

# Davidson College Student Equity Advisers FAQs

*Updated 11/12 by Brian Parker (Student Equity Advisers, Acting Chair)*

## **Who are the Student Equity Advisers, and what is the charge of the students meeting with finalists for faculty positions?**

The charge of the Student Equity Advisers is to help faculty hiring committees identify candidates whose work, research, and teaching experiences are in line with the college's stated goals of inclusive pedagogy and diversity. Members go through an application process through to join the group, and are selected based on their demonstrated interest in institutional and academic diversity at Davidson. All members undergo an annual training session on best practices in hiring with Ann Todd in Human Resources, and they participate in professional development sessions and meetings throughout the year.

## **Who is the "Student Liaison," and what is their role?**

The Student Liaison acts as point-person between the 3-4 students assigned to each search and a given search committee. The Student Liaison serves as a conduit for information, including the specific requirements of each position, details about candidates' visits (CVs, Itineraries), and any particular desires or concerns of the department. In the past, some search committees have chosen to give Student Liaisons a role beyond evaluation of finalists, including help assessing the larger pool of candidates.

A crucial component of the Student Liaison's role is to coordinate scheduling between the department and other members. The same 3-4 students need to meet with each candidate in order to ensure the fairness and consistency of our feedback. The Student Liaison will advocate for consistent times when 3-4 more members are available to meet with candidates.

## **What is the protocol or agenda for the meeting with a candidate who is visiting on campus?**

Our meetings with candidates are loosely structured, and we ask questions in order to evaluate candidates' strengths in five areas (below). These five metrics can be adjusted based on the needs of the department or the requirements of the position. We also give candidates the opportunity to ask us questions. Our goal with candidates is to foster a relaxed, conversational atmosphere that helps them understand concerns, questions, and experiences of students from underrepresented groups at Davidson.

Typical areas of feedback:

- Strategies for fostering inclusive classroom environments
- Experience working with people of diverse backgrounds in their communities and institutions
- Ability to perceive problems underrepresented or marginalized groups may face
- Level of engagement with diverse or underrepresented populations in their research and teaching
- Potential to engage students in dialogue about sensitive diversity and minority issues

## **What is the format of the report? Is it confidential to the members of the committee only, or public?**

The 3-4 members provide feedback in a letter. Some department chairs have also followed up with students in person. The written letter is confidential, shared with the department (via the Equity Advisor), the Dean of Faculty, and Ann Todd.

## DAVIDSON COLLEGE EQUITY ADVISER PROGRAM

Group of faculty (volunteers and recruits) trained in hiring best practices that serve on tenure-track and academic administrative searches outside their department to assist search committees in hiring the best person for the job.

- **TRAINING:** Trained annually by HR, (along with seasoned Equity Advisers) on hiring research and best practices in academic searches, particularly with regard to creating an unbiased and inclusive hiring process. Group also meets throughout the year for support and to attend other training opportunities when offered.
- **APPOINTMENT:** Appointed to a search outside own discipline as a non-voting member. Often put in a related field (math professor serving on physics search, Spanish professor serving on French search). But have had equal success with art professor serving on psychology search.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Begin working with the chair before the search starts. Attend all of the committee meetings and review all of the applications but not expected to do the recruitment legwork. Serve as the liaison to the Student Equity Adviser.
- **TASKS:** Review job description, advise on advertising locations, recommend ideal search committee make-up, coordinate any necessary training, advocate for aggressive recruitment, identify bias in process.

### The Equity Advisers are NOT:

- Not a voting member—unless the committee wants them to be a voting member.
- Not specifically to provide a “diverse” person onto a search committee. This person brings knowledge, not “representation”.
- Not an attempt to MAKE anyone hire a different person than they **need** for the department.
- Not the “lone voice for diversity” on the search committee.
- Not someone who will do the work for the search committee. Will be a part of the committee and encouraging—but the bulk of the work will still rest with the rest of the committee

