Sample 1

Faculty Development Plan
Information Systems Department
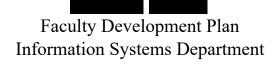
Introduction

My first year at BYU has been instructive. I have learned much that I hope to implement in the coming year to build on strengths and improve areas of weakness. Using the feedback from students and the Comment Classification service provided by the Center for Teaching & Learning, I have developed the following plan for the 2021-22 Academic Year.

Self-Assessment

Strengths, Skills, and Competencies

Explaining Challenging Concepts: In the student feedback, a number of students throughout the year mentioned my ability to explain challenging concepts in a way that was easy to understand, which I have felt is a strength of mine. I believe that any successes that I have achieved in teaching are due to my own struggles in learning and understanding new subjects. When I am finally able to master a subject, I remember what it felt like to start from scratch, and I try to explain the material in a way that I feel would have helped me to better understand it when I was learning it for the first time. Students especially seemed to appreciate the supplementary videos that were created and posted as I identified areas where they were struggling throughout the semester. Elder Marlin K. Jensen said in a talk I heard years ago that "we can teach to entertain, we can teach to inform, or we can teach for understanding." Since hearing that talk, I have made it my mission to teach for understanding.

Cares About Student Success: A number of students mentioned that they felt that I cared about their success, which I feel is one of the highest compliments they could give. I was pleased that students for the most part felt like there were ample opportunities to get help in the course, that they were treated respectfully, and that they felt involved. I feel that one of my particular strengths is connecting with those students who perhaps struggle a little more than others. Students over the years have regularly given feedback that they feel I am very approachable, which has been an aim of mine. I do my best to be available and ready to help and answer questions. When I can get into those one-on-one situations with a student who is struggling, I feel confident in my ability to come up with an example or an analogy that makes sense for that particular student and helps that concept to click. I try to seek out those opportunities.

Spiritually Strengthening: The spiritual aspect of teaching at BYU was a new and exciting concept for me, and I was grateful to receive such positive feedback in regard to the thoughts and discussions that we had regarding spiritual matters. Many students commented on the spiritual

thoughts that were shared in class, and I received a number of notes throughout the semester from students who told me the thought that day was just what they needed to hear. I understand that I am simply the means by which those messages are received, but I am grateful to be a part of that process.

Building Character: I especially appreciated the comments from students about wanting to be a better person because of the class, not just in the spiritual aspect as referenced above, but in learning. I did my best to teach that life is about so much more than a grade in a class, which tended to be the focus of so many students. One defining experience, in particular, came in Fall semester when students were concerned about the short time allowed to complete the difficult final exam. We ended up having a great discussion in class about not lowering the bar by extending the time, but rather preparing better, which some students discussed in the feedback. It was great to watch them step up to the challenge and to score better than the students the previous year had done.

Work Ethic: Many students in their feedback for Winter semester referenced my learning ASP.NET in order to teach their IS 413 (Enterprise Application Development) course. The Covid-19 pandemic obviously created challenges for all faculty this past year, including teaching to class full of masked students and switching back and forth between virtual and in-person classes. In the IS department in particular, we shifted from 75-minute classes to 50-minute classes in order to add another section of our IS Core to ensure that all students could be in-person at least once per week. In addition to those challenges, technology changes from semester-to-semester in the world of Information Systems. I had to quickly learn to use SQL Server Management Studio, VBA, Tableau, Solver, among other topics throughout the year, which is not completely unusual for our discipline. But the most difficult challenge by far was to learn a new and complex programming language (ASP.NET Core), in a course that was new to our program, which meant no previous materials to build from, and with only the Christmas break to prepare. I have never put so much time into prepping a course. I told the students on the first day of class, "I debated whether to try to hide this from you or let it come out slowly and painfully over the course of the semester, but I had never programmed a line of code in ASP.NET Core prior to Thanksgiving." I watched their faces fall. Then I continued, "But learning new technologies is the life of an Information Systems professional, so when the call came, there was only one answer: 'Giddy up.'" It was fun to then watch over the course of the semester as students started to gain an appreciation of how tough the new language, and they seemed to gain a respect that I had picked it up to teach the class. There was a cool feeling that we were all in it together. In what has probably been my most challenging year in teaching, I appreciated that so many students recognized and appreciated all the effort that must have gone into learning a difficult new programming language in such a short amount of time sufficiently to be able to teach it to them and answer their questions. More than the language itself, I hope that example sticks with them.

