- LHR liaison should meet initially with all committees at the start of the search and should be available to help through the process. LHR can assist with:
    - Recognizing and avoiding unlawful inquiries.
    - Standard procedures such as disposition of the notes of the search committee.
    - Answer questions regarding processes that may be unclear.
- Avoiding unconscious bias in hiring—we recommend regular training open to all CUL staff and to eventually require training for anyone serving on search committees.

Effective Recruiting

General recommendations for more effective recruiting include:

- Maintaining a regular CUL presence at professional conference career opportunities, such as job fairs, even if we do not have a current openings. This would serve to market CUL to prospective future candidates. This "constant gardening" could be a role for AASC members.
- CUL administrative support for tabling at conferences such as ALA, ACRL, and other major librarian and archivist conferences.
- Recruiting directly from LIS programs, by reaching out to them with vacancy information.
- Developing "talking points" for CUL staff, should opportunities arise, to discuss working at CUL with LIS students or other potential candidates.
- Creating an attractive and informative web page describing what makes working at CUL and living in the Ithaca area attractive. This could be a collaboration between the AASC and CUL Assessment & Communication. See Appendix for example from Grand Valley State University.

Job Posting Best Practices

Hiring supervisors should take great care in writing and circulating job descriptions. This includes:

- Careful consideration of both required and preferred qualifications, as these should serve as the basis for evaluating candidates.
- Writing job descriptions and postings so that both managers and candidates have an idea of what measures will be used to gauge success in this position.
- Not overloading a position description with so many criteria that no reasonable candidate could be expected to fulfill them (the "purple unicorn" job description).

- Considering prospective salary in relation to in-demand skillsets, required experience, and peer institution practices. Providing salary ranges in job postings to reduce expectation mismatch.
- Careful choice of wording the job posting so as to avoid inadvertent bias in the applicant pool. This can mean avoiding words or desired traits that are perceived as stereotypically masculine or feminine.
- Strengthening CUL's standard diversity statement that is currently appended to all job descriptions. The current statement reads: "Diversity and Inclusion are a part of our heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities." A stronger statement could also include language such as the following: "CUL embraces diversity and seeks candidates who will create a climate that attracts individuals of all races, nationalities, and genders. We strongly encourage women and underrepresented minorities to apply."
- Targeting job postings to attract both the best talent and to increase the number of candidates from underrepresented minority groups.

Recruiting for Diversity

The *Job Posting Best Practices* section (above) includes some recommendations that are related to recruiting for diversity. The AASC is pleased to note the creation of an ad hoc CUL task force, which can help CUL staff improve the climate for diversity in our workplace. Additionally:

- We recommend expanding the diversity fellows programs currently in place at Mann and Law, in order to make it possible for any unit library to participate.
- Research shows that interviewers evaluate candidates from underrepresented groups more fairly when there is more than one such candidate in the hiring pool (Valian 1998). Search committee members and hiring supervisors should keep this in mind as they evaluate candidates.
- Collaborate with diversity-oriented professional organizations and past library fellows to solicit candidates from underrepresented groups.
- LHR may wish to consider using a service, should a relevant one exist, to recruit candidates. For example, Blendoor is used for merit-based matching candidates with technology companies.

Search Progress and Communication

Search committees are expected to conduct professional, expeditious searches. Suggested guidelines include:

- Moving the search process along efficiently once the job listing has been posted. Treating the steps in a search as time-sensitive will help prevent the loss of good candidates. For example, search committees can commence phone interviews with top candidates before the job posting closes. It is not necessary to wait. We heard in our

survey that slow-moving searches and long gaps in communication are problematic and have resulted in losing top candidates.

- Providing an approximate timeline for the search process when speaking with candidates during the phone and on-campus interviews. If unforeseen circumstances delay the search process, the Chair should notify all active candidates in order to avoid confusion and allay concerns.
- Professional and courteous conduct on the part of all search participants who interact with candidates; we are effectively ambassadors for CUL and for Cornell.
- Discretion on the part of search committee members as the search progresses; this includes refraining from divulging confidential information, such as the identities of candidates. Breaching of confidentiality should be viewed within a disciplinary context, and prompt reconsideration of an individual's membership in the committee.
- The expectation that search committee members are to refrain from sharing information that might generate rumors or other back channel communication.
- Timely communications from the search committee to CUL can help minimize the spreading of rumors. A standard set of expected communications would help clarify expectations - for example, for each search:
    - LHR or the hiring supervisor will announce the composition of each search committee and the related position.
    - The search committee will notify CUL of on-campus interviews or save the date messages at least two weeks in advance, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
    - Messaging regarding "failed" searches should also go out.
    - CUL staff will have the opportunity to provide input on candidates for all academic searches. Currently, this is usually handled by distributing an online survey.
    - Once a candidate has formally accepted an offer, the search committee chair or hiring supervisor should announce the outcome of the search via CU-LIB prior to the candidate's first day.
- When possible, supervisors of search committee members should be accommodating with work load and schedules during interview periods.
- Taking a cue from the ACRL recommendations, when there is a failed search, stakeholders should reflect on the search process, and consider the salary, position description, required qualifications, candidate and stakeholder feedback, advertising, screening, and evaluation process before reinitiating a search.

