

**Office of the Vice President for Intercultural Affairs &  
Office of the Vice President for Mission and Ministry**

*helping loyola marymount university move toward inclusive excellence*

**Evaluation of the Search Process**

**Loyola Marymount University Los Angeles**

## INTRODUCTION

Working collaboratively, the Vice Presidents for Intercultural Affairs and Mission and Ministry provide a two-part professional development program for search committees (Smith, Turner, Osei-Kofi, & Richards, 2004). Part One, *Best Practices: Recruiting and Hiring Faculty for Mission*, covers LMU history, mission, and goals; The Catholic Intellectual Tradition; Ethnic and Religious Identity in U.S. Catholic Higher Education; Benefits of a Diverse Faculty; and Hiring for Mission: An Inclusive Term. Part Two, *Moving Away from Traditional Recruitment Strategies: Recruiting and Hiring Faculty for Mission* focuses on legal and ethical principles and LMU guidelines that guide the hiring process. The goals for these components aim:

- A. To demonstrate understanding of the university's definition of recruiting and hiring for mission
- B. To recruit and propose for hiring well qualified teacher-scholars who understand and value the nature of LMU as a Catholic and Jesuit-Marymount university and who will help us achieve and maintain an equitable ratio of ethnically diverse faculty and an equitable balance between men and women faculty.

The Vice Presidents for Intercultural Affairs and Mission and Ministry also implement *Evaluation of the Search Process*, a survey designed to generate data to describe the nature of the search process. The data are analyzed, and findings are reported to the president and other executive-level administrators. This report provides a descriptive analysis of the evaluation data that was collected at the end of the 2010-2011 academic year.

## EVALUATION STRATEGY

The evaluation strategy for examining the faculty search process utilized an online survey. To develop this strategy, an evaluation team met regularly during the fall of 2010. These meetings focused on developing a survey instrument to evaluate the goals of the program. The evaluation provided: (1) a structured opportunity to reflect on and share their experiences on a search committee and (2) formative and summative feedback on the professional development program. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed through the online survey. This mixed methods approach allowed the evaluation to be an integrated part of the search process and was designed to be meaningful to all search committee members.

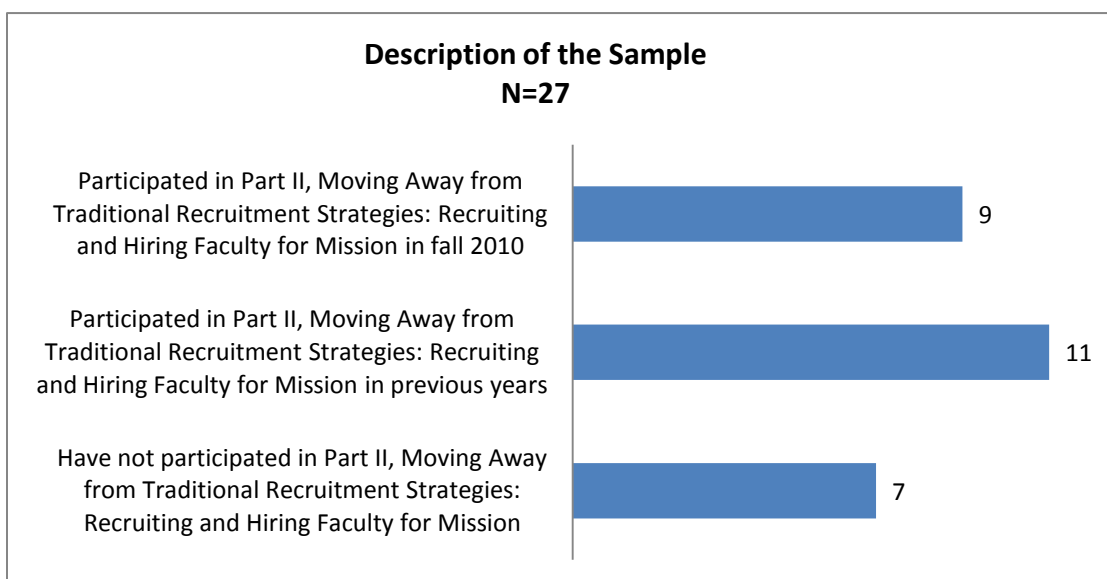
*Methods.* A mixed-methods study was employed where participants were asked to respond to both multiple choice and open-ended questions. The target sample for this survey consisted of all faculty members who served on 25 tenure track or clinical search committees during the 2010-2011 academic year. A total of 88 evaluations were distributed electronically through Qualtrics. Emails were sent to search committee members in mid-April. Reminder emails were sent out at the end of April. The evaluation closed in mid-May. A total of 27 evaluations were completed, which yielded a 31% response rate. Due to confidentiality reasons, any identifying information provided in any open-ended questions were excluded.

