



The Diversity Advantage

...building an inclusive and equitable campus

University of
Lethbridge



Human Resources



**October
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Best Practices for Hiring with a focus on Diversity & Equity

To support departments in the search and selection of new Faculty and Professional Librarians

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The Diversity Advantage • University of Lethbridge
4401 University Drive • Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada • T1K 3M4
Telephone: 403-329-2274 • Fax: 403-329-2685 • Internet: www.uleth.ca/diversityadvantage

Available online at: <http://www.uleth.ca/diversityadvantage/resources.html>

For more information, contact:

Cheryl Wheeler, Human Resources Office • 403-329-2036 • c.wheeler@uleth.ca

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We believe in diversity, and equal opportunity for participation.

Diversity strengthens the University and enriches the experience of our students, staff, and faculty members. We respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, and provide equal opportunity for full participation in the University. We are an inclusive community, in which students, staff, and faculty members feel welcome, respected, valued, and empowered to contribute fully.

— University of Lethbridge Strategic Plan, Fundamental Principles

Introduction

This guide promotes the University's commitment to diversity and equity, and enables the University to gain the best recruitment outcomes with processes that are fair and equitable. It supports academic units in the search and selection of new faculty members with information compiled from research and advice literature on academic search strategies and from experienced and successful search committees.

What is Diversity?

Diversity is the recognition and acknowledgement of individual differences such as education, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, ethnicity, culture, language, or any other characteristic that shapes an individual's attitudes, behaviors, and perspective.

What is Employment Equity?

Employment equity is ensuring the search and hiring process is fair and equitable so the appropriate qualifications of each candidate are the only criteria upon which a hiring or promotion decision is made. Employment equity involves hiring the most qualified candidate for any open position while ensuring that the hiring process and the qualifications required for each position are fair and equitable for all persons. Moreover, employment equity means that candidates are not advantaged or disadvantaged whether an individual is from the dominant group or a marginalized group.

Employment equity was introduced by the Federal Government to ensure all Canadians have equal access to employment opportunities. Consistent with human rights legislation, employment equity recognizes the value and dignity of each individual and ensures each individual will have genuine, open, and unhindered access to employment opportunities, free from any barriers, systemic or otherwise. The University is considered an employer under the Federal Contractors Program for Employment Equity (FCP) and is therefore required to achieve and maintain a workforce that is representative of the available external labour market, such that traditionally disadvantaged groups¹ are given the same opportunity for employment as everyone else.

¹ Women, members of visible minorities, aboriginal persons and persons with disabilities, collectively known as “designated groups” under the FCP.

The Hiring Process

A Dean, Chair, or member of a Committee responsible for making recommendations or decisions for hiring within the University's faculty, has the responsibility to ensure that fair and equitable practices are followed throughout the hiring process. A hiring process that includes all of the following steps with diversity and equity initiatives firmly entrenched will help fulfill that responsibility:

1. Identify the Department's needs, goals, and personnel gaps. (See below.)
2. Appoint a representative search committee. (See page 2.)
3. Determine selection criteria based on the position's expectations. (See page 3.)
4. Draft and place the advertisement. (See page 4.)
5. Determine evaluation formats for the criteria sought. (See page 5.)
6. Review applications & create a short list. (See page 5.)
7. Design the interview questions based upon the selection criteria. (See page 6.)
8. Plan the site visit. (See page 9.)
9. Conduct interviews and other assessment events. (See page 10.)
10. Assess results and select a candidate for the position. (See page 10.)
11. Document the process. (See page 11.)

The following sections explain this process in detail.

1. Identify the Needs

Determine the program or organizational needs, goals, and personnel gaps the position will meet². There should be a clear and complete picture of what the position is before the search committee begins its work.

All facets of the position must be articulated and defined³. Along with the essential academic considerations, the question of needs may include equity representation, e.g., are there members of designated groups serving as role models, mentors for students, and expanding the perspective of the department?

The completed list of position expectations should be made available to candidates through the unit's web site or when providing information to short-listed candidates. This list can also provide the new faculty member and the Chair with guidance for feedback and performance evaluation.

The Position Expectation column in the *Planning Template for Diversity and Equity Hiring* (Appendix B page 17) provides a generic list of expectations that can be modified to suit individual departments.

2. The Search Committee

The composition of the Search Committee is very important. The chair should endeavor to include a broad representation of individuals from the designated groups as well as sexual orientation (LGBT), age groups, etc.). A more diverse Search Committee will allow for broader perspectives in assessing candidates' qualifications. Studies have shown that more diverse groups have better problem-solving and creative decision-making. A diverse search committee also shows the candidate that the committee is serious about widening the academic pool. If your department is fairly homogenous it may be advisable to seek members from outside the unit to ensure appropriate representation and a wider perspective.

² This may be covered in the Department's staffing proposal used for position funding.

³ Note that describing what is to be done, does not necessarily prescribe how it is to be done. In fulfilling the *Duty to Accommodate* (Appendix A) it is important to be open to hearing alternative methods or means of accomplishing the tasks and the required outcomes of the position.

The committee should have five to seven members who have a common understanding of their obligations⁴. The Chair sets the tone and shapes the attitude of the committee ensuring members feel involved, valued and motivated. Some find it beneficial to assign special roles for each member to make it easier for the committee to stay on task and ensure everyone participates fairly and responsibly.

Key Search Committee roles could include:

- An ethical leader – will become familiar with the ethics of recruitment and will remain sensitive to guide and advise the committee on ethical issues throughout its work.
- A teaching leader – will provide expertise on pedagogic effectiveness and the use of teaching portfolios, and will keep the group's focus on teaching criteria.
- A scholarship leader – will attend to relevant scholarship abilities and potential, keeping the group's focus on the fit between candidates' scholarly performance and interests, and position needs.
- An employment equity leader – will ensure the hiring is carried out in an equitable way and in accordance with legislation and university policy.
- A recorder – will record and file meeting minutes.
- Other roles – generally people with other particular or relevant expertise – i.e. specific fields of study, legal issues in hiring (e.g. immigration), department labs, studios or computer facilities.