Candidate Evaluation Methods and Criteria

When interacting with candidates, CUL staff and search committees are advised to:

- Refrain from asking unlawful questions. Consistent training or documentation would be helpful and could reside on the wiki.
- Use criteria derived directly from the job posting, such as required or preferred qualifications, as the starting point for evaluating candidates. Other skills, experience,

and traits may be considered in addition after screening for the required and preferred qualifications.
● Evaluate candidates on how they would develop and grow in a CUL environment as well as how they would represent CUL in the larger library profession.

Need for Further Guidance

CUL is advised to work with LHR to develop policies, training and/or documentation related to gathering additional information on candidates. For example:

● Soliciting informal feedback from individuals not listed among a candidate's references;
● Examining candidates' public social media profiles;
● Conducting web searches for publicly available information on candidates.

In the past, LHR advised that these are valid avenues of information gathering on candidates provided that they directly relate to the job responsibilities, i.e. the feedback is strictly limited to their suitability for a position. Where confusion lies and where guidance is needed is when and how this type of information gathering would be appropriate. Examples include guidelines covering waiting until after the phone interview to gather any secondary information, and only soliciting feedback from close professional networks who can be trusted with maintaining confidentiality.

The On-campus Interview

● As noted earlier, all search participants who interact with candidates are effectively ambassadors for CUL and for Cornell. Professional and courteous conduct are expected.
● Ensure that candidates receive accurate information about CUL Procedure #13, Appointment and Promotion of Librarians and Archivists. This discussion should not strike fear into the hearts of candidates. Currently, Procedure #13 is discussed in a meeting between the candidate and LHR, but search committee members and the hiring supervisor should also be able to discuss the process accurately.

Treatment of Internal Candidates

As part of our charge, the Task Force looked at the experiences of internal candidates for academic positions at CUL. We gathered this information through our survey of CUL, and via 12 one-on-one interviews with staff who volunteered to speak with us confidentially. [Please note that we only spoke with job candidates, not hiring supervisors.]

Of the 29% of survey respondents who had been a candidate for an academic position within the past five years, 55% had been a candidate for an internal position (or put another way, 10% of all survey respondents had been an internal candidate within the past five years). Though CUL staff in general regarded the interview process favorably, it was somewhat less favorably regarded by internal candidates. For example, 15% of internal candidates disagreed with the

statement, "On-campus interview was conducted in a professional/respectful manner," while no external candidates disagreed with this statement.

During one-on-one interviews with members of the task force, many candidates reported that they experienced a lack of communication from the search committee about the status of the search at all stages of the process – after they had submitted an application, after phone or on-campus interviews, after reference checks, etc. – with some experiencing weeks- or months-long gaps in communication. It also seems that the way information is communicated to internal candidates runs the gamut from more formal channels (email, phone calls) to very informal methods (such as text messages).

Several internal candidates reported feeling that they were constantly under scrutiny, and were "always interviewing" for the position while the search was ongoing. They felt it was difficult to maintain their dignity and privacy under such pressure and speculation. Across the board, internal candidates felt that a lack of confidentiality during searches was a real issue at CUL and what should have been protected information within the search committee was often leaked to other CUL colleagues. Confidentiality is especially crucial when an internal candidate's supervisor is not supportive of his/her candidacy for another position.

There were some discrepancies reported as to the professionalism and formality of the behavior of search committee members. Several candidates felt that the search committee members conducted themselves fairly and professionally and that they were treated the same as external candidates. However, multiple people reported that members of their search committee lapsed into casual or even inappropriate behavior that they attributed to the fact that they were well known by members of the committee. While every effort should be made to ensure a comparable interview experience for internal and external candidates, most respondents felt that some flexibility may make sense (for example, allowing an internal candidate to decline the offer of a tour of the library). There is also a perception amongst some internal candidates that external candidates have more leverage in negotiating salary.

Additionally, candidates felt that staff should be able to move around professionally at CUL with more opportunities to explore potential career trajectories beyond managerial roles. One candidate also suggested allowing current CUL staff (both academic and nonacademic) to act in interim roles for open positions before they apply. This would allow staff and supervisors to see if they might be a good fit for the role, and allows for increased cross-unit training and knowledge sharing.

Overall, it seemed that the practices of the particular hiring supervisor determine much of the interview experience for internal candidates, and that practices vary significantly across CUL units. More consistency in search committee practices, as well as more training for members of search committees would be beneficial to everyone involved. Encouraging and prioritizing internal candidacies must be balanced with the need to diversify and bring in new talent.

Training

- Staff members who are interviewing internal candidates could benefit from advance guidance as to how to conduct themselves; specifically, it should be made explicitly clear that they need to treat an internal candidate with the same level of professional courtesy they would extend to external candidates.
- Supervisors/managers would benefit from additional training in effectively mentoring/advising support staff seeking academic positions in CUL (how to be supportive and provide opportunities while also managing expectations), as well as how to provide honest, helpful feedback to unsuccessful job candidates.
- Inform hiring supervisors who are the head of search committees that they have the flexibility to recuse themselves from a search if a current employee who reports to them decides to apply to the position.