## FINDINGS

The professional development for search committees serves the overarching goal of developing and maintaining a mission sensitive and inclusive work and learning environment. The findings address the two program goals detailed in the *Introduction*.

Quantitative data<sup>1</sup> are first presented to highlight the general trends observed. Often times, however, the qualitative data yielded more textured and detailed answers from respondents. The qualitative component is particularly important given that the number of respondents is too small to draw generalizable conclusions based solely on quantitative analysis of survey data.

**Description of the Sample.** A total of 88 faculty members were invited to complete the evaluation because they served on one of 25 search committees during the 2010-2011 academic year. At least one search committee member completed the evaluation for 18 of the 25 search committees. Of the 27 respondents, 9 participated in *Part II, Moving Away from Traditional Recruitment Strategies: Recruiting and Hiring Faculty for Mission* in fall 2010, 11 participated in previous years, and 7 have not participated.

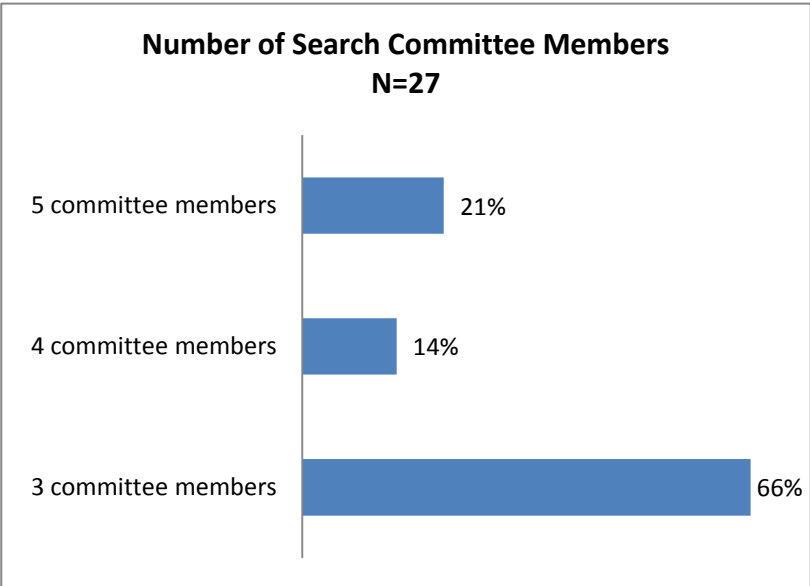


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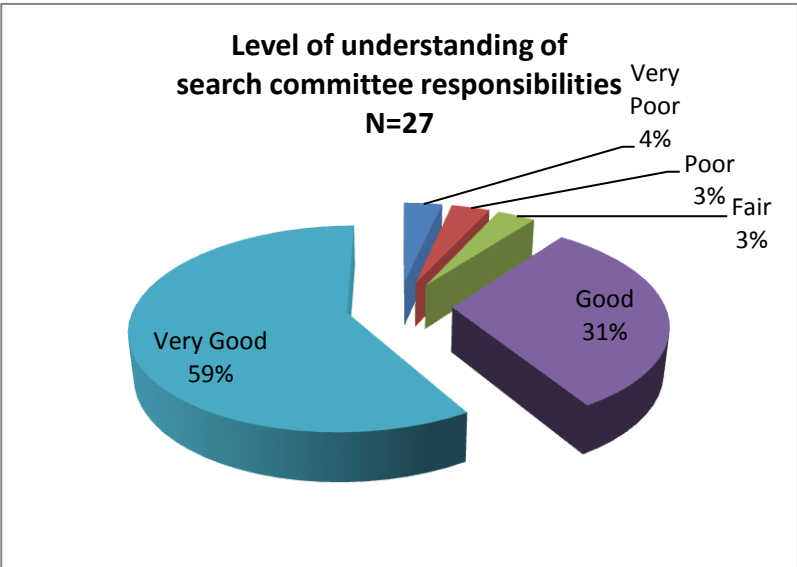
<sup>1</sup> Quantitative data is most often presented in percentages. Caution should be taken when interpreting these percentages given the small number of students.

