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Holistic Principles in Grantee Selection: An Introduction

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Association of
American Medical Colleges

Presentation Outline

1

Provide an overview of the Holistic Review Framework

2

Introduce elements of the selection process that you can control and those you can influence

3

Share promising practices within Holistic Review

4

Engage in Q&A

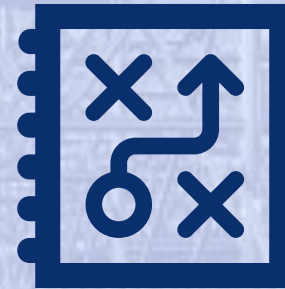
Overview of Holistic Review



*Originally
designed for
medical
schools*



Flexible



Strategically Focused

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graph LR; A[Screening] --> B[Interviewing]; B --> C[Selecting];
```

Screening

Interviewing

Selecting

AAMC Holistic Review in Admissions Framework™

- Emphasizes the importance of giving **individualized consideration**
- Provides **operational guidance**
- Encourages using a **balanced approach**

DEFINITION

Holistic review is a **flexible, individualized way** of assessing an applicant's capabilities, by which **balanced consideration is given to experiences, attributes, competencies, and academic or scholarly metrics (EACM)** and, when considered in combination, how the individual **might contribute value to the institution's mission.**

CORE PRINCIPLE 1

In a holistic recruitment and selection process, selection criteria are:



Broad-based