3. Selection Criteria

Setting out selection criteria and the weighting of each factor provides the Search Committee with a fair and organized structure for decision-making. The list of selection criteria should be related to the position, relatively brief, measurable, and ranked in order of importance to the position's expectations.

This step should be done before a position ad is prepared so the ad can more accurately describe the position and the qualifications being sought.

Questions to assist in developing a list of selection criteria include:

| | |
|--|--|
| Teaching | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a Ph.D. required, completed, or nearing completion? • What areas of specialization must the person have? • What skills are needed to teach well? |
| Supervising & Counseling Students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy? • Listening skills? • Rapport with students? • Cultural sensitivity? • Recognizes different learning styles? • Ability to give effective feedback? |

⁴ Obligations such as: University policies, Faculty Handbook, Human Rights legislation, diversity & equity considerations, and equitable selection processes.

| | |
|--|--|
| Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an established research program necessary, or is research potential a reasonable criterion? • How is research potential defined? • Should the person have received funding/grants? • Should the person be willing to participate in collaborative or interdisciplinary research? |
| Collegial Relationships & Community Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively? • Good interpersonal skills, such as...? • Adds to the diversity of the department? • Able to serve as a role model for students from designated groups? |

(For more specific questions see Appendix B page 15.)

Vague, general, or undefined criteria can be a barrier in the evaluation stage. Ensure criteria are not beyond what is necessary so that the largest number of qualified people can be considered. The Committee may wish to solicit the views of additional members of the campus community.

Rank the criteria in order of importance. Determine the essential or threshold qualifications and other characteristics without which a candidate will not be selected. Designating a percentage of time for each task/responsibility area may assist in determining which sets of skills are more important than others. Assess your department for diversity in its representation and whether there are any equity hiring goals, to determine what weight the diversity factors carry in the selection.

Requiring candidates to submit a package of relevant information at the time of application can help the Search Committee in short-listing. Decide what information you want the candidate to provide as part of that package or in their covering letter.

See sample position criteria in the *Planning Template for Diversity & Equity Hiring* (Appendix B page 17).

4. The Advertisement

The advertisement describes the position and the application process with clarity. Generally, a good ad will:

- Use inclusive and unbiased language.
- Provide a clear description of responsibilities and expectations.
- State all of the essential qualifications sought plus other key evaluation criteria.
- Provide information on university or community assets that would serve a diverse group and attract them to the University of Lethbridge.
- Contain instructions for applicants.

The posting must also contain the following statement to satisfy federally legislated requirements related to Equity and applicants who reside outside of Canada:

“The position is open to all qualified applicants, although preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. The University is an inclusive and equitable campus encouraging applications from qualified women and men including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and Aboriginal persons.”

(See Appendix C pages 27-29 for sample ads.)

Identify where you are most likely to capture the attention of your target market. Polled candidates indicate a preference for discipline specific journals and list-serv's, *University Affairs*, personal networks, University websites and the *CAUT Bulletin*. Efforts should also be made to advertise with associations or contact groups that directly serve members of the designated groups.

Possible outreach sources and proactive strategies:

- Academic and professional societies through their newsletters or journals or status of women committees.
- Professional societies and associations of designated groups (e.g., Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada, see: <http://www.swaac.ca/>, Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science and Technology <http://www.ccwestt.org/>).
- Relevant industry, government, and research organizations (e.g., Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, see <http://www.criaw-icref.ca/>).
- Email lists.
- Actively develop relationships or contacts to encourage designated candidates to apply by, for example, contacting relevant faculties and departments in other universities, or combine visits to deliver papers or attend professional conferences with recruitment efforts for present or future positions.
- Seek out outstanding graduate students nearing completion of their Ph.D. program and mentor them for future faculty opportunities. Make use of the postdoctoral fellow lists from granting agencies.

5. Evaluation Formats

Because of differences in communication and presentation styles, using a variety of evaluation formats⁵ may allow a more thorough and accurate assessment of an individual's qualifications. Each of the methods should provide information and evidence on how well the candidates meet the position criteria.

It is useful to have a checklist for all methods so each candidate's qualifications can be compared and the evaluation remains focused on the criteria being tested. To apply the evaluation, determine what criteria are being tested by each method and rate each candidate according to how well they meet the criteria requirements.

Committee members should consciously strive to be open-minded and avoid bias and assumptions when evaluating applicants. (See Appendix D page 30 for the more common types of biases.)

6. Application Review and the Short List

There are several factors to keep in mind when reviewing applications⁶:

- a) Recognizing candidates' qualifications is where most barriers arise. There is an unfortunate tendency to:
 - Judge people based on our own experience and knowledge.
 - Look for like-minded or like-appearing candidates.
 - Think too narrowly, which interferes with seeing how someone may be just as good but in a different way.
 - Make assumptions about possible behaviour or characteristics without evidence.
 - Resort to initial impressions, whether positive or negative.
- b) Do not undervalue scholarship or research that is non-traditional or unconventional, outside the mainstream of the discipline, or focused on issues of gender, race, or minority status. The Search Committee could acquire the help of experts to assess fields with which they are unfamiliar.

⁵ There are a number of methods to allow candidates to demonstrate their skills and abilities and provide the Search Committee with enough information to complete an evaluation, including: the application package; the interview; a formal presentation to faculty; a teaching simulation; meetings with colleagues and constituency groups; evaluations or samples of work; and references.

⁶ Timely, considerate communication throughout the hiring process can generate good will within the applicant pool and can favorably distinguish us from other universities. E.g. an email acknowledging receipt of applications, prompt notification to finalists, or thoughtful planning and contact about site visits.

