



# Mitigating Bias in Hiring: Equitable and Inclusive Practice

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# Presenter



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# Learning Objectives

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- **Learn how first impressions and biases may affect evaluation of applicants through learning about major characteristics that influence first impressions.**
- **Learn to avoid the pitfalls of bias in the interview and selection process through learning and understanding bias types.**

# 10 Demographic Trends Shaping the U.S. & the World

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1. Americans are more racially and ethnically diverse.
2. Asia has replaced Latin America as the largest source of new immigrants.
3. Demographic changes are shifting the electorate.
4. Millennials are the new generation to watch.
5. Women's role in labor force & leadership has grown.
6. The American family is changing.
7. The middle class is shrinking.
8. Christians are declining as a share of U.S. population.
9. The world's religious makeup will look very different by 2050.
10. The world is aging.

# What about diversity?

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- ▶ According to the 2010 census data, the US is more Hispanic and Asian than it was two decades ago; with Hispanics accounting for most of the population gains (in raw numbers) every year since and Asians experiencing the fastest population growth every year since 2000 (gain of 2.2% in 2011-2012)
- ▶ Women account for 43% Of the executive, administrative, and managerial occupations in the U.S., but only 5% of the top executive positions are held by women.
- ▶ About 2.4% of the population identified themselves as belonging to more than one race.
- ▶ Persons with physical and mental disabilities comprise the largest single “minority” in the U.S., with approximately 50 million individuals and almost 20% of the total population.
- ▶ Of the net additions to the workforce since the year 2000, more than 65% have been women, men of color and immigrants.
- ▶ About 25 million Americans identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender, intersex.

# The Business Case for Diversity

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- When tethered to concerns about parity, diversity is linked to positive outcomes, at least in business organizations.
- Related to business success because it allows companies to “think outside the box.”
- Enhances an organization’s creativity, problem-solving, and performance.

# Diversity...it's simply good business

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- Racially diverse teams outperform non-diverse ones by 35%
- Teams with greater gender parity in representation earn 41% more in revenue
- People from different backgrounds have varying ways of looking at problems, thus better ways of solving them (“tools”) -

# Diversity Benefits of Diverse Faculty for Students

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Faculty diversity linked to educational benefits

- Closing the achievement gap by 19 – 51%

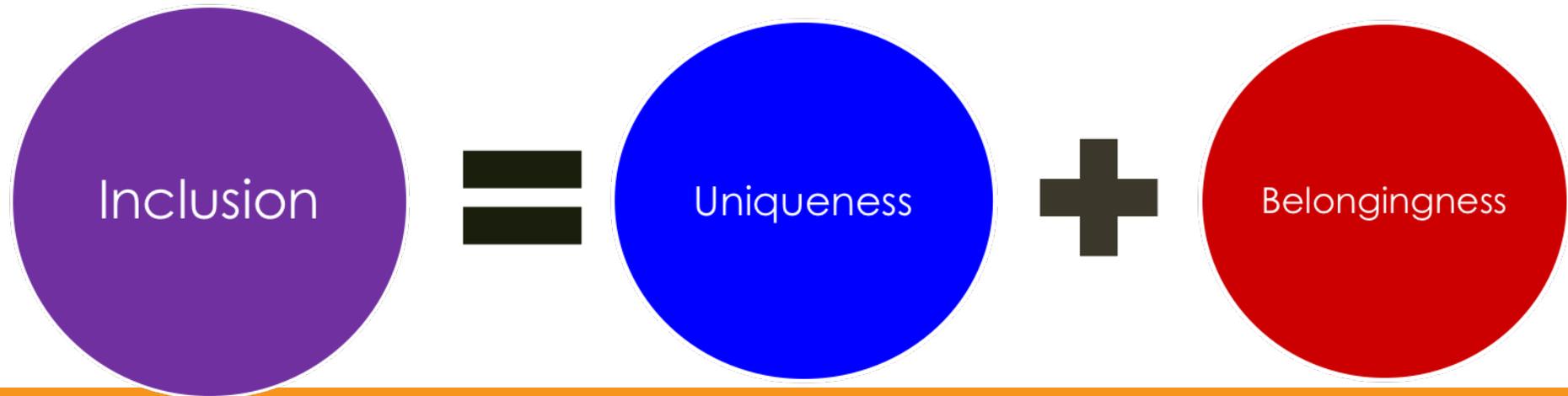
# Inclusion

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Puts the concept of diversity into **action**

Policies and practices embrace the promotion of diversity, equality, and equity

All individuals have equal access to opportunities & resources and can contribute fully to success



# Flow

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- **First Impressions**
- **First Impressions and Bias**
- **Research**
- **Bias Theory**
- **Case Studies**
- **Closing tips**



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# RESEARCH



# **Gender Bias in Hiring: Behind the Screen – a study on blind auditions**

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- **Princeton University research (2000) by Rouse (Princeton) and Goldin (Harvard)**
  - **Concealed identities of musicians auditioning for spots in symphony**
  - **Revealed existence of gender-biased hiring**
  - **Blind auditions findings – women advanced from preliminary rounds by 50%**

