

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Interview Questions and Rubrics

As search committee chairs work to identify new hires who demonstrate commitments and capacities to contribute to the College of Engineering's mission, vision and inclusive excellence goals we have provided sample questions and rubrics to support your efforts. We encourage you to use as many as the questions as appropriate to evaluate and assess each candidate.

1. Please share with us what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to you, why they're important to advance in this position, and ways that you might do that.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion have very broad meaning. Candidates will at the very least share that each term has a different meaning and explain merit in each of these concepts as well as specific personal strategies to foster them in the workplace.

2. Demonstrated Commitment/actions taken
 - a. As a higher education professional, what steps have you taken to increase awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion and to mitigate your biases at work?
 - b. What diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts/initiatives have you been involved in where you played a significant role? What were the outcomes of those efforts/initiatives?
 - c. What does it mean for you to have a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion? How have you demonstrated that commitment in your work?

Candidates should demonstrate continued learning about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and ways to mitigate bias. We hope that candidates will share steps they have consistently taken throughout multiple aspects of their work to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is important that they highlight their own actions and personal accountability to promote a welcoming and equitable climate. If individuals speak in broad terms, encourage them to provide an example.

3. What does it mean to you to be effective in an environment that values diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Candidates should demonstrate shared responsibility and accountability to effectively advance diversity, equity, and inclusion, and provide specific examples/strategies of what they do currently and will do in the future.

4. In your opinion, what is the most challenging aspect of working in a diverse environment? How do you navigate that?

Candidates response should reflect they are aware of the challenges that can arise in diverse environments, but that they are capable of appropriately addressing those challenges. If they do not provide ways that they would address those challenges, ask them for an approach they have used.

5. What is your approach to understanding the perspectives of colleagues from different backgrounds?

We hope to hire colleagues that will thrive in a diverse work environment. An article in the Harvard Business Review explains that working on diverse teams produces stronger outcomes. Candidates should share previous experiences of building a bridge of understanding between colleagues.

6. Student Engagement

- a. Provide specific examples how you have helped students from underrepresented backgrounds feel included and valued both in and outside of the classroom.
- b. What are some strategies you've used to encourage students from different backgrounds to collaborate with one another inside and/or outside of the classroom?
- c. How do you draw upon your student's prior knowledge, backgrounds, and lived experiences in order to inform your work?
- d. How do you affirm and engage diverse perspectives in your work?
- e. Tell me about an instance where you adapted your approach in order to work more effectively with students who have identities that are different from yours?

Candidates should emphasize the importance of intentionally including and advancing diverse representation, perspectives, and experiences and continually learning and adapting their approach. Encourage candidates to provide specific strategies/examples they have found effective.

7. Bias Interruption:

- a. How would you handle a situation where a colleague or student was being culturally insensitive, sexist, racist, or homophobic?
- b. How have you responded when a colleague has interrupted/talked over another colleague from an underrepresented background?
- c. What strategies/tools have you used in the past to interrupt bias? What was the outcome?

Our goal is to hire candidates who will actively advance a welcoming environment where all employees feel respected and valued. Candidates who rate high in this area demonstrate ways they have and/or will actively stand up against biased remarks and actions. If candidates simply share that they would interrupt/speak-up, encourage them to share their approach (ask how).

8. How would you advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion with colleagues who don't understand its importance?

As we continue the work to make our campus truly reflect [inclusive excellence](#) and the [university values](#) we may encounter individuals who do not understand the

importance of workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is our hope candidates will express and interest and willingness translate values and beliefs into action.

9. Management

- a. Can you give me an example of how you make your direct reports feel a sense of inclusion, belonging, and equity on a daily basis?
- b. Please describe your experiences recruiting, hiring, training, and/or supervising a diverse workforce.
- c. What steps will you take to eliminate bias from your hiring process?

It is the expectation that those in management and leadership roles value and embrace inclusion for all employees as well as serve as champions. Those applying for leadership positions should have clear and specific examples of proactively working to make the environment a friendlier place where everyone feels encouraged to contribute and feels positive about their opportunities for growth, regardless of their background.

We all have subconscious biases. Candidates should have a sense of awareness of their biases and share steps they will take to proactively avoid/address them when serving on search and hiring committees. Encourage candidates to provide specific personal examples rather than use broad statements of commitment.

