

STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN THE HIRING PROCESS

Agenda

- Background – Diversity at HSU
- What is unconscious bias?
- Where do we see unconscious bias in the hiring process?
- Strategies for avoiding unconscious bias in the hiring process
- HSU action plan and next steps

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Describe why diversity is an important aspect of many initiatives at HSU
- Define unconscious bias and identify at least two ways it might impact the hiring process
- Identify at least two strategies for avoiding unconscious bias in the hiring process
- Understand how this workshop fits in to the larger Plan for Workplace Diversity at HSU

First steps: Why should we care?

- Why is diversity amongst our staff and administrators relevant to HSU, your department and colleagues, and our students?

CSU Chancellor's Office: "The CSU seeks to recruit, retain, and engage highly talented and diverse employees who will advance the CSU mission" (Oct 11, '13)

Why is a diverse staff/administration important to HSU?

- A few (of the many) reasons:
 - ▣ Our students (and colleagues) are asking for it
 - ▣ Diversity increases opportunities for creativity and the quality of the product of group work (Williams and O'Reilly 1998; DiTomaso et al 2007)
 - ▣ Empirical links between diversity & organizational performance (Page 2007)

What do we mean by “diversity”?

- **Ensuring equity across multiple dimensions of diversity** (age, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, social class, etc.)
- **Remedying under-representation** (gender, race, ethnicity)
- **Commitment to and/or experience with diversity** as a central qualification (and asset) for all positions on campus

Multiple Dimensions of Identity



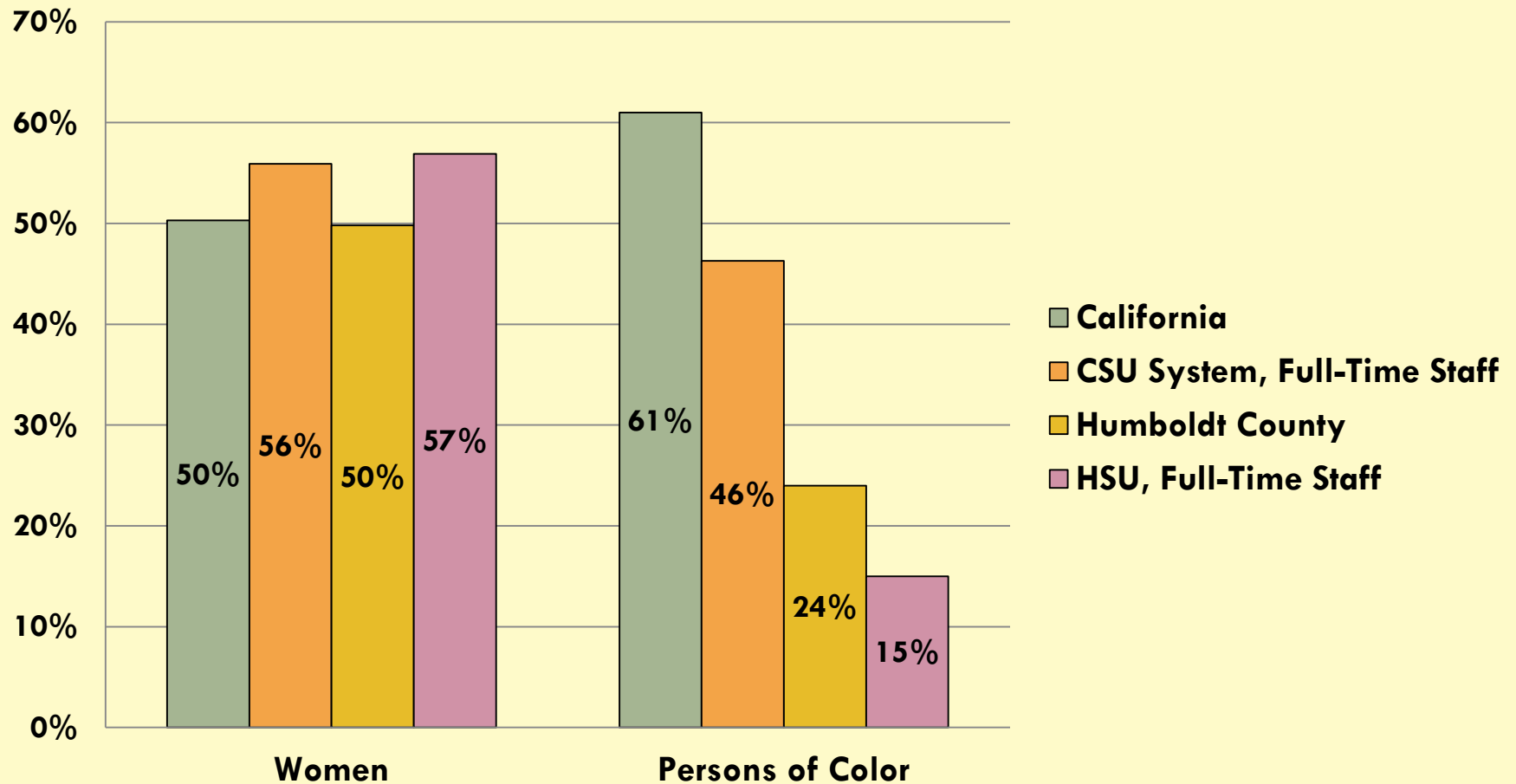
Adapted from: *Diversity Wheel*, Diversity Leadership Council, Johns Hopkins University