**Goal A. Demonstrate understanding of the university’s definition of recruiting and hiring for mission.**

**A.1. Number of search committee members.** More than half of the evaluation respondents (66%) indicated that there were 3 members on the search committee.

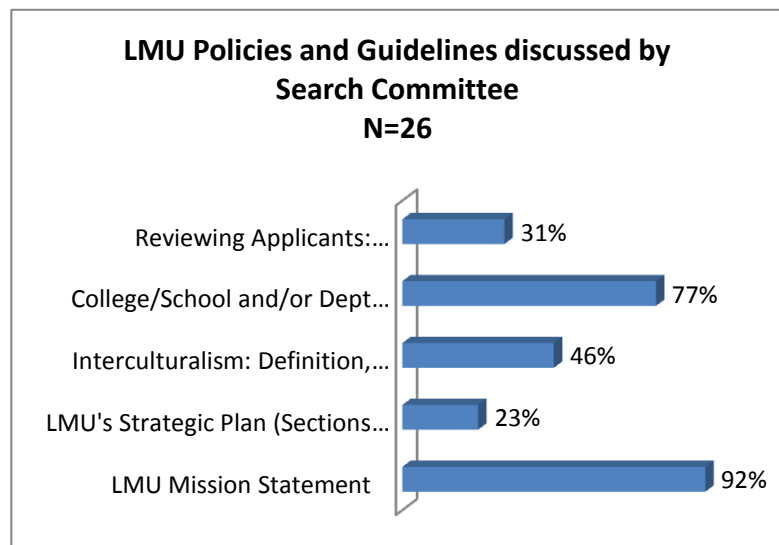


**A.2. Level of understanding of Search Committee Responsibilities.** An overwhelming majority of evaluation respondents (90%) had a very good or good understanding of their responsibilities.



**A.3. LMU Policies and Guidelines discussed by Search Committee.**

When asked about the documents the search committee discussed at the onset of the search, an overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that the search committee discussed the LMU Mission Statement (92%) and the College/School and/or Departmental Strategic Plan (77%).



**A.4. Role in the Development of the Department Review Report.** After obtaining the Dean’s approval to initiate a search, the Department must conduct a Department Review to identify educational goals for recruiting new faculty as a result of retirements, resignations, programmatic shifts, or enrollment surges. The Department’s educational goals must be the basis of the program’s decision making. Respondents were asked to comment on the role that they played in developing the Department Review Report. There was a wide range of responses. Some participants were heavily involved in the development of the report either as the chair or a member of the search committee. However, several respondents stated that they had no involvement in the development of the report. Two respondents stated:

“I am not aware of the Department Review Report.”

“I did not play a role in the report. It was done prior to my involvement on the search committee.”

**A.5. Role in the Development of the Mission and Culturally-Sensitive Position Announcement.**

Language in the Position Announcement can be geared to attract candidates who are prepared to make specific contributions to the LMU community. In any given search, the recruiting strategies – and thus the emphasis in the Position Announcement – will be dictated by the departmental review conducted before the search begins. When respondents were asked about their role in developing the Job Position Announcement, many did not play a role in this part of the process unless they were the committee chair. Three respondents stated:

“The job announcement was written by the department chair and reviewed by the department during a general meeting.”

“I was not given the opportunity to provide input...I was given a copy of the announcement only once it had already been sent to the publisher.”

“I did not play a part in the process. A template was used for the announcement.”

**A.6. Alignment of Interview Questions with the Mission and Culturally-Sensitive Position**

**Announcement.** Almost all respondents stated they incorporated LMU’s Mission Statement and Identity into the interview questions.

“Candidates were reminded of the Mission statement and asked how they saw themselves contributing to the mission.”

“The questions covered areas including university mission, diversity, catholic identity, etc.”

