

The PRS Description of Areas of Position Responsibility

MOTION: Modify the paragraphs in the section concerning Position Responsibility Statement (the new FH 3.4 or the old FH 5.1.1.5) as follows.

BACKGROUND and RATIONALE: This proposal specifies that every faculty member shall have a PRS. It ensures some degree of uniformity in PRSs by requiring certain information to be contained in every PRS. Because PRSs are used in faculty review, it is important for PRSs to be clear in the description of position responsibilities and provide some indication of the distribution of position responsibilities.

S14-19 was distributed in April 2015 from the PRS Task Force. By October 2015, 18 single-spaced pages of comments were received. The feedback indicated that there was some uncertainty about the purpose of the PRS. Furthermore, there was widespread disagreement about the initially proposed enumeration of categories and initially proposed limits on percentages of effort. In response to these comments, the proposal below continues to require PRSs to list areas of position responsibility and indicate the distribution of those responsibilities. However, this proposal authorizes faculty members and chairs to decide which categories (or combinations of categories) are applicable to the faculty member.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES: The proposed text differs from what is currently in the *Faculty Handbook*. The proposed text:

- (i) clarifies that all faculty appointments require a PRS, regardless of administrative duties;
- (ii) clarifies the purpose of the PRS, by noting the connection between the content of the PRS and its use as a tool in evaluation of faculty performance;
- (iii) specifies information that is required in all PRSs;
- (iv) lists different *possible* areas of position responsibility; and
- (v) requires all PRSs to specify the distribution of different areas of position responsibility, with an eye to helping evaluators assign appropriate weights to the different areas of position possibility during faculty review. Distributions may take the form of proportion of effort or comparative importance, so long as there is a standard in the department or college for interpreting these descriptions.

ORGANIZATION:

If approved (and if S14-19-1, S14-19-2, and S14-19-3 have been approved), the structure of FH 3.4 will be as follows:

3.4 Position Responsibility Statement

3.4.1 General Description

3.4.1.1 Appointments Requiring a PRS

3.4.1.2 Intended Use of the PRS

3.4.2 The Form of the PRS

3.4.2.1 Required Elements

- 3.4.2.2 Individualization of Areas of Position Responsibility
- 3.4.3 Procedures for Establishment and Maintenance of the PRS
 - 3.4.3.1 Procedures at Initial Appointment
 - 3.4.1.1.1 Joint Appointments
 - 3.4.3.2 Review and Update of the PRS
 - 3.4.1.2.1 Formal Review of the PRS
- 3.4.4 Procedure for Mediating PRS Disputes

PROPOSED TEXT:

Note: The following text is from the changes made in S14-19-3. The first paragraph numbers listed in square brackets refer to the paragraph numbers from the text in S14-19-3. The second paragraph numbers listed refer to FH 5.1.1.5 from the August 2015 edition.

3.4 Position Responsibility Statement

[¶1/¶1] It is the policy of Iowa State University that evaluations of tenure-eligible/tenured faculty are based on the position responsibilities of faculty members and other activities that relate to faculty appointments. The results of all reviews must be shared with the individual faculty members.

3.4.1 General Description

[¶2/¶2] A position responsibility statement (PRS) is a tool that describes the range of responsibilities undertaken by a faculty member. The PRS is written and approved by both the faculty member and the department chair. Because responsibilities and duties change throughout faculty careers, the PRS shall be reviewed and updated as necessary at intervals appropriate to the stages of faculty career development. Thus the PRS allows for a flexible and individualized system of faculty review, ~~particularly within the promotion and tenure process of tenure-eligible/tenured faculty or for advancement of non-tenure-eligible faculty.~~ The PRS shall not prevent or constrain justifiable changes to or developments within any area of a faculty member's position responsibilities. The ~~position responsibility statement~~ PRS description itself should be general and ~~only~~ include only the significant responsibilities of the faculty member that are important in evaluating faculty accomplishments especially in the promotion and tenure process for tenure-eligible/tenured faculty or for advancement for non-tenure-eligible faculty.

[¶2/¶2] The ~~position responsibility statement~~ PRS shall not violate the faculty member's academic freedom, ~~in teaching, in the selection of topics or methods of research, or in extension/professional practice. If the parties agree to more specific language beyond a general description of areas of position responsibilities, that specific language shall not be understood to be a checklist or constraint on the faculty member's freedom to choose areas and methods of inquiry appropriate to the discipline.~~

Because it outlines the expectations for faculty members in carrying out their duties in accordance with Iowa State University's public land-grant university mission, the PRS shall be understood to be a public document.

3.4.1.1 Appointments Requiring a PRS

[¶4/¶8] All faculty members with appointments governed by the *Faculty Handbook* as defined in Section 3.3 shall have a PRS. University administrators generally have faculty rank. If a university administrator has significant non-administrative responsibilities (especially research/creative activity, teaching, or outreach) carried out within an academic department of the university, he/she shall have a PRS appropriate to his/her duties in that department. Department chairs will have a PRS, written by the department chair and the dean, describing the administrative and other departmental responsibilities of the position.

3.4.1.2 Intended Use of the PRS

[¶3/¶3 partial] As noted in Chapter 5 (Evaluation and Review), the PRS is a tool referenced during all forms of faculty review. The PRS is particularly significant within the promotion and tenure process of tenure-eligible/tenured faculty or for advancement of non-tenure-eligible faculty. The PRS should allow both faculty members and their administrative and peer evaluators to understand the basis of the academic appointment and to place that into context with the promotion and tenure criteria. The descriptions should be brief but may include detail important to the department and/or faculty member.

3.4.2 The Form of the PRS

3.4.2.1 Required Elements

Every PRS should be a brief document and must include the following information:

- Name of faculty member and faculty salary base
- Title
- Primary department (tenure home)
- Secondary department (if applicable)
- Description of areas of position responsibility
- Signatures of the faculty member and department chair(s)
- Signature date
- Formal review date

Colleges may require additional statements or information to clarify the nature of faculty position responsibilities.

3.4.2.2 Individualization of Areas of Position Responsibility

Faculty responsibilities in a land-grant university are diverse. Examples of areas of position responsibility common to many faculty include, but are not limited to: teaching, research/creative activity, extension, outreach, professional practice, clinical practice, professional service, and institutional service. The description of areas of position responsibility in the PRS should include whichever areas of position responsibility are applicable to the faculty member.-

Because the PRS is used in evaluation, the goal of the PRS is to provide an individualized description of the expected responsibilities of each faculty member. To this end, the PRS will include a brief narrative describing the position responsibilities along with indication of the expected distribution of those responsibilities (e.g., expected proportion of effort or relative importance). Different faculty members have different ranges of duties and responsibilities. The PRS's description of the distribution of areas of position responsibility should reflect how the faculty member's distribution compares to those of other faculty in the same department or college. (For example, a faculty member who teaches six classes has a greater expected proportion of effort for teaching than a faculty member who teaches one class. With the greater assignment of teaching responsibilities, the evaluator gives greater weight to teaching for the faculty member with the greater number of classes, in accordance with evaluation procedures.) The responsibilities and their distribution should be compatible with satisfying or exceeding the expectations for promotion and tenure or advancement.