How to incorporate diversity in the hiring process?

- Broaden the **applicant pool**
 - *Attract the best, hire the best*
- Ensure **equity** in the search process
 - *Unconscious bias can prevent us from hiring the best person for the job*
- Hire individuals who bring **capacity** in this area

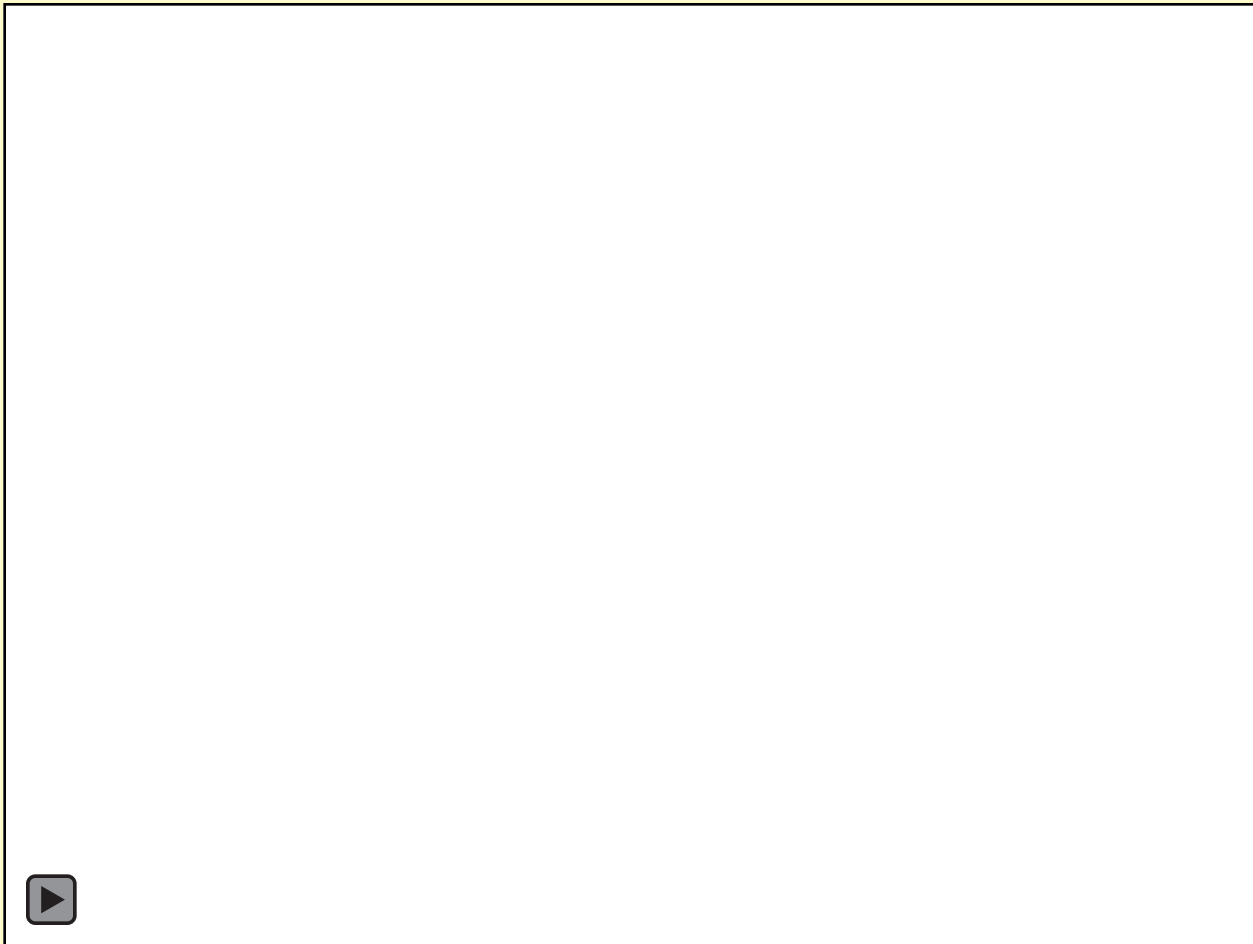
Staff Diversity @ HSU (overall)

