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Introduction

The following guide was compiled to address challenges within the hiring process for Student Affairs, to better address racial and other inequities that affect hiring, promotion and retention of staff from underrepresented backgrounds. The Student Affairs Division expects that members of its hiring committees represent the diversity found on MSU Denver’s campus. We hope this guide presents a fair and consistent process for future hiring.

Special Thanks

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Charge 1 – Diversity Statement to be included on all SA Postings

Metropolitan State University of Denver is a unique, access-oriented campus community that values diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are a designated Hispanic Serving Institution located in downtown Denver. Our student population consists of nearly 50% first-generation students and over 45% students of ethnic/racial minority backgrounds.

We create an equitable learning and working environment with individuals who consistently demonstrate commitment to equity and inclusion. We value the diverse identities and perspectives of our students, faculty, and staff and recognize that to achieve a just and equitable society, diversity must go beyond simple representation. It requires critical inquiry and dialogue and a commitment to action. We strive to provide a culture of belonging where all community members feel valued to achieve personal and professional success.

[About MSU Denver](#)

[Latino/a/x Faculty and Staff Association](#)

[African American Affairs Council](#)

Charge 2 – Potential sampling of qualifications

Based on the recommendations that HR provided that lean away from using many required or preferred qualifications, we developed a tool that we would like to see utilized to help determine a candidate’s commitment to equity and justice work. The columns are created based on the level of competency required for various roles and could be used to help hiring managers determine the skill-level needed based on the type of on-boarding and training they can provide. Competencies were based on the [ACPA and NASPA Professional Competency Areas for Student Affairs Educators handbook](#). The use of these competencies as required/preferred qualifications allows us to signal our [institutional values](#) and hold candidates accountable for meeting these standards once hired. We encourage supervisors to use these competencies as examples, and modify them to meet the needs of the specific position while maintaining a similar level of expectation.

	Interpersonal (Entry-level)	Intrapersonal (Supervisory or Mid-level)	Systemic/Community (Upper-level Administration)
Competency Level	<p>Competency Level 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to articulate a foundational understanding of social justice and equity within the context of higher education • Awareness of how one is affected by and participates in maintaining systems of oppression, privilege, and power • Advocates on issues of social justice, oppression, privilege, and power 	<p>Competency Level 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience designing programs and events that promote equity and justice • Experience facilitating dialogue about issues of equity and justice • Experience effectively addressing incidents of bias 	<p>Competency Level 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience assessing the effectiveness of institution/office in removing barriers to addressing issues of social justice and inclusion. • Experience creating strategic plans for the continued development of justice and equity centered programs and practices • Experience presenting or publishing on justice and equity topics beyond their institutions. • Demonstrated institutional effectiveness in addressing critical incidents of discrimination that impact their institution/office • Experience leading initiatives around social justice and equity
What to look for in an application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated values for equity and social justice • Can speak to their socialization and biases • Can identify specific issues in higher education/MSU Denver that need to be addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated values for equity and social justice • Demonstrated experience leading programming and addressing incidents of bias/discrimination • Demonstrated commitment to expanding knowledge relating to equity and social justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated experience impacting equity and social justice outcomes through policy and practice • Demonstrated experience assessing campus/office climate and using data to inform intervention • Demonstrated experience holding individuals and institutions accountable for equity and injustice
Examples to look for when assessing a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses belief in and commitment to MSU Denver’s mission and values around equity and social justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses belief in and commitment in MSU Denver’s mission and values around equity and social Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expresses belief in and commitment in MSU Denver’s mission and values around equity and social Justice • Demonstrated experience impacting equity and social justice outcomes

resume and cover letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to expand knowledge relating to equity and social justice • Expresses desire to work with MSU Denver demographics and why they are an institutional strength 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated experience impacting equity and social justice outcomes through programming or incident response 	<p>through strategic visioning and assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has shared knowledge in a professional or community setting on equity topics. (ex. presenting at a conference)
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Evaluation: As a Hiring Committee, we'd like for you to discuss the following questions-

- Which level of competency should be expected for the position you are hiring for?
- What competencies might you look for in that role? What might be some things to look for in a candidate's application that hint at them meeting these competencies?
- If a candidate meets most but not all competencies for their assigned level, what development opportunities might their office/supervisor realistically be able to provide them to ensure they are advancing in these areas?

Charge 3 - Develop a prompt and guidance around a potential supplemental question or required candidate diversity statement.

