

Diversity Checklist for University Departments

Markus Brauer, Department of Psychology and Wisconsin School of Business
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Note: The criteria listed below permit both comparisons within departments (current data vs. data from several years ago) and comparisons between departments.

Demographic composition of the Department:

- What percentage of faculty, grad students, postdocs, and staff identify as being from a marginalized group (e.g., faculty of color, women, other historically underrepresented groups)?
- What percentage of Departmental leadership (e.g., chair, vice chairs, area group chairs) identify as being from a marginalized group?
- What percentage of individuals who were offered a faculty position or graduate admission in the Department in the previous year belong to a marginalized group?
- What percentage of these individuals ended up coming (acceptance rate)?
- What is the number and percentage of faculty and graduate students from marginalized groups who joined the Department in the previous year?
- What is the number and percentage of faculty and graduate students from marginalized groups who left the Department in the previous year?

Departmental structure:

- Does the Department have a Climate and Diversity Committee? If yes, how frequently does the Committee meet? How many \$ does the committee have at its disposal for diversity initiatives? Does the Committee Chair report regularly to the Chair or the faculty meeting? Does the Committee regularly examine departmental policies to address systemic forms of injustice? Does service on the Committee count toward departmental service considered in tenure review?
- Does the Department have a Vice Chair for Diversity and Inclusion? If yes, is the Vice Chair given enough resources (time and money) to effectively do their job? Does the Vice Chair receive departmental credit for serving in this role (e.g., teaching remission)?
- Does the Department have a diversity tab on its webpage? If yes, how extensive/detailed is this tab? For example, does it contain an explicit commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by the departmental leadership (a “diversity statement”)? A diversity, equity, and inclusion action plan? Relevant resources (e.g., ways to get involved, ideas for anti-racist behaviors, such as the “Anti-Racism Resources Page for the Biomedical Research Training

Community”¹)? A description of past and future diversity activities and the outcomes/results of past initiatives? A link to the page where the system for reporting grievances is described?

- Does the Department have a system for reporting grievances related to discrimination/exclusion, hostile/intimidating behavior, and sexual assault/harassment?
- To what extent is the Department’s physical space accessible to individuals with different physical ability (e.g., is the whole department ADA approved)?
- Does the Department have gender-neutral bathrooms? If not, are there signs telling people where to find the closest gender-neutral bathrooms?
- Does the Department give out awards for faculty and graduate students who have been instrumental in helping the Department achieve its diversity and inclusion goals?
- Does the Department monitor the number of students from marginalized groups who participate in departmental research labs, both during the academic year and as summer interns?
- Is there a person in the Department whose explicit task it is to monitor the legal obligations regarding equality and non-discrimination?

Diversity initiatives:

- How many diversity events did the Department host in the previous year, e.g., diversity townhall, diversity café, guest speaker on a topic related to diversity, UW-Madison’s *Real Talk for Real Change Sessions*
- How many diversity training workshops did the Department hold in the previous year, e.g., Title IX workshops, UW-Madison’s *Anti-Racist Capacity Building for Faculty and Staff*? What percentage of faculty and grad students attended these workshops?
- How many and what kind of activities has the Department organized that were designed to allow members to get to know each other in an informal setting or to promote team building?
- To what extent is the Department’s physical space designed in a way so that individuals from all groups feel welcome and included (e.g., no pictures of old White men on the walls, no geeky stuff that appeals primarily to men, artwork on the walls by artists from marginalized groups, highlighting of contributions by scientists of color, a big sign in the entrance hall saying that people from all backgrounds are welcome here, etc.)?
- How many and what type of activities has the Department organized that were specifically designed to reduce the isolation of and promote the social integration of faculty and graduate students from marginalized groups?
- Does the Department engage in fundraising activities to obtain funds for faculty and graduate students from marginalized groups (e.g., a fundraising event for the “Graduate Students of Color Fund”)?
- Does the Department engage in fundraising activities to obtain funds for campus groups and community organizations that advance social justice causes or provide services to members of marginalized groups? [Note that this can be a yearly team-building event]
- Is there a mechanism in place to monitor whether there is an adequate representation of scholars from marginalized groups among guest speakers in the Department?