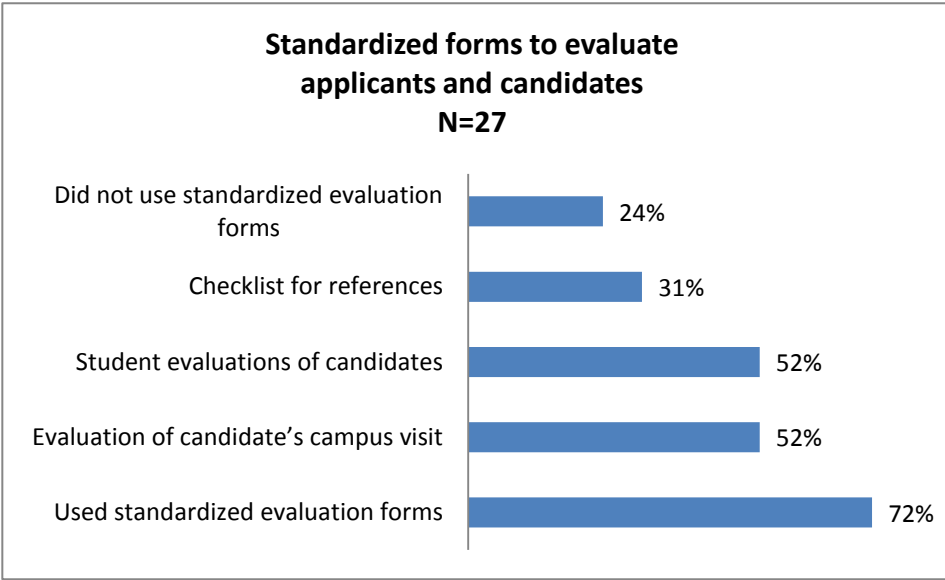
“We asked questions about the mission and goals of LMU. We also asked questions about the candidate’s experience working with diverse communities.”

“All candidates were asked about their personal understanding of LMU’s catholic mission and how this would translate into their teaching, research and service.”

However, there was not an explicit connection between the announcement and the interview questions.

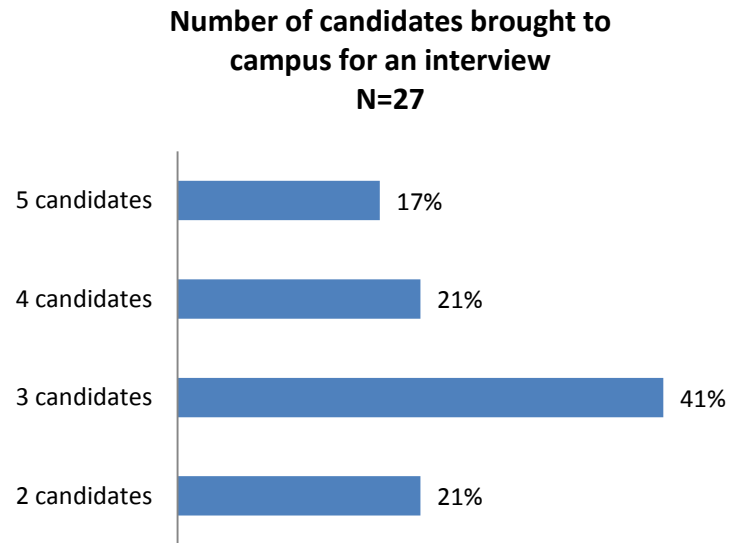
**A.7 Standardized Forms to Evaluate Applicants and Candidates.**

An overwhelming majority of respondents (72%) indicated that they used a standardized form to evaluate applicants and candidates.

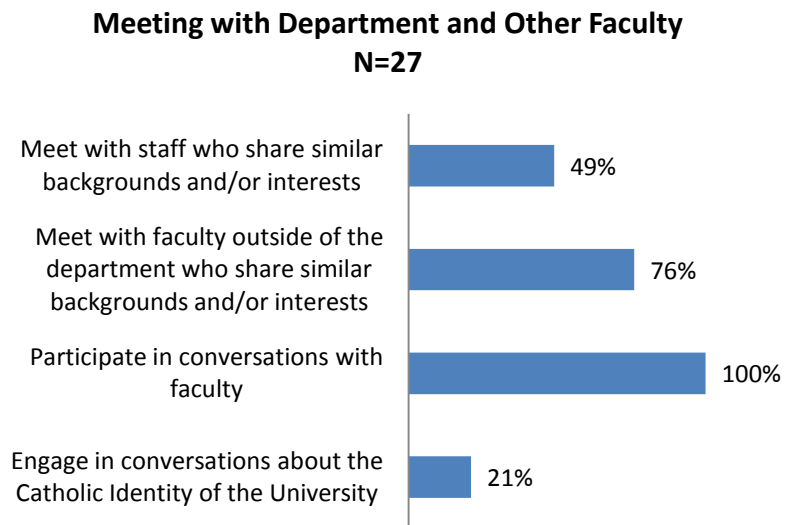


Additionally, respondents were asked to list any factors from the department review report that influenced the selection of applicants. Some respondents indicated that they were not aware of the department review report, and thus did not use it to develop a form to evaluate applicants and candidates. Approximately, one quarter of respondents (24%) reported that their search committee did not use standardized evaluation forms to evaluate applicants and candidates.

