Language in Job Ads: Best Practices

The Job Advertisement

Job descriptions communicate the responsibilities, qualifications and skills required in a position and the institutional mission and values. Research shows that the content and wording of the job advertisement affect the diversity of the applicant pool. Highly qualified URM candidates who are interested in a position often do not apply because the content and wording in the advertisement signal preference for men and/or white applicants, fail to show meaningful institutional commitment to diversity, or perceive a lack of “fit” to the position or to the culture of the unit/institution. To attract a diverse applicant pool, the advertisement must reflect the unit’s commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. The following practices tend to yield a diverse applicant pool:

1. Clearly state that diversity is a priority for the unit and repeat this commitment throughout the advertisement. For example:

“The School is committed to recruiting and retaining students and faculty from groups that have historically been underrepresented in the sciences.”

“The College values our cultural and intellectual diversity, and continually strives to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. We are especially interested in applicants who can strengthen the diversity of the academic community.”

“At ASU and the College of Health Solutions, we work to maximize opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds, abilities and perspectives. We value and encourage cultural and intellectual diversity, and strive to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for all faculty, staff and students — which we believe is critical to our success as a community. All individuals who can strengthen the diversity of our academic community are encouraged to apply, and will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other basis protected by law.”

2. It is best to avoid gender pronouns but if needed use both “he” and “she” to attract women applicants, or use gender neutral pronouns such as “ze” to be inclusive of non-gender conforming individuals. “We encourage applicants to apply who would enhance the inclusiveness and diversity of our School.”

3. In describing the requirements for the position, avoid using wording associated with a gender or race as it discourages women and URM from applying to positions in male and White dominated areas because they suggest a less diverse workplace and lower sense of belonging.
4. In describing responsibilities, qualifications and skills required, it is best to use behavior-like wording that describes how applicants might behave under particular circumstances while avoiding trait-like wording that state traits the applicants must have. For example, it is best to say “the applicant must have the ability to make quick decisions” rather than “the applicant must be decisive.”

5. Broaden the descriptions of scholarship, experience and disciplinary backgrounds suitable for the position. For example:

“All tenure-track faculty in SCCJ engage in research, teaching, and service. Successful applicants must demonstrate the ability to contribute to the core research mission of the SCCJ. For this position, we seek to hire a candidate who specializes in a core aspect of homeland security, including (but not necessarily limited to) domestic terrorism; international terrorism; cyberterrorism; human trafficking and criminal justice; immigration policy, criminal justice and homeland security; criminal intelligence analysis; counter-insurgency; the role of criminal justice agencies in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery; and similar national and international security issues.”

6. Limit the number of required qualifications to 3-4, and if possible, shift required qualifications to desired qualifications.

7. Signal that the unit values teaching and welcomes applicants whose scholarship engage critical paradigms, new perspectives, and/or innovative ideas, and employ cutting-edge methodologies or innovative techniques. For example:

“The School’s programs are designed to train students to think critically, to be accountable to the communities with which they engage, and to utilize a full repertoire of theoretical approaches and innovative research methods, with training in quantitative and qualitative approaches and an established specialization in measurement and statistical analysis available to doctoral students. The Sanford School engages diverse approaches to study society, institutions, communities, families, and individuals.”

8. Emphasize the unit’s DEIB efforts by highlighting any initiatives and programs that promote fair practices and the success of URM faculty and students. These may include: mentoring programs, networking opportunities, support for transdisciplinary collaborations, diversifying the curriculum, or prioritizing research on underrepresented or understudied communities or on issues affecting underrepresented groups. While we require candidates to demonstrate their commitment to diversity, we also need to show our DEIB efforts in order to attract URM applicants. For example:

“Through teaching, academic programs, service and research, all faculty at the College of Health Solutions address one or more of our three major areas of focus: 1) The systems of health care and the health needs of populations; 2) Health and human performance of individuals across the lifespan; 3) Personalized interventions through precision health. Across these areas, we work to address Grand Challenges, complex and difficult health problems which require transformative collaboration, translational research and innovation. We are particularly interested in making an impact on populations with significant health disparities.”

Other ASU Initiatives: African and African American Faculty and Staff Association; Chicano/Latino Faculty and Staff Association; Faculty Women's Association; Faculty Women of Color Caucus, Southwest Borderlands Initiative; Member of the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity; ASU ADVANCE; SEA Change

9. Require a diversity statement that demonstrates experiences with diversity issues, diverse students, and working in multicultural environments.
10. Address local demographics to signal communities of interest for URM applicants. For example:

“Phoenix is the 11th largest and 2nd fastest growing metropolitan area in the country with shifting demographics (42.2% non-white and 31% Latinx) and has the 2nd largest Native American population.”

