

BOOK REVIEW

Turner, Caroline Sotello Viernes. (2002). *Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees*. Association of American Colleges and Universities. 56 pp., \$15.00. ISBN 0-911696-90-3.

In this brief monograph, Turner provides timely information on the current minority faculty composition in higher education and offers helpful guidelines for changing the status quo to reflect greater racial and ethnic diversity within the professoriate ranks. Through a citation of Harvey (2001), she presents current data on full-time minority faculty: “5 percent African Americans (non-Hispanic), 2.7 percent Hispanics, 5.7 percent Asian Americans, and 0.4 percent American Indians” (p. 1). Compelling reasons, aside from equity, are given by Turner for increasing these numbers. For instance, “Faculty diversification contributes directly to educational quality. A diverse faculty means better educational outcomes for all students” (pp. 1-2).

Turner stated, “A faculty search can, in fact, become a measure of larger institutional commitments and attitudes...an institution’s core values surface during a search process” (p. 6). In *Diversifying the Faculty*, she presents an expanded outline of steps to follow before the search begins, during the search process, and after the search concludes to reach the ultimate goal of diversification. She also mentions myths and misconceptions about the recruitment of faculty of color and attempts to debunk them. While acknowledging and applauding the efforts of higher education institutions to internationalize their faculties, Turner focuses specifically on the hiring of people of color from the United States. The author notes that despite the steady growth in diversity among college students, a similar increase in diversity has not occurred among the faculty. This news is discouraging, but the problem is not insurmountable.

This short, how-to book is heavily influenced by scholarly research. In the 28 pages of the book body, Turner shares several practical recommendations. She devotes the remainder of the book to appendices, notes, references, and an annotated bibliography.

As I read Turner’s book, I couldn’t help but reflect on my own experiences both as a job applicant at universities and while serving on a couple of university search committees. As an African-American woman, I have been on both sides of this fence and am able to see the extreme value of a guidebook such as this one.

Advisors (and others) would benefit greatly from reading this book and sharing it with faculty and administrators. Those seeking opportunities to serve on search committees can implement Turner’s wonderful suggestions for increasing diversity. I highly recommend this guidebook and feel that it should be required reading for academic deans, department chairpersons, and search committee members.

Reference

Harvey, W. B. (2001). *Eighteenth annual status report on minorities in higher education*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

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