# **Racial Bias in Hiring: “Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal”**

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- **University of Chicago Graduate School of Business and Massachusetts Institute of Technology by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2002)**
  - **Sent fictitious approximately 5000 resumes in response to 1,300 help wanted ads listed in the Boston Globe and Chicago Tribune**
  - **Manipulated resumes by randomly assigning them with “very white-sounding names” and “very African-American-sounding names”**
  - **Applicants with “white-sounding” names are 50% more likely to get called for an interview**

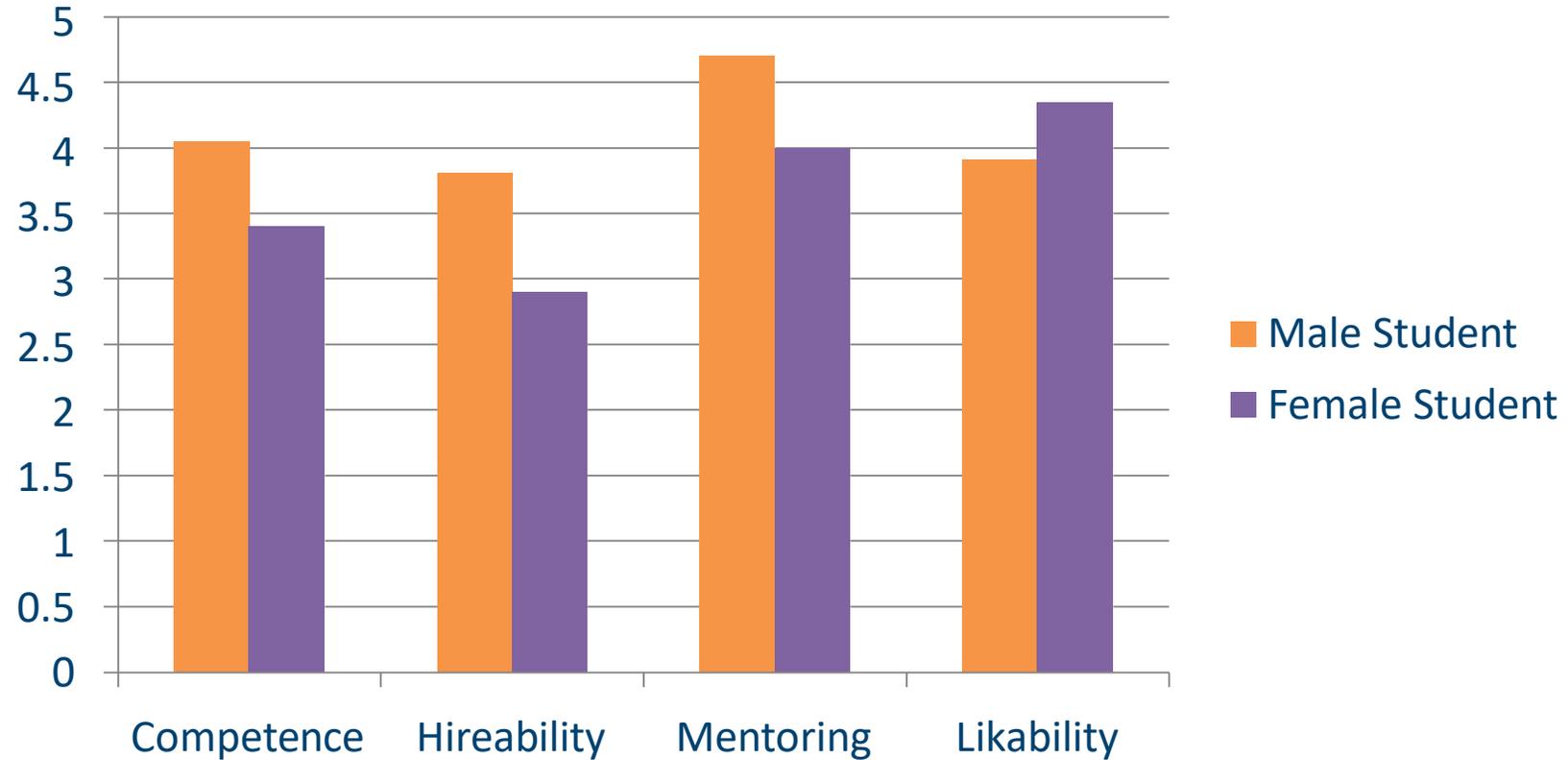
# Are you a 'dilettante' or a 'renaissance' person? (Leung, UC Berkeley, 2014)

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- **Someone who has done a lot of different things in their careers can be seen as flexible and adaptable (renaissance); but someone who has done a lot of different things can also be seen as doing a lot of unrelated things and likes to “move around” (dilettante)**
- **Being defined as a “renaissance” or “dilettante” is based on perception**
- **Danger of creating narratives regarding “promising trajectory” or “being less reliable”**