Linked to institutional mission and goals



Promote diversity and inclusion as essential to excellence

CORE PRINCIPLE 2

A balance of experiences, attributes, competencies, and metrics (EACM) are:



Used to assess applicants with the intent of creating a *richly diverse interview and selection pool*



Applied equability across the entire candidate pool



Supported by performance data that show certain Es, As, Cs, and Ms are linked to a likelihood of success as a resident

CORE PRINCIPLE 3

Screeners and reviewers:

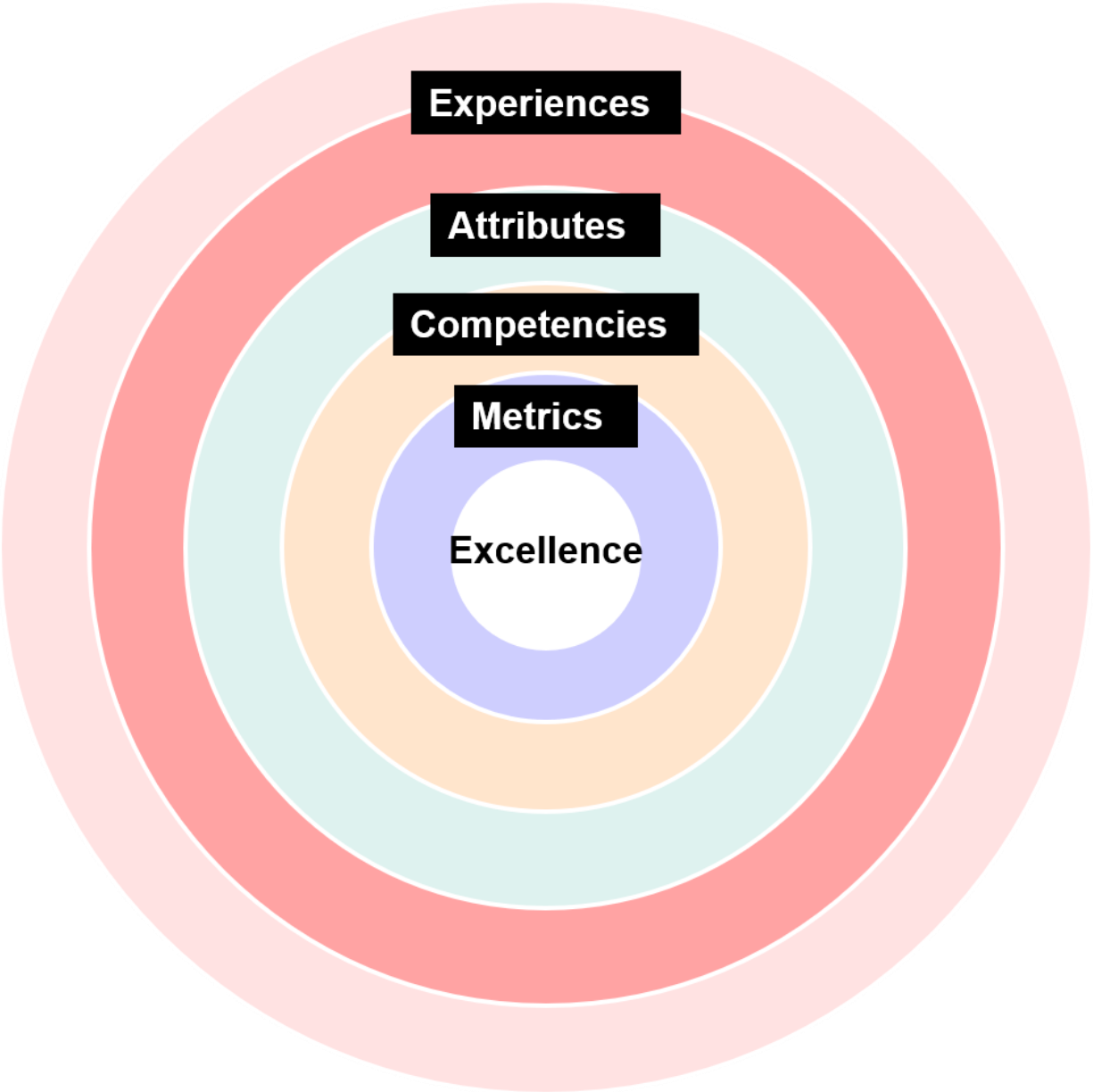


Give individualized consideration to how each applicant may contribute to the institution or program's learning environment and **practice of medicine**



Weigh and balance the range of criteria needed to achieve the outcomes desired by the program or institution.

EACM Criteria Identification Tool



Experiences

Cultural events

Educational background

Community service

Historical events

Leadership roles

Research experience

Life experiences

Professional associations

Political Events

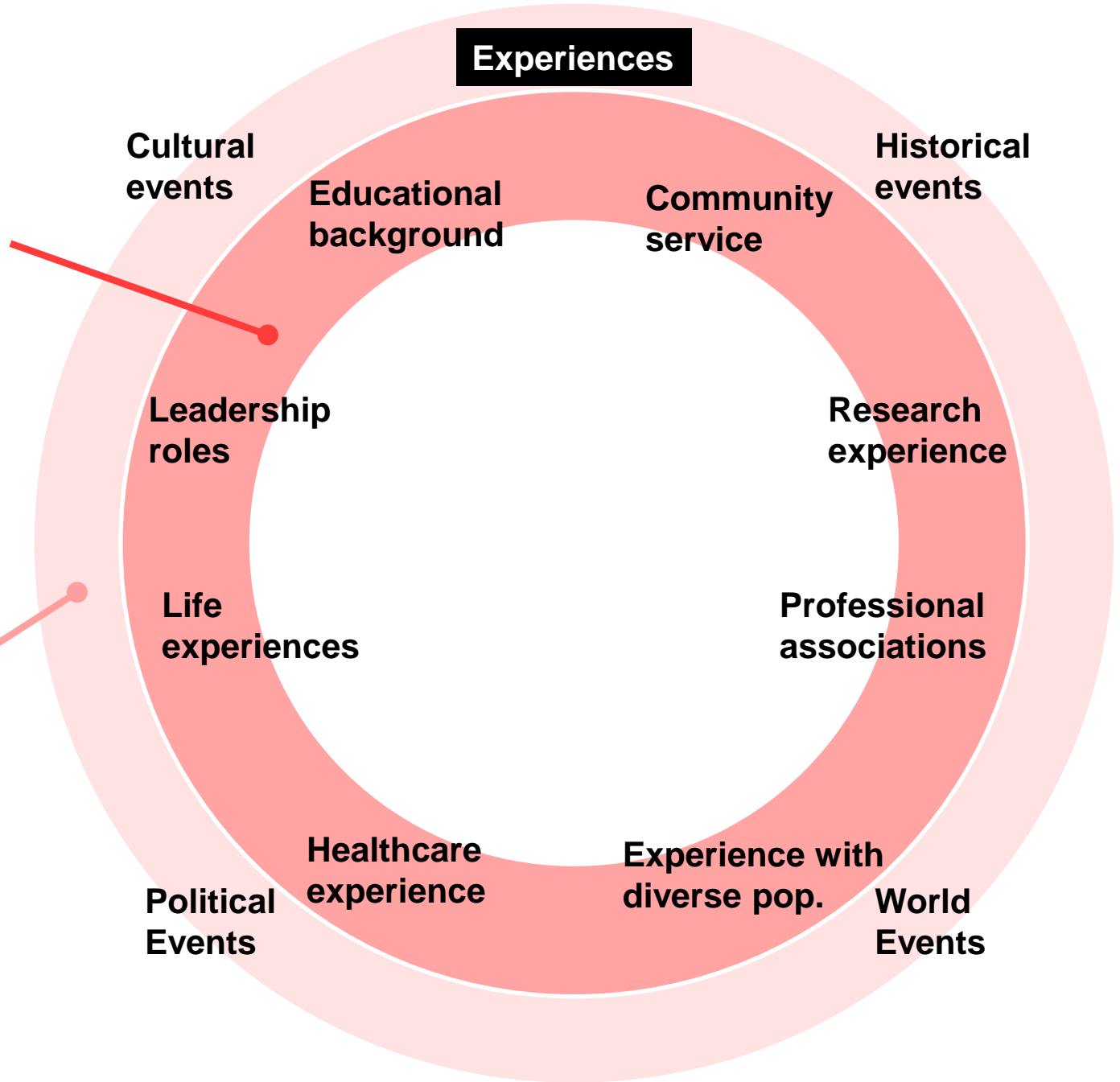
Healthcare experience

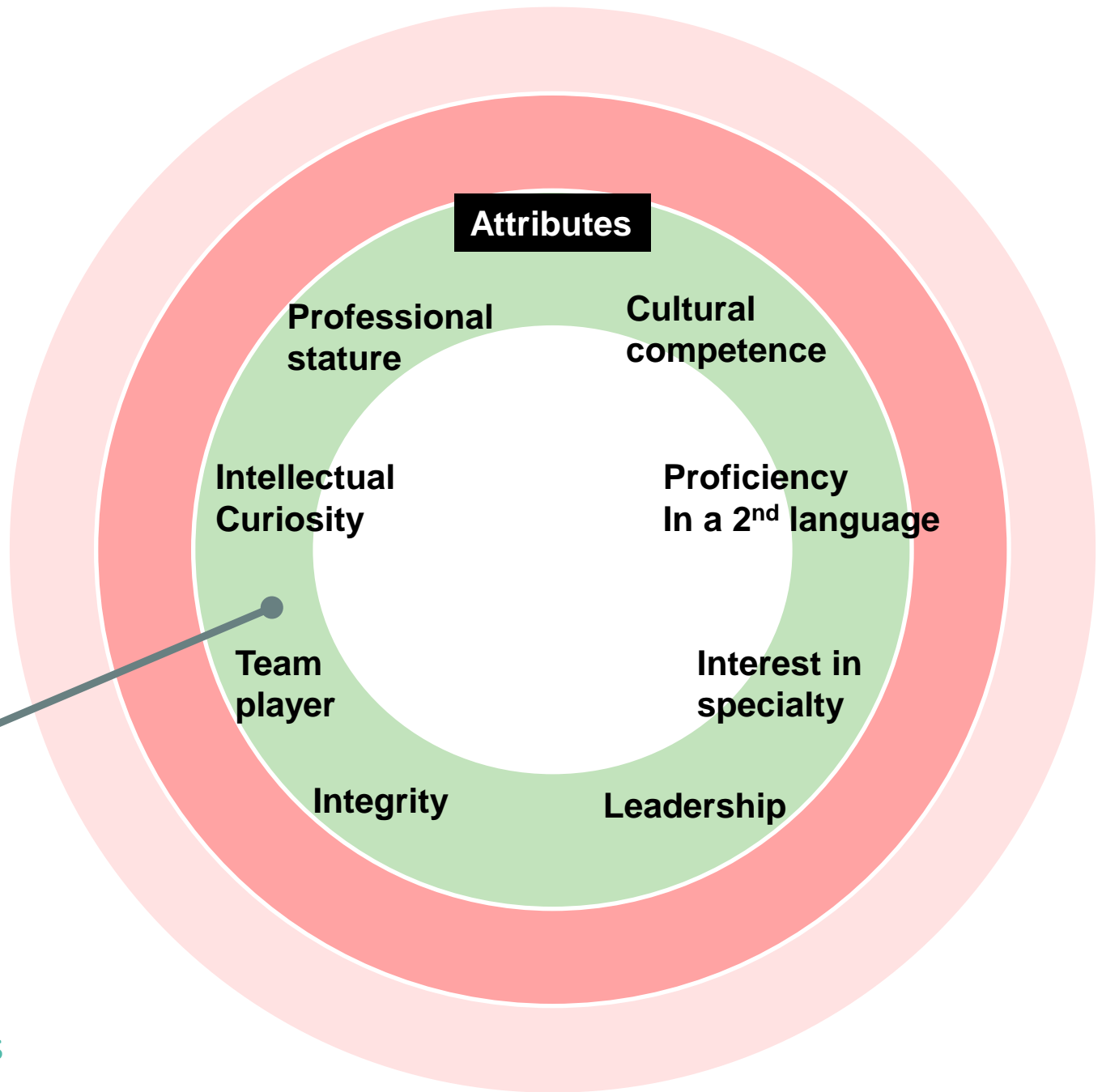
Experience with diverse pop.

World Events

Experiences-
Encompasses the path an applicant has taken to get to where s/he is.

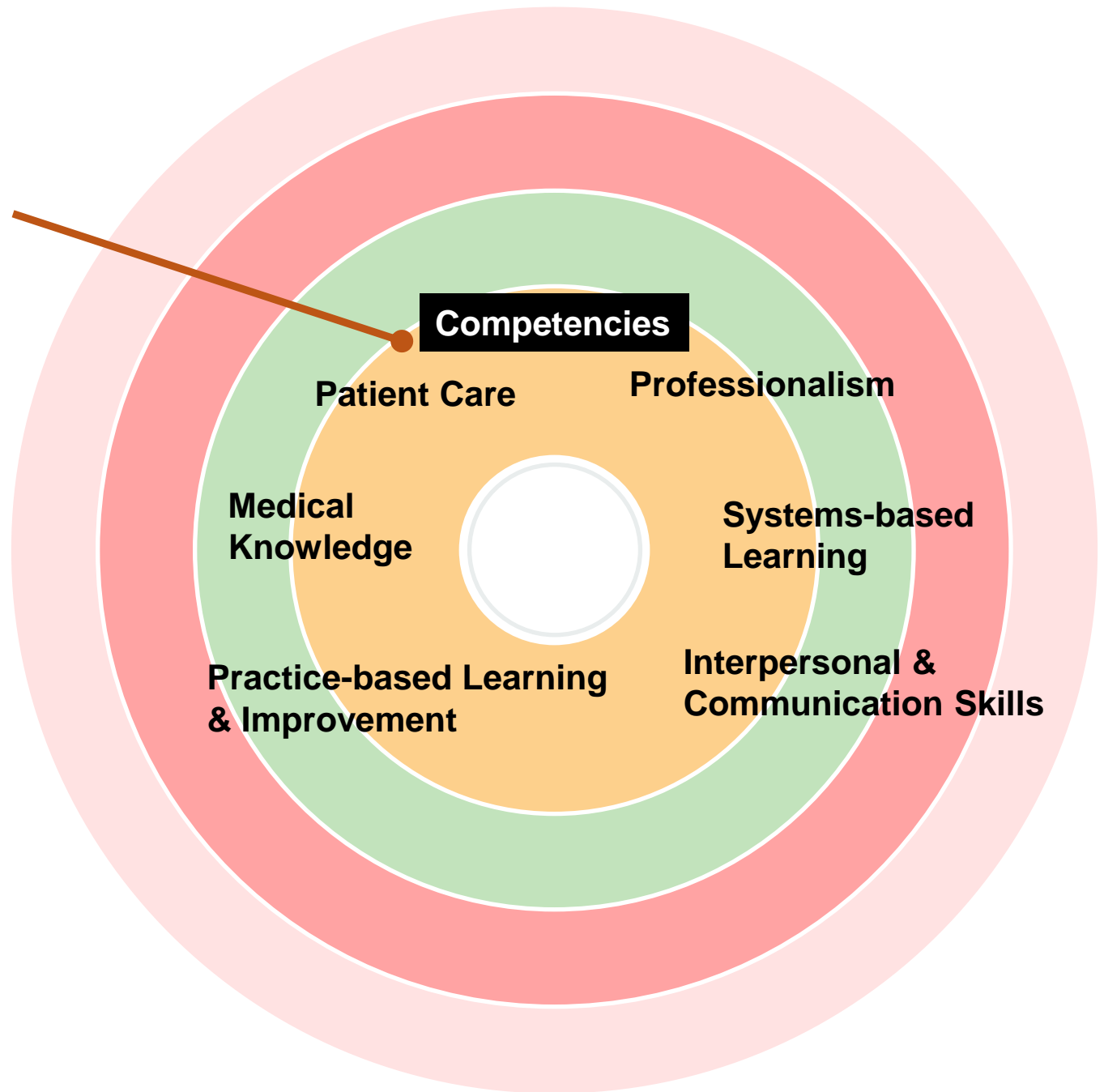
The outer ring acknowledges the influence of the world context in which these experiences took place

