

Faculty Development Plan

Assistant Professor, Department of Statistics, Brigham Young University

August 22, 2016

This plan is split into three sections: Teaching, Scholarship, and Citizenship. Each section will distinguish current strengths and weaknesses in that area and then make specific goals to try and improve.

1 Teaching

1.1 Strengths

I get good feedback from my students when I teach. I feel that I am energetic and passionate about the subject. Even though I am not always clear in my presentation of the material, I realize when I am not clear and I spend more time to make sure everyone can understand. I spend time in advance to have original examples that have some twist the students can relate to, such as when speaking of probability I can talk about sports or entertainment or church-related topics to engage them while we work through the example. I have a natural connection with the students I teach and I honestly care about their future and their well-being.

1.2 Weaknesses

I have not committed to the structure of my classes early on because I had little confidence in it, so I end up changing things or adding things partway through the class. Sometimes I feel this was needed, but even when I felt like it went well, it would have been much better if I planned ahead before the class started. I am not consistent in how I run my class from the beginning to the end of my courses. My organization is overall my weakest point. My homework and examinations are decent, but they take me an especially long time to write. I have to start weeks in advance and I still end up making errors occasionally and have to throw out questions. I have not connected well with my Teaching Assistants and am not very organized in telling them exactly what I want and when I want it done by.

1.3 Specific Goals

1.3.1 Use TAs more effectively

One class I taught this past year was in conjunction with a colleague's section of the same course, and he did an amazing job of utilizing his TAs to make less work for him. The TAs were fully responsible for inputting grades and maintaining the assignment statuses on Learning Suite's and they helped design some of the course material, such as exam questions. I would like to adopt these principles and use my TAs more effectively. I will do this by

- Meet with my TAs at the beginning of the semester and outline exactly what the responsibilities are.
- Make the TAs responsible for recording grades and maintaining them online.
- Use TAs to help write test questions or homework questions that I would then edit/check and assign.
- Follow-up with the TAs frequently (weekly meetings or check-ins) to make sure they are able to fulfill their responsibilities.

I will know if I have succeeded at this goal if I feel that the TAs are effectively making my teaching burden lighter.

1.3.2 Organization

The class should be consistent throughout, which means that I need to have a plan I trust at the beginning of the semester and stick with it. I can adjust if needed, especially the first one or two times I teach the course, but hopefully after a few years of teaching the same courses I will be able to be more consistent. Specifically I will

- Create a syllabus and class schedule based off of the main things I expect the students to know at the end of the course.
- Have a well-thought out series of assignments and examinations that help the students to understand the main principles being taught in the course.
- Modify when necessary for students on an individual level, but keep the class content and structure the same throughout the course of the semester

At the end of every semester I can follow-up with myself to see how consistent I was.

1.3.3 Improvement

I am not a perfect teacher, but sometimes I don't even know where my deficiencies are. I need to seek out more training to help me understand where I am lacking and how to improve in areas I need improving but do not know about yet. Specifically I will

- Attend training offered by the University or college at least once per semester

- Read at least one book per year on effective teaching
- Ask for help as a teacher in my prayers

I can follow-up every school year to see if I have accomplished these tasks.

1.3.4 Continue what is working

My in class experience has been great. I love being in front of my class, I love the subject material, the students are great and I wish to continue much of what I have done that is working. These are

- Use good examples in class that engage the students
- Be clear about my expectations of the students for exams and homework assignments
- Be personable and get to know my students and let them get to know me

2 Scholarship

2.1 Strengths

I am intelligent and hard-working. I am more proficient at mathematics than the normal statistician, and that has served me well in understanding difficult concepts in theoretical work that I have done. I have also put my foot in the door in some very interesting areas where there is a lot of interest. I have started to network and develop relationships by going to several conferences over the past several years.

2.2 Weaknesses

I am quite slow at writing, and am usually pretty bad at it as well. I also tend to have so many projects and pick at them all a little at a time that it takes me a long time to actually finish one of them. I also do a lot of the work myself. I don't know yet, exactly, how to involve the graduates and undergraduates in my work, because of how mathematically complex it is.

2.3 Goals

2.3.1 Two projects in my hands at a time

I enjoy my research more when I am limited to just two major projects. When I have more I tend to not get any of them done very quickly. Specifically I will

- Designate 2 projects as my current top priorities
- When I am asked to start a new project, be clear that I am willing, but that it may have to sit in a queue for a while

- Try to submit work as soon as possible for publication so I can move on to my next projects

I will follow-up on this regularly by keeping track of all my projects and making sure two are highlighted as the top priority and queue the rest accordingly.

2.3.2 Have other people work on my projects

Reviewers for journals or collaborators can all give me helpful insight to my papers. They can be doing this while I work on my main two projects. Since I have first authored most of the papers I have written it has taken me a long time to get papers done, but joining projects with others on papers where I can contribute parts but not all will help.

- Submit papers to journals frequently
- Find collaborators to work with on all my projects
- Work on other people's projects as well
- Continue network and taking advantage of the connections I have to find more people to work with

Next year I hope to be able to follow-up on this and make sure that I have had other people working on my research as well.

2.3.3 Learn to work with students

While I have worked with students on their projects for different classes or graduation requirements, none have worked on my projects, and I am not sure how to involve them quite yet. For now, there are no specific actions items except to look for possible ways I can use students to help with my work.

2.3.4 3 Publications per year

This should be easy this year, as I have 2 so far and up to 4 more submitted soon, and 3 more in the wings. To maintain this pace I believe that I need to organize myself and keep track of all my possible projects and current projects.

- Keep a list of all current and potential projects, where they are at as far as who is responsible for the next step in their progression, and when I plan to be done with them
- Continue to network and try to find more people to work with so we can get more done and so I can help with other projects to maintain the publication pace.

Every week I can update the list mentioned, or check to see if it is updated.

3 Citizenship

I have three major areas of citizenship that I can focus on: the department, the University, and the statistics community. I list what I can do for each of the three below.

3.1 Department

- Support department events such as faculty congeniality lunch and other social occasions
- Participate in faculty meetings and provide insight
- Perform all my required duties in my department committees, currently on scholarship committee and actuarial committee

3.2 University

- Support University events and attend trainings and presentations, such as devotionals or the new faculty lunches
- Support the aims of the University and the themes designated by University officials

3.3 Statistics

- Perform reviews when requested, between 2 and 6 per year
- Serve on committees and look for ways to support the organizations I am part of, such as EnviBayes, the Environmental section of ASA, and the SOA.