- c) Some designated group members may have a non-traditional career path. Some recent immigrants take longer to obtain their senior degrees due to the financial constraints of relocating and the challenges of adapting to a new country and language. Women and people with disabilities are more likely to have had career pauses.
- d) Recognize that meeting family obligations does not mean diminished professional commitment, competence, or ambition.
- e) Many skills are transferable; they may be acquired through volunteer, non-academic, or alternative work experiences.
- f) Do not underestimate demands of community service. Members of designated groups often have frequent demands made on them because they are under-represented in many departments, for example student-advising or counseling responsibilities and numerous requests to serve on university committees.
- g) Be sensitive to issues related to cross-cultural communication, like differences in accents and speech patterns that may lead to direct or indirect discrimination. In some cultures, it is impolite to look a person in a position of authority directly in the eye. In others, contradicting another person openly is unacceptable, especially if that person is in a position of authority. Aboriginal and other cultures look askance at self-promotion and are more likely to credit others for their successes. (For more on aboriginal communication see Appendix E page 31.)
- h) When evaluating letters of references, beware of stereotypical thinking and how words and phrases may be used differently by men and women, or applied differently to them.

The University is required under the FCP to gather data on the number of applicants in each designated group. To facilitate data collection, applicants should complete the Equity Survey in Section E of the grey HR Application for Employment form available in the Dean's Office or HR. The Committee must report such data to the Dean as part of its recommendation on hiring.

Members reviewing application packages can use a checklist (similar to the one in Appendix B page 19) to calculate scores for each candidate by applying the weighting factor to a rating (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) assigned for each criteria on the list. The members' scores can then be averaged for each candidate.

Take special care not to eliminate potentially strong candidates who represent one of the four designated groups. Once a list of semi-finalists is determined the group can be further screened by asking them to provide additional information in completing some detailed essay questions.

The resulting short list of finalists should include the most qualified candidates for the position. If there are no members of designated groups on the short list, the Search Committee and the Dean should consider why.

7. Interview Questions

Use interviews with a structured format as these provide the same type of information on all the candidates and are less susceptible to the personal biases of the interviewer. The purpose of interview questions is to discern the extent to which candidates meet the criteria that are necessary for successful performance in the position.

- Questions should be matched to the position criteria and are subject to demonstrations of validity.
- All candidates must have the opportunity to answer all of the questions.
- Some probes or follow-ups should be developed to elicit sufficient information to make an evaluation.
- Questions not answered to your satisfaction should be rephrased; probe firmly but with discretion.
- Know the range of answers expected as well as the ideal answer; this gives a better parameter for scoring.
- The order of the questions asked and the person who asks them can affect the candidate's response.

- A standard form with the questions, the criteria sought, and space for the evaluation of the candidate's answers provides a useful tool for comparing candidates and for documenting the process. Appendix B page 21 provides a sample that can be modified to fit any position.
- Each candidate's responses should be carefully noted and scored objectively and independently by each member of the Committee.

What to Ask:

Behaviour-based questions that ask the candidates to show they have the knowledge and skills required and how well they have used them generally are the most predictive of future behaviour and of success.

Instead of asking *"What do you think is a good evaluation system?"* a behaviour-based question would ask, *"Please describe the evaluation system you used in the most recent course you taught?"* Such questions usually start with: *"Describe a situation in which.... Tell me about a time when.... What was the toughest...most exciting...most difficult...most interesting....How have you assisted in...What roles have you played in the organization which... Give me an example of..."*

Speculative questions, (*"what would you do..."*) also have value in finding out how candidates would apply their skills in a particular situation and in understanding their knowledge, philosophy or vision, and relationship with others. These questions can be useful when the candidate is new to teaching and is unable to cite past performances. Don't ask leading questions that telegraph the answer you want (*"We have a team approach here...how do you feel about that?"*)

In listening to the answers, listen for: a **situation**/task (what was the situation), an **action** (what did the candidate do), or a **result** (what happened). When answers are vague, ask for a specific example.

Speak to referees and ask the same type of questions the candidates were asked to confirm the demonstration of skills and abilities. Ensure anyone offering opinions on candidates speaks to the criteria being sought. Referees should be made aware that individuals have a right of access to references about themselves.

What to Avoid:

Avoid questions that require a candidate to furnish any information concerning race, religious beliefs, colour, sex or sexual orientation, physical disability, mental disability, age, national or ethnic origin, marital status, family status, source of income, or conviction for which a pardon has been granted (unless it is based on a bona fide occupational requirement). These types of questions are grounds for potential discrimination and are monitored by the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Commission policy, does however, permit employers to collect the data they require (e.g. self-identification of designated groups) to plan and support special programs, even though the information collected may touch upon one of the prohibited grounds. However, in the event of a complaint, the employer must be able to show that the data collected have not been used to discriminate, either in the hiring process or later when deciding promotion opportunities.

| AVOID ASKING | PREFERRED |
|--|---|
| Name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About name change: whether it was changed by court order, marriage, or other reason. • Maiden name. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Is any additional information necessary to verify your educational credentials?" |
| Address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For addresses outside Canada. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask place and duration of current or recent address. |

| AVOID ASKING | PREFERRED |
|---|---|
| Age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For birth certificates, baptismal records, or about age in general. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask if they are eligible to work under Canadian laws regarding age restrictions. Once hired, proof of age may be requested for benefit plans or other legitimate purposes. |
| Sex or sexual orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any questions concerning the candidate's sex. Males or females to fill in different applications. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about duration of stay or anticipated absences only if posed to males and females alike. |
| Marital status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether applicant is single, married, divorced, engaged, separated, widowed, or living common-law. Whether an applicant's spouse may be transferred. About the spouse's employment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts for emergencies and/or details on dependents can be determined after selection. If transfer or travel is part of the position, the applicant can be asked whether these requirements can be met. |
| Family status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of children or dependants. About pregnancy, child bearing plans, or child care arrangements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask whether there are any circumstances that might prevent completion of a minimum service commitment. Whether candidate can meet specified work schedules or has activities, commitments, or responsibilities that may prevent meeting work attendance requirements. Explaining university policies on all forms of family, parental, and maternity leave as well as child care, partner benefits etc. This is a great way to relieve the burden on applicants having to ask such questions. |
| National or ethnic origin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About birthplace, nationality of ancestors, spouse, or other relatives. Whether born in Canada. Proof of citizenship. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants can be asked whether they are eligible for employment in Canada since citizenship, permanent residency, or valid work permits are necessary to do so. Documentation of eligibility to work (papers, visas, etc.) Can be dealt with after selection. |
| Race or colour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any inquiry into race or colour, including colour of eyes, skin or hair. | |
| Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mother tongue. Where language skills were obtained. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask if applicant understands, reads, writes, or speaks languages required for the position. Testing or scoring applicants for language proficiency is permitted if directly position-related. |