Women and Persons of Color as Percentage of Population

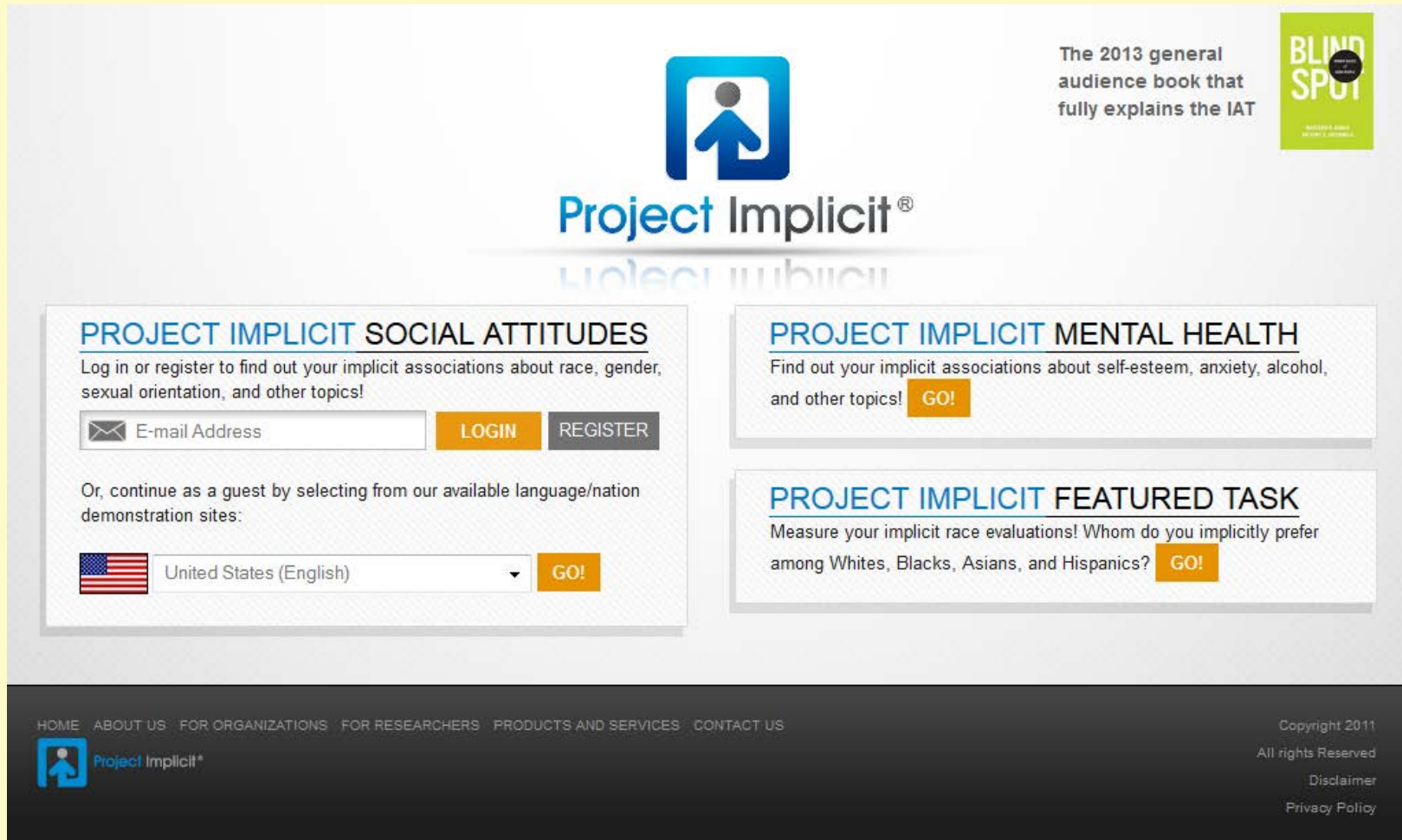


What's happening that creates
inequity in the search process?

What is “Unconscious Bias”?



What is “Unconscious Bias”?



The Project Implicit website interface features a central logo with a blue square containing a white figure with arms raised, and the text "Project Implicit®" below it. To the right, there is a promotional banner for the book "BLIND SPOT" with the text "The 2013 general audience book that fully explains the IAT".

The main content area is divided into three sections:

- PROJECT IMPLICIT SOCIAL ATTITUDES**: Includes a login/register form with an "E-mail Address" input field, "LOGIN" and "REGISTER" buttons, and a guest access option with a language/nation dropdown menu (currently set to "United States (English)") and a "GO!" button.
- PROJECT IMPLICIT MENTAL HEALTH**: Includes a "GO!" button to access tests about self-esteem, anxiety, and alcohol.
- PROJECT IMPLICIT FEATURED TASK**: Includes a "GO!" button to access a featured task about implicit race evaluations.

The footer contains navigation links: HOME, ABOUT US, FOR ORGANIZATIONS, FOR RESEARCHERS, PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, CONTACT US. It also includes the Project Implicit logo and text: "Copyright 2011 All rights Reserved Disclaimer Privacy Policy".

Test yourself: implicit.harvard.edu

Research shows clear evidence of unconscious bias...

- ...In **evaluations of applications**
 - ▣ By race and by gender
 - ▣ For positions at all levels
- ...In **feedback from references**
 - ▣ Emphasis on “ability to perform” vs. “communal” traits
 - ▣ Differences in length, quality, and # of “doubt raisers”

Where and how might unconscious bias enter the hiring process?

- ❑ Screening applicants
- ❑ Interviews
- ❑ Reference checks

How might unconscious bias manifest in the hiring process?

- Stereotypes – positive & negative
- The “cloning” mechanism
- Ungrounded assumptions & myths

What can we do to prevent bias from entering the hiring process?

- ❑ Screening applicants
- ❑ Interviews
- ❑ Reference checks

Going from “well-meaning” to “well-doing...”

How to avoid unconscious bias in the hiring process...

Reviewing applications...

- Evidence-based process

- Structured process/matrix evaluation
 - ▣ Intentionally considered definitions of excellence
 - ▣ Research concerns rather than speculating

How to avoid unconscious bias in the hiring process...

Reviewing applications...