Communication

- Encourage candidates to speak informally with the hiring supervisor before applying, which provides the supervisor with the opportunity to be honest about qualifications, expectations, etc.
- Colleagues/supervisors should exercise discretion and sensitivity when discussing a current employee's candidacy with them. Minimize "you're a shoo-in" and "best candidate" type of encouragement that is likely well-meaning, but unhelpful when navigating an unsuccessful outcome.
- Search committees should provide timely communication concerning a search's progress to candidates.
- Internal candidates should be apprised of their status before a CUL-wide announcement of on-campus interviews, including if they have not been selected for an interview. While this is a deviation of normal procedure (waiting until the search closes to notify candidates that they were not selected for an interview), internal candidates are in a unique position and should be accorded certain considerations.
- Communicate clear expectations and options as to what internal candidates should do during their interview (e.g., do staff need to take personal time for the interview?) as well as on the days that competitors visit campus.
- Honest feedback if the candidate does not get the position (or an interview) will help them improve and grow professionally.
- Search committee participants should assume all communications with an internal candidate are confidential unless they have determined otherwise, and/or until the search reaches the public phase.

Professional Development

- Consider rewarding lateral moves (small raise, extra travel funds) to encourage career development in a variety of directions, not just from individual contributor roles to managerial roles.

- Consider allowing current CUL staff (both academic and nonacademic) to act in interim roles for open positions for a set period of time before they apply.

Policy Clarification

- Knowing when a position needs to be posted and when we can just move someone into a new role would help both supervisors and staff.
- A clear policy on whether members of the search committee may also be a reference for an internal candidate is needed.
- Clarify the appropriate level of involvement of an internal candidate in the interviews of their competitors. May they attend meetings, presentations, have access to application materials, or provide feedback? Note that in some cases the internal candidate may end up working closely with, or be supervised by, one of the competing candidates.
- Clarify whether an interview is required (and what its structure should be) when there is only a single, internal candidate for a position.
- More transparency is needed regarding how salary is determined and negotiated for internal candidates in a competitive search.

CONCLUSION

In was an honor and an eye-opening task to compile the best practices and provide broad recommendations for hiring academic staff at CUL. We believe it would also be helpful to have a CUL-wide strategic overview of our broad hiring goals, such as a gap analysis, in which to couch these recommendations.

In addition to the recommendations, several areas that are beyond the task force's charge and are important enough that we recommend further exploration and or action are set forth below:

- Retention was an issue that came up frequently in the literature review, outside recommendations and best practices, and CUL staff feedback. We recommend AASC consider forming a new task force to look into this area. This may include anything from welcoming new hires (onboarding services), to mentoring, to development of CUL staff beyond their current role.
- Training for hiring was recommended for search committee members several times in this document. How this would come about and the ownership of this kind of training is unknown. It might fall under the AASC purview and/or sponsored by CUL administration to oversee or to delegate to the appropriate group. An example of how this might work would be session(s) at Career Development Week targeting hiring managers, search committees, and interested CUL staff.
- While we made some initial suggestions surrounding the use of secondary information (social media, web, and non-listed professional contacts) in evaluating candidates, there is a policy gap regarding using these in the evaluation process. We recommend the development of a more formal policy.

- The development and maintenance of a secure wiki space for searches and a public facing web page promoting CUL as a place to work will require coordinated effort between LHR, CUL Communications, and AASC (perhaps a task force or sub-group).

APPENDIX

Task Force Charge

Convened by the Academic Assembly Steering Committee, the Task Force on Best Practices in the Recruitment and Hiring of Academics shall examine current recruitment and hiring practices at the Cornell University Library, analogous practices at our peer institutions and elsewhere in the academy, as well as current literature pertaining to recruitment and hiring.

The Task Force will prepare recommendations on best practices for CUL, units, and search committees, addressing (but not limited to) the following issues:
- Recruiting and hiring a diverse academic work force
- Appropriate treatment of internal candidates
- Scheduling and structure of interviews
- Clear communication of expectations of academics within CUL

The recommendations will be delivered as a report to the Academic Assembly Steering Committee, which includes the *ex officio* representative from Library Human Resources, and the University Librarian. It will then be shared with the full Assembly and added to the agenda of the next Assembly meeting for discussion.

Academic LHR Guidelines

- [LHR wiki](#)
- [Procedure #39, Search Procedures for Academic Appointments](#)
- [Procedure #13, Appointment and Promotion of Librarians and Archivists](#)

CUL Survey Summary Responses

Characteristics of Respondents
- 37% nonacademic staff; 63% academic staff
- 29% had been a candidate for an academic position at CUL within the last 5 years; 71% had not
- Of the 29% that had been a candidate with the last 5 years, 55% had been candidate for an internal position (or 16% of all respondents had been an internal candidate within the past 5 years)
- Of the internal candidates, 65% were interested in discussing their experience with a member of the task force or with LHR

Interview Experience

- The interview experience itself is generally favorable, but somewhat less so for internal than for external candidates. For example, 15% of internal candidates disagreed with the statement "On-campus interview was conducted in a professional/respectful manner," while no external candidates disagreed with this statement.
- Where there is clearly room for improvement is in conveying information of various kinds, and inviting follow up questions. Not surprisingly, these issues were somewhat less pronounced for internal candidates, with the exception of being invited to ask follow up questions, where an equal proportion (about 15%) of internal and external candidates either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.
- A notable proportion of all (internal and external) candidates disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements:
    - I ended up with a good understanding of the culture of CUL (23%).
    - I ended up with a good understanding of the academic promotion process (Procedure #13) (19%).
    - I ended up with a good sense of what it would be like to hold the position for which I interviewed (19%).