| AVOID ASKING | PREFERRED |
|--|---|
| <p>Religious beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About religious denomination, affiliation or customs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the required calendar/timetable; ask if such a schedule poses problems for the applicant. Reasonable accommodation of an employee's religious beliefs is the employer's duty. |
| <p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a list of all disabilities, limitations or health problems. Whether applicant drinks or uses drugs. Whether applicant has ever received psychiatric care or been hospitalized for emotional problems. Whether applicant is receiving counseling or therapy. Whether applicant has received worker's compensation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Employer should disclose any information on medically-related requirements or standards early in the application process, then ask if the applicant has any condition that could affect his or her ability to do the position. If the applicant chooses to talk about their disability, an employer should make inquiries about accommodation needs. Limit inquiries to applicants' ability to perform essential duties of the position. A disability is only relevant to position ability if it threatens the safety or property of others or prevents the applicant from safe and adequate position performance even when reasonable efforts are made to accommodate the disability. |
| <p>Criminal record</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the applicant has been arrested or convicted of a pardoned criminal offence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquiries about criminal record or convictions are discouraged unless related to position duties. |
| <p>References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same restrictions that apply to questions asked of applicants apply when asking for employment references. | |

8. The Site Visit

All communications and contact with the candidates can add to how welcomed they feel by the institution and how favorably they will compare it to others. Measures contributing to a successful site visit include:

- Communicate clear, consistent, correct, and similar information preferably in writing. Candidates appreciate knowing in advance what is expected of them, their travel arrangements, whom they will meet, what they will do or see, where they will stay, how long they are required to stay, and how they can be reimbursed.
- Allow the candidate to have some input into the day's schedule. Ask if there is anything particular they wish to see or do, or anyone they would like to meet.
- Attend to special needs, such as accessibility issues, accompanying family members, and dietary requirements or restrictions.
- Maximize the comfort of candidates, especially those who are under-represented and/or are in a stressful position of being scrutinized by many people. Be sensitive to signs of excessive fatigue, low blood sugar, or nervousness.

- Provide a benevolent host.
- Offer private space with a desk, chair, and computer, directions to the washroom and the nearest cafeteria.
- Make thoughtful gestures, such as a friendly face at the airport and on departure, a small gift in the hotel room with a welcoming note from the Dean.
- Plan meals in quieter restaurants that are more conducive to talking.
- Include recovery time in the site visit.
- Provide opportunities for candidates to meet with newer faculty, faculty in related research, or with interdisciplinary interests.
- Be prepared to discuss parental leave policies, housing and schools, childcare services, spousal placement services, the minority community, and the cultural climate on and off campus.

9. Conducting Events

In addition to the interview, the site visit can include meetings with the candidate's prospective colleagues, teaching simulations, opportunities for students to interact with the candidate formally and informally, and a tour of the facilities or community. All candidates should be provided equal opportunity to make their best presentations for the position.

Schedule events as consistently as possible to be fair to all candidates, and ensure the venues are accessible to all candidates. Hand out a criteria checklist to those attending the different evaluation events to help reviewers focus on the criteria the Selection Committee has identified as important. These evaluations should be signed by the reviewers and collected.

Remember at all times that the interview process is formal. Committee members should be sure to keep the conversation balanced, avoiding too much focus on aspects of the candidate's personal life. Failure to do this may leave an unsuccessful candidate feeling that those particular aspects of his or her life played a role in the committee's decision and may lead to a complaint of discrimination.

Under the University's legal duty to accommodate, applicants with a disability must be assessed solely in terms of the qualifications required for the position and their ability to perform the position with or without accommodation. The fact that a qualified person requires some form of accommodation to perform the position cannot be held against that person in the evaluation of candidates. (See Appendix A page 14 for more on the duty to accommodate.)

10. Final Assessment and Selection

The challenge for the Committee is to keep biases, stereotypes, and assumptions from interfering with the assessment of a person's competence for the position. Focus on the 'bona fide requirements' of the position. Assess the value of diversity—is there a commitment under the Faculty's equity plan and the unit's hiring goals to close the gaps in representation of the designated groups? To arrive at an objective and fair decision:

- Focus on how well candidates measured against the position-related criteria tested in each of the evaluation formats. All evaluators' comments on a candidate's suitability should be in writing.
- Ensure references have been checked and educational qualifications verified.
- Openly and thoroughly review all the documented evaluation input and scores collected to determine the best match for person to position. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses. Keep notes of the discussion.
- Summarize results on one page to facilitate the final selection decision. (A sample *Candidate Summary Template* is available in Appendix B page 23.)

Once the successful candidate has signed their offer, other candidates will need to be informed. It is important to thank them and leave them with encouraging words. Notes of the interview can serve to provide candidates with feedback needed to help prepare for their next position application and interview, should they request it.

11. Documentation

Keep accurate and detailed records of the entire selection process. These records are confidential and should be stored in a secure location. Records of a search or selection may include:

- Committee membership lists.
- Position descriptions.
- Candidate lists.
- Criteria for selection.
- Application packages.
- List of standard questions addressed to candidates.
- Evaluation forms, screening and interview notes.
- Notes of telephone references.
- Committee minutes, notes, reports, related documentation and correspondence.
- Nomination memos.
- Recommendations for reappointment.

Transitory records such as telephone messages, notices of meetings, or draft letters and reports are best destroyed at the end of the search.

Notes of interviews or other evaluation methods should be objective, factual, specific to the individual, thoughtful, and prepared with consideration of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPP).

Under FOIPP, a candidate in a search competition may request access to the Committee's records. In such a case, the requester would have access to: notes of their personal interview; the Search Committee's minutes or notes on the requestor; and references or notes of telephone references about the requester unless the information was provided in confidence.