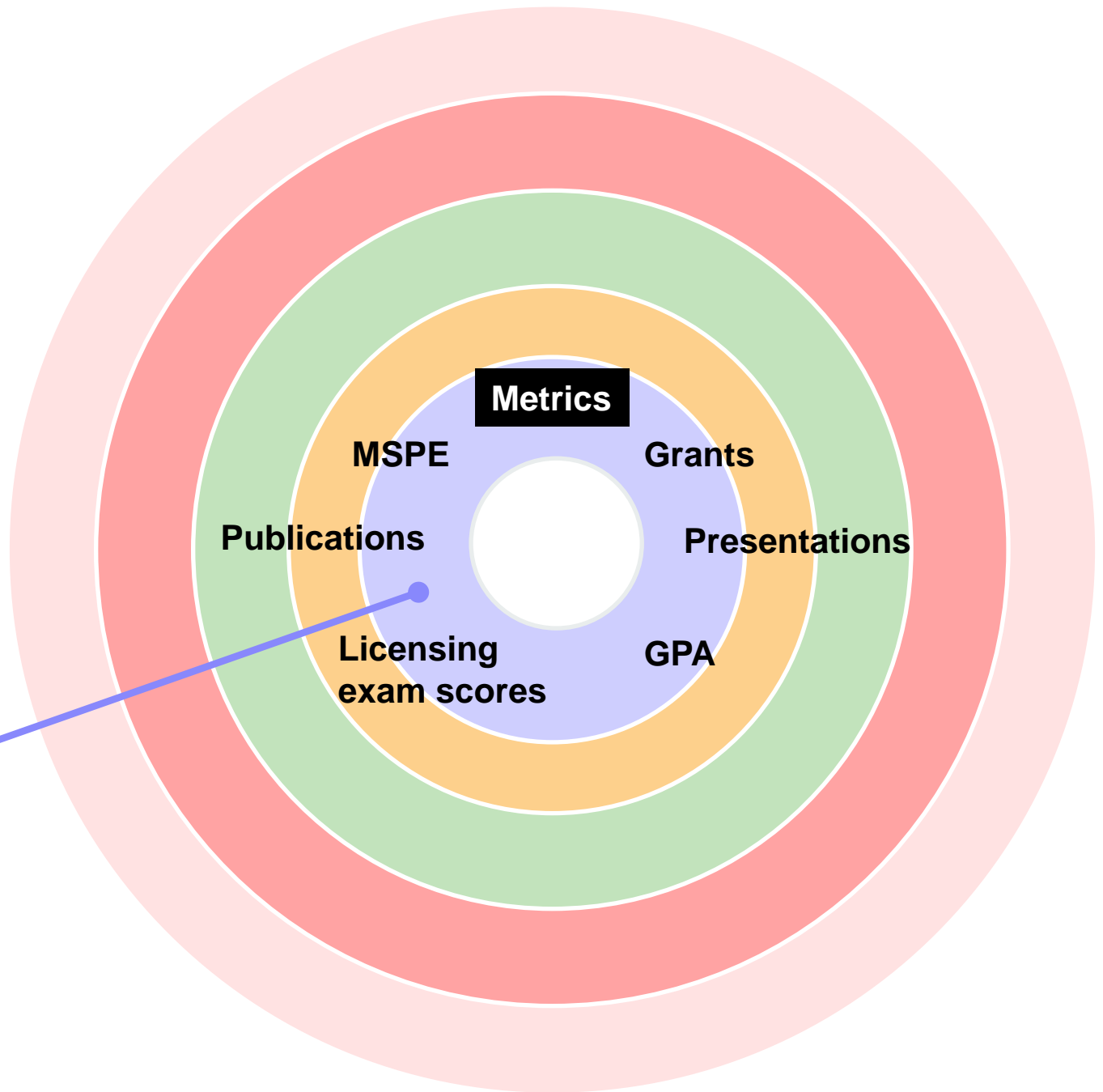




Attributes- Includes the applicant's current skills and abilities, personal qualities, and relevant demographic factors

Competencies-
Include the way in
which an applicant
applies their skills
including how they
think, achieve
results, interact
with people, and
self-manage.





Metrics-
Includes the
quantitative
scholarly academic
components of the
applicant's
portfolio

Holistic Review

- 1. Mission-driven
- 2. Strategically focused
- 3. Acknowledges diversity as essential to institutional excellence
- 4. Informed by local data



**Institutional Mission, Goals
& Diversity Interests**

Screening

Interviewing

Selecting

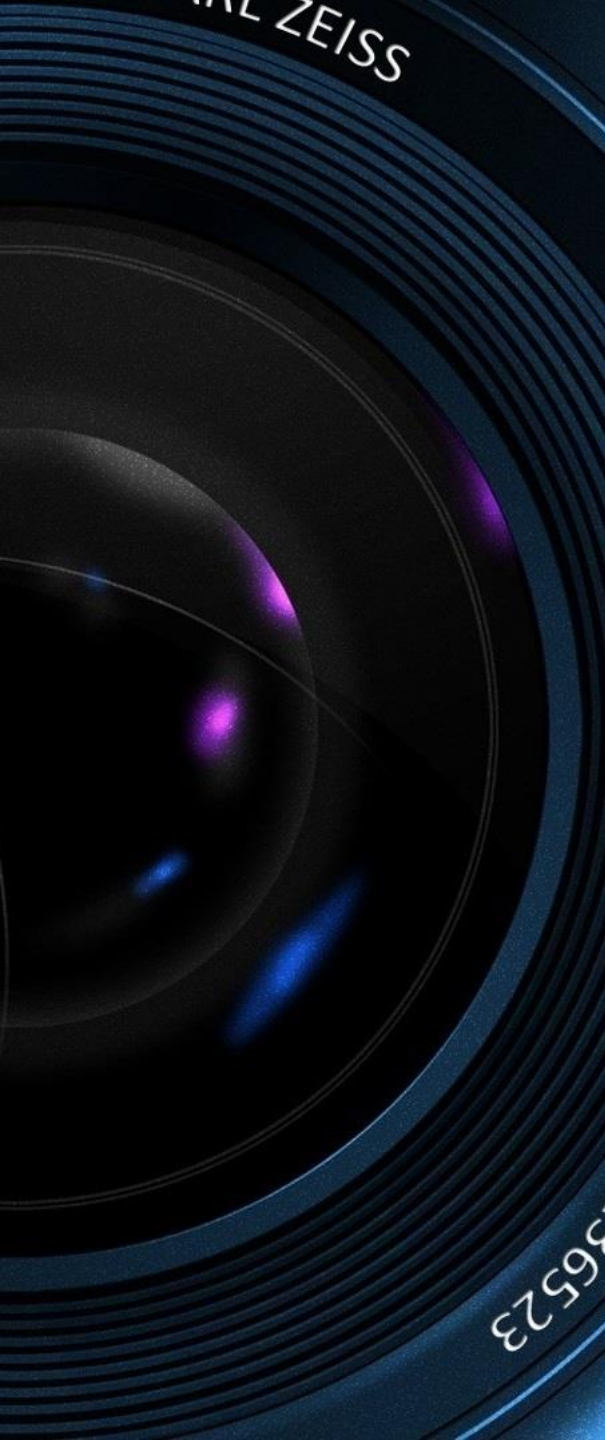
Selection Criteria

Misconceptions



A holistic selection process:

- Is not “making up for previous injustices”
- Is not a quota system
- Does not lower standards, it expands them
- Does not ignore academic metrics; rather, considers metrics in the context of an applicant’s entire portfolio



Goal: To engage you in thinking about how you might strategically apply the AAMC's Holistic Review Framework to:

- **Widen the lens** through which we assess applicants in support of your mission and
- Further **leverage the benefits of diversity and inclusion**

Resource

Applicant Criteria Identification and Prioritization

