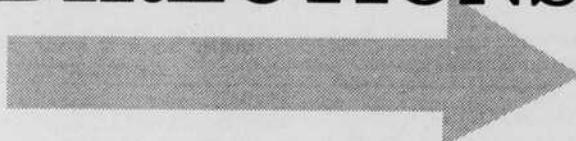


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University of Oregon
Fall 1996

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University hopes to increase minority hiring, retention

■ **DIVERSITY:** The percentage of minority hires has been growing in recent years

By Ben Kwasney
Higher Education Reporter

Not all recruiting involves the football or basketball teams. The University seeks faculty of color to help fulfill its educational goals.

"When we talk about recruiting, it is not at all like recruiting for football players," said Kenneth Lehrman, director of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity for the University. "We don't go visit their homes and take them out to dinner, meet their parents and bring them on campus for a football game," he said.

"One thing we do is put a strong emphasis on recruitment by way of seeking out potential applicants of color," said Lehrman.

Lehrman said one way people of color are recruited is that advertisements might be placed in a non-traditional medium aimed at minority candidates.

"That sends a message to faculty of color that we just don't talk the talk, but that we are genuinely interested in attracting minority applicants," he said.

Lorraine Davis, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs, said recruitment and retention of faculty of color are separate issues.

"Recruitment is one thing, retention is another," Davis said.

Because of issues related to recruitment and retention, the Underrepresented Minority Recruitment Program was initiated two years ago.

The program is supplemented by a statewide board initiative and the chancellor's office. When a department hires a minority tenure-track faculty member, that department receives \$90,000 per year for a minimum of three years or another financial structure can be implemented. A tenure-track faculty member is one who is scheduled for tenure in six years and is reviewed by department after three years.

Davis said the money is allocated for support of the minority faculty member. Uses for the funds include research funding, connections to other scholars and equipment.

Lehrman said often the money is used to hire adjunct professors. He said an effort to reduce the teaching load of a new hire is made, increasing the chances of that person reaching tenure.

"We use this program to try to be of assistance in every area of tenure-related teaching hires," said Davis.

The percentage of new tenure-track hires at the University continues to increase yearly. In 1994, only 11 percent of faculty appointments were minorities, compared with 32 percent of available positions through this August offered to minorities.

"The numbers aren't wonderful

When we talk about recruiting, it is not at all like recruiting for football players. We don't go visit their homes and take them out to dinner...

— Kenneth Lehrman
Director of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

yet," said Gwen Steigelman, planning manager for the Affirmative Action Office.

In 1995 only 8.1 percent of faculty in instructional areas were classified as Asian or Pacific Islander, African-American, Hispanic or Native American.

Of the 75 reported faculty of color in instructional areas, 92 percent were Asian and Hispanic.

She said although there has been a concerted effort to hire minorities, factors such as economics and the surrounding environment make it difficult to recruit minorities. Eugene has a 6.8 percent minority rate, lower than several competing locales.

Women hires have dropped off since 1994. In that year, 52 percent of appointments were women compared to 34 percent through last August.

When a faculty position opens, a search committee of professionals narrows the entire list of applicants to a short list of approximately three. At that time, the Office of Affirmative Action releases information regarding the candidate's race.

"What we can do legally is to use race or ethnicity as a plus in someone's candidacy," said Lehrman.

If three candidates possess near equal qualifications, then minority or female status breaks a tie. He said to do any more than use race and ethnicity as a plus would lead to possible reverse discrimination suits.

"That plus can break a tie because of the diversity that candidate has to offer that the other white male candidates don't have to offer," said Lehrman.

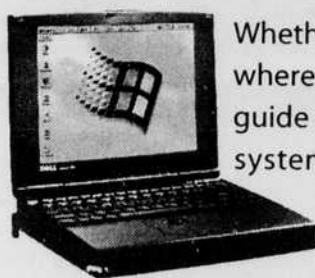
University policy statement 3.140 states: "Their presence on the faculty will help University of Oregon students to develop as educated men and women who will make their contributions in our complex, racially and ethnically diverse society."

The policy procedures state that if women or minorities are included on the short list, then they should be chosen, unless it is determined that some other candidate is demonstrably better qualified.

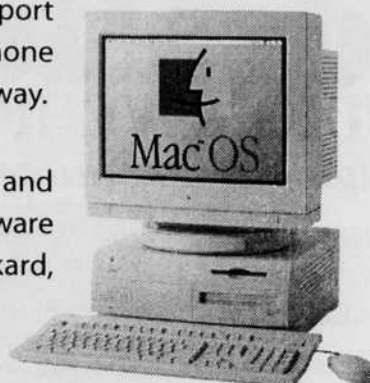
"We haven't leap-frogged a less qualified candidate over a more qualified candidate," said Lehrman.



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