

# HIRING EQUITY TOOLKIT

## RATIONALE FOR THE TOOLKIT

The Canadian Philosophical Association and many departments of philosophy in Canada are committed to increasing the representation of women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and aboriginal people among faculty members. (These four groups are those designated as underrepresented by the Federal Contractors' Program; this Toolkit will employ the commonplace shorthand, 'designated groups'.)

Important though it is to affirm this ideal, it is rather more difficult to achieve it in practice. Statistics gathered by the CPA Equity Committee show that while some departments have been successful in increasing the representation of these designated groups on faculty, most departments have at best had mixed success.

While the CPA Equity Committee will continue to encourage departments to strive to increase the representation of designated groups on faculty, we can perhaps help most by showing how member departments have actually taken concrete steps towards this goal. To that end, we initiated a survey of member departments that asked them to share information about the policies and practices employed in hiring; our goal was to assemble a toolkit of 'best hiring practices' to be made available to all members of the CPA, so that Departments that affirmed the ideal of increasing the representation of designated group members on faculty could enact concrete steps to further the ideal in particular hires.

This document represents the outcome of that survey, and our reflections upon it. We hope that this Hiring Equity Toolkit can remain a work in progress, so that as philosophy departments innovate to further diversity aims in their hiring practices, these innovations can be shared more broadly.

### *The Big Picture*

Many member Departments of the CPA share the goal of increasing the representation of women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and aboriginal people on faculty. However, respondents to our survey conveyed the complexities and difficulties of achieving this goal in practice, given factors such as the under-representation of members of designated groups in the profession in general and among respondents to particular job ads; the need to balance equity aims with other compelling goals, such as area coverage; and the competition for strong candidates between departments, so that even a search culminating in an offer to a designated group member often fails to culminate in a hire. Some of the responses indicated that departments often experience difficulties during the hiring process that affect their desire to respect principles of employment equity:

- “Fundamentally, the policy of the university remains one of ‘encouraging’ equity. The department of human resources gives us what appear, at first, to be very useful policy documents, but these documents are formulated in such vague way, underlining at most abstract plans, objectives, and directives. These documents do not help us much during our deliberations; we resort to using common sense to respect principles of employment equity. The fact that we have had success in recruiting female candidates is above all else a question of luck. The number of women applying is low, and amongst them are so few candidates with appropriate areas of specialisation and area of competence that it is difficult to form a short-list. Many star candidates withdraw their names before the interviews stage.”
- “... the department has no official plan requiring employment equity. Nevertheless, in our discussions, we take into account equity, above all else equity between the sexes, at all stages of the hiring process. For example, last year, 25 of 124 applicants were women. We made sure that women were over-represented: we placed four women on the short-list, and one of our two finalists was a woman. Throughout the hiring process, we discussed questions of equity, and while the department was not unanimous in its concerns, a majority of the department felt strongly that we should try to strength the representation of under-represented groups. I recognize that we must try harder to hire women.

Recently, with the hiring of a male candidate, and after many retirements, the department included only one woman.”

- “Our department has no policy specifically directed towards hiring target groups. There has always been a consensus in our department favouring hiring equity, and members of hiring committees must attend workshops on employment equity. Nevertheless, although the ratio between male and female members is good, there are no members from visible minorities or of First Nations communities among the permanent members of the Faculty, and I am certain that the department would like to take steps to fix that, if the opportunity were to come along in the immediate future to hire new faculty.”
- “Our department has set, as a goal, to have women make up 30% of our faculty, which means that we must hire, one, preferably, two, if not more, women. The percentage of female applicants has often been less than 30% (the number often cited as the percentage of women available on the job market). In spite of this shortage of applicants, during three of the last four searches, female candidates were on the short list. Nevertheless, each time the job was given to a white man. I do not know if a department can become known as a department that is ‘exclusively male’ or composed ‘exclusively of white men,’ which might stop potential female or minority candidates from applying. The last several years, the majority of our master’s students who were going on to doctoral programs were women, indicating that we have support from our female students.”
- “Our institution also wants to improve the representation [of equity seeking groups] while undertaking minimal measures of positive discrimination. This is reflected in our hiring practices, or at least in the way we go about recruiting. Our main problems are that we are a very small department, and that, especially in the case of female candidates, after the composition of a short-list, there is a shortage of candidates from the target group. It seems that we need to examine the under-representation of women to determine why there are so few female candidates.”

