Iowa State University Generic Template for a Faculty Position Responsibility Statement with Explanatory Comments

Position Responsibility Statement

Department of ________________ College of _______________

Faculty: ___________________________ Title: ___________________________

1 This Position Responsibility Statement (PRS) is a generalized job description used as part of all evaluations. It describes different areas of responsibility, including the proportion of effort that is expected in each area, and it makes explicit an expectation of collegial professional behavior.

2 Areas of Responsibility with Proportions of Effort

   Teaching (##%)
   [Expectations related to teaching and advising will be listed here.]

   Research/Creative Activity (##%)
   [Expectations for research/creative activity will be listed here.]

   Extension (##%)
   [Expectations for extension activity will be listed here.]

   Institutional Service (##%)
   [Expectations for institutional service will be listed here. The proportion of effort must be at least 5% for TTE faculty.]

   Professional Practice/Clinical Practice (##%)

   External Service/Engagement and Outreach (##%)

   Administration (formal) (##%)

3 Citizenship & Collegiality
The Department of ________________ is committed to sustaining a collegial, positive, and productive working environment for each individual and for the collective benefit of all. Professional behavior (as described in Faculty Handbook Section 7.1.2) is an expectation of all faculty.

4\(^5\) Agreed to by:

   [signed after the PRS is developed] ___________________________ Date

   Faculty Member

   [signed after the PRS is developed] ___________________________ Date

   Unit head (e.g., Chair)

6 This PRS must be formally renewed by [month/year] ____ during/after [formal action] ____.
Explanatory Comments

The Iowa State University Faculty Handbook requires that every faculty member have a Position Responsibility Statement, or PRS, that is the basis of all faculty evaluations, both annual performance reviews and advancement/promotion/tenure/post-tenure reviews. The PRS is a general job description that will change as faculty duties change. For tenured and tenure-eligible faculty, it is developed as a result of negotiation between the faculty member and the chair/unit head. The negotiation is based on the job advertisement and on the department's expectations for faculty at the hiring rank. The PRS should be developed within 6 weeks of the faculty member's arrival on campus. A copy signed by both parties is placed in the faculty member's personnel record. The PRS for non-tenure eligible faculty is also negotiated except for those faculty initially hired with specific responsibilities outlined in the LOI. This document explains the areas of responsibility that must be and that might be included in a PRS. It provides guidance to the faculty member and the chair about what the negotiated PRS might look like.

Areas of Responsibility with Proportions of Effort

The PRS template is shown with separate sections for each area. A narrative format combining the areas can also be used, but percentages are still required. The percentages represent the proportion of effort that is to be devoted to an area of responsibility. Effort indicators are approximate, serving only as guidelines, because effort required for any area may vary substantially over shorter periods of time (e.g., weeks). Percentages should be in increments of no less than 5% and should represent proportion of effort over the academic year. There are seven different areas of responsibility, but few faculty will have expectations in all seven areas.

Teaching - Expectations related to teaching and advising will be listed here. Expectations for TTE faculty will be listed in broader terms rather than specific courses. For example: "Responsibilities for teaching include one graduate course, one undergraduate course, and shared responsibility for the introductory lab course. The minimum teaching responsibilities will be [N] formal courses per year [or N credit hours per year]." Or "Responsibilities include teaching 12 credits per academic year made up of at least one graduate course, one entry level course, and others as assigned by the department chair. Advising of graduate and undergraduate students is also expected." Expectations for NTE hired to teach specific courses or perform specific curricular-related activities may have more specific descriptions tied to the Letter of Intent.

Research/Creative Activity - Scholarship varies among disciplines; it is defined to include an original product that is disseminated widely and is peer reviewed. It includes research, discovery, and other creative activities. Expectations for the faculty member’s scholarship will be stated here. If specific activities, such as grant submission, are expected, they should be noted. An example for a research-focused hire might be "You are expected to maintain an active research program in ____________ that leads to data-based, refereed publications in appropriate scholarly journals [note: this could reference an available list of journals if one is maintained by the unit]. In addition, you are expected to pursue external funding to support your research program and graduate students."
Extension - Extension is an integral component of the land-grant mission of the University. This category recognizes appointments with explicit expectations in the area of extension.

Institutional Service - This area will describe the expectations for institutional service in accordance with the needs of the individual’s department, college and the university. For those with low proportion of effort in this area, a simple statement like "Your institutional service activities may include departmental, college, and university committees." is acceptable. When a faculty member assumes a major institutional service role (e.g., the faculty member becomes Associate Chair and/or Director of Graduate Education [DOGE] in a department, is elected to a leadership position in the Faculty Senate, or is appointed to chair a major University Committee such as the Institutional Review Board), the faculty member's PRS should acknowledge this responsibility. Institutional Service is required for promotion and tenure and is expected for tenured professors. The minimum percent effort in institutional service for tenured and tenure-eligible faculty is 5%.

Professional Practice/Clinical Practice - This area describes faculty duties and responsibilities related to clinical or similar professional activities, such as veterinary clinical practice, librarianship, or design.

Professional Service/Engagement and Outreach - This dual area recognizes two kinds of activity that are connected to the individual’s area of expertise but that have a focus external to the university. It includes service to funding agencies and to professional organizations/societies/agencies. Reviewing, editing, serving as an officer are other examples. Engagement and outreach activities that leverage the professional expertise of the individual should also be included here. Service activities that do not relate to the professional expertise of the individual should not be included here.

Administration (formal) - This category is for formal administrative appointments such as department chairs and center directors, when appropriate. It is recognized that most DOGE or associate chair appointments are considered institutional service.

Citizenship & Collegiality
The Faculty Handbook section on Professional Responsibilities is referenced in the PRS to emphasize the expectation of collegiality as a condition of employment. "Faculty members do not exploit, harass, or improperly discriminate against colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas, faculty members show due respect for the opinions of others." [excerpt from FH 7.2.1]

The agreed upon PRS can be altered and adjusted by mutual consent of the faculty member and unit head. Because all faculty evaluations are done in reference to the PRS, whenever there is a change in major responsibilities, the PRS should be changed to reflect the change in responsibility. The change can be initiated by the faculty member or by the chair, but no change can be made without agreement by both parties. Each department's governance document states the procedure to follow should there be a dispute regarding the content of the PRS.
A faculty member has only one PRS. Some faculty hold appointment in two departments. For faculty with joint appointments, the PRS will be signed by the chairs of both departments. The descriptions of the areas of responsibility and proportions of effort should clarify the expectations in each department. One department will be designated as primary. For TTE faculty, this is the department in which tenure will reside. Faculty without joint appointments may have responsibilities in a second department or faculty may have responsibilities in a program. Such responsibilities should be part of the PRS, but there is no requirement for the signature of the head of the second unit.

To ensure that formal review of this document occurs in a timely manner, a formal PRS review will be conducted as part of or immediately after each major faculty evaluation event (e.g., contract renewal for NTE faculty, 3rd year review for tenure-eligible faculty, promotion review and post-tenure review for tenured faculty). The next formal PRS review and its date are indicated on the PRS itself. If no change in the PRS is needed at that time, the signature page is revised to reflect the date of current review as well as the date of the next formal review, and the document is signed again by both/all parties.