Participation on Search Committees

- 59% of respondents had served on a search committee within the past 5 years; 41% had not.
- 29% of respondents had been a hiring manager for an academic search within the past 5 years, 71% had not.
- Of the hiring managers for an academic search within the past 5 years, 71% chaired the search committee, 12% served on (but did not chair) the search committee, and 18% were not on the search committee.

Search Committee Experience

- The search committee experience is mixed.
- A significant proportion of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements:
    - The pitfalls of unconscious bias were raised and steps were taken to avoid bringing bias into the interview process (43%).
    - Opportunities were available to provide input on the content of the position announcement (48%).
    - Opportunities were available to suggest lists or service boards in which the position was advertised (21%).
    - To ensure an objective, equitable and legal interview process, applicable laws, guidelines, policies, and procedures were discussed/established/outlined before or at the beginning of the search process (18%).
- There was broad agreement ("agree" or "strongly agree" responses taken together) with the following statements:

- o At the beginning of the search process, a consistent set of criteria was established for the committee to evaluate the candidates (91%).
- o Search committee members comprised a good representation of the stakeholders in the recruitment process (100%).
- o Search committee members were from different campus libraries (91%).
- o Search committee members maintained an appropriate level of confidentiality for the candidates (96%).
- o Search committee members did a good job explaining the position and the CUL environment to candidates (98%).
- o Efforts were made to ensure candidates had as similar an experience as possible during their on-campus visit (96%).
- o Scheduling and logistics were consistent and well-organized (95%).
- o The structure of the on-campus interview allowed for staff, who were not on the search committee, adequate time to interact with the candidates (91%).
- o Search committee provided updates during the course of the search process to the hiring supervisor, if that individual was not part of the committee (57%; 39% responded "N/A or don't know").
- o Search committee members notified Library Human Resources of unqualified candidates in a timely manner (80%).

Search Committee Policies and Procedures

Policies:
- Use of social media: 61% of respondents indicated search committees had no policy on gathering information on candidates via social media.
- Use of other methods for gathering information on candidates: 54% of respondents indicated search committees had no policy, while 27% indicated information from other sources, if verified and relevant, would be taken into account in evaluating candidates.

Pre-campus interviews:
- Consistent methods for pre-campus interviews: responses indicate high consistency (88%) in the methods used for pre-campus interviews for all candidates in a search.

Reference checks:
- Timing of reference checks: references are typically checked following on-campus interviews (83%).
- Number of candidates for whom references are checked: 45% of respondents report checking references only for the preferred candidate, while 47% report checking references for multiple candidates.
- Reference checking methods: references are most often checked via telephone (61%), followed by either telephone or email (14%).
- Reference check participation is varied (41% - search chair only, 37% - at least two members of the search committee, 22% - all members of the search committee).

Search outcomes:
- The majority of the time the first choice candidate accepted the position (60%).

- When one or more candidates declined an offer, dual career or family considerations (27%), location (19%), salary (15%), and acceptance of another offer (12%) are the most commonly given reasons.

Academic Search Participation More Broadly

There seems to be fairly broad satisfaction with the academic search process among survey respondents, regardless of their participation on a search committee.

- 55% of responses indicate agreement with the statement "I feel well informed about searches currently ongoing at CUL."
- 60% of responses indicate agreement with the statement "When searches are conducted at CUL, I am given sufficient opportunities to interact with job candidates in whom I have an interest."
- 76% of responses indicate agreement with the statement "Watching the recorded presentations of candidates when I was unable to attend their presentations in person was valuable."
- 39% of responses indicate agreement with the statement "When providing feedback on job candidates, I have enough information about and exposure to the candidates to offer an informed evaluation," and 53% indicate this is "sometimes" the case.

Interview experience, all candidates

Legend: NA or cannot remember, Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree

Categories (top to bottom):
- I was invited to follow-up with questions to the search committee and/or HR after the on-campus interview, if I...
- I obtained all the information I needed to make a decision regarding accepting the position
- I ended up with a good sense of what it would be like to hold the position for which I interviewed
- I ended up with a good understanding of the academic promotion process (Procedure 13)
- I ended up with a good understanding of the culture of CUL
- Efforts were made to promote the position, working at CUL, Cornell, and living in Ithaca
- Appropriate opportunities were provided for CUL staff to interact with me during on-campus visits
- Meetings in on-campus interview were well organized and included the appropriate staff for the position and its...
- Questions in on-campus interview made sense regarding the position
- Lodging, traveling and scheduling logistics were well-organized
- On-campus interview was conducted in a professional/respectful manner
- Phone interview was conducted in a professional/respectful manner
- Search committee was comprised of an appropriate representation of the hiring department and allied...