There is no single recipe for confronting these challenges effectively: each hire is different, and circumstances can vary dramatically between departments. So each department has to sort through the hiring equity measures that are appropriate to their situation, and the outcome of any given hire may not, on its own, be a particularly good indicator of the seriousness of a department’s commitment to redressing the under-representation of women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and aboriginal people among faculty members.

What is striking from responses to our survey, though, is that there is a great deal of scope for equity measures at a number of different points in the hiring process, from defining a position through advertising and networking strategies to approaches to deciding on longlists, shortlists, and offers. It is these sorts of concrete measures, rather than good intentions alone that are the measure of a department’s seriousness in redressing the under-representation of the above groups.

Our ‘Toolkit’ approach to hiring equity, then, is framed by one clear prescription:

**Departments that are serious in their commitment to hiring equity face an onus of justifying their hiring processes, at all stages, in light of the full range of alternative practices.**

Only some of the practices in this toolkit will be appropriate to a given department at a given time; departments ought to reflect, however, on the reasonableness of practices that diminish the probability of hiring members of designated groups.

## *Structure of the Toolkit*

Our survey asked departments to describe what they considered themselves to have done well in the course of recent hires, at the following phases of hiring:

1. Defining the position
2. Advertising
3. Networking and canvassing
4. Defining longlists and shortlists
5. Campus visits
6. Deliberating about an offer
7. The offer and the hire
8. Retention policies and practices

Discussion of various tools and approaches (drawing upon survey results, though without attribution to particular Departments) is supplemented by excerpts from Departmental and University equity policies / plans where these seem especially useful or innovative.

## THE TOOLKIT

### *1. Defining the position*

Decisions about defining a position can make a considerable difference to the prospects of hiring a member of a designated group, for a number of reasons:

- Positions with very limited candidate pools—for example, a job in a very narrow area of philosophy—may have a correspondingly limited chance of attracting appropriately qualified members of designated groups. So all else being equal, broadly defined positions may attract larger numbers of contenders from designated groups.
- Insofar as it is the case that members of designated groups are better represented in some subfields of philosophy than in others, choices as to position area influence the prospects for hiring designated group members. So, for example, a department advertising in feminist philosophy will have a proportionally greater chance of hiring a woman, and a department advertising in aboriginal philosophy a proportionally greater chance of hiring an aboriginal person. Such patterns may extend to other areas of philosophy as well, though claims (e.g. that women are better represented in ethics than in some other areas of philosophy) remain largely anecdotal. [Reliable evidence about the representation of designated group members across subfields would be tremendously valuable; if you're aware of such evidence, please let us know. We also hope that the CPA may, at some point in future, be able to gather such evidence.]
- Insofar as it is the case that members of designated groups are better represented in the junior than in the senior ranks of the profession, decisions about the rank at which a position is advertised influence the prospects for hiring members of designated groups.

A number of departments indicated that equity considerations are important in defining areas for hires.

- At the University of Alberta, for example, the Department of Philosophy's Hiring Equity Plan indicates that "Future permanent positions will not be advertised as slot replacement requiring a specifically-designated research expertise. The successful candidate will need teaching competence in areas needing coverage in the undergraduate curriculum, but we will consider the research programs of the applicants entirely on their own merits. Candidates will be selected on the basis of their accomplishments and promise in research and their ability to make a contribution to the graduate program...."

- At the University of Toronto, the Department of Philosophy's *past* Equity Hiring Plan noted that "Wherever possible, positions will be advertised either as open (possibly with some preferred teaching areas) or with broadly described areas of specialization."
- "We are an all-male department and so we have not been successful in attracting women (or other designated groups). We have had specific needs in our only tenure-track hire in the past 12 years that precluded defining, e.g., a position in anything other than our exact needs. We are, however, in the process of hiring [for a tenure-track position] which we are defining in such a way as to attract women."