Include question(s) on all job applications that ask about **demonstrated** commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

Examples:

- *What does social justice mean to you? How do you incorporate this principle in your work?*
- *Articulate your experience in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion.*
- *When have you addressed injustice or inequity in your community?*
- *Explain a time when a student spoke to you about an equity barrier they were facing and how you helped them address the situation?*
- *When have you challenged a leader or policy that you felt was unjust? How did you address it?*
- *How have you maintained or supported a diverse workforce?*
- *Write about your experience of one of MSU Denver's core values: Community, Access, Diversity, Respect, Entrepreneurship*
- *What tools/techniques do you bring for promoting collaboration among underrepresented groups?*

Assessment (Points 1-3) (Exceptional, Good, Marginal, Poor)

(3) Demonstrates an understanding and acceptance of equity, inclusion and diversity concepts, and that they are broader than just race, ethnicity, and gender.

(2) Demonstrates self-awareness, in terms of understanding their own culture, identity, biases, prejudices, power, privilege and stereotypes.

(2) Demonstrates willingness to challenge and change institutional practices that present barriers to different groups

(2) Able to provide concrete examples and/or experiences in these areas

(1) Infuses equity, inclusion and diversity concepts in response to questions not directly prompting for them

(1) Uses inclusive language.

(1) Shares successful experiences working with underrepresented populations.

Charge 4 – Sample Questions to be utilized throughout the interview process

To best utilize these questions, we recommend that hiring committees spend time answering the questions as a group to identify how to differentiate between strong answers that demonstrate depth and experience and answers that simply utilize buzzwords. It is important for consistency that each candidate receive the same questions.

Position Levels:

- Entry Level
- Supervisory/Mid-Level
- Upper-Level Administration

Open-ended:

- Entry Level
 - Please share an example that demonstrates your respect for people and their differences; and how you've worked to understand the perspectives of others?
 - Provide an example of a time you communicated a concept to an individual who spoke English as a second language.
 - What does social justice mean to you? How do you incorporate this principle in your work?
 - What is your definition of a diverse student population?
 - What strategies have you employed in working with a diverse staff?
 - The University has a diverse workforce (in terms of ethnicity, class, culture, language, sexual orientation, disability, and beyond). Can you tell us about your experience working with and serving such a diverse population?
- Supervisory/Mid-Level
 - What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse working environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
 - What tools/techniques do you bring for promoting collaboration among underrepresented groups?
 - What behaviors, techniques, or decisions allow you to function most effectively as a provider or employee when working with a highly diverse student population? How do you define "diversity" in the workplace?
 - Please describe experiences you have had leading campus outreach activities for underserved student populations (e.g., developing and leading workshops, providing consultation to student service departments).
- Upper-Level Administration

- What do you see as the fundamental characteristics of organizations that create an inclusive environment?

Scenario-Based Questions

Write up case studies or scenarios related to equity and justice for candidates to respond to. Allow candidates time to read the case study and write their answers out to then present to the hiring committee. Support the introvert in not having to respond immediately on the spot, and allow for answers to demonstrate more depth of experience.

Hiring authorities could also invite candidates to bring samples or evidence of work that supports their involvement with social justice and equity (program reports, press coverage, etc.). This could also be discussed at some point in the interview. Instructions should be vague to allow for all types of representations (poem, keynote speech, etc.)

Assessment:

When assessing whether an applicant is open and committed to issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), a candidate should:

- Demonstrate an understanding and acceptance of equity, inclusion and diversity concepts, and that they are broader than just race, ethnicity, and gender
- Demonstrate self-awareness, in terms of understanding their own culture, identity, biases, prejudices, power, privilege and stereotypes
- Demonstrate awareness of generational differences in work styles
- Demonstrate willingness to challenge and change institutional practices that present barriers to different groups
- Infuse equity, inclusion and diversity concepts in response to questions not directly prompting for them
- Able to provide concrete examples and/or experiences relating to DEI
- Use inclusive language.
- Seem comfortable discussing issues related to DEI
- Indicate experience, commitment, and/or willingness to promote issues related to DEI
- Share successful experiences working with underrepresented populations.

If interviewing for a management position:

- Demonstrate recognition that diversity and inclusion are threaded through every aspect of management
- Create a culture of belonging where all team members feel valued Add

Campus core competencies for inclusiveness:

- Show respect for people and their differences; promotes fairness and equity.
- Engage the talents, experiences, and capabilities of others.
- Foster a sense of belonging; works to understand the perspectives of others.
- Create opportunities for access and success.

Assessment Activity: Take some time to complete the following activity to help integrate what you have learned in this section.

- Draft two DEI questions that align with the position and competency levels described in this guide that will be asked during your phone or in-person interview.
- What would be the ideal answer to each question?
- Share your questions and ideal answers with your hiring committee

Charge 5 – Identify additional posting locations that target under-represented campus populations

Information on websites to post with can be found at the following SharePoint document link, conversations with HR should help you determine what budget you may have to post on sponsored sites.

<https://msudenver.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/EquitableHiringGroup/EaZ7A9IAfaBMruyymretK4EBxQrI5cmV1rjiSqAr-xcLTQ?e=RZzZVn>