Search committee experience

Legend: NA or don't know · Strongly disagree · Disagree · Agree · Strongly agree

Categories (top to bottom):
- Search committee members notified Library Human Resources of unqualified candidates in a timely manner
- Search committee provided updates during the course of the search process to the hiring supervisor, if that…
- The structure of the on-campus interview allowed for staff, who were not on the search committee, adequate time to…
- Scheduling and logistics were consistent and well-organized
- Efforts were made to ensure candidates had as similar an experience as possible during their on-campus visit
- Search committee members did a good job explaining the position and the CUL environment to candidates
- Search committee members maintained an appropriate level of confidentiality for the candidates
- Search committee members were from different campus libraries
- Search committee members comprised a good representation of the stakeholders in the recruitment…
- Opportunities were available to suggest lists or service boards in which the position was advertised
- Opportunities were available to provide input on the content of the position announcement
- At the beginning of the search process, a consistent set of criteria was established for the committee to evaluate the…
- The pitfalls of unconscious bias were raised and steps were taken to avoid bringing bias into the interview process
- To ensure an objective, equitable and legal interview process, applicable laws, guidelines, policies, and…

X-axis: 0.00%, 10.00%, 20.00%, 30.00%, 40.00%, 50.00%, 60.00%, 70.00%

CUL Survey Summary Responses (Free Text)

Composition of Search Committees

Survey respondents endorsed the idea that search committees should be representative of those who are stakeholders in the position being recruited for:

> *"[A] cross section of stake holders on the search committee with different goals and expectations represented their departments strongly and effectively"*

> *"Having a non-librarian as part of the committee was very helpful."*

"It was great to have a faculty member from the community that the incoming librarian served involved in the process -- that brought lots of insights that we wouldn't have had otherwise."

Survey respondents identified the size of the search committee as a factor contributing to the length of the search process due to scheduling difficulties:

"The most challenging part was the size of the group. There were six of us, I think, and that is a very large group to find adequate time to meet … "

"The size was good (4 people) - larger committees have been more challenging to coordinate."

"I think having smaller search committees is better than the 5 people we usually have. Scheduling is too hard. Perhaps 3-4 is better."

"Smaller search committee would have been helpful (too many folks - 7!)"

One respondent expressed concern that the same people are being asked repeatedly to serve on search committees, limiting opportunities for others to serve:

"I wonder … if there is a way to sort of keep tabs on who has been on committees recently, so that we spread this work (and opportunity) around a little bit. I see us get into patterns of asking the same people over and over. The more you get asked the more you get asked, and the opposite is also true, but we aren't necessarily excluding people from search committees for any good reason."

Support from CUL Human Resources is highly valued and received broad endorsement from survey respondents, whether that support took the form of occasional participation in search committee meetings or actual membership on the search committee:

"Very helpful to have a CUL HR representative on the committee."

"It's very helpful to have the guidance of Library HR … "

"Having a representative from HR was useful in ensuring consistency throughout the process …"

"HR was helpful about guiding us on consistency and fairness … "

"Library HR joining searches has been incredibly valuable … "

Training for Potential Search Committee Members

Many survey respondents feel the search committee experience could be improved by making training available to potential search committee members:

"It became very clear to me that so much of the search committee experience comes down to who the hiring supervisor/chair of the search committee is - if they are disorganized, the search will be disorganized. If they don't know certain policies/procedures, then they don't adhere to them. It made me think that perhaps training (not just for unconscious bias) for search committee chairs might be a valuable investment. It might really help us achieve some level of consistency across units/searches."

"Need more training on unconscious bias, the entire search process, effective and fair application screening, legal issues, AND how to articulate legal, compliant and auditable reasons for rejection and candidate feedback (perhaps only those who have been through such a training could be [search committee] chairs)."

"We had a lot of experienced search committee members and I actually think this was problematic, because everyone thought they knew everything. So, the chair did not start with basic review of policies/procedures, probably assuming that this wasn't necessary. We had discussions as we went along, if there was disagreement about policy/procedures, but I think we could have avoided that if we reviewed at the beginning."

"Everyone needs implicit bias training. Units, university library leadership, as well as Academic Assembly, need to be held accountable for diversifying academic and nonacademic staff. Openness and broader scrutiny is the way forward."

"Workday was a little tricky - having someone from HR give a refresher course on the platform might have been helpful."

Process

Survey responses reflect a keen awareness of the importance of treating candidates equitably; the use of an evaluation rubric facilitated equitable treatment:

"The most recent search I participated in was run pretty well. The director ran a tight ship, we used a standard rubric for evaluation … "

"Using some kind of grid to ensure that we are evaluating the candidates using the same criteria [worked well]."

"We also spent time evaluating the needed requirements and expectations for the job to ensure that we evaluated everyone the same way."

"Meeting with the committee to discuss criteria before posting and reviewing criteria again before reviewing candidates [worked well]."

"The chair of the committee … provided a chart to rank candidates against the job requirements, which helped greatly."