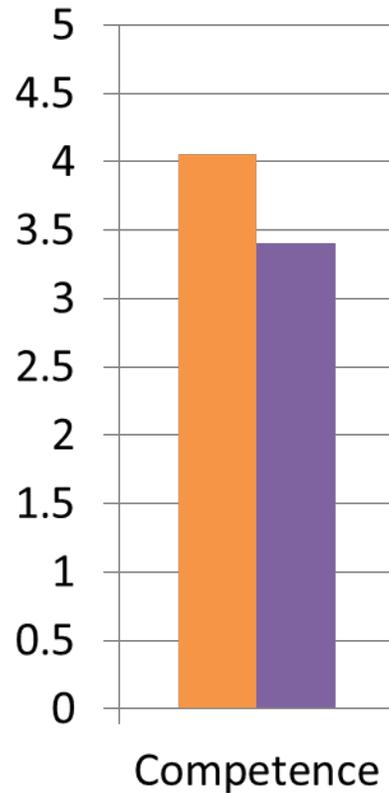
# Do we have an unconscious bias?

- Handelsman, et al, *PNAS*, 2012.
- Science faculty rated a student (male or female) for a lab manager.



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Competence rating	male student	female student
male faculty	4.01	3.33
female faculty	4.1	3.32

- Male Student
- Female Student

# Do we have an unconscious bias?

- Milkman, et al, 2014.
- 6,500 faculty were emailed by fictional prospective grad students
- identical emails with different names

Discipline	% Responding to White Men	% Responding to Women and Minorities	Difference
Business	87%	62%	25
Education	86%	65%	21
Human services	89%	71%	18
Health services	71%	57%	14
Engineering and computer science	72%	59%	13
Life sciences	72%	61%	11
Natural and physical sciences and math	73%	64%	9
Social sciences	75%	68%	7
Humanities	80%	75%	5
Fine arts	62%	73%	-11

# Do we have an unconscious bias?

Milkman reported these surprises in her NYT article

- Were Asians favored, given the model minority stereotype?

No. Chinese students were the most discriminated against.

- Did reaching out to faculty of same gender or race reduce bias?

No. Same levels of bias in both same race and same gender faculty student pairs (except when Chinese students emailed Chinese faculty).

- Did it help to be in a discipline with more women and minorities?

No. Faculty in more diverse disciplines, like criminal justice, were no less likely to discriminate than in less diverse disciplines, like statistics.

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# **BIAS THEORY**



# Bias Theory

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## • Halo Effect

- Overgeneralization based on a single characteristic that may or may not be related.
- One attribute can be so striking that other characteristics are ignored.

## • Contrast Effect

- Undue influence of people or things in the evaluation process that may result in the inaccurate evaluation of an applicant.
- Comparison of applicant to someone or something other than the established selection criteria.

# Bias Theory

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## Similar-To-Me-Effect

- **People's tendencies to favor applicants who are most like themselves.**
- **Preconceived notion of "how" a particular person appears for a specific job or vague notions of "fit" that are not based on job-related qualifications.**

## Common Social Stereotypes

- **Holding common stereotypes, maintained by discriminatory attitudes and practices that may represent some underlying prejudice.**

# Bias Theory

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## Primacy Effect

- **Associated with “the first impression” of a candidate and the powerful role in their subsequent assessment.**

## Harshness/Leniency Bias

- **Tendency of interviewers to be generally amiable and lenient people while others are critical and demanding.**
- **In either case, the bias toward harshness or leniency will tend to raise or lower the scores of the candidates interviewed.**

# Bias Theory

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## **Self-fulfilling Prophecy Bias**

- **Tendency of evaluators to make an initial judgment about a candidate and look for evidence to support that conclusion.**
- **Tendency to interpret responses from candidate more/less favorable based on the initial judgment.**

## **The Beauty Bias**

- **Job candidates who are more attractive physically have substantial higher odds of being hired.**

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# STRATEGIES IN REDUCING BIAS IN THE HIRING PROCESS



# Points to consider when evaluating candidates

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- Are your judgments and evaluations based in fact on job-related criteria?
- Are your assumptions valid for evaluating a person's ability to the job? If you are the committee chair, it is your responsibility to hold other members of the search committee accountable.
- Hiring decisions should be based solely on job-related criteria.
- Ask committee members to clarify their statements or positions if there are doubts about their motives or basis for their decisions (i.e. Can you explain how or on what basis did you come to that conclusion or how does that relate to the job criteria?)

# Points to consider when evaluating candidates

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- **Set expectations for interview performance, and be flexible to people's individuality.**
- **Maintain an open mind in your response to applicant's styles and cultural characteristics.**
- **Be open to learning something new and see desirable attributes in someone who performs differently than you anticipated or that in your experience is customary.**

# Equity-minded approach to evaluating applicants

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- **Integrate ways to assess for candidate's cultural competency**
- **Create opportunities for candidates to engage in self-reflection**
- **Have candidates articulate their understanding of their responsibilities (especially for instructors)**
- **Concrete examples of how they have supported student success**

# Other Resources

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- Blink (Malcolm Gladwell)
- Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People ( M. Banaji & A. Greenwald)
- Project Implicit – Harvard University
- Everyday Bias (Howard Ross)

# Have a Question?



Submit questions to our presenters  
using the Chat.



Thank You

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