Other departments feel themselves strongly limited in how they can advertise job openings:

- I doubt that we would ever modify a job posting because of the level of minority representation in the department. More than half of our department retired in the last decade, and the other half will be retiring in the next five years. Our priority has been to reconstruct the department to cover all essential areas of philosophy.

Overall, it seems important that departments reflect on how the definition of each position will affect prospects for hiring members of designated groups. This consideration will have to be weighed against others, but it should not be ignored.

Moreover, decisions at this stage of a hire, as at others, should take seriously what John Rawls has called the 'burdens of judgment': the room for reasonable disagreement about such things as the interpretation of evidence, the weighting of considerations, and the definition of concepts. Within this scope for reasonable disagreement (say about where a department's needs are strongest, or whether a teaching need dictates an area of specialization or of competence, or whether a retirement in a given area demands a replacement in that area), departments may appropriately allow equity considerations to be decisive. This is at least part of the rationale motivating some departments to define positions broadly: to opt for open rather than area-specific positions; or to express area needs in terms of teaching competence rather than AOS.

## 2. *Advertising the position*

Responses to our survey showed three aspects of advertising thought to be relevant to hiring equity.

First, many departments include 'boilerplate' ad wording that notes a commitment to hiring equity, for example:

- "Carleton University is committed to equality of employment for women, aboriginal peoples, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. Persons from these groups are actively encouraged to apply."
- "Concordia University is committed to employment equity and encourages applications from women, aboriginal peoples, visible minorities, and disabled persons."
- "The University of Alberta hires on the basis of merit. We are committed to the principle of equity of employment. We welcome diversity and encourage applications from all qualified women and men, including persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and Aboriginal persons."

Second, many departments seek to advertise not only in the obvious venues (APA Jobs for Philosophers, CAUT Bulletin, University Affairs), but in venues that communicate a department's commitment to faculty diversity (e.g. APA Newsletter on Feminism, FEAST listserv, SWIP-L):

- “The nomination committee shall seek to have advertisements diffused widely, including in outlets that to a commitment to equity in hiring.”
- “The Equity Committee [encourages] the Department to keep equity aims in mind in its advertising and networking efforts for future hires. Included in this goal might be publicizing the post through publications and electronic forums that are likely to signal our seriousness about recruiting members of designated groups (e.g. electronic lists for American and Canadian Societies for Women in Philosophy, etc.)”

Third, some departments go beyond ‘boilerplate’ wording in seeking to communicate their genuine interest in applications from members of designated groups. For example,

- “We’ve explicitly mentioned that feminist work counts in our job ads. So, for example, when advertising in ethics we said in the ad that this includes feminist and historical approaches. We worried that otherwise we might miss out on good applicants from these areas.”
- “We will formulate our job advertisements so as to make clear that we are particularly interested in attracting qualified candidates from the designated groups.” (University of Toronto’s Equity Hiring Plan)

### 3. *Networking and canvassing*

Much of the work of publicizing and soliciting applications for faculty positions takes place not through formal advertisements, but through informal networking. This informal networking doesn’t always serve goals of employment equity (e.g. the ‘old boys network’), but a number of departments have sought to use informal channels to increase the representation of designated group members in hiring pools:

- “We’ve had much success the last few years in hiring women and visible minorities.... Most of this success has come about through active recruiting—we’ve made sure that the pools contained candidates who were (1) enormously strong and (2) fulfilled our diversity aims.”
- “Our equity plan specifies that there should be active recruitment of designated groups for positions. We’ve taken this extremely seriously in recent years: there’s been assiduous networking by members of department, with representation of designated groups as the primary consideration.”
- “Word of mouth is believed to remain the best way of getting designated group applicants.”

Some departments have gone beyond having their members use existing networks to get applications from under-represented groups: they’ve sought to canvass for designated group members who are on the job market or potentially ‘moveable’, and worked to contact these potential applicants.

