

The Planning Document for Use in the Baylor University Annual Faculty Performance Review Process

An essential part of the Annual Faculty Performance Review process at Baylor University is the “Planning for the Year Ahead” document that each faculty member completes for review by and discussion with the chair. This document should be an account of the faculty member’s expected activities and achievements during the coming year. It initially provides a basis for the chair to confirm that she or he is in agreement with the faculty member’s goals and expectations and/or to discuss adjustments in these projections, and, at the following year’s performance review, it provides a basis for assessment of the faculty member’s success in the year’s work. Review of the previous year’s document and activities should also provide a basis for refining, revising, and/or developing the document for the coming year. The document is intended to facilitate a clear and transparent conversation between the faculty member and the chair about the role the faculty member is to play in the department, school or college, and university.

While the “Planning for the Year Ahead” document is intended to support the annual performance review, the activities and achievements that it describes should fit appropriately within the context of a longer-term plan of professional growth for the faculty member. It should also be noted that, while the document will inevitably touch on matters that are of concern in promotion processes, determinations of expectations and progress toward promotion will be separately documented in the course of these processes.

The “Planning for the Year Ahead” document should be concise and specific, addressing within the areas of teaching, research, assigned administrative responsibilities, and service and/or academic citizenship the tasks that the faculty member anticipates completing and the nature of the accomplishments that each of these will achieve. The document may contemplate a range of possible activities during the year, with the understanding that specific achievements may depend on a variety of circumstances. In addition, some positions may be subject to a variety of unknown needs—for example, a faculty member with administrative duties might undertake various projects during the year that could not be projected at the time the planning document is produced—and in this case the faculty member and the chair should describe anticipated responsibilities as specifically as possible while also acknowledging that specific expectations will solidify as the year proceeds, and should, when possible, revise the document during the course of the year to reflect these expectations.

Sample Statements for Planning Documents

(Note: These are simply examples that indicate how a faculty member might go into detail, and are not intended to indicate the appropriate level of detail for any given faculty member. Also, they are not intended to represent the workload of a single faculty member: a large number of activities is described so as to provide a variety of examples.)

Teaching Goals and Plans: I expect to teach two sections of _____ and one section of _____ in the spring semester, and two sections of _____ and one section of _____ in the fall semester. In the _____ class, I intend to continue with my strategy of expecting students to produce individual presentations of increasing scope throughout the semester, but I plan to shift the schedule slightly so that they have an extra week to consult with me before the final project. I plan to teach the other classes much as I have done in the past few years, while varying specific example topics somewhat from those of recent years, and continuing to monitor students' performance on the first exam in each to make sure that there are no areas in which I'm incorrectly assuming that prerequisite courses have prepared them. I will also clarify the information in my syllabuses about contacting me, because some students have apparently been confused about the most efficient ways of leaving messages for me when I'm in the lab.

Research/Creative Activity Goals and Plans: I plan to submit between three and five articles for publication this year. If the collaboration with Dr. _____ moves quickly enough, I expect that it will yield two manuscripts that we could submit in the spring, and I expect also to be working on the article that I submitted last fall to the Journal of _____ if I receive a response on it by February; this may range from minor corrections to a more substantial revise & resubmit, or even a rejection that leads me to recast the article significantly for submission to another journal. If the collaboration with Dr. _____ does not move so fast, I anticipate instead spending more time on a solo-authored article on _____, but that would probably not be ready for submission before July or so. (Etc. for the remainder of the year . . .)

Assigned Administrative Responsibilities Goals and Plans: I will be supervising the undergraduate _____ lab again this year, as I have been doing for the past three years. I will continue to be in my office between 3 and 5 each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, so as to be available in the event of any questions arising. I'll be conducting training for all the TAs at the beginning of each semester as usual, but because several of them will be returning from last year, I will be encouraging the more experienced ones of them to help to train the newbies informally throughout the semester. I will be careful to have an old hand present at all times for the first three or four weeks of each semester.

Service/Academic Citizenship Goals and Plans: I will be continuing to serve on the University Library Committee and the Dean's Undergraduate Core Curriculum Committee, each of which

meets once a month, although the latter will require more time than the former will. I'm the faculty advisor for the Swing Dance club, and I usually advise about five-eight students each semester with respect to their upcoming schedules. I may be asked to provide one or two presentations for junior faculty at the _____ series sponsored by the Academy for Teaching and Learning, and I usually write between ten and fifteen letters of recommendation during the fall semester and about five during spring. I sing in my church choir, and provide a presentation twice a year on the Hiking merit badge for the Boy Scout troop that meets at my church.

Chair's response:

(Note: These comments don't necessarily relate to the sample statements above.)

These plans are consistent with my understanding of Dr. _____'s role within the department and the University. I appreciate the response to the student concern about clarity in assigning grades, as well as the significant contribution she will be making to the professional convention in the fall (not to mention the recognition of her expertise that this assignment conveys on the part of the society). The plans for pursuing research projects make good sense; I would add that I do think that it will be important this year to make sure to prioritize these so that at least two of the three articles she describes have been submitted by the time we meet next year.