

## Reasons not to 'hire your own' PhD students

1. **The hiring decision:** how open and honest can the discussion be? Will junior faculty members or lecturers actually feel free to critically evaluate these candidates. . . knowing that his/her advisor/committee members/teachers are in the room?
2. **New ideas:** those trained elsewhere will have more experience with different ways of doing research, teaching, and service. . . hiring your own may lead to a sort of conservatism. . . academic inbreeding
3. **Expectations < Loyalty:** these folks gave me a PhD. . . there is an added pressure to accede to the wishes of one's colleagues . . . "my former advisor really wants this or that. . . I feel obliged to support."
4. **Expectations < Hiring:** other students have been hired. . . why not me. . . or my student. . . maybe if I do more service. . . etc. . . they will hire me too. . . maybe if I take a postdoc nearby. . . or accept a part-time lecturing position. . . I will get a TT offer some day. . .
5. **Expectations < Tenure:** we expect every new hire to get tenure. . . but in "hiring your own" cases there is an added pressure. Are we really going to deny someone tenure. . . someone we have known for a long time. . . someone who has former committee members voting etc. etc.? As with the hiring decision. . . is an open and critical evaluation of a tenure candidate possible with former advisors/committee members/teachers in the room?
6. **Conceit, internal and external:** really??. . . we can't find anyone better or more qualified. We just are "that good." The message to other top schools?
7. **Confirmation bias:** . . . "How do we know we're doing a good job hiring? Well, just look at all these great people we hired! How do we know they're good? They came from a great department! And if they weren't good, we wouldn't have given them PhDs."
8. **Difficult switch:** being seen as a student vs being seen as a peer. . . going off to a different place and earning tenure/reputation. . . is a way for our PhD students to grow as scholars and individuals. . .
9. **Less Productivity:** Perhaps because of 2), 5) and 8) there is some evidence that Depts/Schools that hire their own are less productive.

**Note:** in a case where 'one of our own' goes off, gets tenure elsewhere, establishes her/his own research voice and agenda, then most of the worries noted above would be diminished or not apply.

## Conflicts of Interest

1. The advisor, committee members, teachers, research collaborators . . . each have more at stake than an 'outside' faculty member. "We trained this candidate . . . we are great . . . so the candidate is great!" There is a clear conflict of interest present.

**All of this leads to:** we are more willing to speak out in support of 'our own.'

**Privilege:** consider how this advantages specific voices

2. Outsiders, junior faculty members (lecturers/assistant/associate) also may have conflicts of interest. If they are against the hire, there are two choices.
  1. Speak out and perhaps alienate one's (senior) colleagues, create enemies, and strain friendships for little or no gain.
  2. Stay quiet and vote against the hire anonymously

Given the benefits and risks associated with speaking out against a 'hire our own' candidate, it is better to stay quiet. The conflict is between being open, honest, and forthright as opposed to holding one's views back on grounds of self-interest.

**All of this leads to:** a suppression of some voices in 'hire our own' cases.

**Marginalization:** consider how this process marginalizes specific voices

3. Challenging a 'hire our own' view is even more contentious when we have already done it. Imagine a faculty member challenging a 'hire our own' candidate because of 1 and 2 (or any of 1-9 above) in the presence of a colleague who was hired as 'one of our own.' Again, there is a high likelihood of more hurt feelings, alienated colleagues, etc. Again, the conflict is between being open, honest, and forthright as opposed to holding one's views back on grounds of self-interest.

**All of this leads to:** a suppression of open and honest discussion in 'hire our own' cases.

4. All of this gets revisited in the tenure decision.