- Slow down! (research shows this helps mitigate bias)
- Screen for candidates' demonstrated "*Ability to establish and maintain working relationships with staff, students, and faculty from diverse backgrounds*"
(tips for doing this available on blue handout)

How to avoid unconscious bias in the hiring process...

Interviewing process...

- Provide candidates what they need to do their best
- Go beyond first impressions
- Interrupt speculation and interpretation
- Be open to questioning our standards of measure
- Ask open-ended and follow-up questions

How to avoid unconscious bias in the hiring process...

Checking references...

- Account for possible bias in recommendations
- Obtain references from multiple sources (including former supervisors NOT listed as references)
- Follow-up on messages conveyed “between the lines”

Action plan and next steps...

...new recruitment processes

Plan for Workplace Diversity at HSU – AY 13/14

- Strategies for Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process workshop – required for all hiring authorities and search committee members as of January 1, 2014
- Intentional outreach efforts designed to broaden the breadth and diversity of our applicant pools
- Implement consistent language relative to diversity in vacancy announcements
- Data collection/analysis – applicant pools and new hires
- Resource website for hiring authorities and search committees



Human Resources

A Department of
Administrative Affairs

- HR Home
- Employee Information
- Evaluating Employees
- Job Vacancies
- Forms
- Payroll
- Compliance
- Recruitment Resources
- Discrimination Resources

Recruitment Resources

- [Staff Recruitment Handbook \(PDF\)](#)
- [Recruitment Forms](#)
- [Outreach Checklists and Resources](#)
- [Diversity in Recruitment](#)

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- HR Staff Directory

Diversity in Recruitment

Strategies for Avoiding Unconscious Bias in the Hiring Process Workshop

Resources from workshop required for all hiring authorities and search committee members.

- [Workshop Slides \(PDF\)](#)
- [Selected References List \(PDF\)](#)
- Visit the [Training and Professional Development](#) website to view upcoming workshop offerings

Template Language for Vacancy Announcements, by Job Category (PDF)

Offers suggestions for diversity-related vacancy announcement language. Hiring authorities should include **at least one** bullet point (adapted appropriately for the specific position and/or job category) that pertains to competency with diversity-related issues in the “Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities” section of each position announcement.

Tips for Evaluating Candidates’ Ability to Work With and Support Students from Diverse Backgrounds

Offers tips, suggestions, and strategies for hiring committees regarding how to evaluate this requirement in the interview and reference check process. Includes suggested interview and reference check questions.

This document will be shared with all search committee members at the initial meeting and is not available online.

Additional considerations....

- Diversity Search Advocates... coming in AY 14/15...

Interested? Sign up on clipboard circulating around the room!

Contact information and resources...

- Plan for Workplace Diversity at HSU – www.humboldt.edu/diversity
- Lanaya Gaberel, Training Coordinator, Human Resources
lanaya.gaberel@humboldt.edu or x5154 (to schedule workshop for your entire unit)
- Jim Stemach, Recruitment Coordinator, Human Resources
jim.stemach@humboldt.edu or x5177
- Melissa Meiris, Asst. Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
melissa.meiris@humboldt.edu or x4504
- Radha Webley, Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
radha.webley@humboldt.edu or x4502

Diversity as a core competency...

- **New HSU template language:** *HSU is committed to enriching its educational environment and its culture through the diversity of its staff, faculty, and administration. Persons with interest and experience in helping organizations set and achieve goals relative to diversity and inclusion are especially encouraged to apply.*

- **Vacancy announcements** will also include at least one bullet point (adapted for the position) that pertains to competency with diversity-related issues, such as:
 - Ability to establish and maintain working relationships with staff, students, and faculty from diverse backgrounds. (clerical support position)
 - Demonstrated knowledge and familiarity addressing issues of concern facing students from diverse backgrounds in higher education. (student services position)

The interview process...

Evaluating for competency with diversity in...

- Application files
- Interview and reference check questions

See “Tips” handout in your workshop folder.

(This resource will be shared with all search committees.)