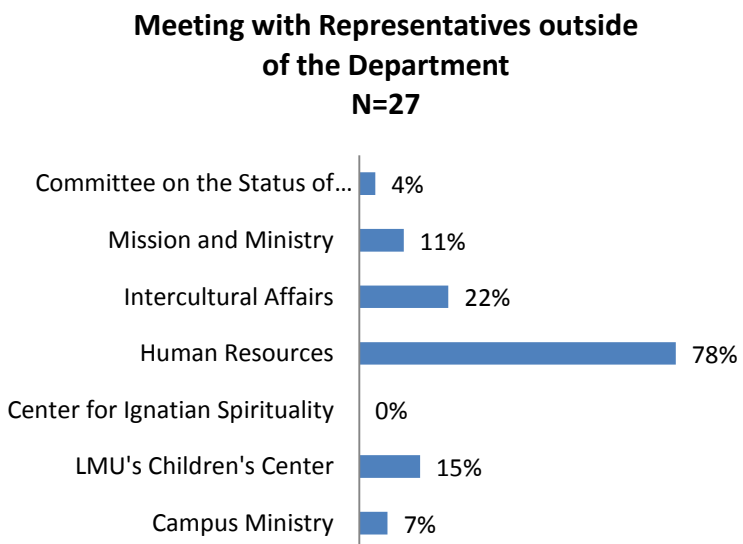
**A.8. Number of Candidates Brought to Campus for an Interview.** Almost half of the respondents (41%) noted that their search committee brought 3 candidates to campus for an interview. Approximately one fifth of the sample indicated that they brought 2 candidates (21%) or 4 candidates (21%). Only 17% of respondents brought 5 candidates to campus.



**A.9. Meeting with Department and Other Faculty.** All respondents noted that candidates participated in conversations with faculty during the campus visit. An overwhelming majority (76%) met with faculty outside of the department who share similar backgrounds and/or interests.



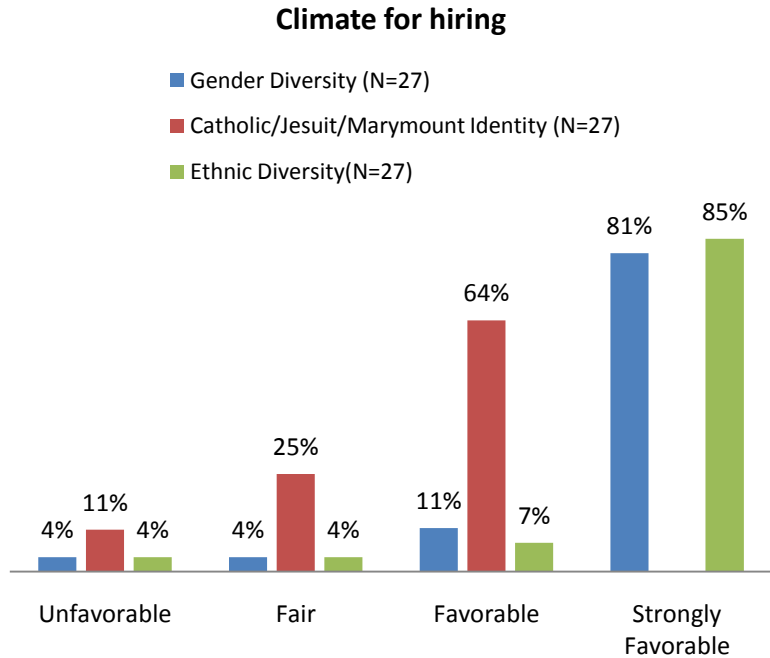
**A.10. Meeting with Campus Representatives outside of the Department.** Respondents indicated that an overwhelming majority of candidates (78%) met with a Human Resources representative. A number of respondents also indicated that candidates met with representatives from the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects and Housing.