### OUR BEST PRACTICES IN PROGRAM ROLL OUT

- **Understand the problem**—what are you really trying to fix
- **Know the rules**—handbook, culture, tradition
- **Identify the influencers**—sell in advance, get pre-critique
- **Roll out to leaders**—understand what power “earns”
- **Pilot**—be willing to learn and prepared to adjust
- **Clarify expectations**—mandates vs. options, who owns
- **Training**—build in from the beginning
- **Be agile**—Be unafraid to constantly adjust and expand

## BEST PRACTICES IN EQUITABLE SEARCHES

- **Job Description and Posting**
  - Avoid “liberal arts background”, archaic language, religion
  - Clearly determine criteria (must have and prefer to have)
  - Include “Diversity Capital” as a criteria and request evidence in materials
  
- **Recruiting (widening the net)**
  - Advertise beyond the traditional
  - Actively recruit (conferences, colleagues, direct asks)
  
- **Search Committee**
  - Diversity
  - Non-departmental memberships
  
- **Application review**
  - Avoid firm numbers and rating scales
  - Avoid assumptions and bias (school, international applicants, higher standards)
  - Create review process specifically designed toward fairness
  
- **Interview techniques**
  - Behavior-based questions
  - Consistent line of questions and evaluation criteria
  - Include aspects of interview that “sell” not just “buy”
  - Panel interviews
  - Fight consideration of hire as a “marriage”
  - Understand what can and cannot ask in interview

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# Davidson College Faculty Searches Hiring Process

## 1. Search Committee

	<b>Search Chair</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Consults with HR on Equity Adviser	Assigned to search	Provides trained equity advisers	<b>Reviews</b>
2	Determine committee membership	Consult on committee membership		<b>Approve</b>
3	Determine search criteria	Advise as necessary		
4	Arranges any necessary training	Provide training for committee	Provide training for committee	
5		Liaison with student equity adviser	Assigns student equity adviser	

## 2. Promoting the Position

	<b>Search Chair/Committee</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Draft outreach plan *	Advise on locations, networking best practices		<b>Approves</b>
2	Draft ad	Advise on language	Can provide samples	<b>Approves</b>
3	Sends advertising to listservs, professional associations etc.	Liaison with student if can assist in research	Sends to ad agency (major publications)	<b>Approves Costs</b>
4	Draft job posting (jobs@Davidson)	Advise on draft job posting, including diversity language	Posts on jobs@; provides system access	
5	Push position to grad programs, strong applicants, colleagues	Advise on best networking options, provide sample letters/emails		

## 3. Reviewing applications

	<b>Search Committee</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Review applications	Advise or review procedures, review applications		
2	Narrow the pool	Advise as necessary		
3	Chair sends pool to HR with national pool data if available	Advise in providing field data for comparison	Provides EEO data to Dean	<b>Approves</b>
4	Committee determines search status (close search or continue applications)		HR can close search when requested	
5	Committee may send first wave of rejection letters		HR can pull names and emails	

\*An outreach plan describes how the search will generate a diverse applicant pool. The plan should identify any resources the search committee needs to implement the plan including researching assistance, purchasing databases etc.

#### 4. Interviewing candidates

	<b>Search Committee</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Draft questions	Review questions, may solicit questions from student		
3	Narrow to finalists	Advise as necessary		
4	<b>Chair sends finalists</b> to HR		Provides data to Dean	<b>Approves</b>
5	Committee determines search status (close search or continue applications)		HR can close search when requested	

#### 5. Finalists

	<b>Search Committee</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Organize campus visit	Arrange for student group time; advise on campus visit	Provide HR time or alternative	
	Interview candidate	Participate in candidate interview	Available for candidate meeting	Interview
2	Solicit feedback from participants	Advise on means of collecting feedback, secure feedback from students		Provide Feedback
3	Committee makes selection			
4	Chair notifies HR of selection		HR closes search	<b>Approve</b>

#### 6. Offer and Acceptance

	<b>Search Committee</b>	<b>Equity Adviser</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>Dean</b>
1	Makes offer contingent on background check		HR runs background check	Draft offer
2	Chair notifies HR if possible visa needs		HR begins immigration process (if necessary)	
3	Send remaining rejection letters, personally call finalists		HR can assist as necessary	
4	Provide search process feedback to HR/Dean	Provides search process feedback to HR/Dean	Review process	Review