

Dual-Hiring and Diversity



Over past decades, universities have worked hard to attract women and underrepresented minorities to faculty positions and, in many instances, are meeting with success. The new generation of academics is more diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity than ever before. With greater diversity comes the need for new hiring practices. Institutions should not expect new participants to assimilate into current practices built around old academic models and demographics. This undermines innovation, opportunity, and equity. New hiring practices are needed to support a diverse professoriate—and one of these practices is couple hiring.

Underrepresented Minority Faculty

Couple hiring may help to advance racial/ ethnic diversity, which enhances competitive excellence. Women and men from all backgrounds have academic partners; in fact, among underrepresented minority respondents to our survey, the gender difference in rate of academic coupling disappears (30% of minority women and 32% of minority men are partnered with another academic). And although the rate of academic coupling among underrepresented minority faculty is generally lower than that among faculty overall (31% versus 36%, respectively), the rate of dual hiring is the same (10% of all underrepresented minority respondents have been part of a dual hire at their current institutions). Dual hiring, in other words, may support institutional efforts to compete for the brightest talent across the widest spectrum.

Dual-Hiring and Same-Sex Couples

Underrepresented minority faculty in academic partnerships also tend to give equal weight to both partners' careers. Nearly half (49%) of respondents from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds consider their partner's academic career to be of equal importance. This is higher than the proportion of minority faculty in other types of partnerships who do so (34% among faculty with employed, non-academic partners; 7% among faculty with stay-at-home partners).

Same-Sex Couples

Like all academic couples, same-sex academic couples value balance and equality in their relationships. Lesbians and gay men in academic partnerships are more likely to give equal weight to both partners' careers (64%) than are lesbians and gay men in other types of partnerships (46% among faculty with employed, non-academic partners; 11% among faculty with stay-at-home partners).



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