



BEST PRACTICES FOR INCLUSIVE EVENTS AND INTERVIEWS WITH LAW STUDENTS

Duke Law students value employers using inclusive practices to identify top talent and build a diverse legal community. Employers recruiting our students are encouraged to use inclusive recruiting practices when meeting with our students. An inclusive recruiting plan can help employers understand how unconscious bias and existing recruitment strategies can undervalue students from varying backgrounds and can highlight how these diverse experiences may benefit your organization. Planning ahead for inclusion can help to create a recruiting experience that will be welcoming to all students.

An interview is just one small piece of recruiting, as today's employers and students aim to develop relationships over time. We recognize that employers are working hard to implement inclusive recruiting practices. At the same time, we know that there are many dimensions to hosting inclusive events and interviews, and appreciate it can be challenging to create a recruiting plan that fully encompasses inclusive best practices.

Our Four Dimensions of Inclusive Recruiting cover event logistics, promotion, and content, as well as interview considerations. We have developed this resource to highlight inclusive recruiting best practices which may support your organization's on-going efforts and provide others to consider incorporating throughout the hiring cycle. We hope this information will serve as a handy reference for your recruiting team and interviewers. Thank you.

Duke Law Career and Professional Development Center

FOUR DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSIVE RECRUITING FOR LAW STUDENTS

1. Planning Your Event

Event Scheduling

- Consider cultural festivals and religious observances when scheduling events and activities.
- Refer to an interfaith calendar, if helpful (e.g. <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/>).
- Consider if the date/time is feasible for broadest student participation (e.g. consider students participating virtually from varying time zones).
- Designate specific ending time for event. Discourage employer representatives from inviting students to unscheduled post-event activities.

Event Venue & Catering Selections

- Consider if the selected venue reflects a message of welcome or exclusion.
- Review the associated barriers to student participation in the event (e.g. travel costs, resource expenditures).

- Confirm that the venue, and its related facilities, are accessible for all guests.
- Verify that persons with a disability, visible or not, can enter, exit and participate in the venue with dignity (e.g. students with special mobility, sight, or hearing concerns). Review [Duke's Special Events Accessibility Checklist and FAQ](#) for additional helpful information.
- Investigate if the event venue has flexible seating options for disabilities and body size.
- Consider dietary restrictions that may be due to disability, medical, cultural, or religious observances when selecting restaurants or ordering food. Share menus ahead of time if possible.
- If planning to serve alcohol, ensure that the event has not been designed so that drinking feels like the only option, a cultural imperative, or disrespectful for those who choose not to drink alcohol.

2. Promoting Your Event

- ❑ Audit marketing materials to see if the language being used currently appeals specifically to certain demographics rather than language applying to a broader audience.
- ❑ Consider all students and groups that may benefit from attending the event and develop advertising inclusive of those populations.
- ❑ Promote your event directly to Duke Law student affinity groups. Please visit [here](#) for student group contact information.
- ❑ Utilize the CPDC class contact lists, and post your event on the CPDC Events calendar for all students to view. For most events, we recommend that you invite the entire list for your target class year(s).
- ❑ Review wording and images in marketing for potential to be experienced by a segment of the community as offensive or alienating.
- ❑ Confirm that advertisement informs students that accommodations are possible upon request. Accommodation and alternative format statements are recommended in any publication describing a specific program or event. Please review [Duke's Accommodation and Alternative Format Statement](#) recommendations to be used where applicable.



At Duke Law, we value diversity, in the broadest sense, because the law is a field and profession that must serve and protect all members of society.

3. Event Content Considerations

- ❑ Consider if the core content of the program incorporates different populations on campus rather than focusing narrowly on specific populations or cultural identities. Confirm that the content of your event is relevant to people of diverse backgrounds (e.g. race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, immigration status, gender, age).
- ❑ Solicit input from individuals from varying backgrounds and experiences during the planning and preparation phases.
- ❑ Recognizing the demands on your diverse employees, strategically and thoughtfully utilize diverse representation (gender, ethnicity, perspective, etc.) when selecting speakers or panel members, and in promotional materials to reflect the diversity of your organization.
- ❑ Review which identities are not represented or at the table for your event and plan to increase the variety of perspectives present and featured during your event.
- ❑ Consider if the event has the potential to be polarizing for students or others off campus. Assess if the event or conduct/behavior associated with the event may be interpreted poorly. If polarizing, prepare employer representatives to navigate those situations. Depending on the culture and norms of your organization, one approach to consider is acknowledging any event interruption and returning to the event as planned.
- ❑ Use inclusive language during the event. Apply gender-neutral language (e.g. "Hello Students" instead of "Hey Guys").
- ❑ Ask panelists/students how they prefer to have their names pronounced and confirm you are pronouncing their names correctly. Acknowledge that sometimes we may inadvertently exclude someone from conversation due to fear of pronouncing their name incorrectly. It is better to ask for the name pronunciation again or to say the name incorrectly and apologize than to exclude someone from meaningful engagement in conversation.
- ❑ Communicate your organization's diversity and inclusion goals to proactively engage students on this topic.
- ❑ Prepare speakers and panelists to communicate your organization's definition of diversity, its inclusion goals, and reflections of what diversity means to the representatives themselves.
- ❑ Educate organization representatives on [Duke's non-discrimination policy](#).

4. Interview Considerations

Before the Interview

- ❑ Prepare interviewers on your organization's definition of diversity, inclusion goals and reflections of what diversity means to the interviewers themselves.
- ❑ Solicit input from individuals from varying backgrounds and experiences during the interview planning and preparation phases.
- ❑ Utilize diverse representation (gender, ethnicity, perspective, etc.) when selecting interviewers to reflect the diversity of your organization. When possible, consider having two interviewers conduct the interviews together to increase representation.
- ❑ Train your interview team to acknowledge and counteract unconscious bias prior to the interview process to facilitate informed and equitable decision-making. Below are examples of common types of unconscious bias interviewers should be familiar with to disrupt:
 - ❑ Affinity Bias: tendency to gravitate toward people similar to ourselves.
 - ❑ Attribution Bias: undervaluing of accomplishments and overvaluing of mistakes of those who are not similar.
 - ❑ Confirmation Bias: inclination to favor and look for information that confirms existing beliefs while disregarding information that contradicts those beliefs.
 - ❑ Name Bias: judging a person based on their name and perceived background.
- ❑ Consider incorporating behavioral interviewing practices into your interview training.
- ❑ Train interviewers to avoid inappropriate inquiries (e.g. sexual orientation, gender identity, political ideology or marital status). Do not engage in conversation topics based upon or perpetuating stereotype assumptions (e.g. pandemic concerns due to race/nationality, child-rearing roles, political activism based on race).
- ❑ Educate interviewers on [Duke's nondiscrimination policy](#).

During the Interview

- ❑ Ask interviewers/students how they prefer to have their names pronounced and confirm you are pronouncing their names correctly.
- ❑ Communicate your organization's diversity and inclusion goals to proactively engage students on this topic.
- ❑ Appropriately explore areas of student's diversity-related backgrounds listed on a student's resume (e.g. LGBTQ+, women, race oriented activities).

After the Interview

- ❑ Incorporate strategies to counteract and mitigate unconscious bias in decision-making.
- ❑ Assess candidates as individuals and not based on group identity.
- ❑ Consider asking every candidate the exact same questions.
- ❑ Assess candidates on consistent criteria for skills and experience.
- ❑ Review process for "screening in" versus "screening out" students.
- ❑ Audit patterns in scoring for patterns which may reveal unconscious bias.