Interests & Opportunities

In teaching, I have always been fascinated by the process of how students learn, and particularly introductory classes where they are learning subjects such as programming, database, or networking for the first time. I believe that when students have a solid foundation and understanding of those core topics, it will make a difference throughout their entire educational experience. My heart lies with those new students, and I relish any opportunity to recruit new students in.

One area that I have only a little experience in, but which I have great interest in learning, is the world of Data Analytics / Data Science. Those topics marry the world of database, statistics, and analysis together, which are all areas that I enjoy. As I complete my first year and feel I have my feet a little better under me, those are topics that I would like to research and pursue.

Areas to Develop

Time Management: I believe that much of the negative feedback I received could be attributed to time management in class. Many students in the first semester commented on the length of the spiritual thoughts to begin class. I do not believe that it was the spiritual thoughts in particular that were the issue, but rather the casual start to class. We sometimes would start class a few minutes late because I had been helping students in the previous class or due to technology issues in getting logged in and getting the Zoom group online. Then I would have some conversation with the students about how things were going, along with any announcements/updates I had regarding Learning Suite or upcoming announcements. Then we would have a prayer and a thought, where I would then ask if the students had any thoughts they wanted to share. We often would be 15 minutes into the 50-minute class before we started on new material. This was never an issue up until after the first midterm, where spiritual thoughts suddenly seemed to come into competition with student grades, and I began to hear rumblings that students were not happy with the use of time in class. I learned a great lesson that students at BYU are serious about their education, and that every minute is important to them. The next semester, I modified my approach to where I always started class right on time, immediately have a prayer and a short spiritual thought, and always be ready to roll with new class material 5 minutes into class. The negative comments disappeared, so I plan to continue that approach in the coming year.

Course Organization: Many students referenced in the Database course that the course was not well-balanced, and I agree; the course was relatively simple in the beginning and then became much more complex at the end of the semester. I believe there is an opportunity to condense the material that is mostly review for students in the beginning of the semester in order to allow for more time at the end of the semester to focus on the more challenging concepts. In the ASP.NET course, the opposite may have been true; we moved perhaps too quickly and then ended up needing to come back and review concepts that we had already covered. There is an opportunity to slow down in that course throughout the semester and make sure we understand concepts all along the way. I have also learned in my short time at BYU that students seem to dislike any changes to the schedule (even if those changes benefit them, such as giving more time for an assignment, because that then impinges on the next assignment), so more work up front to make sure there are as few disruptions to the schedule as possible will also help in the organization.

More Examples in Class: One comment that came up frequently was the desire for going through more examples in class. We did do a number of examples in class, but not nearly as many as the students or I would have liked due to our limited time. I recorded a number of videos in the Database course going over examples to supplement, but students did not seem to discover the value of those videos until late in the semester, and then many did end up expressing appreciation for those supplementary materials in the feedback they gave. Having the full 75 minutes in class will obviously help, but over my years in education, I have discovered that technical instruction is often better delivered in a video format where students can watch pause, rewind, and rewatch as necessary outside of class. That frees up more time in class time to go

through examples and answer questions on homework and help students individually. I plan to incorporate more of that into my classes to allow more time for examples in class.

In-Class Activities: One of the comments brought up frequently in the ASP.NET course was regarding our in-class activities. Following the feedback in the Fall semester regarding the desire for more examples in class, I changed the format for the Winter semester to follow the method described just above. The bulk of the content came through videos that were viewed prior to class, and students came to class to ask questions, go over examples, and to get help. Some students did not like the extremely loose format of the in-class activities, where the content for the day was determined by the questions that students had, and felt like going to class was a waste of time (despite liking the content of the videos.) Some students wanted to pursue topics deeper in class. I need to find a way to better balance the structured aspect of the class while still allowing for students to ask questions and get help.

Goals

Teaching Development

My long-term goal is simple: I want to be the best teacher I can be for the department, college, and university. To me, that means being among the top teachers in the department. That will obviously not happen overnight, especially because I am surrounded by great teachers. But a goal is meant to stretch us. Meeting that goal will obviously entail teaching for understanding, building relationships with students, helping them learn how to learn, and rewarding them appropriately for hard work. It also entails helping them to understand who they really are, what is their true purpose in life, and building them up spiritually. It is the process of continual improvement that I enjoy so much.

