

I. OVERVIEW

The first meeting of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) Anti-Racism Committee (ARC), Law and Hiring Subcommittee, was held on Friday, November 6, 2020 online from 1:00–2:30 p.m.

A. ATTENDING

Shelly Booker, director of talent acquisition; James Connolly, assistant professor, adjunct; Leslie Darling, executive vice president, general counsel, and corporate secretary; Isabel Garcia-Gonzales, associate director, faculty employment services; Matt Morris, assistant professor, adjunct; Jefferson Pinder, director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for academic affairs (co-chair); Molly Scranton, associate director of faculty affairs; Roberto Sifuentes, professor; Amy Vogel, associate professor; Jeff Ward, special assistant for executive communications (notetaker); Timeka Young, manager of employee relations and training (co-chair)

B. VISITING

Shiben Banerji, assistant professor

C. AGENDA

- Introductions
- Presentations

II. INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSION

After introductions, subcommittee members had a brief initial discussion about their work, and made the following observations:

- While there are certain nondiscrimination requirements that must be met in terms of how searches are conducted, members were eager to fine vehicles and language to better communicate values and aspirations for diverse hiring throughout the institution.
- Their investigation wanted to consider all staff and faculty recruitment and hiring practices, including part-time faculty hiring, which does not have a uniform process throughout the institution, and searches that use a search firm.
- Retention is also essential to the hiring process.
- Being mindful of intersectionality, recruitment should be attentive to all kinds of diversity.

III. PRESENTATIONS

The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to presentations from members of the subcommittee who shared their expertise on aspects of the hiring process at the School:

A. FULL-TIME FACULTY HIRING

Scranton presented on the full-time faculty search process, a roughly year long-long process (from placing search announcements in the summer, candidates applying by December of January, search committees evaluating candidates and making recommendation to the dean of faculty, to the dean negotiating a hire with selected candidate(s) by April) that is outlines in the Faculty Handbook. Building a diverse pool through networking (e.g., Black academics' organizations; faculty reaching out to their professional networks) and placing job postings in diverse academic publications (e.g., tribal colleges journals) as well as more general (e.g., Chronicle of Higher Education) and specific (e.g., textile art publications) is an essential element of diverse recruitment. Care is also taken that job postings are written to encourage diversity and avoid exclusionary language.

During conversation after the presentation, the following salient comments were made:

- A review of recent hiring data may be helpful in gauging recent progress and identify room for growth.
- Implicit bias training for faculty who sit on search committees would help avoid affinity biases which may reinforce racialized prejudice in ways that are not overt, e.g., favoring candidate from a particular educational background. Such awareness would ideally lessen burden on faculty of color, who are burdened with being the custodians of this awareness.
- The diverse hiring techniques used for full-time faculty searches could be help shape a part-time faculty search process.

B. STAFF HIRING

Booker then presented on the efforts of the Department of Human Resources (HR) to attract diverse job candidates when recruiting for staff. She outlined their seven-year effort to advertise the Art Institute as an "employer of choice," i.e., an place where many people work and is looking to hire diverse candidates, more broadly. That process has included outreach to a wide spectrum of organizations and institutions, including diverse professionals' groups and conferences, career fairs at historically Black colleges and universities and churches, and a presence in community activities. These events have continued virtually during social distancing, as does HR's robust presence on LinkedIn, quarterly email newsletter, and online videos. The talent and acquisition team also supports hiring managers

by encouraging diverse hiring in job descriptions and appropriate level of minimum qualifications to avoid bias; additionally, they oversee new employee orientation.

C. PROTECTED STATUS

Darling then gave a brief presentation on the legal requirements in hiring, making sure to emphasize the many avenues still open to the institution when working toward diverse hiring. While there are federal, state, and local laws (e.g., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Chicago Human Rights Ordinance) that prohibit the institution from making employment decisions (e.g., hiring, compensation) based on protected status (e.g., race, age, disability), there are still many lawful steps the institution could take to encourage diverse hiring. Those include, having diverse search committees; requiring a diverse slate of candidates to proceed with a search; making early outreach efforts, even cultivating interested candidates before there is an open positions; having conversation with hiring departments and managers about institutional goals; and establishing aspirational goals or targets.

D. FACULTY RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS AND STARTEGIES

Finally, Banerji gave an overview of a list of diverse fellowship and hiring programs at peer institutions, liberal arts colleges, and academic consortiums that may provide a model for SAIC. These models found ways to recruit where diversity, gender, or academic interest were a factor in considering candidates. Models included: the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) post-graduate teaching fellowship, in which SAIC already participates and could be a model for similar programs in other consortia; the Rhode Island School of Design's recent cluster hire of scholars working on race; Haverford's post-doctoral fellowship, which is a pipeline for conversion to tenure-track positions; and programs at several schools which require hiring to be part of a comprehensive, departmental-level diversity strategic plan.