¹ https://www.diversityprogramconsortium.org/pages/anti-racism_resources

Recruitment of faculty:

- How many and what type of outreach initiatives has the Department organized to allow graduate students from marginalized groups from other universities to get to know the Department (e.g., pre-doctoral research internships, collaborative projects with colleagues from other universities and their graduate students, number of postdoc grants written with and for graduate students from marginalized groups from other universities)?
- How many and what type of outreach initiatives has the Department organized after a faculty position is announced (e.g., emails sent to colleagues asking them to encourage their grad students and postdocs to apply, emails sent to Department Chairs with a large percentage of graduate students of color, postings on professional associations, mining networks)?
- How are job ads written? Is it made clear that the university is an equal-opportunity employer and that candidates from marginalized groups are particularly encouraged to apply? Did the job ad mention scientific areas in which applicants from marginalized groups tend to be well-represented?
- Did members of the hiring committee receive special anti-bias training informing them of current biases that may affect their choices during the hiring and interview process (e.g., UW-Madison's *Searching for Excellence & Diversity*® workshops)?
- Are the selection criteria and the required qualifications clearly specified before the first candidate is interviewed (preferably before the job ad is published)?
- Does the hiring committee use a holistic evaluation process rather than privileging one or two specific qualifications (e.g., focusing mainly on number and impact of publications)?
- Are job applicants asked to provide a diversity statement in which they explain how they will contribute to the Department's diversity mission and is this statement taken into account during the selection process?
- Does the department use flexible funds to make job offers for candidates from marginalized groups more attractive (e.g., increase start-up funds, create buyout opportunities)?
- Are unsuccessful candidates informed within a reasonable amount of time and are explanations for rejection provided to anyone who requests them?

Recruitment of graduate students:

- Does the Department have an underrepresented minority recruitment plan in which recruitment and outreach activities are described?
- How many and what type of outreach initiatives has the Department organized to allow undergraduate students from marginalized groups from other universities to get to know the Department (e.g., Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP), Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU), recruitment weekend, events that help applicants from disadvantaged social backgrounds prepare their application to grad school, brochures/posters advertising the Department's doctoral program that are sent to minority serving institutions/HBCUs)?
- Does the Department have off-campus partnerships and alumni/faculty outreach practices to identify talented applicants from marginalized groups?
- Does the Department use a faculty admission committee to make admission decisions (rather than letting individual faculty make the decision individually without coordinating with others)?

- Does the graduate program tab of the Department's website state that the Department is interested in recruiting highly qualified students, especially students from traditionally underrepresented populations, and does it link to the diversity tab of the Department's website?
- Does the Department use a holistic admission process that puts little weight on criteria known to disadvantage applicants of color and applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds (such as GRE scores)?
- Does the Department use flexible funds to increase the number of fellowships (including AOF fellowships) and/or the amount of these fellowships for students from marginalized groups?
- Does the Department provide at least a 4-year written funding guarantee along with admission to all admitted applicants?
- Prior to prospective students' visits, are the students asked whether they would like to meet with individuals or organizations that share any of their identities?
- Are issues of diversity, equity and inclusion explicitly discussed during the visit of prospective students (e.g., a short presentation by the Chair, a meeting with the Chair of the Climate and Diversity Committee, diversity grad student lunch)?