“ASU serves more than 70,000 students across five campuses, and has a rapidly growing digital immersion population. The Sanford School is located on ASU’s Tempe campus. Tempe is part of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area, where demographic change, cultural diversity, and socio-economic disparities demand new models of higher education, which are highly relevant to ASU’s charter (https://www.asu.edu/about/charter-mission-and-values)”

“ASU’s location offers the resources of a major metropolitan area (5+ million) in a state with spectacular natural scenery and recreational areas, sublime winters, and a culturally rich population.”

11. Highlight institutional and unit demographics by stating faculty and student diversity. Across ASU, 52% of students are nonwhite and 26% are Latinxs. For example:

“The SCCJ is housed in the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, a comprehensive public research unit at ASU with a student body of over 7,122 undergraduate and graduate students, more than 57 percent of whom are students of color.”

12. Units that lack a diverse faculty or student body should address commitment to grow and support diversity by highlighting DEIB initiatives. For example:

“The School works to develop an inclusive and thriving community that reflects the sociodemographic diversity of our state and nation (sols.asu.edu/about/justice-equity-diversity-inclusion).”

13. To wrap up ASU’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, end the advertisement with one of President Crow’s statement on social justices such as the following:

“In order to accelerate meaningful change and to contribute to a national agenda for social justice, ASU has committed to a series of actions known as the LIFT (Listen, Invest, Facilitate, Teach) Initiative. LIFT is being undertaken with the goal of enhancing diversity, growth and opportunity for Black undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff, while also expanding ASU’s academic offerings, community services and collaborative relationships to the benefit of all underrepresented groups and individuals at ASU.”

https://president.asu.edu/commitment

Resources

- youtube.com/watch?v=QGtQsJUiaxk&ab_channel=jmferrier
- environment.uw.edu/intranet/personnel/academic-human-resources/faculty-job-advertisement-language/
- diversity.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/recruiting_a_more_diverse_workforce_uhs.pdf


The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice (SCCJ) in the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions at Arizona State University (ASU) invites applications for an Assistant Professor position to begin August 16, 2022. This is a full-time, benefits-eligible, tenure-track, academic-year (9-month) faculty position. We encourage applicants to apply who would enhance the inclusiveness and diversity of our School.

All tenure-track faculty in SCCJ engage in research, teaching, and service. Successful applicants must demonstrate the ability to contribute to the core research mission of the SCCJ. For this position, we seek to hire a candidate who specializes in a core aspect of homeland security, including (but not necessarily limited to) domestic terrorism; international terrorism; cyberterrorism; human trafficking and criminal justice; immigration policy, criminal justice and homeland security; criminal intelligence analysis; counter-insurgency; the role of criminal justice agencies in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery; and similar national and international security issues.

About the School:
The SCCJ is housed in the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, a comprehensive public research unit at ASU with a student body of over 7,122 undergraduate and graduate students, more than 57 percent of whom are students of color. SCCJ is a nationally-recognized leader in higher education and is highly regarded for its distinguished faculty and research productivity as evidenced by it being ranked the #2 best program in criminology and criminal justice program in the United States by US News and World Report.

The SCCJ offers undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees in criminology and criminal justice; a master’s degree in crime analysis; undergraduate concentrations or certificate programs in correctional studies, criminal investigations, juvenile justice, law and human behavior, legal issues in criminal justice, policing, and victims studies; and graduate certificates corrections leadership and management, crime analysis, homeland security, and law enforcement administration. In addition, the SCCJ offers upperdivision courses in Yuma and Lake Havasu City, AZ; these programs are designed to allow students who already hold an associate’s degree to complete the Bachelor of Science degree by taking in-person classes. And SCCJ proudly
offers its Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice, Master of Arts in Criminal Justice, and Master of Science in Crime Analysis degrees online, allowing students from around the globe to earn highly-valued degrees from one of the leading criminology and criminal justice programs in the world. For more information about the SCCJ’s opportunities for research, instruction, practice, student internship experience, and community-based service learning opportunities, please visit our website at http://ccj.asu.edu.

The SCCJ is conveniently located on ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus in the heart of the fifth largest city in the United States. Our proximity to major criminal justice agencies enhances the opportunities for instruction, practice, student internship experience, and community-based service learning opportunities. The successful candidate will engage in scholarly research, teach on-campus and online, serve on committees, mentor students, and perform other duties as assigned by the Director of the School.