**Goal B. To recruit and propose for hiring well qualified teacher-scholars who understand and value the nature of LMU as a Catholic and Jesuit-Marymount university and who will help us achieve and maintain an equitable ratio of ethnically diverse faculty and an equitable balance between men and women faculty**

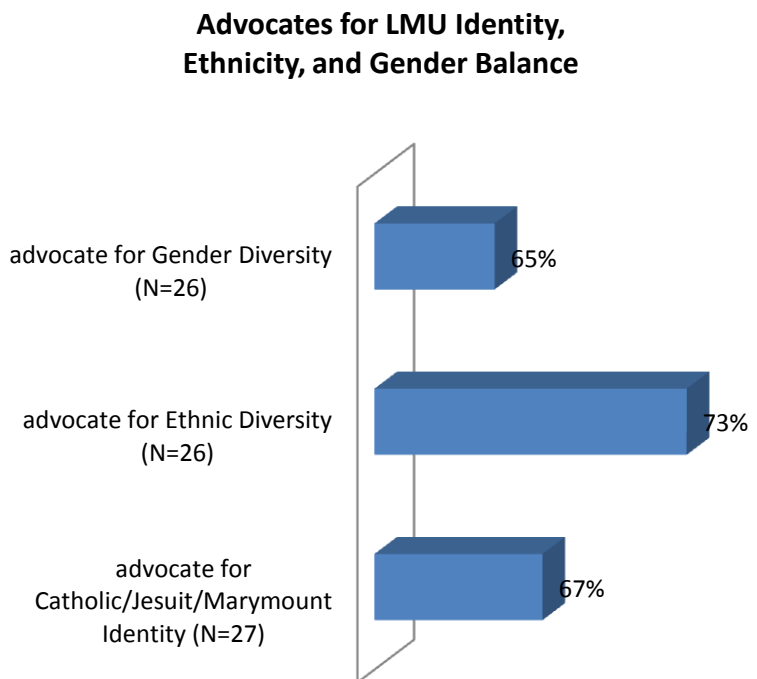
**B.1. Climate for Hiring.**

Respondents felt the climate was favorable or strongly favorable for Ethnic Diversity (92%) and Gender Balance (92%). More than half of the respondents (64%) felt the climate was favorable for hiring for Catholic/Jesuit/Marymount Identity.



**B.2. Advocates for LMU Identity, Ethnicity, and Gender Balance.**

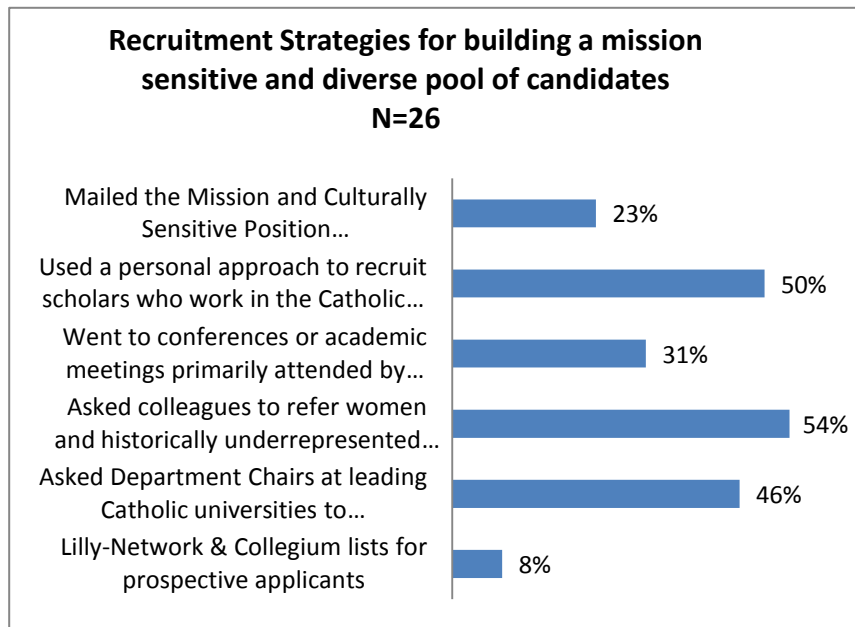
Faculty who serve as advocates are expected to monitor the procedures of the search process, the diversity of the total applicant pool, and of the group selected for interviews. More than half of the respondents indicated that they identified advocates for Gender Balance (65%), Ethnic Diversity (73%) and the Catholic/Jesuit/Marymount Identity (67%).



