Faculty Development Plan
Brigham Young University
Department of Economics

June 7, 2013

Introduction
I believe the best progress is made intentionally. This plan lays out my intentions for developing as a faculty member at Brigham Young University. My overall goal is to find professional and personal fulfillment in helping to realize Brigham Young University’s mission to provide intellectually top-notch education to students in a spiritually uplifting environment, with the tangible indicator of successfully achieving continuing faculty status and eventually the rank of full professor. I will organize the plan around the three primary areas of responsibility I have as a faculty member: scholarship, teaching, and citizenship. In each area I will articulate my philosophy, assess my current progress, and set specific goals for development.

Scholarship

Philosophy
Scholarship is important to my development as a faculty member at Brigham Young University because it is much of the reason I chose this profession as a career and because it is critical to my helping Brigham Young University achieve its mission. I find the opportunity to engage in research personally and intellectually fulfilling. It allows me to leverage my natural curiosity for discovering mechanisms and developing new ways of solving problems to earn a living and to hopefully improve the world. It is also critical to Brigham Young University’s commitment to the highest quality undergraduate education. By excelling in scholarship, I will be at the cutting edge of my field and will be well equipped to teach my students the most relevant concepts and tools. I will also be well regarded within my field, and thus positioned to help students be accepted to the best post-graduation positions, whether in employment or graduate school. Thus scholarship does not compete with other aspects of the university’s mission, but complements them.

Self-assessment
I believe I am in a strong position and on a good trajectory with regard to succeeding in scholarship. My graduate training and post-doctoral fellowship gave me excellent tools, working relationships, and research ideas. I have several publications already out and several more under review as of this writing, and multiple other projects at various stages in the pipeline. Generating interesting research ideas and translating them to high-quality research is hard work, of course. My main strengths in this area are my technical training and my passion to produce good, influential work. My weaknesses are in time management and project selection. Much of my research progress tends to occur in spurts of intense of unsustainable effort, with lags in between, which may not be optimal. I also suspect I spread myself thin over many projects, not all of which have equal merits.
Development goals
With scholarship, the proof is in the pudding. That said, the pudding can be long in the cooking. So I will set goals for scholarship inputs, intermediate markers, and final outputs.

- Inputs
  - Read at least one article from each of the top five economics journals (Econometrica, QJE, JPE, AER, RESTUD) each week
  - Maintain an active “idealog” where I record and keep track of the status of any and all research ideas that occur to me
  - Devote Fridays to research
  - Present papers in at least 3 top academic conferences each year (e.g., AEAs, Econometric Society, NBER Summer Institute, SOLE)
  - Be proactive in having regular conversations with the department chair and senior colleagues to get their feedback on my research progress and trajectory

- Intermediate markers
  - Submit at least three new manuscripts for publication each year
  - Revise and resubmit manuscripts within 4 weeks of getting them back

- Final outputs
  - Have an article accepted to a top-five economics journal by my third year review
  - Have two articles a year accepted in at least a top field journal

Teaching
Philosophy
If a passion for research was much of the reason I chose this profession as a career, teaching is most of the rest of the reason. I enjoy teaching and I find it a very tangible way to do good and help the university fulfill its mission. Some of the most influential people in my life have been my teachers and I aspire to similarly influence my students for good.

The chance to teach students and help them develop the same enthusiasm for economics that I have is one of the things I most look forward to in my career. My main objectives in teaching a course are threefold: to inspire enthusiasm for the topic, to set up an organizing structure for the course, and to effectively teach the specific content of the course. All three are critical, although in my experience many teachers focus on the third and neglect one or both of the first two. Without an infectious enthusiasm, few students will become truly engaged in the course. Without an overarching organizing structure to the course, students are less likely to be able to internalize the material enough to permanently master it, no matter how effectively it is presented.

I credit outstanding teachers from my own studies with instilling a passion for economics and research in me. Teaching experiences I have had up to this point have given me a taste of the satisfaction teaching can bring and helped me begin to hone my own teaching approach. I aspire to instill the same excitement for economics in my future students as my teachers did in me.