Job Duties:
Successful applicants must demonstrate the ability to contribute to the mission of the School in research, teaching, and service. The specific responsibilities of the position include: teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice; conducting research and publishing scholarship within the person’s specialty area(s); seeking external funding to support scholarly research; engaging in service within Arizona State University at the school, college, and university levels; providing service to the community and the profession; and participating in curriculum development, program planning, and student advisement.

Required Qualifications:

- A Ph.D. in criminology, criminal justice, homeland security, intelligence analysis, security studies, or a related social-scientific field from a regionally-accredited university; and
- Candidates should have strong evidence of (or demonstrated potential for) excellence in research and teaching.

Desired Qualifications:

- Substantive specialization in a core aspect of homeland security, including (but not necessarily limited to) domestic terrorism; international terrorism; cyberterrorism; human trafficking and criminal justice; immigration policy, criminal justice, and homeland security; criminal intelligence analysis; counterinsurgency; the role of criminal justice agencies in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery; and similar national and international security issues;
- Experience working with the U.S. Department of Defense, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, or other agencies in the national intelligence community;
- Demonstrated experience publishing in peer-reviewed journals or academic press books;
Reinforces that DEI is a priority for the unit

Signals that the unit values teaching and welcomes applicants whose scholarship engage critical paradigms, new perspectives, and/or innovative ideas.

Requires statement that demonstrates experiences and commitment to DEI in teaching.

There is a clear commitment to DEI and inclusion. The SCCJ actively seeks and supports a culturally diverse faculty and student body. We seek applicants and nominations from those who have experience teaching, mentoring, and developing research in ways that effectively address individuals from historically underrepresented backgrounds. Our School, and indeed the entirety of our University, seeks to recruit and retain a diverse workforce as a reflection of our commitment to serve the people of our state, to maintain excellence of the University, and to offer our students richly varied disciplines, perspectives, and ways of knowing and learning. ASU is committed to creating a community in which a diverse population can learn, live, and work in an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the rights and sensibilities of each individual without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religious creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, medical condition, age, political affiliation, veteran’s status, or any other basis protected by law.

Application Instructions:
To apply, please visit https://publicservice.asu.edu/content/jobs. Applicants must submit all of the following materials through an Interfolio dossier. Complete application materials must contain the following items:

• A letter of application in which you describe your fit with the assistant professor positions relative to the qualifications listed in this advertisement;
• A complete curriculum vitae or résumé that details the applicant’s educational and professional history;
• A one-page (maximum) statement of the applicant's research agenda;
• A two-page (maximum) statement of teaching philosophy that includes the applicant’s experience with and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
• The names and complete contact information (titles, organization affiliations, mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses) for three professional references. At least one reference needs to be a current supervisor or chair

Interviews will be held at ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus. Applicants are expected to give a research presentation if invited for an in-person interview. A background check is required prior to employment.

Application Deadline:
The initial application deadline is Friday, September 24, 2021 at 5:00p.m. Arizona Time (which is always Mountain Standard Time since Arizona does not observe daylight savings). Applications will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis for a
reserve pool. Applications in the reserve pool may then be reviewed in the order in which they are received until the position is filled.

This position is subject to the successful completion of an employment background check. An employment background check includes a criminal background check, employment verification, and reference checks. In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire. Please direct all questions about the position to the School Director at 602-496-5260.

About ASU:
Arizona State University is a comprehensive public research university named #1 in the United States for innovation for the sixth consecutive year, followed by #2 Stanford and #3 MIT. Our ASU Charter indicates that we measure our success not by whom we exclude, but rather by whom we include and how they succeed; advancing research and discovery of public value; and assuming fundamental responsibility for the economic, social, cultural and overall health of the communities we serve.

We are also committed to advancing anti-racist policies and practices as described in a recent statement by President Crow in support of our Black students, faculty, and staff (available online at: https://president.asu.edu/statements/asu-commitment-to-black-students-faculty-and-staff).

Arizona State University is a VEVRAA Federal Contractor and an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis protected by law.

For complete statements on ASU’s non-discrimination policies, please refer to: http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/acd/acd401.html and https://www.asu.edu/titleIX/

In compliance with federal law, ASU prepares an annual report on campus security and fire safety programs and resources. ASU's Annual Security and Fire Safety Report is available online at https://www.asu.edu/police/PDFs/ASU-Clery-Report.pdf. You may request a hard copy of the report by contacting the ASU Police Department at 480-965-3456.