**B.3. Recruitment Strategies for building a mission sensitive and diverse candidate pool.**

More than half (54%) indicated that they asked colleagues to refer women and historically underrepresented applicants. Half (50%) used a personal approach to recruit scholars who work in the Catholic intellectual tradition.

A number of respondents stated that the candidate’s fit within the department and LMU were important factors.



“The candidate’s familiarity and openness to Catholic higher education.”

“Teaching experience.”

“Willingness to teach a 3-3 load while also fulfilling research expectations and service requirements.”

“Fit with the Mission of the University.”

“Mission-related Experience.”

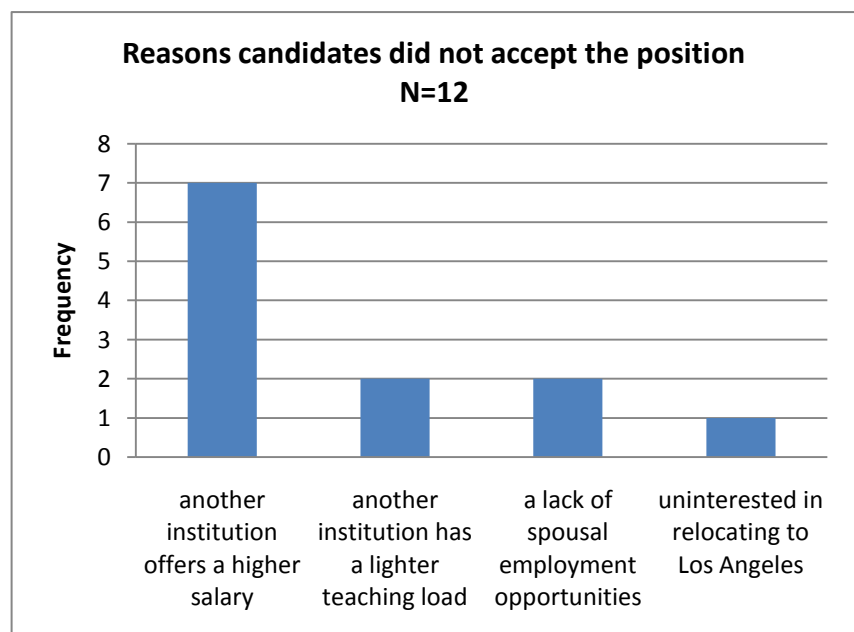
Some respondents also indicated the importance of a candidate’s ability to work with a diverse population.

“Ability to contribute to a more robust intercultural community”

“Ability to serve a diverse student population”