Awareness/Understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	
1	Limited indication of efforts to educate self about diversity topics in higher education. Vaguely describes the importance of diversity. Uncomfortable discussing diversity-related issues. Unaware of demographic data about diversity in specific disciplines or in higher education.
2	Limited awareness or understanding of historical and systemic challenges underrepresented individuals in higher education face and the factors influencing underrepresentation of particular groups in academia. May speak in broad terms and reference institutional efforts/commitment.
3	Demonstrates some qualities consistent with weak and strong characteristics. May provide personal examples regarding trainings/increased awareness but does not demonstrate how they applied what they learned inside and outside of the classroom.
4	Understands and is knowledgeable of diversity from either personal experience or education about the experiences of those with identities different from one's own. Is comfortable talking about race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and other identities, specific actions taken to decrease bias and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion, demonstrates ongoing commitment to learning and action.

5	<p>Sophisticated understanding of differences stemming from ethnic, socioeconomic, racial, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and cultural backgrounds and the obstacles people from these backgrounds face in higher education. Deeply believes that diversity, equity, and inclusion is important, demonstrates humility and commitment to continued growth.</p> <p>Familiar with demographic data relevant in higher education. Provides examples of programs to address climate or underrepresentation. Provides examples of initiatives, programming, and policies they have engaged in to advance inclusive excellence.</p> <p>Understands challenges experienced by underrepresented individuals in higher education. Addresses why it's important for staff and faculty to contribute to meeting the above challenges and will be a change-agent for the organization.</p>
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Experience Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

1	<p>Description of efforts are brief or vague. May share efforts in their prior organization but does not share personal efforts.</p> <p>May have attended a workshop or read books, but does not demonstrate how they applied what they learned to enhance a welcoming climate for all.</p>
2	<p>Limited experience or plans for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion. May share a personal story/training that contributed to their growth rather than consistent actions across multiple areas of their work.</p>
3	<p>Shows aspects of weak and strong characteristics. May have attended several activities (conferences, student organizations, trainings, talks).</p>
4	<p>Shows commitment to addressing diversity, equity, inclusion in multiple aspects of their work. Provides personal examples/strategies used with outcomes.</p>
5	<p>Significant direct experience advancing diversity, equity and inclusion through multiple aspects of their work. Examples may include advising an organization supporting underrepresented individuals; facilitating a workshop promoting DEI; leading a college-wide/organization-wide DEI initiative or program; creating and implementing strategies and/or pedagogy to encourage a respectful class environment for underrepresented students; organizing equity minded student activities and programming; leading/supervising with DEI mind-set; serving on relevant university committee on DEI; research on underrepresented communities; success in advancing equitable policies; active involvement in professional or scientific organization aimed at addressing needs of underrepresented students.</p>

	Track record spans career stages and provides examples as undergraduate or graduate student and in staff/faculty positions, if appropriate.
Plans to Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	
1	Unclear what unique efforts candidate would undertake at Ohio State. Merely says they would do what is asked, if hired or speaks in broad terms.
2	May have participated peripherally in efforts promoting equity diversity, equity and inclusion. Shows enthusiasm but limited knowledge/demonstrated prior actions.
3	Share plans with limited mentioning of objectives, expected outcomes, specific tasks.
4	Actively engaged in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Provides multiple examples with measurable outcomes throughout their career of ways they have mitigated bias and advanced inclusive excellence. Demonstrated personal responsibility and accountability and commitment to continued learning. References OSU or college-level plans and how they can contribute.
5	Shares plans with measurable outcomes grounded in promising practices to promote diversity, equity and inclusion at Ohio State and within their department and/or campus-wide.

Resources: obtained from the below websites August 2021

<https://hr.uw.edu/diversity/hiring/tools-for-evaluating-applicants/>

<https://hr.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk4401/files/inline-files/Potential%20Diversity%20Interview%20Questions.pdf>

https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/sites/oidi/files/Equity-Minded_Interview_Questions.pdf

<https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/interviewing/interview-questions.html>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/interview-questions-about-dei-applicants-should-know-job-interview-2020-8>

https://www.nocccd.edu/files/diversity-qualifications-diversity-interview-questions-updated-4719_38488.pdf

https://www.ucdenver.edu/docs/librariesprovider102/default-document-library/diversity-interview-questions-guide.pdf?sfvrsn=9d2e58b9_2