Survey responses indicate that having adequate time to interact with candidates is an area where change may be warranted. Current practice is to arrange meetings between the candidate and various groups of staff (determined by the search committee and/or the hiring supervisor) with whom the candidate could expect to come into contact if hired. A public presentation by the candidate that is open to all interested parties is also customary. Some survey respondents suggested another meeting with the candidate (apart from the presentation) for people who are not otherwise on the candidate's schedule, but are interested in further interaction with him/her:

"I'd like to have a Q&A session included in the interview day, open to any folks who aren't otherwise on the candidate's schedule. I'd like this to be separate from the presentation Q&A, so it could specifically focus on questions about the job responsibilities, without the slides hovering over everyone's heads reminding us of what the candidate wants us to know (as opposed to what WE want to know)."

"As for participating in searches: there tends to be ample opportunity when it's a search in my own unit library. For searches outside of my unit library, sometimes there is enough contact (for searches where all I really need to see is the presentation), but many times (particularly for librarians in a similar role to my own) I feel that additional interaction would be nice and that opportunity is simply not available."

Overlap between ongoing searches was cited as an occasional impediment to sufficient interaction with candidates:

" … it's important that there is more coordination between the units about when searches are going on so that there isn't too much overlap and everyone has ample opportunity to participate in all the searches."

Several respondents cited personal time constraints as something that prevented them from interacting sufficiently with candidates:

"I'm kind of sorry that I can't keep up with all the recruiting. Floods of emails and invitations to participate, but who has time? I only attend to the ones that seem likely to affect my department fairly directly."

"The time felt quite rushed: a lot was packed into the campus visit."

"Always hard to find time to watch all the important recordings -- of candidates, trainings, meetings."

Survey respondents cited timeliness as an important factor in the ultimate success of searches:

"We seem to be losing a lot of candidates to slow searches and/or non-competitive salary."

"People are so busy and gone to conferences that it is virtually impossible to find times to meet. It extends the search process into many months. This last search committee I was on lasted 5 months from when job was posted until person was hired. I don't think we move quickly enough."

"[I]t takes an awful long time to hire someone! [N]ot very good that way -- both for applicants and for departments."

"There were some periods of lag time, mostly due to the hiring supervisor being out of town. This lag time made the search process take much longer than it should have, which was unfortunate, but perhaps unavoidable."

In general, survey respondents had a positive view of the level of administrative support available for academic searches:

"Overall, I thought that the administrative support (Lianna May, at Mann) was excellent and very well-organized."

"Administrative support for scheduling logistics was out of this world"

"[H]aving designated administrative support was essential"

"Handling of on-campus interview and travel arrangements by one person (Angie Cleveland, and now also Lianna May at Mann) - as well as their interaction with HR - has been wonderful."

Even so, at least one respondent had a negative experience:

"Announcements, invitations, and feedback forms were slow to come from Olin 201 staff. Same with travel arrangements. Either that office needs the proper resources to provide administrative and logistical support for recruitment, and then follow through on that support. Or that kind of scheduling work needs to be clearly shifted to the search committee."

Job Descriptions

The importance of a well-defined and realistic job description was expressed by a significant number of respondents:

"[Having a] well-defined position description and expectations for the candidates we were hoping to attract [worked well]."

"[U]sing the job description as a guide for candidate evaluation [worked well]; (accurate job description very important)"

"The job descriptions were sometimes unrealistic -- asking for too much experience for an entry-level position (assistant librarian), resulting in a weak candidate pool, or in some cases losing good candidates who started the process but were eventually told what "assistant librarian" means (no one outside Cornell would know our local tiers). Those who write the job descriptions need to be willing to accept feedback from the search committee."

"Our advertising language (position description) needs some more thought (many ads are very long lists of required qualifications, we need to think more about this depending on the role)."

"Hiring managers need to be careful to not write position announcements in such a way as to make the position impossible to fill. This is particularly important when the position requires some kind of special skill(s) or area of expertise that is hard to find."

"After the first search failed, we were able to provide feedback on changes to the job posting, which helped tremendously."

Communication

Survey responses indicate that good communication is crucial at all stages of a search, and that striking the right balance between protecting a candidate's confidentiality and sharing enough info with CUL to allow for informed decision-making can be challenging:

"Good and honest communication among search committee members [worked well]"

"Even when an academic hire was happening in my own department, the committee was so closed mouthed that I didn't know what was going on. Committee members perceive themselves as extremely powerful and they are right. If you don't make it onto the selection committee, what you think doesn't matter."

"I would like to have an internal web or wiki page that lists all current academic searches, their current status (applications open/closed, applications being reviewed,

phone/skype interviews being conducted, etc.), has links to the cover letters and resumes of all candidates invited for an in-person interview, and a link to the feedback survey for each. This is done at an institution I previously worked at and made for a more efficient and transparent system."

