

What is Affirmative Action?

Affirmative action means taking proactive steps, such as in the recruitment and search process, to ensure equal access to employment and promotional opportunities for women, people of color, individuals with disabilities and veterans.

Why do we have affirmative action goals?

Equity and diversity among students, faculty, and staff is a core mission of the University. It is Regents' policy to take affirmative action in employment. The University is a federal and state of Minnesota contractor and is required to have an Affirmative Action Program.

Are affirmative action goals really quotas?

Affirmative action goals are not rigid or inflexible quotas that must be met. They are benchmarks used to assess the effectiveness of recruiting efforts and fairness in the selection process.

How is the candidate pool evaluated to determine if it is sufficiently diverse?

In evaluating the applicant pool, HR and/or the EOAA Liaison will compare the racial and gender makeup of the pool of applicants to the goals established for the position. If the representation of women and people of color in the pool is substantially below the goals established for the position, additional recruitment/outreach efforts may be needed.

Am I required to hire someone who meets an affirmative action goal?

Not necessarily. Affirmative action is one factor of many that a search committee should consider when evaluating applicants.

If two candidates are equally qualified for a position, and one of the applicants meets an affirmative action goal, is affirmative action considered a "tie breaker"?

It is unlikely that two applicants will have exactly the same qualifications for the job. Affirmative Action is one factor in the selection process among other factors such as education, previous work experience, specialty, community involvement, etc. Any of these factors, including the attainment of an affirmative action goal, may tip the balance in favor of one candidate over another.

Should I guess the gender/ethnicity of an applicant who chooses not self-disclose demographic data?

No. The search committee/hiring authority should not guess the race or gender of a applicant.

How thorough should documentation be of the selection process?

Document the selection decision, including the reason for non-selection of candidates, so that others (OGC, HR, EOAA or investigative agencies) can reconstruct the decision-making process in the event of a complaint or audit.

Who can help me if I have questions?

The EOAA Office, EOAA Liaison or HR Representative assigned to your unit.