Purpose: A critical part of a holistic selection process is identifying Experiences, Attributes, Competencies, and Metrics (EACMs) that are grounded in your mission and promote diversity and inclusion. Developing a shared understanding of how these criteria are prioritized facilitates recruitment, helps orient reviewers and interviewers, and informs the development of evaluation rubrics.

This activity will help you to “widen the lens” through which you assess residents by identifying and ranking the mission-driven EACMs that would add value to your program.

Directions: For each applicant criterion:

Part 1

1. Determine if each example in the following charts should be included, edited, or eliminated from your resident selection process.
2. Add any criteria that would be important to the accomplishment of your institution’s mission and program goals.

Part 2

3. Rank how the EACMs contribute to your decision to invite a resident for an interview.

Experiences

① Criteria	② Importance of criteria to interview invitation			
	Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Educational background				
Community service/volunteer experience				
Leadership roles				
Experience with diverse populations				
Research experience				

Resource



Applying Holistic Review to Resident Selection

Purpose: Developing shared definitions of the criteria you identified in Activity 1 helps orient reviewers and interviewers and informs the development of evaluation rubrics; it can also help mitigate the influence of unconscious bias. This activity will help you to define your high-priority criteria and assess if your recruitment materials and selection processes reflect your priorities.

Directions:

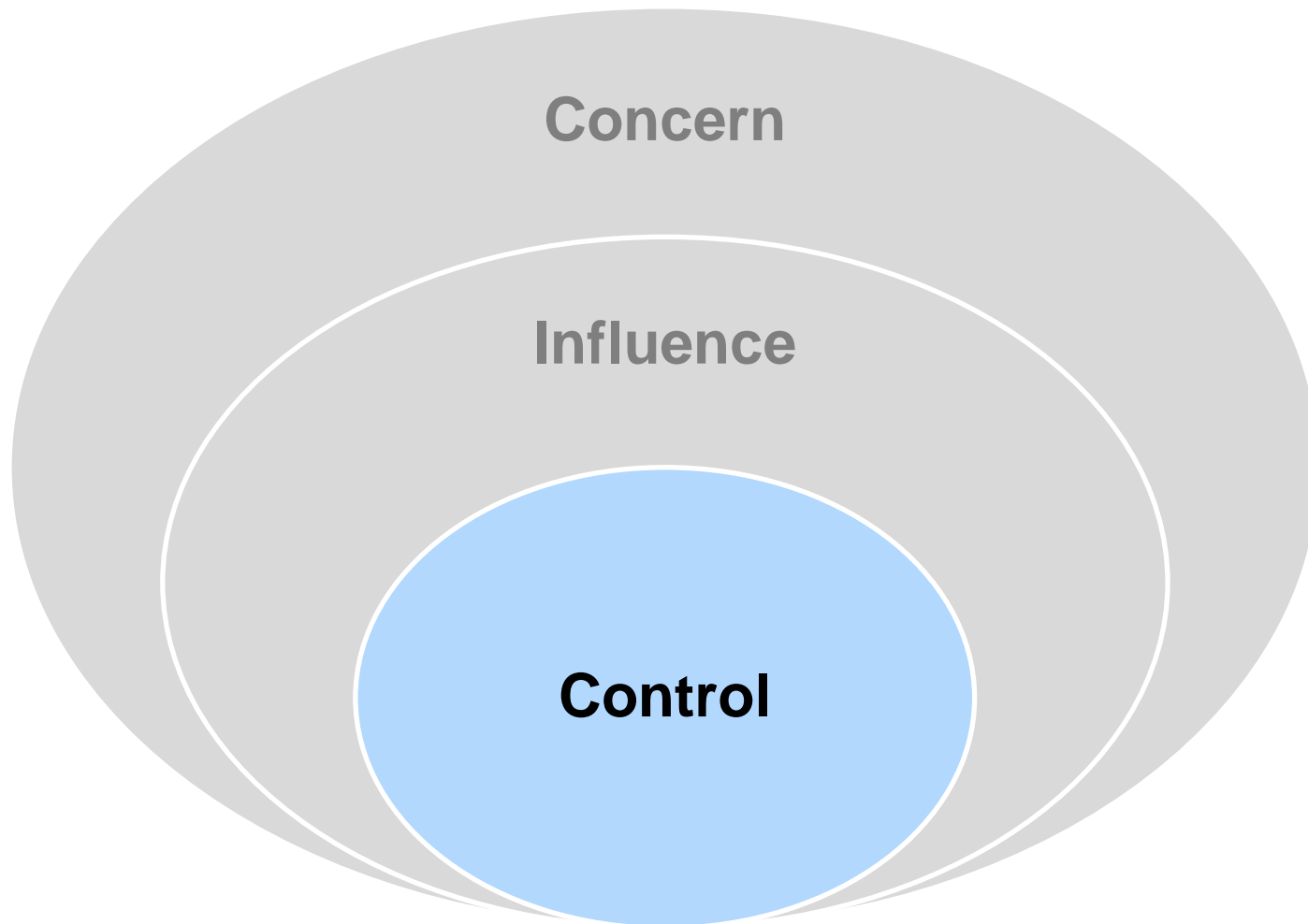
1. Review your rankings from Activity 1 and select two "very important" criteria for each of the four domains in the EACM model. Clearly define each of those criteria.
2. Look at your current recruitment materials and selection filters to determine if these will reveal the priority criteria that you have identified.
3. Determine what you could add or change to assist you in finding the EACMs you are looking for.

Part 1: Resident Selection Criteria

EXPERIENCES	1. <i>Criterion:</i>
	Definition: <i>How do you define it?</i>
	Assess: <i>What evidence will satisfy this requirement? Do my current recruitment and selection materials allow me to assess this criterion? What, if any, changes are needed?</i>

Control, Influence, Concern Model

What Do You Control?



What Do You Control?



**How your
recruitment
materials are
written**



**Including a
diversity
statement in your
call**



**Where you post
your call**



**Application
materials that
reflect what
you've determined
is important and
mission aligned**

What Do You Control?



**Your application
criteria and
requirements**

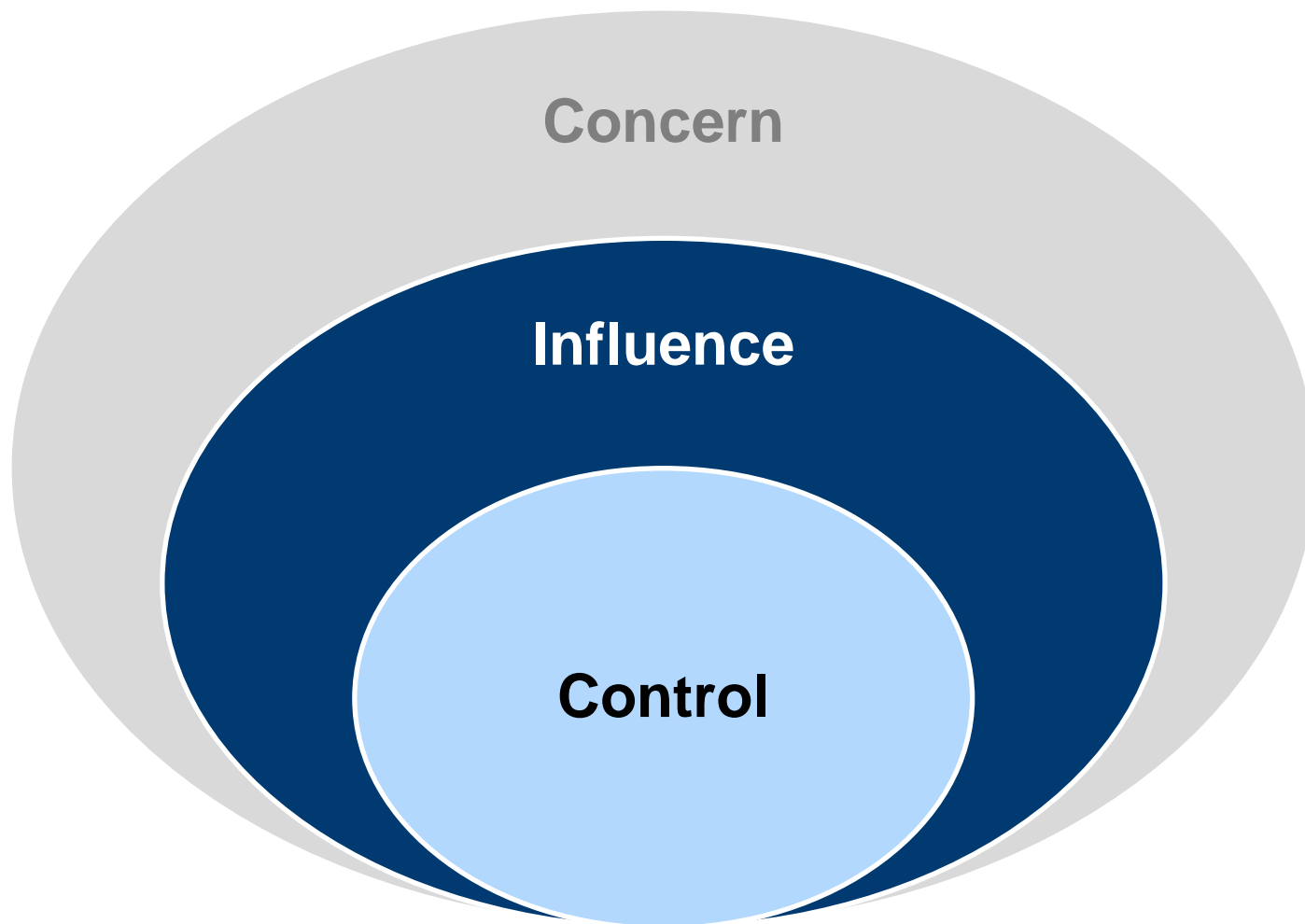


**The tools you use
to assess
applicants**



**How you weigh
your requirements**

