DEVELOPING A RESEARCH PLAN

Planning a research program involves both identifying the research question(s) you want to pursue, and deciding what you want to accomplish in your pursuit of those questions. This worksheet is designed to help you focus on the latter – specific, measurable outcomes of your research program, and the timetable you will follow to achieve those outcomes.

Step 1. Set long-term goals for your research program. For this, you will want to consider both your own aspirations and the expectations of your institution.

Take a few minutes to consider **what you would like** your research program to look like ~5 years from now, or (if you are in a tenure-track position) when you come up for tenure. Write a brief description.

i. What will be the main focus of your research? What will be your subsidiary interests?

ii. Will you have written papers? How many? In what journal(s) will they have been published?

iii. What will your lab/studio space be like? (if appropriate)

iv. What equipment will you have, or have access to? (if appropriate)

v. How many students will be working with you? How many will be undergraduates? Graduates?

vi. With whom will you be collaborating, besides your students?

vii. Will your research be funded by external grants? What kind(s)?

viii. Where and how well will you be known, within your professional community?

ix. To what extent, and how, will your research program be integrated with your teaching?

x. What else?

Step 2: Consider the challenges and opportunities facing you.

What support is available to you to help you achieve your goals?

What impediments stand in the way? Are they insurmountable? How much of your time and energy will they consume? What strategies will you try first to overcome any impediments?

Do your long-term goals take advantage of opportunities that exist and appeal to you?
Step 3: Carefully examine your long-term goals.

Are they appropriately ambitious, considering your challenges and opportunities? Do they appeal to you? Can you see yourself happily working toward them? If not, go back to step one and revise them as necessary. You want a research program that motivates and excites you.

Step 4: Set intermediate goals for your research program.

b. Where will you need to be, a year from now, to accomplish your long-term goals? Write a brief description.

c. What do you need to accomplish this semester to get on track toward your long-term research program goals?

Step 5: Set short-term goals for your research program.

d. What will you do this month to make progress toward your research program goals?

e. What will you do this week to make progress toward your research program goals?
Example Program of Research 20XX-20XX
Name

Overarching Theme

Major Research Themes

1)  
2)  
3)  

Research Production Overview

Number of first author publications per year:  
Average Journal Impact Factor:  
Number of Undergraduate Students/yr:  
Number of Graduate Students/yr:

Research Production by Major Research Theme

1. Publications and Conferences:

Title: Example - Book

Resources: Funding, personnel, partnerships, etc.

Time line:
In print: 8/2015  
Submit final version: 8/2014  
Submit original version: 8/2013  
Submit book proposal: 2/2013

Title: Example - Manuscript

Resources:

Time line:
Revise dissertation chpt: 8/2010  
Lit review: 9/2010  
Check data analyses: 11/2010  
Peer feedback: 12/2010  
Final draft submitted: 2/2011
2. Publications and Conferences:

3. Publications and Conferences:

**Long Term (5 year) Goals**

**Intermediate Term Goals**

**Short Term Goals**

**Challenges and opportunities**

Challenges *(examples)*

- Recruiting students
- Time for data analysis and publication
- General funding context

Opportunities

- Establishing new partnerships
- Institutional support
- Expansions to collaborations