The Federal Contractors Program recommends a summary report of the committee's activities, including a statement of measures that were taken to meet the diversity and employment equity goals and requirements, be prepared by the Chair and submitted to the Dean and the Human Resources office. This information would be useful to the University in measuring its progress toward achieving employment equity and diversity goals. The *Equity Report – Summary of Search Procedures* form is available in Appendix B page 25.

The price of the democratic way of life is a growing appreciation of people's differences, not merely as tolerable, but as the essence of a rich and rewarding human experience.

- Jerome Nathanson

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Appendices

- Appendix A: Duty to Accommodate.
- Appendix B: More Questions for Establishing the Expectations of the Position; Planning Template for Diversity and Equity Hiring; Application Evaluation; Interview Evaluation; Candidate Summary; and Equity Report.
- Appendix C: Sample Employment Advertisements.
- Appendix D: Types of Biases to Avoid; the Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act; and the Canada Human Rights Act.
- Appendix E: Communication Characteristics of Aboriginal People.

Appendix A

Duty To Accommodate

1. What is the duty to accommodate?

The duty to accommodate is the obligation to meaningfully incorporate diversity into the workplace. The duty to accommodate involves eliminating or changing rules, policies, practices and behaviours that discriminate against persons based on a group characteristic, such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, marital status, family status and disability.

Sometimes, workplaces have rules, policies, practices and behaviours that apply equally to everyone, but which can create barriers based on an irrelevant group characteristic. For example, if you require that employees wear a certain uniform, you may create a barrier to someone whose religious practice requires a certain manner of dress.

The duty to accommodate requires employers to identify and eliminate rules that have a discriminatory impact. Accommodation means changing the rule or practice to incorporate alternative arrangements that eliminate the discriminatory barriers.

2. Does the duty to accommodate apply to all grounds of discrimination?

The duty to accommodate is most often applied in situations involving persons with disabilities. In these situations, accommodation often means removing physical barriers, perhaps by building a wheelchair ramp. It often also means accommodating individual needs, such as by providing a computer screen reader for a blind employee.

The duty to accommodate also applies to grounds other than physical disability. Specifically, it applies to all grounds covered by the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#): race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and conviction for which a pardon has been granted.

3. Is there a legal requirement to accommodate?

The duty to accommodate is a legal requirement, per sections 2 and 15 of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. Section 2 reads as follows:

“The purpose of this Act is to extend the laws in Canada to give effect, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, to the principle that all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted.”

The Act says that accommodation is required, short of undue hardship. The Supreme Court of Canada has also defined the duty to accommodate. (For a summary of these court decisions see Appendix A of [Place for All – A Guide to Creating an Inclusive Workplace](#).)

4. What is the process of accommodation?

When approached with a request for accommodation, an employer or service provider is expected to do the following:

- Determine what barriers might affect the person requesting accommodation,
- Explore options for removing those barriers, and
- Accommodate to the point of undue hardship.

If the employer finds that removing the barrier or changing the workplace rule creates an undue hardship on the business, then that rule or practice is a Bona Fide Occupational Requirement (BFOR), in which case the employer does not have to accommodate.

If you fail to follow this process, you can be found to have discriminated, per the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

Excerpted from: Canadian Human Rights Commission, Preventing Discrimination, Tools & Resources, Duty to Accommodate.

For more information:

www.chrc-cdp.ca/preventing_discrimination/toc_tdm-en.asp

Appendix B

More questions to consider in establishing the expectations of the position:

| Expectations for: | Questions to consider may include: |
|---|---|
| Teaching | What courses will be taught and in what area of specialty? Delivery format? Graduate and / or undergraduate courses? Are there graduate seminars? Is there team teaching? How extensive is the involvement in curriculum development? What percentage of time is to be devoted to teaching? What else? |
| Supervising & Counseling Students | Supervision of graduate students? What sort of interaction is expected with students? How much feedback will they be expected to provide students? Will the person be expected to provide one-on-one assistance to students in their classes? How will they work with Teaching Assistants? What percentage of time will be involved in supervising and counseling students? What else? |
| Research | What is/are the area(s) of specialization? Will the person be expected to bring/get grants & funding? Will the person be expected to involve students in research projects? What percentage of time is devoted to research? What else? |
| Collegial Relationships & Community Service | What sort of collaboration with colleagues is expected? What sort of participation in departmental activities? What percentage of time in community activities or professional associations? How can the person assist the department in meeting departmental and university goals? What are the other departmental or organizational goals to be met, e.g. from the Strategic Plan, the Equity Plan? What else? |




Planning Template for Diversity & Equity Hiring

DEPARTMENT:


Position Title:

#


| | | | Weighting Factor | Evaluation Methods Used to Test for Criteria | | | | | |
|--|--------|---|--|--|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Position Expectations (what will the person do) | % Time | Position Criteria (what qualifications are needed) | | App Pkg. | Interview | Presentation | Classroom | References | Meetings |
| Teach <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ph.D. level instruction in core areas▪ Undergraduate & graduate courses▪ In teams▪ A diverse student body with a range of attitudes, experiences and learning styles▪ Participate in curriculum development▪ Work collaboratively at integrating curriculum▪ In a distributed learning environment (on & off campus) Work with Students <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Supervise graduate students▪ Provide academic counseling and advising to graduate & undergraduate students▪ Be available to students for out of class consultation▪ Mentor students▪ Provide a role model for students | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ph.D. at or near completion with specialization in relevant field | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Potential for, or demonstrated scholarly competence | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Team player, works cooperatively | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Pedagogic effectiveness - Sensitive to the range of attitudes, experiences, diversity in the classroom; understands different learning styles & variety of methods and technologies to support them | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Curriculum development ability: content knowledge, conceptualize, writing skills, willing & able to improve diversity content | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Willing to teach off-campus / use distance technologies | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ability to supervise, provide feedback, valid & fair means of assessing achievement | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Accessible, approachable, fair, flexible and patient with students. Listening skills | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Good rapport with students, can motivate & inspire | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sensitive & respectful of diversity - cultural & gender differences, and differing learning styles & goals | | | | | | | |
| Research, Scholarly or Creative Work <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop a continuing research program▪ Attract external research funds▪ Work collaboratively in research pursuits▪ Include opportunities for students▪ Enhance the department’s research capacity | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Strong commitment to research & creative work (grants, contracts, publications, exhibitions, performances etc.) | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Proficient in research methods & scholarly writing skills | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Integrity, originality and quality | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Balance: ability to co-author & work alone | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Energy, stamina | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ | | | | | | | |
| Participate in Dept/Univ Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Collegial activities, seminars, recitals, conferences, debates, etc.▪ Dept./Faculty meetings, committees, accept administrative duties, community service▪ Adhere to policies & deadlines▪ Work with staff▪ Use computer technology for teaching and communication▪ Expand the diversity of the department | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Willing to participate in departmental activities & accept administrative duties | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Respectful of diverse disciplinary backgrounds, fields of study, & other perspectives | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tactful, diplomatic, accessible, responsible | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Collaborative and fair | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Basic computer skills or willingness to learn & use | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adds to the diversity of the department | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ | | | | | | | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3 =essential, without which we will not choose this candidate, 2 =Important, 1 =an asset | | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------|--------|-------|----------------|
|  | <i>Application Evaluation</i> | POSITION: | | | |
| | EVALUATOR/ Date: | CANDIDATE: | | | |
| Position Criteria | | Weight | Rating | Score | Comments/Notes |
| Recognized Teaching Ability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree status / from: Areas of specialization Graduate teaching Graduate supervision (e.g. masters & doctoral cmtes) Evidence of additional work with graduate students Undergraduate teaching Experience with distributed learning Content, knowledge, skill valid in recognized field Pedagogic effectiveness Inclusive material / non-discriminatory language Articulated, valid & fair means of assessing achievement Innovative, creative development of course materials Use of technologies to improve teaching & learning Contributions to curriculum development | | | | | |
| Research, Scholarship or Creative Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of activity (appropriate for stage of career?) Collaboration Has presented and disseminated work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conferences, meetings (note if internationally) Record of grants for basic or applied research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nationally recognized agencies Foundations Other non-refereed agencies/foundations Published in refereed journals Published in professional journals | | | | | |
| THRESHOLD CRITERIA TOTAL | | | | | |
| Additional Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitivity to broad range of perspectives Sensitive & respectful of diversity & equity Evidence of departmental activities & admin. duties Evidence of service to community Adds to the diversity of the department | | | | | |
| ADDITIONAL CRITERIA TOTAL | | | | | |
| 1=significantly below requirements, 2=below requirements, 3=meets requirements, 4=exceeds requirements, 5=significantly exceeds requirements, NA=not provided in application pkg. | | | | | |

Notes

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|--|
|  | Interview Evaluation | | POSITION: | | | |
| | EVALUATOR/ Date: | | CANDIDATE: | | | |
| Questions | Criteria Sought | Weight | Rating | Score | Comments/Notes | |
| Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is your philosophy of education and how is it manifested in your teaching? What has been the most difficult part of team teaching for you & how did you cope with it? What innovative approaches do you employ in teaching? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scholarly competence, pedagogic effectiveness Team player, works cooperatively Diplomatic, problem solving skills Demonstrated teaching experience Understands different learning styles & variety of methods and technology to support them | | | | | |
| Working with students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give examples of challenges you've had with students in your teaching experience and how you handled them. Tell us about when you've acted as a mentor. What did you do? What were the results? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible, responsible, fair, sensitive and respectful, patient, approachable. Listening skills Good rapport with students. Can motivate and inspire. Sensitive to needs of students | | | | | |
| Research Agenda – current & future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What direction would you like your research to take and what plans do you have for taking it there? What opportunities do you see in our Dept. for cooperating in research with specific colleagues? Tell us about some of the opportunities you've created in your research for students. How has your research informed your own teaching? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrity, originality, quality Collaborative Strong commitment Scholarly competence, interest in collaboration. Respective of fields of study Shares information, ability to give effective feedback. Integrity Responsive to change | | | | | |
| THRESHOLD CRITERIA TOTAL | | | | | | |
| Additional Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your expectations of the Dept.? How do you see your involvement with the community and how would this be enacted? Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Tell us about the types of collaborative efforts you have been involved. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasonable Sensitive & respectful of diversity & equity Forward thinking | | | | | |
| ADDITIONAL CRITERIA TOTAL | | | | | | |
| 1=significantly below criteria, 2=below criteria, 3=meets criteria, 4=exceeds criteria, 5=significantly exceeds criteria. | | | | | | |

Notes

|  Candidate Summary | | | POSITION: | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|------------|--|--|-------|
| | | | EVALUATOR / DATE: | | | | | |
| CANDIDATES | Application Package | Interview | Presentation | Classroom | References | | | TOTAL |
| 1. | | | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | | | | |
| 7. | | | | | | | | |
| 8. | | | | | | | | |
| 9. | | | | | | | | |
| 10. | | | | | | | | |
| 11. | | | | | | | | |
| 12. | | | | | | | | |
| 13. | | | | | | | | |

Notes:



Equity Report - Summary of Search Procedures

To assist the University in measuring its progress towards achieving employment equity goals as required by the Federal Contractors Program, your co-operation in providing the following information is appreciated. To be completed by the Chair of the Search Committee and forwarded to the Dean. A copy with the Dean's signature should be sent to the Human Resources Office.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|----|--------------------|-------|---|---|---|-------------|-------|----|--------------|
| Faculty/School: | | | | | | Department: | | | | | | | | |
| Position Title/Rank: | | | | | | | | | | | Position #: | | | |
| Composition of the Search Committee * | | | | | | Applicant Summary: | | | | | | | | |
| | M | F | A | PD | VM | | Total | M | F | A | PD | VM | NI | Non-Canadian |
| Faculty | | | | | | Applicants | | | | | | | | |
| Staff | | | | | | Short-listed | | | | | | | | |
| Students | | | | | | Interviewed | | | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | Recommended | | | | | | | | |
| Total | | | | | | Successful | | | | | | | | |
| * If status is declared: M=male, F=female, A=aboriginal person, PD=person with a disability, VM=visible minority, NI=did not self identify. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Where was the position advertised in addition to <i>University Affairs</i> and the <i>CAUT Bulletin</i> to reach a diverse group of applicants? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Please describe any additional efforts made to attract members of designated groups that are under-represented in the unit. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| If there were no members of designated groups on the short list please explain why in terms of specific criteria that were not met. Attach additional information if desired. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Is the successful candidate consistent with your department/faculty's employment equity strategy? If so how? If not, please explain. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chair of Search Committee: | | | | | | Signature: | | | | | | Date: | | |
| Dean: | | | | | | Signature: | | | | | | Date: | | |

Appendix C



Faculty of Arts & Science

Political Science (International Relations) Tenure-Track Position

The Department of Political Science at the University of Lethbridge invites applications for a full-time, probationary, tenure-track position at the rank of Assistant or Associate Professor, to begin July 1, 2006.

Expectations for this position include:

- ▶ Teaching at the undergraduate level.
- ▶ Developing a continuing, externally funded, research program.
- ▶ Contributing to the expansion of our graduate program, including supervision of graduate students.
- ▶ Contributing to the department, faculty, and university in service activities.

The ideal candidate will have all of the following qualifications:

- ▶ A PhD at or near completion.
- ▶ A specialization in International Relations.
- ▶ Demonstrated ability to interact constructively with faculty and students.

The position offers a competitive salary commensurate with experience, an excellent benefits package, relocation assistance, access to exceptionally well-equipped facilities, and a unique opportunity to work within one of the best largest-profile, small, Political Science departments in Canada. Funding is also available to eligible new faculty members in support of research and scholarly activities.

Located in southern Alberta, near the Rocky Mountains, Lethbridge offers a sunny, dry climate that is surprisingly mild for the prairies, excellent cultural and recreational amenities, attractive economic conditions and an exceptional quality of life that is second to none. Founded in 1967, the University has an enrollment of over 8,000 students. Our focus on liberal education, selected professional programs, smaller classes, co-op placements, and involvement of students in faculty research provides the very best education available. For more information about the University please visit our web site at www.uleth.ca, and the Department's web site at www.uleth.ca/fas/pol.

Applications should include a curriculum vitae, transcripts, publications, a statement of teaching philosophy and research interests, and names and contact information of at least three references who are scholars in the field. Direct application packages and letters of references to: Dr. Peter McCormick, Chair of Search Committee, Department of Political Science, University of Lethbridge, 4401 University Dr., Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 3M4. E-mail: mccormick@uleth.ca; phone: (403)329-2580. Applications will be accepted until Feb 15, 2006.

The position is open to all qualified applicants, although preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. The University is an inclusive and equitable campus encouraging applications from qualified women and men including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and Aboriginal persons.



Faculty of Education

Teacher Education (2) Tenure-Track Positions

The Faculty of Education at the University of Lethbridge invites applications for **two** full-time, probationary, tenure-track positions at the rank of Assistant Professor, to begin July 1, 2006.

- 1) **Mathematics Education** – expertise in elementary and/or secondary mathematics teacher education;
- 2) **General Teacher Education** – expertise in any curricular discipline will be considered.

Expectations for these positions include:

- Teaching undergraduate and graduate courses.
- Fluency with current theories and practice in areas of expertise.
- Contribution to the graduate program in the areas of professional practice and professional development.
- Contribution to the undergraduate program in the areas of professional practice and professional development, including supervision of pre-service students.
- Engagement in scholarly or creative work.

The ideal candidates will have the following qualifications:

- A PhD with appropriate specialization at or near completion.
- A minimum of two years successful K-12 classroom teaching experience.
- Eligibility for teacher certification in Alberta (B.Ed or equivalent).
- Experience with First Nations students.
- Interest in integrating communications technology into the teaching and research repertoire.
- Demonstrated potential for excellence in teaching, research, and scholarship.

The position offers a competitive [salary](#) commensurate with experience, an excellent [benefits](#) package, relocation assistance, access to exceptionally well-equipped facilities and a unique opportunity to work within one of most distinguished teacher education programs in Canada. Distinct in a number of ways, the Faculty of Education offers combined and after degree programs, extensive practica and content integration with other faculties. For more information visit our web site at www.uleth.ca/edu and the University's web site at www.uleth.ca.

Located in southern Alberta, near the Rocky Mountains, Lethbridge offers a sunny, dry climate that is surprisingly mild for the prairies, excellent cultural and recreational amenities, attractive economic conditions and an exceptional quality of life that is second to none.

Applications should include a curriculum vitae, transcripts, areas of expertise relevant to teaching/research, and names and contact information of at least three references who are scholars in the field. Direct application packages and letters of references to: Dr. Jane O'Dea, Dean of Education, University of Lethbridge, 4401 University Dr., Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 3M4. E-mail: jane.odea@uleth.ca; phone: (403) 329-2051; fax: (403) 329-2252. Applications will be accepted until Jan 31, 2006.

The position is open to all qualified applicants, although preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. The University is an inclusive and equitable campus encouraging applications from qualified women and men including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and Aboriginal persons.



Faculty of Fine Arts

New Media (Design) 3-yr Term Position

The Department of New Media at the University of Lethbridge invites applications for a full-time, three year term position (with the possibility of conversion to tenure-track) at the rank of Assistant Professor, to begin July 1, 2006.

Expectations for this position include:

- Teaching core and elective courses in Graphic Design, Net Art for New Media, and other courses relating to professional or creative practice.
- Developing courses according to program needs, and candidate's field of experience and established record of success.
- Engagement in scholarly or creative work.
- The desire and ability to participate in the development and operation of the department & faculty.

