

Improving Faculty Recruiting in the Computing Community Panel

130pm-3pm, July 17th in 2018 CRA Conference at Snowbird, UT

Organizers: [Shashi Shekhar](#) and [Josep Torrellas](#) (CRA Board)

Faculty recruiting challenges are on the mind of many computing research members. In this session, the panelists will discuss faculty recruiting challenges faced by departmental leadership (e.g., low yield), faculty members (e.g., multiple candidates per week), and faculty candidates (e.g., many strong candidates not getting academic interviews). It will also assess the needs, if any, for computing research community action.

Panelists:

Michael Franklin ,	University of Chicago
Juan Gilbert ,	University of Florida
Brian Noble ,	University of Michigan
Jennifer Rexford ,	Princeton University
Craig Wills ,	Worcester Polytechnic Institute

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Goals: The goals of this panel discussion are to understand the faculty recruiting challenges faced by the computing research community (i.e., departmental leadership, faculty members, and faculty candidates) and to assess the needs, if any, for computing research community action.

Background: The number of computing faculty openings [[Bizot 2018](#)] has increased significantly in recent years due to booming enrollments and expanded research opportunities across many societal needs. Many computing departments have multiple open positions and are actively recruiting from among doctoral and post-doctoral candidates, who are also being recruited aggressively by companies. Recruiting faculty is a very arduous process. There are major challenges, such as: (a) several hundred candidates applying for each open position, (b) large overhead on the faculty during the recruiting season, (c) frustratingly low yields from offers, (d) a large number of trips for the lucky candidates, (e) no campus interviews for several strong candidates, and (e) diminishing interest in academic careers [[Tamer 2018](#)].

Panel Questions: (a) What is working well and not working well in the tenure-track faculty recruiting process? (b) Do we need to improve the faculty recruiting process? (c) Is there a need for computing research community action and, if so, what is it? (d) How may a CRA-hosted website of faculty candidates, that departments can access, help? What information may faculty candidates share on such a web-site? (e) What are pros and cons of recruiting events at conferences [[Alvarado 2014](#)]? (f) What are the risks of such initiatives and how may the risks be managed?

Supplementary Information: Many disciplines have a “faculty recruiting” conference [[Economist 2016](#), [AALS 2016](#), [AEA 2010](#), [AMA 2016](#)] to bring candidates and universities together in one place for initial screening and match-making. For example, the Association of American Law Schools holds a three-day [Faculty Recruitment Conference](#) [AALS 2016] each fall besides maintaining a Faculty Appointments Register (FAR), and publishing a quarterly [Placement Bulletin](#) of advertised faculty openings. The American Marketing Association (AMA) holds an [Academic Placement Career Fair](#) [AMA 2016] during its summer conference to offer the opportunity to interview and connect in person. The fair is attended annually by over 130 schools and 200 candidates.

The faculty recruiting conferences offer benefits such as cost reduction, up close and personal assessment (over skype/webex screening), technology leveling and comparison in context [[Perlmutter 2015](#)]. Candidates also benefit from opportunities for networking, honing interviewing skills, picking up a broader set of opportunities and assessing match with a potential employer. A few candidates have expressed concerns about travel expenses and an ideal faculty recruiting conference may consider subsidizing candidate travel.

Beyond recruiting conferences, some disciplines use a matching program [[NRMP](#)] for training opportunities with anti-trust exemption. Other ideas may include auctions and bidding. In general, using online forums for matching candidates and recruiting departments seems to offer high potential.

References

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