- “For at least some positions (including senior positions) there’s been a systematic canvassing of directories of philosophers to identify possible designated group candidates, followed by invitations to those candidates.”
- “We will engage in active searching and recruitment of promising members of the designated groups emerging from graduate programs or holding postdoctoral fellowships or faculty positions.” (University of Toronto Equity Hiring Plan)
- “...efforts should also be made to advertise with associations or contact groups that serve directly the members of the designated groups. This type of outreach recruitment is especially important in situations where a significant under-representation of one or more designated groups has been noted in the area in which the position arises. If no or few applications are received from members of

designated groups, the Committee should consider a second round of advertisements including more direct approaches to suitable persons.” (University of Western Ontario Equity Plan)

- “Subject to goals being achieved and prior to making any...appointments, the Employer shall make a positive attempt in good faith to recruit women candidates....this shall include: (1) contact with the persons Chairing relevant University Departments in Canada requesting the names of possible candidates and specifically asking them to suggest names of men and women candidates; (2) contact asking for suggestions from organizations within the profession or discipline which specifically represent the interests of Women in the profession or discipline; the names of these organizations shall be provided by the Union to the Employer; (3) contact requesting nominations from all women members of academic staff in the academic unit and related disciplines within the university.” (Brandon University Equity Plan)
- “Organizations within the profession or discipline that specifically represent the interests of women will either be asked to provide names of qualified women who could be invited to apply for the position or have advertisement sent to them for circulation.” (Lakehead University Equity Plan)

A further measure for recruiting candidates—though one that requires a long-term vision—is to invite promising new PhDs from designated groups to take up postdocs at one’s institution, funded by SSHRC or other funds.

#### 4, *Defining longlists and shortlists*

Once a position is defined and advertised, the applications roll in: departments are faced with the challenge of moving from tens or hundreds of dossiers to a list of those who will be invited for campus visits. There’s tremendous diversity in the principles and practices that departments use to narrow the pool, and thus a great deal of room for any given department to reflect upon the criteria and processes they use.

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A first variable involves the number of candidates who can be interviewed: where the number is small, this may discourage risk-taking in narrowing the pool. One survey respondent noted APA interviews as a useful instrument:

- “Interviewing at the APA has helped broaden our short list. When we’re forced immediately to choose 3 or 4 people to bring to campus our most conservative instincts win out. But if there’s room for a dozen people on the list we’re a bit more adventurous.”

Another department made full use of funding from their university for designated group candidates:

- “Our University has a number of employment equity-related funds, which can be used for advertising in unconventional venues and, more significantly, to fund a campus visit for a designated group candidate who might not be in our top two or three.”

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A number of respondents described requirements imposed on departments to include designated group members on shortlists, or to justify their absence:

- “The dean expects to see women on the short list for every position and if there isn’t one, She asks for the top-ranking female candidate’s CV before she signs off on the short list. She also interviews all candidates, so she can step in if she thinks the department’s recommendation doesn’t conform to the principles of equity.”

- “If there is no female or visible minority candidate on the short list, the Department is pressed to justify its list by the central equity office. In other words, the presumption is that there will be at least one female and/or visible minority candidate on the short list, and exceptions must be justified.”
- “Where there are no female applicants for a faculty position, or where the Personnel Committee determines a short-list which does not contain at least 40% (minimum of 2) female candidates, the Dean shall be immediately advised. In such cases, the Dean may require an extension of the competition deadline, additional advertising, and/or such other measures as are deemed appropriate. In addition and where possible, the Dean may require that at least one female applicant be placed on the short-list.” (Trent University Equity Plan)

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Developing longlists and shortlists is a necessarily clumsy exercise: one attempts to balance a wide range of considerations in the face of uncertainties and disagreements in judgment.

A number of respondents to our survey described steps taken by search committees to make sure that members don't employ criteria biased against members of designated groups:

- “In its hiring, the Department will have to deal with issues of qualification and evaluation which are less than straightforward. The introduction of women and minorities has resulted, for example, in increased interest in social and political philosophies, especially those dealing with exploitation and liberation, and in the relationship of particular discursive forms to the exercise of power. In the past, such specializations have not met with much sympathy amongst those who assess candidates for jobs. At worst, such interests may be judged in advance as unphilosophical, and even marginally unusual writing styles may be judged inappropriate. At best, staff members may feel ill-equipped to evaluate candidates in unfamiliar areas. In any case, departments, especially those in which there has been little or no junior hiring for many years, tend to have difficulty in hiring faculty members significantly different from themselves no matter how good their intentions.” (1993 Hiring Equity Plan, Department of Philosophy, University of Alberta)
- The Dean “urges chairs to instruct committee members on how to read CVs critically (for example, not to see career interruptions for having children or late entry into philosophy as signs of a ‘weaker’ candidate).”
- “On committees that I've been on, I have been forced to stress to other members of the committee that feminist perspectives on the AOS and AOC are legitimate philosophical perspectives.”
- “The Committee focuses not just on women's representation but on that of other designated groups. In a general way, the Committee shall remain vigilant to avoid all discrimination toward underrepresented groups.”
- “The review of applications for a position and compilation of a short list of candidates is a key process in Employment Equity efforts. Quite often, numerous applications must be reviewed in a short period of time, inviting the use of a decision-making process based on less-than-equitable considerations. A natural tendency is to look for graduates of certain prestigious universities, for applicants with a substantial number of presented papers or articles published in high-profile journals, or for applicants with extensive teaching experience. A degree from a university outside North America or Europe, or a publication in a journal from outside North America or Europe, or in a language other than English or French, cannot be assumed to be of lesser value. While the identification of high-performing applicants is, of course, legitimate and desirable, an uncritical ‘check-mark’ approach to narrowing the field, though efficient, risks perpetuating existing biases of the system through favouring groups of applicants who are most likely to be in a position to fit the ‘target profile’. Search Committees should reflect on this traditional target profile and whether it is appropriate. Committees must avoid bias

against scholarship that is unconventional, outside the mainstream of the discipline, or focused on issues of gender, race or minority status.

- There may be good reasons why a given candidate has not attended the prestigious university B including, perhaps, lack of financial resources, family obligations, or the biases inherent in that university's processes for accepting students. The explanation for the poor representation of women in tenurable positions in the past generations at this and other universities includes, along with systemic (often unconscious) discrimination within the academy, the reality and perception that an academic life was 'simply not a good prospect' for women. Self-selection, experience and environmentally-coerced choices often result in rather few women even aiming at such a career.
- It is important for Committee members to make a real effort to be alert and open-minded when reviewing applications. The Committee should be open to non-standard categories of competence and consider experiences or qualifications that are outside of the mainstream; it needs to remain conscious of the real needs of the position, not just of the traditional profile. Résumés which might be discarded using the traditional checklist approach may contain numerous relevant attributes not previously considered. Factors that Committee members should keep in mind when reviewing applications include: (i) career gaps for family, maternity or paternity leave; (ii) alternative work experiences; (iii) other non-standard profiles including experiences and qualifications outside the norm." (University of Western Ontario Equity Plan)

Other respondents noted ways in which their department allowed the scope for reasonable disagreement—that is, the inevitable zone of uncertainty about candidates—to weigh in favour of members of designated groups as longlists and/or shortlists are assembled.

- "We are always looking for candidates from underrepresented groups who are as good as or nearly as good as the best overall candidates. We ensure that any remotely likely member of a designated group gets careful consideration. Beyond that, there is nothing to be done. Members of such groups have to come out at or very near the top of the competition. We go a bit further than 'all other things being equal' but not much and it is very much a matter of individual judgment for each committee member."
- "In adopting the [past equity] reports, the Department has identified a number of reasons for overtly seeking to hire women and visible minorities as permanent faculty. Given the complexities of evaluating qualifications and departmental needs, and the equity dimensions of these complexities..., it seems particularly important not to eliminate at early stages of competition potentially strong candidates from 'designated groups'. This suggests an onus in favour of retaining on longlists and shortlists the names of women and minority candidates who are competitive on a broad reading of acceptable qualifications and styles of work, strength of letters of recommendation and institutional affiliations, construals of the discipline, and so on. This also suggests that preferences and perceived departmental needs around subfields and specializations within the discipline should operate as criteria of elimination for women and minority candidates from longlists only where we're convinced that there is no plausible case to be made that a candidate's teaching and research could contribute meaningfully to the Department." (1998 Equity Report, Department of Philosophy, University of Alberta)
- "In selecting applicants who will be invited for interview, search committees shall include the names of any candidate from a designated group who, if they performed very well at the interview, would be viewed as competitive with other interviewed candidates." (Queen's University collective agreement)

## 5. *Campus visits*

How might equity considerations inform practices surrounding candidates' visits to campus? Points mentioned by survey respondents fall into a number of categories.