Self-assessment
Introspection and feedback I have received so far in my teaching experiences makes me confident that I am an effective teacher. First, I enjoy teaching, and I believe the students
sense this and appreciate it. Second, before coming to BYU, I was fortunate to have had opportunities to teach throughout my graduate and undergraduate studies. These teaching assistantships involved significant responsibility for teaching core concepts and independence in gauging student needs, structuring TA instruction sections, and developing problem sets and other evaluation tools. I was honored to have been voted twice by graduate students in the Economics department as Graduate TA of the Year (2009 and 2010). Finally, I have received positive feedback from my BYU courses so far.

I see two major areas for improvement in my teaching. The first is to manage the different paces at which students learn better. I find I am perhaps catering to the slower students and doing more hand-holding than I should, to the detriment of the fastest students. The second is motivate students to do more preparation outside of class. My lectures are structured so that a student could succeed in the class by only attending the lectures, but I feel my students are being deprived of the great amount of learning that should occur outside of the classroom, if only they were motivated to do it.

**Development goals**

My specific teaching goals are as follows:

- Utilize the mid-semester evaluation survey tool each term I teach, communicate the results to the students, and tangibly incorporate the feedback into my teaching the rest of the term
- Develop visual data examples to illustrate the theoretical concepts in my econometrics course
- Develop quizzes or other methods to encourage outside-of-class preparation on the part of the students
- Ask a colleague to visit one of my lectures each semester between now and the third year review, and get their feedback from the visit, and implement suggestions in my teaching

**Citizenship**

*Philosophy*

Brigham Young University is not the stone and bricks that compose its buildings. It is the people and relationships fostered here. I consider citizenship to be the metaphorical thread that forms the fabric that binds the people that are the university together. By being a productive citizen in my department, in my college, in the university, and in my discipline, I am contributing to the strength and vibrancy of the university.

*Self-assessment*

I believe I am a naturally helpful person committed to doing my share in whatever setting I find myself. When given an assignment, I am committed to fulfilling it and helping out when asked. However, I also tend to be engrossed in my own work, and it is likely I let opportunities to help pass by unseen without actively seeking them out. I believe actively finding ways to contribute to the work community is an area of improvement for me.

**Development goals**
We were given the counsel not to take on too much responsibility in the department at this early stage in our careers. However, I feel the following citizenship goals are appropriate:

- Magnify any assignment given to me by the department chair
- Actively offer to read and give feedback on my colleagues’ manuscripts
- Find opportunities to interact with colleagues outside of the department (exercise, recreational activities)
- Invite a prominent scholar in my network to give a department seminar at least once each academic year
- Read colleagues’ papers before R-squared seminars and give constructive feedback

**Conclusion**
Formulating this plan has already helped me articulate valuable development objectives in scholarship, teaching, and citizenship. By explicitly writing them down and showing them to others, I am confident that I will be able to make progress towards achieving them. Achieving these specific goals in turn will position me well for accomplishing the larger objective, which is to contribute meaningfully to Brigham Young University’s mission and attain the rank of full professor.
Project description
My course development proposal is to create with a student assistant a set of vignettes using real-life data to visually illustrate the theoretical concepts in the Econ 388 Econometrics course that I teach. I propose creating a set of ten vignettes covering the following topics:

1. Conditional expectation function versus causal effects
2. Bivariate regression fitting
3. Multiple regression
4. Inference
5. Asymptotic theory
6. Heteroskedasticity
7. Serial correlation
8. Instrumental variables
9. Differences-in-differences
10. Probit/logit

For each topic we would:
- identify and obtain a relevant real-life dataset
- write and document a Stata do-file to visually represent the data and illustrate the econometric concept
- prepare lecture notes for presenting in class
- make all materials available for students on Learning Suite.

