



Program Overview

Established in 2008, OSU's Search Advocate program enhances equity, validity, and inclusive excellence in university hiring. Search Advocates are OSU faculty, staff, and students who have been trained as content-neutral, external search and selection process advisors. Their preparation includes a 16-hour workshop series addressing current research about implicit bias, merit-based hiring and the changing legal landscape in hiring, inclusive employment principles, practical strategies for each stage of the search process, and effective ways to be an advocate on a search committee. As a quality assurance measure, advocates who wish to remain eligible beyond the first year must engage in relevant continuing education that is recorded and approved through the Search Advocate program.

Role of a Search Advocate

Each Search Advocate is a content-neutral external process consultant/advisor who advances inclusive excellence by asking questions to help committee members test their thinking, identifying and promoting practices that minimize barriers and advance diversity and social justice, and helping committees mitigate the impacts of cognitive and structural biases. As external committee members, advocates are able to explore assumptions, norms, and practices that an internal member might not question. The search advocate plays a vital role in position development, recruitment, screening, interviews, references, evaluation, and integration of the new faculty or staff member into the institution. In partnership with the search chair, search committee members, search administrator, and hiring official, the search advocate affirms OSU's commitment to inclusive excellence.

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