First are measures designed to ensure fairness and legality during formal interviews:

- "Regulations remind the Committee of prohibited questions (e.g. marital status), and to avoid discrimination."
- "Candidates shall be evaluated with due recognition given to legitimate differences between the careers of men and women. These differences include but are not limited to the effects of primary responsibilities for family care and related career interruptions, part-time education and work history." (Lakehead University Equity Plan)
- "In the evaluation of candidates for appointment, applicants shall not be disadvantaged by reason of career interruptions caused by family responsibilities." (Brandon University Equity Plan)
- "During the interview process, all candidates must be given an equal opportunity to make their best presentations for the position. The Committee would be wise to prepare in advance a series of set questions which are to be asked of all candidates where possible, with the responses of each candidate carefully noted and rated independently by each member of the Committee. Each interview question should have a specific job-related purpose. In instances where areas of expertise vary among candidates, making this difficult, the same types of questions should be asked of each candidate. Questions should be equitable in and of themselves and should relate directly to the requirements of the position to be filled. Candidates should be given sufficient opportunity to answer each question without interruption.

Interviews should be conducted with sensitivity to issues related to cross-cultural communication. The most obvious of these may be speech itself. Differences in accents and speech patterns may lead to direct or indirect discrimination against an excellent candidate, an outcome all members of the committee must guard against. The committee must also be conscious of more subtle cultural-communication issues. In some cultures, for example, 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. Some cultures look askance at self-promotion and members of that culture are more likely to credit others for their successes than to credit themselves. Care should be taken to ensure that Committee members are tolerant of different interactional styles and that such behaviours are not interpreted inappropriately by some members of the Appointments Committee as a lack of self-confidence or an inability to meet the requirements of the position. Such behaviours may appear to indicate a lack of self-confidence, but is self-confidence a bona fide occupational requirement?

If a candidate is a person with a disability, that disability must be accounted for both in the provision of effective accommodation so that the person is comfortably capable of completing the interview and in allowing the person to display fully his or her qualifications for the position.

The considerations outlined above apply not only to the candidates, but to members of the Appointments Committee. All contributing Committee members must be given equal and adequate opportunity to participate in each interview and in all decision-making. How Committee members themselves interact and treat each other will be a significant reflection on the Faculty or Department. All members should be free to voice their individual points of view and to interact with the candidate, all the while being treated with respect by the other members. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Committee to ensure this happens.

- The interview should focus on whether or not the candidate is capable of meeting the bona fide requirements of the position, and efforts should be made to eliminate subtle biases (based on race, age, gender, ethnic background, disability) from the interview process and from all decision-making.” (University of Western Ontario Equity Plan)
- University policy that each hiring/renewal/tenure & promotion committee must “have as a member an ‘Equity Assessor’ who is assigned by a central equity office. The EA is non-voting, but must be present at all meetings and submits a report on the equity of the department’s procedures and actions to the central equity office.... Also, all committees must have at least one female member.” (University of Windsor Equity Plan)
- “Where women faculty are available they shall be encouraged to participate on Appointment Committees. When there is no female member in an Academic unit, the Dean may select a female member from available female faculty.” (Lakehead University Equity Plan)

Second are issues around ensuring that the visit as a whole, including its informal aspects, don’t unfairly disadvantage or discourage designated group candidates:

- “Interviews have, almost without exception, involved a lot of contact time with candidates who are typically met at the airport and delivered to their hotels, driven to the university, taken on a campus tour, etc. Often they are taken for a drive around the city as well and are usually treated to dinner with members of the hiring committee. We have been encouraged to save money, when possible, by having candidates come in for a Friday interview and stay over until Sunday so as to take advantage of discount airfares. When we have done this we have felt obliged to spend more time with candidates while they kill a Saturday waiting for their flight home. The problem with such an approach is that a lot of unstructured time is spent with candidates and the chances are greatly increased that factors irrelevant to qualifications and ability to do the job begin to creep into the hiring decision. I have been moving toward the view that the best practice for campus visits might be to inform candidates what time and place they are to appear for their interview, let them make their own travel arrangements and minimize the hospitality. This, I suspect, is what professional human resources people would advocate and could well make for fairer hiring decisions.”
- “We try to ensure that comments and questions on papers are done in a way that gives each candidate the maximum chance to show his or her full potential. In practice, this means adjusting the intensity of the questioning (without changing the content).”
- “The Committee must remember at all times that the interview process is a formal one, even when events (such as dinners) occur off campus. Because of the desire to make the candidate comfortable, and in an effort to get to know that individual, the conversation may naturally move into areas such as the candidate’s family or personal background. Committee members should feel free to follow the conversation where it may be led by the candidate, but they should be sure to keep the conversation balanced, avoiding too much focus on these 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.... Keep in mind that these requirements extend beyond the ‘formal’ interview. The process must be equitable throughout. Some departments will have the candidate meet informally with members of the department who are not members of the Committee itself. Although these sessions are meant to be more informal, they are nevertheless part of the formal interview process. It is the Committee’s responsibility to ensure that those individuals are also aware of their responsibilities and obligations under Human Rights and Equity Legislation as the Committee will be accountable for any violations that take place during these sessions. Any social occasions associated with the interview process must also be approached with equity considerations in mind. The Committee should ensure that both interview and dinner committees are diverse. Be certain to avoid making any assumptions about the individual’s family status, visible minority status, etc.” (University of Western Ontario Equity Plan)

Third is the need to impress candidates with the city and/or university and/or department so that they'll be more inclined to accept an offer should one be forthcoming:

- “[Our University] has a staff person specifically responsible for helping to recruit and settle in new appointees. S/he is responsible for providing information about, among other topics, local healthcare, housing, schools--all items that women in particular (who are often considered responsible for these things in their families) may be interested in. [In one case,] a candidate mentioned in her letter that she was the mother of a baby. When she made the short-list ... the department Head offered to arrange a visit for her to the campus daycare centre. She was very pleased with this initiative.”
- “We've changed our approach to the campus visit. We take the time to show people around the city and entertain them on the weekend. We realize we have to sell [our city] to job candidates.”
- “Strong candidates will likely have rival offers, so we recognize the importance of selling ourselves to them: we take them out for good meals, have them into people's homes, try to have them see a lot of the city, and meet a lot of people from within the department and beyond. We also try to set up social meetings with faculty from across the university who would be likely peers and/or collaborators across disciplines, and who represent the diversity present on campus.”

Fourth are measures designed to ensure that candidates are evaluated on qualities relating to the diversity of constituencies served by a department:

- “All candidates [should be] asked during their interview whether they are willing and competent to supervise a master's or PhD student who wants to write on feminist perspectives in their area of philosophy.”
- “There's been a movement in the department to focus on more than prestige degrees and publications: we look carefully at documented teaching abilities, and ask questions about how candidates deal with gendered dynamics in the classroom, about their mentoring strategies with students, etc.”

## 6. *Deliberating about an offer*

A number of respondents noted procedures that gave preferential treatment to designated group members where contests are close. For example:

- “When our department as a whole ranks candidates (in an advisory capacity to the Dean's hiring committee), we use a ‘cluster’ system: where two or more candidates are quite closely ranked based on voting, they are considered to be in a cluster. Within a given cluster, a candidate from a designated group is treated preferentially; however members of designated groups from lower clusters do not take precedence over members of non-designated groups from higher clusters.”
- “The key to selection criteria is the following: ‘Among qualified candidates, a non-designated group candidate must have qualifications and experience judged to be substantially better suited for the position than a designated group candidate for him/her to be offered the position’.”
- “In no case will we lower our standards in order to fill a position. Merit remains the primary criterion for appointment; however, membership in a designated group is a further criterion to be considered in the context of this plan. Both criteria will be taken into account in deciding whether to postpone an appointment in order to attract a larger pool of qualified applicants from the designated groups.” (Department of Philosophy Equity Hiring Plan, University of Toronto)

- “Evaluation of candidates shall be based on objective job-related criteria. The candidate who is clearly best shall be recommended, but where no male candidate is clearly better, then the best female candidate shall be recommended until the academic unit has met...employment goals...” (Brandon University Equity Plan)

### 7. *The offer and the hire*

Two preoccupations emerged in responses. The first is not specifically related to hiring equity, but has to do with ensuring that communications with a candidate who has received an offer maximize chances that the offer will be accepted. Second, though, are steps to ensure that members of designated groups aren't disadvantaged in their negotiations over salary and working conditions.

