

# FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN



## 1. Self Assessment

Here are two of my professional strengths:

- *Teaching*: I have developed a teaching style that allows students to be engaged in discussion while still managing to deliver a large amount of course content. I achieve this by structuring my lectures around handouts that I provide my students. The handouts allow me to highlight complex concepts or move through arguments quickly, since students can reference the material. This also allows students to ask focused and specific questions.
- *Writing*: I have developed good writing habits, overall. I generally write for at least 30 minutes per day, and when time permits much more. This has allowed me to have many papers in circulation. It also provides me with new ideas on a regular basis.

## 2. Professional Goals

### 2.1. Citizenship

Current responsibilities/assignments include:

- Philosophy Association Advisor: I work with the student leaders of the association to plan events, and I attend weekly association meetings.

- Teaching Committee Member: I meet with the committee to evaluate peers and to provide feedback on peer teaching.
- Search Committee Member: I assist the committee chair in developing recommendations for the upcoming job search to be given to the department.
- Outreach Committee Member: I meet with the committee to develop ways to encourage students to major in philosophy as well as ways to connect our students to potential employers outside of philosophy.
- Colloquia Committee Member: I meet with the committee to provide recommendations on visiting scholars for talks and minicourses.
- Editor: I serve as a Philpapers Editor for the Modality and the Moral Objectivity categories. I review papers, assign them to categories, and help sort and maintain the website.

At this point in my career, my primary *goal* in citizenship is to provide reliable and consistently good service in each of my service assignments. I am especially interested in the mentoring opportunities provided by serving as the philosophy association advisor. My goal is to help create a vibrant and exciting philosophical atmosphere for students on the BYU campus.

## 2.2. Teaching

In the upcoming year, I have (tentatively) been assigned to teach the following courses.

- (Fall 2021): Philosophy of Religion
- (Fall 2021): Topics in the Philosophy of Science
- (Winter 2022): Introduction to Ethics
- (Winter 2022): Intermediate Formal Logic
- (Winter 2022): Metaphysics

Eventually I would like to teach some courses in metaethics, which is my primary research area. But for now, these are all courses that are needed by the students. As I develop these courses, I have three primary goals:

- *Retention and test preparation:* Prepare and distribute lecture notes as handouts. I already do this, but I want to do it better. First, I want my lecture notes to be more concise: capturing only the most important aspects of the readings/arguments. Second, I want to improve the speed at which I produce the handouts.
- *Organization:* (a) emphasize outcomes and expectations throughout the semester, and especially on course syllabi; (b) road-map and sign-post courses better. In my last student evaluations, students complained that they did not see how everything connected. Make sure they see where we are going and why.
- *Include more variety in teaching methods:* lecture, discussion, group activities, podcasts, readings, media presentation, etc. This is a goal to stretch me to learn new skills. I have developed my lecture and my discussion skills, but I'd like to improve my teaching skills in other places.

Finally, my own statement of diversity:

I'm committed to creating a culture and environment of openness and exchange in my classrooms. Primarily, aim for my classes to be places where students are interested in and feel confident that they can share their opinions and experiences without fear of social or other forms of censure. I hope to do this in a way that promotes not only the free exchange of ideas but also a feeling of deepening discipleship to the savior. Jesus will be our guide as we treat all alike as our neighbors and our family.

### 2.3. *Scholarship*

The primary theme of my scholarship is *moral realism*. Already, I have five papers under way that contribute to realist theories of explanation in morality. But, I would also like to do more to clarify some of the central notions that figure in debates within the moral realist tradition. I have three primary goals:

1. Start two new papers this year. I want to make sure that I constantly have new projects to work on. With that in mind, starting two new papers seems a manageable goal.
2. Submit two manuscripts for publication. I currently have three manuscripts submitted to journals. I have two other manuscripts that are nearly ready for submission. So, I need to finish revising them and submit them.
3. Identify and apply to present papers at four conferences, minimum.
  - Arizona Normative Ethics Workshop (deadline: Tuesday, June 1, 2021)
  - Madison Metaethics Workshop (deadline: May 2022)
  - Chapel Hill Normativity Workshop (deadline pending COVID-19 issues)
  - British Society for Ethical Theory (deadline not assigned yet)

Each of these conferences publishes select papers in some of the most prestigious journals. So, getting accepted to any of them would provide a good shot at getting a very good publication as well.

And here are four areas I would like to begin exploring in my research over the next few years.

- *Thick normative properties*: Are thick properties also *mixed*? Where in the explanatory structure do thick properties stand? Do they explain thin properties, such as right and wrong, or are they explained by thin properties?
- *Non-naturalism*: Characterizing the thesis in a more precise way has proven very difficult. In light of other work I've done on the structure of morality, I'd like to develop a clearer account than has so far been offered for how we should characterize the non-naturalist thesis.
- *Non-standard Modality*: A few philosophers have argued that metaphysical modality (metaphysical necessity and possibility) are not *absolute* modalities. Kit Fine has argued that metaphysical modality is not the most fundamental modality, but in fact normative and natural

necessities are fundamentally distinct notions of necessity. I'm interested in exploring these issues further to discover whether there are metaphysically impossible worlds where the moral laws hold.

- *Universalism*: I am specifically interested in the claim that for any person at any time, it is possible to repent and be saved. I am interested in working out the philosophical and theological case for such a view, as well as considering challenges.

### **3. Fitting individual goals with the department goals**

- My citizenship goals are closely aligned with those of the department and university. And therefore need no more comment.
- My teaching goals support department needs for teaching, as well as department goals of increasing enrollments. This is because (a) I teach a wide variety of courses that the department needs to have taught, and (b) as I increase my teaching skills I will increase the likelihood of more students enrolling in future philosophy courses.
- My scholarship goals will allow me to build a stronger worldwide network, improving the reputation of the university and the philosophy department. It will also allow me to make connections that may someday help students get good jobs or get accepted into good graduate programs.

### **4. Recourses needed**

- Book money: I will need money to purchase books for my research. I still currently have money in my research account for this.
- Travel money: I will need financial support for conference attendance and other professional events.

### **5. Progress on goals**

- I am active and engaged on the committees I serve on.



- I have already begun to revise my syllabi to reflect my aspirations listed in my teaching goals.
- I currently have four papers under review. I have another that is close to being ready for submission. I also have a talk scheduled for August with an international metaethics group.

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