What Do You Influence?



What Do You Influence?



Who applies to
your program



How your
program is
perceived



How visiting
applicants
experience
your program



How current
grantees
describe their
experience

Promising Practices in Holistic Review

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Preparation*



Ground your screening, interview, and acceptance criteria in institutional mission and educational and diversity goals.



Develop a shared understanding of how your school prioritizes these criteria.



Develop shared definitions for these criteria.

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Screening*



Understand the context of the applicant. Consider reading the personal statement and/or experiences first.



Use a screening rubric for experiences, attributes, competencies, and academic metrics.



If using academic metrics thresholds, set them based on institutional data and support services.



After determining applicants have met academic metrics criteria, consider removing academic metrics from the rest of the process.

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Interviews*



Train admissions committee members and interviewers on admissions policies, processes, practices, and unconscious bias.



Use a semi- or highly structured interview process.



Use an evaluation rubric.

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Administrative*



Regularly evaluate your selection process to assess the effectiveness, value, and necessity of policies and criteria.



Clearly communicate mission, goals, and criteria to applicants and advisors, as well as to your institution's faculty, staff, and administrators.



Cultivate support and buy-in from institutional leadership.

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Reducing Implicit Bias*



Common identity formation: Ask interview questions about interests and activities you share in common



Perspective taking: Take the perspective of a member of a group against which you have unconscious bias



Consider the opposite: When data seem to point to one conclusion, briefly look for data supporting the opposite conclusion before making a final decision.



Counter-stereotypical exemplars: Spend time with or focus on individuals you admire from groups against which you have a bias

Promising Practices for Conducting Holistic Review: *Reducing Structural Bias*



Frame the discussion around Bias

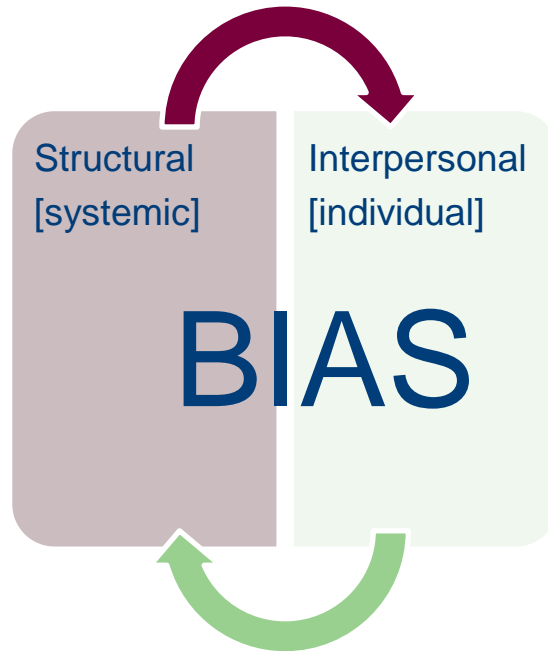


Define elements of bias



Conduct an Equity Impact Assessment

Framing the discussion on bias



Defining elements of bias

Structural (system level decisions)

- GPA calculation, sorting, cutoffs, and prioritization
- MCAT use and policy
- Required premed courses
- Policies related to FAP, disadvantaged status, letters, resident status
- Deadlines

Interpersonal (person-based decisions)

- Attitudes (racism, elitism, sexism, homophobia, etc.)
- Stereotypes, anchor bias, overconfidence, etc.
- Time crunch
- Coded language, tradition, name bias, appearance bias

Equity Impact Assessment:

Undergraduate GPA

- To what competencies or evidence-based predictors does this correspond?
- How reliable is the evidence?
- What school-specific data or applications do we have?
- Who benefits from this?
- Who is hindered by this?
- How can we improve the mission-congruence of this element?
- What is not visible with this tool that may be relevant?
- How can we approach this more equitably?

Additional Information About Holistic Review

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- Harrison, L. E. Using holistic review to form a diverse interview pool for selection to medical school. *Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings*, 32:2, 218-221. [10.1080/08998280.2019.1576575](https://doi.org/10.1080/08998280.2019.1576575)
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- Coplan, B., Todd, M., Stoehr, J., & Lamb, G. (2021). Holistic Admissions and Underrepresented Minorities in Physician Assistant Programs. *The journal of physician assistant education : the official journal of the Physician Assistant Education Association*, 32(1), 10-19. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JPA.0000000000000337>

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Q&A