Ensuring the success of faculty from marginalized groups:

- Is there sufficient communication with faculty candidates after an offer is made (e.g., do Departments use the *Building Your Vision at UW-Madison* tool)?
- Is there appropriate onboarding and integration of new faculty in the weeks before and after the first day of employment?
- Are new faculty provided with networking opportunities, including networking among faculty at a similar career level and with senior faculty and administrative officials at the institution, as well as opportunities to establish relationships in the new faculty's scientific community?
- Are individual research development plans, career development plans, and professional development plans proposed to all new faculty? If yes, are they adequate?
- Are there special events/training sessions for faculty from marginalized groups (e.g., UW-Madison's *Cultural Resilience and Navigational Skills*)
- Are efforts made to connect faculty from marginalized groups to campus and community affiliation groups so they can meet and get to know other members of their identity group?
- Do assistant professors receive a yearly progress report that gives concrete advice on how to increase their scientific impact and achieve tenure?
- Do assistant professors have a mentoring committee? If yes, how often do they meet/interact with the members of their mentoring committee?
- Can assistant professors obtain informal help with the writing of grants and publications?
- Do assistant professors have access to courses for skills development, including workshops/courses/seminars around topics such as grant writing, manuscript preparation, enhancing laboratory management, budgeting, academic advancement, and balancing teaching, research, and service?
- Are there small peer/near-peer group mentoring activities for each new faculty hire?

- Do assistant professors have “sponsors”?²
- Does the Department have procedures that eliminate the “diversity tax,” i.e., the fact that faculty from marginalized groups are asked to serve on numerous committees and often are the go-to person/mentor for undergraduate students from marginalized groups?
- Does the Department have initiatives aimed at reducing the professional and social isolation of faculty from marginalized groups (e.g., networking events, establishing connections to campus and community affiliation groups)?
- Does the Department help young faculty from marginalized groups establish authority in the classroom (e.g., UW-Madison’s *First Class* initiative, where a high status faculty member introduces a new faculty to their class, establishing a tone of respect and asserting the new faculty member’s stature and accomplishments)?
- Does the Department monitor potential pay gaps between faculty belonging to different groups? Do the salary adjustments take into account the fact that it is more difficult for faculty from marginalized groups (including women) to obtain outside offers?
- In their yearly reports (e.g., Scholarly Activities Report), are faculty asked to describe their professional activities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g., co-organization of diversity events, workshops attended) and are these activities considered in the evaluation (including in tenure reviews)?
- Does the tenure review process take into account that faculty from marginalized groups tend to be discriminated against in the peer review process, to be cited less often by their peers, to do more committee work, spend more time with students from marginalized groups who seek them out for support, and have to work harder to be perceived as competent by the students in their courses?

Ensuring the success of graduate students from marginalized groups:

- Does the Department use flexible funds to increase summer funding for graduate students, especially graduate students from marginalized groups?
- Does the Department have a low student-to-advisor ratio (indicating a more personalized mentoring experience), and does it not have a heavy concentration of graduate students among a few advisors?
- Is it required for advisors to attend mentor training (such as the workshops provided by UW-Madison’s *Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experience in Research*, CIMER)?
- Does the Department provide feedback to students about their annual progress toward degree assessments and/or does it require annual committee meetings?
- Does the Department encourage (or require) students and advisors to have discussions about the lab climate and the student’s experience in graduate school at least once per year?
- Are graduate students encouraged/required to establish an Individual Development Plan (IDP)? If yes, are they encouraged/required to discuss it with their mentor?

² Here is NIH’s definition: “Sponsorship refers to a person in a senior position within the institution who serves as an advocate to assist the assistant professor with networking, career opportunities, and strategic identification of individualized professional milestones that ensure success. A sponsor provides an in-depth commitment and possesses the power and influence to substantively support the faculty member. The sponsor’s role extends beyond that of a mentor with respect to advocacy, active tracking, and proactive outreach to those who can impact the career success of the faculty member, and includes the gravitas that may not necessarily be characteristic of a mentor.”

- Does the Department have above AAU peer PhD/MFA/DMA completion rates, and is the “time to degree” below AAU peers?
- Are there differences in degree statistics (e.g., graduation rate, time to degree) between students who do and students who do not belong to marginalized groups?
- Does the Department fully fund all enrolled graduate students for at least the first four years and are the graduate assistant (TA/PA/RA) appointments at least 50%?
- Are graduate students encouraged to take part in professional development activities? Does the Graduate Coordinator or the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies send them information about these activities?
- Are efforts made to connect graduate students from marginalized groups to campus and community affiliation groups so they can meet and get to know other members of their identity group?
- Are graduate students given clear guidance about who they can report concerns to if they have a problem with their advisor, their committee, a faculty member, or another graduate student?

