



The University of New Orleans' Master of Public Administration Program is a leader in diversity outreach on a variety of levels in higher education. The program's primary success has been through its intense outreach network to recent graduating minority Ph.D. students in their hiring practices for staff and faculty positions. This breakthrough practice includes an online infrastructure that merges existing data sets of graduating minority Ph.D. students. After compiling lists of the most prominent potential candidates, the program makes contact and begins the hiring process.

The breakthrough of the University of New Orleans also includes its hiring practices based on individual interest and not merely diversity for the sake of diversity. The program has had remarkable retention of its diverse faculty due to the program's efforts to foster and include the research interests of its applicants. Several have voiced their overall satisfaction with the program's openness and desire to help them in their individual academic pursuits and research. One new-hire minority faculty member went so far as to say the administration did not hire him, "to check a box," but to allow him time and resources to focus on his research while also providing his expertise to the students and program.

The University of New Orleans has also made strides in creating a strong faculty community with minority and non-minority members. Mainly, senior faculty members become mentors to minority new-hired faculty. These senior staff and tenured professors provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for new minority professors. With these mentor-mentee relationships, new hires have stayed on to contribute their work and perspectives with their students and fellow faculty, thereby promoting the diversity the program desires.

The fact that only roughly half of NASPAA accredited programs provide this mentorship program for new faculty, especially minority members, leaves a lot of room for programs struggling to diversify their faculty to consider policies like these and see results. It is an opportunity for those programs desiring to improve their faculty diversity further to create and implement a policy of faculty mentorship that will increase hiring and retention rates of minority faculty for programs.

Finally, their Diversity Webpage also provides an excellent resource for other programs to interact and connect with diversity outreach and other minority organizations across the country and the world. It can be used to facilitate contact between programs and groups, or even inspire programs to research their own specific areas for local groups and organizations that can promote and reach out to minority communities and members.

Based on the University of New Orleans reported data for 2012-2013, the overall 16 member faculty is indeed diverse. Whites are the majority group, with other minority groups (Black, Asian and Hispanic) making up almost a third of the population (28%). Like most programs, UNO also struggles with reaching out to women faculty, but considering its success in gaining minority faculty members, perhaps the same practices can be used with similar success to hire and retain female faculty members.

Figure 1.1: University of New Orleans MPA Program, Faculty Demographics 2012-2013

