Faculty Development Plan

I. Scholarship

I.1 Self-assessment
Pursuing a clear, focused, and feasible research agenda is of signal import as I begin my career at Brigham Young University. There are three main areas of research interest I will develop for the short term third year review, the six year review, and the full professor review: eighteenth-century literature and specifically poetry, aesthetics, and media studies/digital humanities. My strengths here are an excellent footing in all three fields with several projects currently underway. I am also actively involved in two Hum. Lab. working groups; one centered on big data in the humanities and a second devoted to media studies. I am currently working on a project funded by an ORCA grant that will build a searchable database of all the eighteenth-century poems in the ECCO database. Perhaps my greatest strength at this point in my scholarship is a vigorous intellectual interest and several different lines of inquiry to which I am strongly committed.

As I go forward I need to keep two weaknesses in check. First I will be a diligent writer modeling myself, to an extent, on Terry Eagleton who was said to be at his typewriter every morning at 6:00 am regardless of how much he had drank the night before. This will help me both make consistent progress, but also combat my tendency toward perfectionism—a drawback that often hampers intellectual momentum. Second, I have received feedback on my prose that describes my writing as overly complex and as a result obfuscating. So as I practice the craft of writing daily I am consciously striving from clarity and precision.

I.2 Accomplishments
Wordsworth project with Romantic Circles forthcoming
"Technofacts: Christopher Smart and Curiosity Cabinet forthcoming

I.3 Goals
My scholarship goals are to make a solid contribution to the field of eighteenth-century studies and aesthetics. I plan to do this by bringing my interest in DH to the bear on the period in ways that ramify the interpretive possibilities for the literature and enrich our historical understanding of the Enlightenment as well as its perdurability in our contemporary moment. In addition to the professional goals my career goals are to have 4-5 articles at my third year review, 8-10 at my six year review, and promote to full professor by 2025.

I.1.1 Current Projects
Collins paper
Poetry and work co-authored with Matt Wickman
Lyric poetry in the eighteenth century
Poetry and Genre: Big Data funded with an ORCA grant

I.1.2 Future Projects
Book: What is poetry?

II. Teaching
II.1 Self-assessment
Being in the classroom is one of the greatest pleasures of my academic career. I have had a good deal of success, in part because I truly enjoy engaging ideas with bright students. I try to vary my classroom activities to incorporate as many pedagogical approaches as possible. The same can be said of my assessment—several modes in order to reach as many learning styles as I can.

One area I think I will look to improve stems from a tendency to have very high marks from all but a few. Moreover, those few often leave the class disappointed or frustrated. I want to reach everyone if possible, but at least not turn students off to the material. My main source here is course evaluations and comments, which I have and continue to use to improve and reach everyone.

II.2 Goals
My goals are pretty straightforward. To improve course design, deepen my understanding of pedagogy, and employ a multi-modal approach to assessment. I will continue to experiment in the classroom, with assignments, and exams. I also plan to read *Improving College Teaching* this year to broaden my perspective on university instruction.

III. Citizenship
III.1 Self-assessment
I have been tasked with improving English 291 teaching and to increase enrollments in the 300 level classes that build on the early British literature history class. So far I’ve been diligent in gathering syllabi and classroom visits. I think one thing I would like to do is meet with the rest of the section instructors to group think the course and troubleshoot together.

I am also actively involved in three collaborative projects (one of which is funded by an ORCA grant and includes to undergraduate students). These collaborations have taught me a great deal and I will definitely seek to continue and build on these experiences both within and beyond the university.

III.3 Goals
My primary goal is to improve English 291 by using collective wisdom, classroom visits, reading evaluations, and best practices. To do this I will continue to draw on the group’s experience. I also plan to write and submit a report to the DEC and then build on their feedback and assess my influence by maintaining an eye on enrollments in the 300 classes, student ratings, and syllabus/course design.
Course Syllabus

See http://win14eng373.wordpress.com/ for a version of the English 373 British Literature and Intellectual History of the Eighteenth Century I will be teaching this fall.
Scholarship Strategies Project Proposal