The ideal candidate will have the following qualifications:

- An MFA or equivalent terminal degree with appropriate specialization.
- Demonstrated excellence in teaching.
- Demonstrated record of creative activity, and/or scholarly research.
- Professional experience in Web Design, Graphic Design, and/or a background in design history and theory would be an asset.
- Knowledge or experience in one or more of the following: production management and portfolio development; gender-based communications theory or gender studies; cultural studies pertaining to new media technology, would also be desirable.

The position offers a competitive [salary](#) commensurate with experience, an excellent [benefits](#) package, relocation assistance, access to state-of-the-art facilities, and an exciting opportunity to work within one of the fastest growing units in the University. Housed in the Centre for Arts, we offer a B.F.A degree in New Media within a liberal education context. An M.F.A (New Media) program is currently in development. For more information visit our web site at www.uleth.ca/ffa/sectionnewmedia.htm and the University's web site at www.uleth.ca.

Located in southern Alberta, near the Rocky Mountains, Lethbridge offers a sunny, dry climate that is surprisingly mild for the prairies, excellent cultural and recreational amenities, attractive economic conditions and an exceptional quality of life that is second to none.

Applications should include a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, transcripts, evidence of teaching expertise, a statement of teaching philosophy, current research/creative activity and samples of recent creative work and three letters of reference, which assess teaching and research. Direct application packages to: Dr. Ches Skinner, Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Lethbridge, 4401 University Dr., Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 3M4. E-mail: angela.luck@uleth.ca; phone: (403) 382-7153; fax: (403) 328-7127. Applications will be accepted until Jan 31, 2006.

The position is open to all qualified applicants, although preference will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. The University is an inclusive and equitable campus encouraging applications from qualified women and men including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities and Aboriginal persons.

Appendix D

Types of Biases to Avoid

Halo Effect – the tendency to allow one positive (or negative) quality to dominate judgment of all other qualities.

First Impressions – drawing immediate conclusions that overlook and ignore any additional relevant information, leading to a snap judgment.

Cloning – favor those who think, look, or act as you do.

Stereotyping – grouping people together based on oversimplified categories.

Assumptions – taking for granted the attribution of characteristics and behaviors without evidence.

Ethnocentrism – belief that your own culture and ethnic group provides the only right way and all others are inferior.

Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act

Applications and advertisements for employment

8 (1) No person shall use or circulate any form of application for employment or publish any advertisement in connection with employment or prospective employment or make any written or oral inquiry of an applicant

(a) that expresses either directly or indirectly any limitation, specification or preference indicating discrimination on the basis of the race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income or family status of that person or of any other person, or

(b) that requires an applicant to furnish any information concerning race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, or family status.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply with respect to a refusal, limitation, specification, or preference based on a bona fide occupational requirement.

RSA 1980 cI-2 s8;1985 c33 s4;1990 c23 s5;1996 c25 s10

Canada Human Rights Act

3. (1) For all purposes of this Act, the prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and conviction for which a pardon has been granted.

(2) Where the ground of discrimination is pregnancy or childbirth, the discrimination shall be deemed to be on the ground of sex.

R.S., 1985, c. H-6, s. 3; 1996, c. 14, s. 2.

Appendix E

Communication Characteristics of Aboriginal People

Taken from: "Aboriginal Awareness Training", Robert Laboucane, Ripple Effects Ltd. 2006

Aboriginal people have learned by observing their Elders. The department representative is considered the superior person in the communication process and Aboriginal people will respond by following this person's lead. In the aboriginal culture it is considered disrespectful to boast about oneself. Past achievements may be reported but in an undervalued manner because of the cultural value to de-emphasize oneself. You are not encouraged to consider yourself better than others.

| Characteristic | Aboriginal people... |
|---------------------------|---|
| Communication | Do not offend people by offering advice or criticism. |
| Respect: | May be more concerned with giving respect to others. |
| Questions: | Generally ask short and direct questions compared to non-aboriginals. Answers to questions are also short and to the point. They are less likely to volunteer information and careful, sometimes closed, questioning gets results. |
| Silence: | There is no hurry in the Aboriginal culture to begin a conversation or to try and fill a silence. Silence is considered a natural process of thinking before answering questions or responding to statements. |
| Small-talk: | Will often remain quiet with new acquaintances. Personal thoughts are not usually expressed at the first meeting. They believe it is better not to disclose much about them until rapport and a feeling of trust has been established. |
| Tone of Voice: | Tend to have a lower pitch, and may speak softly and more slowly than non-aboriginals. |
| Eye contact: | Express respect by lowering their eyes during an interaction. Not making eye contact translates into respect for the person in perceived authority. |
| Gestures: | May not be as expressive through body language. |
| Emotion: | May show little or no emotion. |
| Making State-ments: | Tend to de-emphasize their own presence, saying "We" rather than "I" in most instances. They generally don't "sell" themselves and bragging about themselves, is not culturally acceptable. |
| Decision Making: | Use consensus to arrive at decisions. Decisions are made through a logical and reasonable presentation of ideas. Cooperation is voluntary. If a decision turns out to be wrong there is no blaming or weakness implied and the consequences are accepted. |
| Body Language: | If an aboriginal person feels uncomfortable they may be evasive or avoid the situation all together. This is especially true when there is conflict or heated debate. The handshake of an aboriginal person is usually soft, with only one or two gently pumps. |
| Non-verbal Communication: | When Aboriginals nod their heads, they are listening passively. This does not necessarily indicate agreement or commitment. If questions are perceived too personal the candidate may hesitate or refuse to answer. In business or friendship, the level of trust will determine response time as well as success in reaching objectives. |
| Cultural Courtesies: | Words such as please, thank you or pardon me are considered vital in the non-aboriginal culture. An aboriginal person may not use 'verbal displays'. Instead of saying "thank you," they may express gratitude by sending a small gift and this may happen long after the interaction. |
| Appearance: | Dress says little about an individual's qualifications and abilities. |
| Appointments & Time: | In the Aboriginal culture, waiting for someone is a sign of respect. They believe that people waiting for them are also showing respect. |
| Age: | Experience brings knowledge for the aboriginals. The older the person, the more they know and more respect is given. There are no attempts to hide their age. |