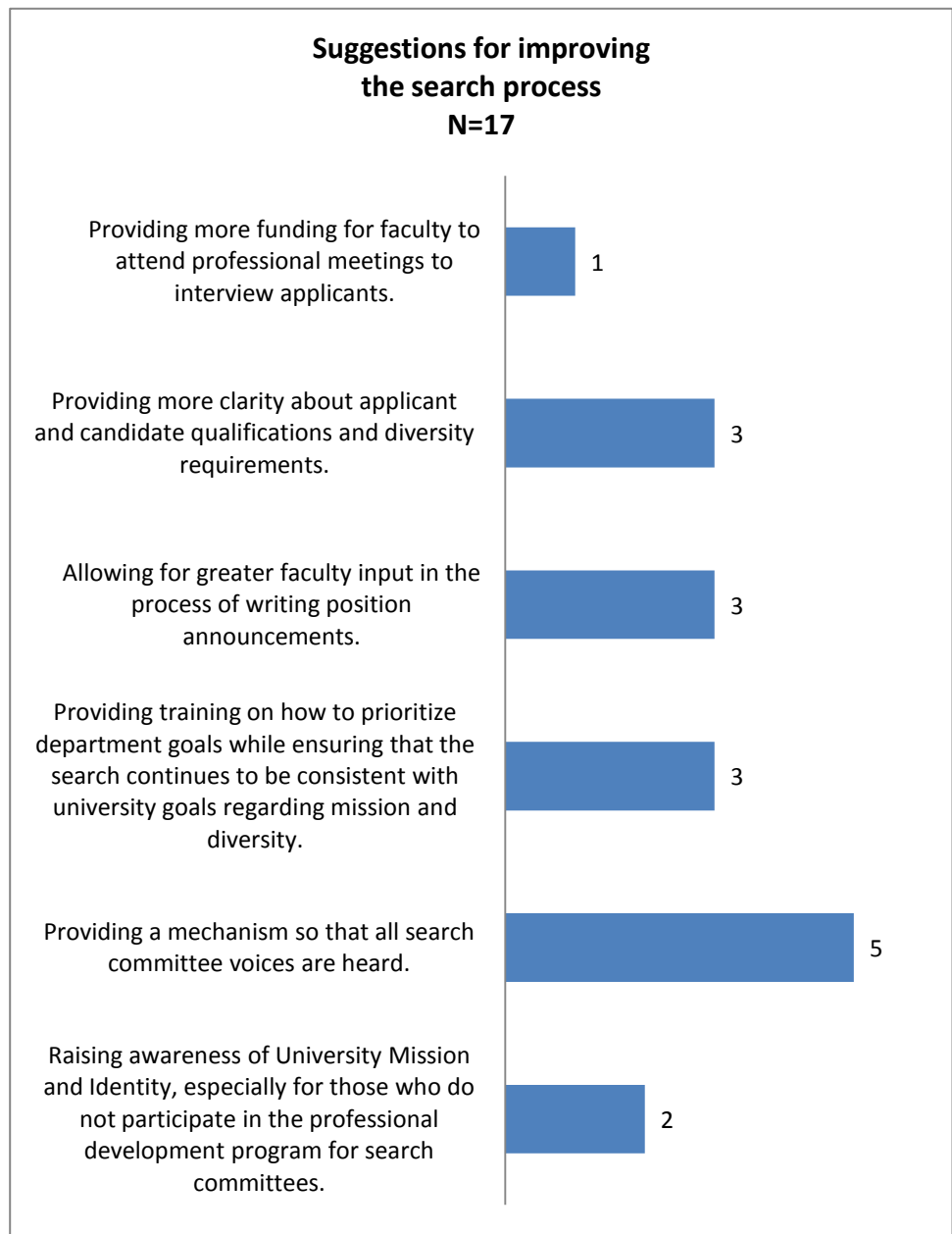
**B.4. Reasons candidates did not accept the position.**

Respondents gave four general reasons explaining why accepted candidates refused the offer: 1) another institution offers a higher salary; 2) another institution has a lighter teaching load; 3) a lack of spousal employment opportunities; and 4) uninterested in relocating to Los Angeles.



**B.5. Suggestions for improving the search process.** While some respondents were satisfied with the current search process, others identified areas for improvement. Respondents noted that the process could be improved by:

1. Providing more funding for faculty to attend professional meetings to interview applicants.
2. Providing more clarity about applicant and candidate qualifications and diversity requirements.
3. Allowing for greater faculty input in the process of writing position announcements.
4. Providing training on how to prioritize department goals while ensuring that the search continues to be consistent with university goals regarding mission and diversity.



5. Providing a mechanism so that all search committee voices are heard.
6. Raising awareness of University Mission and Identity, especially for those who do not participate in the professional development program for search committees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation report highlights several aspects of the faculty search process, including Search Committee Responsibilities, Proactive Recruitment Strategies, Proactive Campus Visits, and Suggestions for Improvement. The survey identified the following specific areas for improvement:

- ***Role and Responsibilities of the Search Committee.*** Not all respondents participated in the Fall 2010 professional development program. Based on many responses, some participants did not understand the role of the search committee, Chief Academic Officer, Dean, Department Chair, and other faculty.
  - **Recommendation: Meet with the entire search committee to clarify its role and responsibilities in the process before its members begin the process of evaluating applicants**
  - **Recommendation: Meet with the entire search committee to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Provost and Executive Vice President, Dean, Department Chair, and other faculty.**
  
- ***Role and Responsibilities of the Provost and Executive Vice President, Deans, and Department Chairs.*** Some respondents expressed frustration with the hiring process, indicating that they had limited input. Specifically, several respondents had no involvement in the development of the Department Review Report or Mission and Culturally-Sensitive Announcement. Also, an explicit alignment between the goals in the Department Review Report, Mission and Culturally-Sensitive Position Announcement, and the content of standardized forms used to evaluate applicants and candidates was lacking.
  - **Recommendation: Provide resources to help faculty understand and appreciate LMU's goal to recruit and hire faculty for mission.**