Institutional climate:

- Does the Department conduct a climate survey? If yes, how frequently? What is the participation rate? Who are the respondents (faculty only, or grad students and staff as well)?
- Does the climate survey measure respondents’ general perception of the climate? Note that potential comparisons are: absolute (e.g., above the scale midpoint?), difference between individuals who do and who do not belong to marginalized groups, improvement over previous years [same for the next bullet points]
- Does the climate survey contain items about sense of belonging, mental health, and intentions to leave?
- Are experiences of discrimination/exclusion measured in the climate survey? If yes, does the survey assess the frequency of these experiences? Are respondents asked to estimate the percentage of peers/faculty who engage in these behaviors at least occasionally?
- Does the climate survey measure personal values related to diversity and support for the Department’s pro-diversity initiatives?
- Does the climate survey identify potential groups and potential behaviors/practices that should be targeted in future initiatives/policies?
- Does the Department conduct focus groups or semi-structured interviews with members of marginalized groups to identify ways to improve the Department’s institutional climate? If yes, how frequently? Who are the participants in these focus groups/interviews (faculty only, or grad students and staff as well)?
- Has the Department been the subject of any high-profile incidents of bias, discrimination, or harassment in recent years? If yes, are the perpetrators of these incidents still in the Department? How were these incidents resolved?
- Is there a disciplinary procedure in place to penalize individuals who perpetrate bias, discrimination, or harassment in the Department? Is this procedure made clear to members of the Department?

Teaching:

- Does the Department offer training on inclusive teaching practices, i.e., practices that have been shown to increase the sense of belonging of students from marginalized groups and to reduce the achievement gap?
- Do syllabi contain a diversity statement?
- Do instructors (faculty and teaching assistants) mention the university's commitment to diversity and inclusion, and do they state their expectations for inclusive, respectful behavior and their zero tolerance for offensive, disrespectful comments?
- Do instructors make sure that students in undergraduate and graduate courses get to know each other and have the opportunity to exchange thoughts related to the course material?
- Are project and discussion groups formed randomly and are group members made mutually dependent on each other, to reduce competition and to promote the integration of students from marginalized groups?
- Do instructors make a special effort to highlight the contributions of scientists of color, female scientists, and other scientists from marginalized backgrounds?
- Do instructors make a special effort to highlight how their course material is related to the topics of diversity and inclusion? If such a connection cannot be made, do instructors make a point to provide diverse examples in lecture, assignments, and exams (e.g., writing multiple choice questions using names representing diverse groups)?
- Are instructors asked to explicitly teach elements of the "hidden curriculum" (i.e., norms for behavior in higher education more likely to be known by higher privilege and continuing generation students)?
- Do instructors use other techniques that have been shown to reduce the achievement gap (e.g., talking about the "utility value" of the material to be learned, promoting a "growth mindset" in students by portraying intelligence as malleable, explaining success/failure experiences in the class in terms of effort rather than stable abilities)?
- Do the course evaluations contain at least one question about the extent to which the classroom climate was inclusive?

Scientific productivity:

- How scientifically productive are faculty from marginalized groups in terms of publications (e.g., number, impact, altmetrics, publication type, author role, co-authors, innovation)?
Note that potential comparisons are: improvement over previous years, difference between faculty who do and who do not belong to marginalized groups, comparison to other Departments [same for the next bullet points]
- How scientifically productive are faculty from marginalized groups in terms of grants (e.g., number, total amount, M-I, role, granting agency, award type, number of R01s, months to first R01)?
- How scientifically productive are faculty from marginalized groups in terms of presentations (e.g., number, type of conference, keynote, invited or not, talks at other universities)?
- How do faculty from marginalized groups score on other indicators related to career progress (e.g., titles, promotions, tenure, awards)?