Teaching Goals for 2021-22

General
- Individually meet with each of the students in the IS Core

IS 402
- Redesign IS 402 course to organize better and compress what we learn in the first half of the class in order to expand what we learn in the second half of the class
- Record additional tutorial videos for IS 402 to allow for more time to go through examples in class
- Review IS 402 assignments and exams and make any appropriate changes
- Start class on time with a prayer and brief spiritual thought limited to the first 5 minutes of class

IS 413
- Redesign IS 413 course to organize better and spread the material out more evenly
- Rethink in-class portion of the course to make better use of the students' time
- Increase level of rigor in assignments

Professional Project

One of the most widely used communication tools among software teams and information systems professionals is software called "Slack". According to the Slack website, there are millions of Slack users in over 150 countries and in 65 of the Fortune 100 companies. In the Information Systems department, we utilize Slack with our students to communicate and to help acclimate them to the environment for their future careers.

Slack provides the ability to program "bots" to help answer questions on programmed topics. I am part of a three-person team that will teach a Workshop at the HICSS 2021 conference on writing bots for Slack.

For my Professional Project this year, I plan to learn the Slack bot environment and programming language in order to be able to accomplish two objectives: 1) Teach the workshop at the academic conference, and 2) Utilize the Slack bots in my own classes to help students to receive quick answers to frequently asked questions and to get the help they need in a more timely manner, which will in turn increase my productivity.

Citizenship Development

Citizenship Goals
- Continue to serve on the BSIS Admissions Committee
- Continue to serve on the MIS Admissions Committee
- Continue to serve as appropriate on the IS Core Curriculum Committee
- Seek out appropriate citizenship opportunities at the College & University levels

Relationship Between Goals and Department and University Aspirations and Needs

The mission of the BYU Information Systems Department is to develop leaders of faith and character who can use, design, implement, manage, and research information systems to make intelligent organizational decisions. The mission of BYU is to assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life. I believe that the goals I have listed are an attempt to contribute my part to meet those goals.

Teaching: The teaching at BYU ought to be the best in the world. I want to mentor these students in a way that they will be able to use, design, implement, manage, and research information systems to make the intelligent organizational decisions referenced above. I believe that we are developing leaders in the industry. But I also believe we are building leaders of faith. These students we teach are exceptional in every way, and I want to help nurture their natural talents and abilities. The proposed goals are meant to increase the level of understanding, both temporal and spiritual, and help students to move forward and become those leaders we expect them to be.

Citizenship: BYU has blessed my life long before I ever came to teach here, and I want to give back in every way possible to the BYU community. I want to get to know others through citizenship and do my best to help all those I encounter in their quest for perfection and eternal life. Whatever talents and abilities I possess, I hope to share with those around me. Seeking out opportunities to serve will help build the university that has done so much for me.

Resources Needed

In my experience thus far, the department has provided me with all the resources I have needed. As a recent example, the course I am teaching has a version of the software for a Mac that differs slightly than the Windows version. I do not own a Mac, so answering questions for students started to become a problem. I inquired about potential opportunities, and within a couple days, the department found a solution for me. Coming from an environment where it felt like we had to beg for resources, this has been a breath of fresh air. I have been very impressed in my short time at BYU with how many resources are available to new faculty, both in terms of equipment, but also in terms of training. I have felt the support of the university, and it is greatly appreciated. I am not aware of any other resources at this time that I might need that have not been provided. I appreciate the opportunity to teach again those courses I taught during my first year in an attempt to improve and perfect them.

Sample 2

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

█████████ | Assistant Teaching Professor | Information Systems | August 19, 2021

Self-Assessment

STRENGTHS, SKILLS, AND COMPETENCIES

I love the mission of BYU and I love teaching. I sincerely try to help BYU students learn how to learn new concepts, feel safe and accepted, and increase their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

I try to put myself in my student's shoes when I teach. This mindset helps me teach in a clear and organized manner. I also have the perspective of someone who has graduated from the BYU Information Systems program and worked in the industry. I recognize that learning a certain skill isn't as important as learning how to learn a new skill. When teaching, I show my students how to access resources online and the power of exploring and figuring things out on their own.

I strive to help students feel safe and accepted. I've received feedback from my students that I'm approachable and easy to talk to. I answer emails quickly and meet with students outside of office hours when needed (such as in the evening or on the weekend). I make a special effort to encourage confidence in students who may not feel qualified to succeed in Information Systems. I strive to be a resource for women as they navigate through the Marriott School.

I'm very comfortable sharing experiences of my faith in Jesus Christ. Many students have expressed their appreciation when I share these experiences because it helps them remember the eternal perspective. With whatever chaotic lives my students may have, I strive to include the Spirit each day so that when they come to class, they can be reminded that with faith in Jesus Christ they can be strengthened.

INTERESTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

I am interested in data analytics and machine learning. I enjoyed teaching IS 115 (Intro to Python Data Analytics) and am excited to teach IS 415 (Data Analytics and Machine Learning) in the fall. As there are needs for other classes, I'm excited to help where needed.

I am interested in learning how to be a better teacher. I want to learn about ways to increase experiential involvement in the classroom.

I'm interested in helping pre-Information Systems students feel comfortable taking IS classes. IS can be an intimidating major if you don't know much about it and don't have any technical background. I want to help those who may not have that background feel confident in using and developing Information Systems skills. I get a special opportunity to do that when I teach IS 201 and look forward to continuing that opportunity.

AREAS TO DEVELOP

While I feel comfortable teaching data analytics and machine learning classes, there is always room to grow. I recognize that there is still much I can learn and I'm excited to grow my knowledge and experience in that field.

I have room to grow as a teacher. I'm excited to learn from my colleagues, my own experiences, and published research about ways to become a more effective teacher.

My professional goals, listed below, will help me grow in the areas just listed.

Professional Goals

TEACHING GOALS

Below are my goals related to teaching. I have several high-level goals with smaller measurable goals.

- Improve Subject Matter Expertise
    - Review content produced by colleague professors who have taught this course.
    - Review online materials on my subject so I keep my technical skills up to date.
    - Read weekly industry news related to Information Systems and share notable highlights with students.
- Improve Course Organization
    - Set and communicate clear objectives with students. Communicate and show high-level objectives throughout the semester and how assignments relate to those objectives.
- Improve Relationship with Students
    - Learn and use the names of my students (especially when I teach the Jr. Core classes. When I teach IS 201 with auditorium size classes, try to learn as many names as I can with a focus on those that reach out and those that are struggling).
    - Periodically throughout the semester (especially after exams), reach out to students whose grades are struggling. Also reach out and congratulate students who performed exceptionally well on exams.
- Incorporate the Gospel into Learning
    - Start class with a prayer.
    - Share faith-filled experiences as prompted (aim for at least once a week).
- Seek Feedback
    - Have a colleague visit my class once a semester and offer feedback.
    - Meet with my CTL advisor.
    - Gather feedback at the end of each unit.
    - Gather feedback at the end of every checkpoint.
    - Organize, analyze, and apply appropriate feedback.

SCHOLARSHIP GOALS

My scholarship goals focus on studying best practices for teaching Information System topics at a university. I will do the following:

- Evaluate and assess Information Systems teaching and how it can be improved
- Read a book related to teaching every semester and apply a principle learned. I will read *McKeachie's Teaching Tips* by Svinicki McKeachie in Fall 2021.
- Visit a colleague's classroom to learn from their Information System's teaching style.

CITIZENSHIP GOALS

The following are my goals to help build the Information Systems and BYU Marriott School's community:

- Through pre-IS recruiting events and my own personal interaction, encourage students to apply to the Information Systems program with a special emphasis on those who may not feel confident and underrepresented groups.
- Help improve the BYU Marriott School's employee experience while serving on the Marriott Employee Experience Advisory Council.
- Help mentor students as I work with Association of Information System's (AIS) officers and TAs.

Relationship Between My Goals, the Department, and University Aspirations/Needs

I strive to align my goals with the department and university's goals/needs in the following ways:

- University/department goal: Mentored learning
  - o Mentor undergrad and grad students as they TA for my classes, serve as an AIS officer, or need a capstone advisor.
- University/department goal: Embrace diversity
  - o Encourage underrepresented students to apply to the IS program.
  - o Give underrepresented students opportunities to share their voice and perspective in class.
- University/department goal: Experiential learning
  - o Add experiential learning activities to class-time (i.e. more practicing and hands-on time in class).
  - o Base assignments more on practice and hands-on experiences rather than straight memorization.

Resources Needed

I've been given a generous budget and resources. I have access to teaching assistants. My time is appropriately split between my different responsibilities. I am very grateful for the IS department and Marriott School's support. I don't have a need for any additional resources.

Activities and Accomplishments to date

Below are some of the things I've already been able to do to work towards my goals:

- Speak at several events (Women in Business event, Women in AIS event, Pre-IS information session) to encourage students who may not normally think to apply to the Information Systems program, to apply.
- Review colleague's past materials for the class I'm teaching.
- Review online materials to increase my knowledge about the topic I'm teaching.
- Gather and implement feedback from students halfway and at the end of the semester.
- Implement peer review and student-rating feedback.

Measures to Assess Success

End-of-semester student ratings will be a big indicator of my success as a teacher. Evidence of me collecting and implementing feedback will help measure how I'm improving.