Resources needed
The resource required for this proposal is student assistant time. I estimate each vignette would require around 3 hours to develop, which comes to 30 hours total. At slightly less than $10/hr for a typical student research assistant wage, this accounts for the $300 grant amount with some allowance for unforeseen difficulties in developing the vignettes.
Citizenship Project Proposal
Brigham Young University
Department of Economics

May 31, 2013

The following goals are only a subset of the ways I hope to contribute to the community of scholars at Brigham Young University, but they are the ones I will give highest priority to over the coming year:

● Actively offer to read and give feedback on a colleague’s manuscript at least once each quarter
● Invite a prominent scholar in my network to give a department seminar at least once each academic year
● Read colleagues’ papers before R-squared seminars and give constructive feedback
● Find opportunities to interact with colleagues outside of the department (exercise, recreational activities)
● Attend devotional each week with colleagues
Scholarship program
My research focuses on econometric methodology, labor economics, and health economics. The common theme I hope my research contributes to each of these areas is applying valid empirical identification of causal effects and sound theoretical foundations to convincingly answer important questions. In the following I’ll describe my agenda in each area more specifically.

Econometric methodology
My econometric methodology research is on identifying the causal effects on the distribution of outcomes in settings where the intervention is not directly controlled by the researcher. I have already published a paper on quantile treatment effects in the regression discontinuity design, and have several related projects under review or in preparation. These include a paper on finite-sample inference in the regression discontinuity design (under review) and nonparametric finite-sample inference with an instrumental variable. My longer term agenda in this area is to develop a unifying framework for identifying distributional effects.

Labor economics
My research in labor economics has focused on the causal effects of union representation, and has served as much of the motivation for my econometric research described above. I currently have a paper under review on the effects of union representation on establishments, and shortly hope to submit a paper on the effects of union representation on the distribution of employee earnings.

Health economics
My health economics and health policy work is somewhat disparate from my other research. It has focused on the impacts of fragmentation in the U.S. health care system. I have two papers under review in this area, and am currently working on a grant proposal for a multi-year project in this area that should result in several journal articles and possibly a book. Despite the difference in subject matter, the theme of reliable causal identification I hope also applies to this line of research.

Scholarly goals
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○ Maintain an active “idealog” where I record and keep track of the status of any and all research ideas that occur to me
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● Intermediate markers
  ○ Submit at least three new manuscripts for publication each year
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● Final outputs
  ○ Have an article accepted to a top-five economics journal by my third year review
  ○ Have two articles a year accepted in at least a top field journal
Economics 388: Introduction to Econometrics

2013 Fall

Instructor: 

Office Hours: 

TAs: 


Objective: This course is designed to teach the conceptual and statistical underpinnings of the most important methods in empirical economic research, as well as help students become proficient in software tools for performing econometric analyses.

Grading: Grades will be based on the midterm exam (20%), comprehensive final exam (40%), an original econometric research paper (25%), problem sets (10%), and class participation (5%).

Exams: The midterm will be in class during the scheduled class time on October 22. The final exam will cover all material and will be in the classroom during our assigned final exam time, December 19, 7am-10am.

Paper: The research paper assignment will consist of a proposal (due October 3), a rough draft (due November 14 and distributed to another class member), reading and commenting on a fellow student’s draft, a 3-5 minute presentation of findings, and a final draft (due on the last day of class). There will be a separate handout with more details on this assignment.

Problem Sets: There will be approximately six problem sets. These will consist of theoretical proofs and derivations, and empirical exercises using Stata. Students may consult in groups, but each student must complete, write up, and submit his or her own work. Problem sets are due on the date listed in class.
## Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>MHE</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/03/13</td>
<td>Econometric modeling</td>
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<td>3.3-3.4</td>
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<td>09/19/13</td>
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<td>3.5, 7.1-7.6</td>
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<td>09/24/13</td>
<td>Inference</td>
<td>4.1-4.3</td>
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<td>09/26/13</td>
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<td>4.4-4.6</td>
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<td>15.4-15.5</td>
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<td>Time series</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Rough draft of paper due</td>
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<td>13.1-14.5</td>
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<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
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**Notes:** Schedule will almost surely be adjusted as we go to accommodate class needs. “W” and “MHE” indicate sections from the Wooldridge text and *Mostly Harmless*, respectively, that are relevant to the topic being discussed that day.
University Policies

Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Sexual Harassment

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor or contact one of the following: the Title IX Coordinator at 801-422-2130; the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847; the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895; or Ethics Point at http://www.ethicspoint.com, or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours).

Student Disability

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC), 2170 WSC or 422-2767. Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-285 ASB.