"When positions are not filled, I think there should be some way of notifying staff … Maybe a summary page of all positions would be useful: for each position, indicate just the basics of its
status, like 'The deadline has passed and we are reviewing applications' or 'Candidates have been contacted and we are arranging campus visits' … The page could be a password-protected page on Confluence, and each position summary might be up until, say, two or three months after the committee has completed its work (whether the search was successful or not). I also think that the policy of waiting to announce someone's hiring until the day they arrive at CUL is annoying. It means we don't know anything, even when some others do. If it's announced to the hiree's future colleagues, then it might as well be announced to everyone. It would be nice to see an announcement to all (or maybe one announcement per week, on Fridays?) when people have accepted a position and papers have been signed. That could be combined with the announcement of posting new positions, for instance."

"If we aren't directly involved in a search, we tend to only hear about searches when a candidate is scheduled to visit, during the visit, when the feedback announcement is made or when a hiring announcement is made. I suppose legally these are really the only points of contact that we should have, but it does leave me feeling really disconnected about what the search committee is looking for, and who the search committee thinks the best candidates are."

"It would be nice if application materials were available by default. When I only see the presentation and materials aren't offered, I think my feedback has to be taken with a grain of salt and it's less valuable than if I had easy access to these things."

Recruitment

Some staff mentioned the importance of casting a wider net in advertising positions in order to attract a larger pool of qualified applicants.

"While most of our candidate pools come from ALA and ARL advertising, we can likely do better in some of our advertising venues (more social media) - and therefore advertising budgets could increase/decrease depending upon the source."

"We have had some recent non-academic hires where the hiring supervisor had great ideas and advertising venue plans that have resulted in better applicant pools - we need to learn from them."

"One piece of info that would have been useful to have up front is that ALA job list ads run for one month. Knowing that ahead of time, I would have made more of an effort from the start to research alternative advertising outlets."

Many survey respondents felt that we could be doing more to increase diversity in the CUL workforce.

"There was only lip service to diversity: a couple of lines in the position description, but no real attempts in targeting places to advertise or o do some real recruiting."

"NOTE: some people won't like new diversity initiatives; after orchestra blind auditions, surveys on satisfaction and perceptions of quality went down until women made up 22-23% of group). Principles will lose to processes. There will be pushback but decide on what you value"

"The high quality of our academic staff is proof of...success, although lack of diversity is an ongoing concern."

"[S]omehow a lot of very well intentioned people keep churning out white finalists (although this is not restricted to academic hiring, it is an across the board outcome at CUL)."

Survey respondents expressed strong concern that we are unable to recruit top-level candidates due to non-competitive salaries.

"I think the process has been very frustrating as of late due to a lack of competitive salary offers."

"SC Chair (or hiring manager) knowing the compensation range before beginning the process, so as to allow vetting of salary range before invite for on campus interviews"

"Knowing the salary range and vetting to candidates before inviting to campus."

Takeaways

- Search committees should be representative of those who are stakeholders in the position being recruited for
- At least some members of a search committee (particularly the chair) should be experienced in conducting academic searches
- Ideally, search committees should include between three and five members - with four being cited as the optimal number - because it is too difficult to coordinate meetings for a larger group of people. Scheduling difficulties can contribute to overly lengthy searches

- Training (whether voluntary or mandatory) should be made available to people who serve on search committees. Search committee members must be familiar with applicable laws, guidelines, policies, and procedures. Search committee members should be made aware of the issue of unconscious bias and know how to counter it.

- Search committees should conduct their business in as timely a manner as possible. Searches that drag on too long are detrimental to CUL because a position remains unfilled; lengthy searches are also demoralizing to candidates we are trying to recruit and can result in a candidate accepting another position.

- Candidates, whether internal or external, must be treated equitably. It is recommended that search committees use an evaluation rubric to ensure that each candidate is assessed against the same set of criteria. Consistent questions for both phone and in-person interviews will also facilitate equitable evaluation. The evaluation criteria, based on the position requirements and expectations, should be established at the outset of the search.

- Search committees should keep both CUL staff and candidates apprised of the status of a search in which they are involved.

- Establish a centralized, password-protected clearinghouse for CUL academic searches, where candidates' application materials are readily available to interested parties, and the status of searches can be readily ascertained.

- When scheduling on-campus interviews, the search committee should provide adequate opportunities for interactions between a candidate and interested CUL staff. This may entail an open meeting apart from the candidate's presentation Q&A.

- Redouble efforts to avoid overlapping on-campus interviews. A centralized clearinghouse of information about ongoing searches could aid in this effort.

- Hiring managers should take advantage of the knowledge and experience of search committee members by soliciting feedback from them about the job description and choice of posting venues, prior to posting the position. Job descriptions should be well-defined and realistic, with job responsibilities and expectations clearly spelled out.

- Posting positions to a variety of job boards/lists/sites, as well as active recruitment by CUL staff at local and national conferences and meetings, will help attract better and more diverse candidates.

- More transparency and earlier communication regarding candidates' salary requirements would prevent misunderstanding and save time and effort of everyone involved in the search.

Sample Search Wiki Space

The task force recommendation of having a wiki space (modeled after the E-resources Trials wiki) would include: search timeline, and templates for job postings, communications with candidates, phone interview scripts, and survey template for candidate feedback.