My main scholarship goals for 2014:
First is to complete the essay that Matt Wickman and I have been researching and co-writing on the "work" of poetry. To an extent we are responding to an essay in New Literary History by Charles Altieri about the lessons poetry can teach theory. Our response is to say that yes poetry can in fact teach theory as lesson, although it may not be the lesson Altieri thinks it is. We draw on both Matt an my expertise in the eighteenth century as well as my background in New Media Poetics to argue that the current questions of poetics in the digital age have a history that charts back at least to the eighteenth century, and that one of the important things historicizing the discourse of the "new" reveals is that the rhetoric of "event" or "rupture" conceals a transhistorical aspect of poetics and techne that has implications for poetry beyond the narrow confines of literary theory. The essay is tentatively titled "Eighteenth-century Poetry and the Techne of Affect", we hope to land it in Critical Inquiry or New Literary History with a submission date of March 15.

My second project is to complete the revisions on an essay that stems from my dissertation. This essay represents a significant revision of the earlier chapter and argues that William Collins's poetry is best understood from the vantage of "aesthetic techne" rather than a "preromantic" or "age of sensibility" framework. This alternative perspective sees Collins's poetic experiments located in the context of Enlightenment technics rather than that ethereal realms of romantic genius. That is, Collins's work illuminates the history of the embeddedness of new media poetics in the world of technics as well as the technicity of eighteenth-century poetry so often seen as the work of madmen and frustrated genius. It is titled "William Collins's Incomplete Project of Aesthetic Techne in the Age of Enlightenment". I will be submitting this essay to Eighteenth Century Theory and Interpretation before April 31st.

The third major research project for this year is an essay on the eighteenth-century lyric genre viewed not as a classical inheritance nor rupture from neo-classical poetics, but an experimental genre that presses the limits of techniques of affect. I hope to contribute to the emerging discussion about the theories of the lyric (re)initiated by Eva Muller-Zettelmann and Margarete Rubik in their "Theory into Poetry: New Approaches to the Lyric". My writing schedule for this essay is as follows: complete the reading and preliminary outlining by May 31 and finish drafting for submission by August 31. My main target journal is Poetics Today, but I am also considering Eighteenth Century Studies.

My fourth research project is currently underway titled "18thC Poetry Themes and Genres Database". This project, funded by an ORCA grant, brings into alignment my interests in eighteenth-century poetry and the Digital Humanities by constructing a database of eighteenth-century poetry with tagging of theme and genre as well as full-text capabilities. The project brings together Matt Wickman, Kylan Rice, Brittany Strobel, Jarom McDonald, and myself in a truly collaborative spirit of the Digital
Humanities. My contribution has been to work up the project conception, designed and built the interface, meet with Librarians to acquire XML files from the ECCO database, assisted Jarom McDonald (of the Office of Digital Humanities) in preparation of the xml files, and worked with Jeremy Browne (also of the Office of Digital Humanities) to design and construct the relational database. The immediate venue for such a project would be 18thConnect managed by Laura Mandel, but I will be using this project for a presentation at ASECS as well as a series of articles that I hope will contribute to both eighteenth century journals as well as digital humanities venues.

When complete, this first iteration of the project will have tagged and full-text of nearly 2100 poems. However, the larger trajectory of this project grows out of my experience administrating the Early Broadside Ballad Archive at UCSB. The next version of the database will require a MEG and ultimately an NEH grant to manage a team of 8-10 students to continue the tagging and cataloguing effort but also to encourage undergraduate and graduate work in the field of eighteenth-century studies and the digital humanities. I have already consulted with Robert Means who is working with Robert Murdoch to acquire an XML version of the entire Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) database with over 180,000 titles and 200,000 volumes. The potential scope of the database at this point becomes truly significant as it develops a powerful research tool for those eighteenth century scholars interested in macroanalysis, text-mining, topic modeling, and computer assisted text-analysis.
Citizenship Project Proposal

My citizenship project speaks to an evolving area that includes not only my role as 291 course coordinator, but becoming an informed and engaged contributor to the aims of the English Department. In my capacity as 291 course coordinator I have been tasked with improving a course that traditionally underachieves in generating interest in the 300 level courses (371, 372, 373) linked to it. I see this first year as something of an information gathering and reporting effort. I will collect syllabi, observe in the classroom, and read student evaluations (per the course coordinator document) with a view to generating a report on the state of teaching in 291. The longer term goal is to help develop the 291 curriculum to best represent the periods, but also increase enrollments in the 300 series.