- “There is at least anecdotal evidence that women fare less well than men at our university when it comes to negotiating starting salaries. And independently of this, women considering offers from our department have on occasion expressed concerns about negotiating a fair offer. Women in this situation have been put in touch with women already working at the university; this has allowed the woman negotiating to understand the system, know what's possible, and see that they're not being short-changed along gendered lines.”
- “Details of this are governed by the collective agreement, with starting salaries dictated by a formula based on the candidate's age and number of years of university teaching experience since the PhD. There is a small amount of range allowed for negotiation.”

### 8. *Retention policies and practices*

No detailed responses in this category were received in our survey. Here as elsewhere, we'd be pleased to hear from Departments about their best practices, and will use any submissions received to update the Toolkit from time to time.

## ADDENDUM

### *Contributing departments*

Twenty-five departments responded to our survey, and many included relevant Departmental and University equity plans with their responses. Special thanks is due to those departments that have taken time to describe particular hiring equity practices, and to share relevant documents (we hope that this list will continue to grow, and have provided a link below for those who wish to contribute, or update their contributions):

- Brandon University
- Carleton University
- Concordia University
- Dalhousie University
- Lakehead University
- Malaspina University College
- Queen's University
- Trent University
- Université de Montréal
- Université Laurentienne
- Université Laval
- University College of Cape Breton
- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Guelph
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Toronto
- University of Waterloo
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Windsor

Thanks as well to Paul Dumouchel and Louise Morel of the CPA for their support in undertaking the survey.

### *A note on departmental and university equity policies*

A number of respondents were good enough to return copies of their Departmental or University equity plans. The most salient elements of these are found above. Looking at the ensemble of equity plans, one finds the following in many of them:

- Commitments to formal non-discrimination in hiring and promotion;
- Commitments to increasing the representation of members of designated groups on faculty;
- Provisions for goal-setting around representation of designated groups within departments;
- Provisions to ensure that some or all members of hiring committees have training in employment equity, and/or knowledge of the relevant university policies.
- Requirements around the presence of designated groups in applicant pools, on shortlists, and among hirings. And the requirement that when designated group members are absent, or not present in sufficient numbers, this be explicitly explained or justified.

### *A note on quotations and attributions*

Our 2003 survey of Canadian departments of philosophy was typically responded to by Chairs or Heads of Departments; in some cases, departmental equity officers responded. Because these responses reflect individual accounts of best practices rather than official statements of department or university policies, they are quoted without attribution.

We also requested that respondents include copies of university and/or departmental equity plans. Because these are documents that have presumably been officially ratified by the relevant bodies, where quoting from them we have indicated the source.

### *Toolkit authors*

This Hiring Equity Toolkit was a project of the CPA's 2002 and 2003 Equity Committees. Its primary organizer and author was David Kahane of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Alberta. Translation was by Ryoa Chung of the Département de philosophie at the Université de Montréal.

The report was edited and ratified by the 2003 Equity Committee: Carolyn McLeod (Chair), Rachel Brown, Ryoa Chung, David Kahane, and Christine Overall. Further revisions were done by Christine Daigle in 2006 and by Kevin W. Gray and Guillaume Beaulac in 2010.

Updates will be the responsibility of future Equity Committees, with the help of Canadian departments that submit comments.

### *Contribute your views*

It's the hope of the Toolkit authors that this document will be modified as time goes by, based on input from Canadian departments and their members.

Please share your thoughts on the Toolkit by contacting the CPA ([acpa@ustpaul.ca](mailto:acpa@ustpaul.ca)). We especially encourage representatives of Canadian departments to submit accounts of hiring practices that have worked for them in equity terms, along with copies of departmental and university hiring policies.

### *Past CPA Equity Reports*

The CPA Equity Committee is mandated to conduct periodic surveys of hiring in Canadian departments and to report to the Association based on these. Please visit the CPA web site at [www.acpcpa.ca](http://www.acpcpa.ca).