- [Sample hiring wiki space](#)

Readings and Additional Resources

Cornell

- University Policy for filing vacancies (Excluding Bargaining Unit Staff) 6.6.1 - Cornell University is committed to selection procedures that are fair, consistent, and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, before initiating searches to fill vacancies, units must utilize a strategy that takes into account the values of equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, a diverse and inclusive workforce, and internal mobility.
- Office of Faculty Development and Diversity: Recruitment resources for departments ("based on research and on institutional data; they highlight best practices in academic recruitment")
- Cornell's Toward New Destinations: Cornell colleges and units use a framework, called Toward New Destinations, to organize their diversity initiatives and programming. Annually, each Cornell College and administrative unit implements three diversity initiatives aligned with Cornell's vision for "Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Minds." These college and unit level initiatives address core principles and goals for composition, engagement, inclusion, achievement that are managed at the college or unit level but reported on and tracked centrally by the university.
- Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble (CITE): *Effective Search Practices I: It Depends on the Lens* (session handout). The *Candidate Short List* section highlights trainings available from the Cornell Interactive Theatre Ensemble, and includes *Pool Development*, encouraging proactive recruitment strategies beyond individual searches. *Evaluating the Candidate Pool* leads with an acknowledgment of evaluation biases in search contexts, encourages use of predefined search criteria, as well as sub-ranking according to criteria.
- Institutional data sources referenced can be accessed through the Diversity Dashboard and University Factbook. Most recent compositional demographics for the seven constituent groups can be viewed in the Diversity Dashboard, while the more granular figures for librarians can be identified through the Factbook:

Fall 2016	Undergraduate	Graduate and professional	Faculty	New Staff	Staff -all	Postdocs and academic professionals -all	Librarians
URM	21.5%	9.2%	8.1%	13.9%	7.3%	6.3%	5.5%
OM	20.8%	9.1%	8.8%	7.2%	5%	9.9%	6.4%
Intnl	10.1%	40.3%	26.4%	1.3%	.6%	9.7%	1.8%
White	39.5%	36.5%	59.2%	76.4%	86.8%	74%	86.4%
Male	48.1%	56%	67.9%	45.5%	57.8%	51.3%	41%
Female	51.9%	44%	32.1%	54.5%	42.2%	48.7%	69%

Source: Diversity Dashboard and University Factbook, Academic Professional Details, Library

Academic professionals – Library	Fall 2001	% total	Fall 2016	% total	% change
URM	4	3.2%	6	5.5%	2.3%
OM	5	4.0%	7	6.4%	2.4%
Intl	4	3.2%	2	1.8%	-1.4%
White	113	89.7%	95	86.4%	-3.3%
Total	**126**		**110**		**-12.7%**
Male	50	39.7%	41	37.3%	-2.4%
Female	76	60.3%	69	62.7%	2.4%

Source: University Factbook, Academic Professional Details, Library

Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

- *What ARL Members are Doing to Advance Diversity, Inclusion, and Equality:* includes submissions from 19 member libraries on programs and initiatives
- Membership statistics of ARL libraries. Demographic statistics on academic and public libraries from American Library Association (ALA) show similar race, age, and gender percentages to the ARL statistics.
- Research Library Issues, no. 286 (2015): Special Issue on Diversity. https://doi.org/10.29242/rli.286
- Diversity recruitment programs
  - Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce (IRDW): a program to recruit MLIS students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups into careers in research libraries and archives. Includes $10K stipend, leadership/career development training, ARL member library site visit, and mentoring.
  - Career Enhancement Program (CEP): now-defunct fellowship program that matches MLIS students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups with ARL host institutions in order to provide practical experience in research libraries.
  - Leadership & Career Development Program (LCDP): 18-month program that prepares mid-career librarians from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups for leadership roles in ARL libraries. LCDP includes three institutes, career-coaching match with ARL director/senior staff, training in developing a research project, and ongoing discussions and webinars.
  - ARL/MLS Diversity & Inclusion Initiative (DII): recruits students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to participate in a multiyear program that includes a stipend, internship in ARL partner library, mentoring, and

career placement assistance in order to expand diversity in academic music and performing arts libraries.

- ARL/SAA Mosaic Program: Fellowship program that promotes diversification of archives and special collections workforce

- Diversity and Inclusion Committee initiative
  - Membership and charge
  - November 2015 Committee report
  - April 2016 meeting agenda

Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)

- Guidelines for Recruiting Academic Librarians (2017)
- Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries (2012).
- SPEC Kit 356: Diversity and Inclusion (September 2017). https://doi.org/10.29242/spec.356
- ACRL Diversity Alliance: network of libraries committed to increasing the "hiring pipeline of qualified, talented individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups" through the creation and support of local residency programs.

Peer Libraries, Articles & Books

- Chronicle of Higher Education (2017). Creating a Diverse Faculty.
- Gaucher, D., Friesen, J. and Kay, A.C. (2011). Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(1), 109-128. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022530
  - Gender Decoder Tool for Job Ads
- Grand Valley State University Library informational page on working there for job candidates.
- MIT Libraries Committee for the Promotion of Diversity & Inclusion LibGuide
- Valian, V. (1998). Why so slow? The advancement of women. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
  - Valian's suggested hiring guidelines are featured in Hunter College Recruitment and Retention.