

## **RATIONALE:**

### **What's the problem?**

**The scope of PRSs:** According to ISU's *Faculty Handbook*, faculty position responsibility statements (PRSs) are supposed to be brief. The content is limited to identification of areas of position responsibility, brief general descriptions of the responsibility in each area and the percentage of effort assigned to each area, and any other clarification.

There have been additional statements introduced by departments, colleges, or the university that go beyond this limited scope. (In the resolution "additional statements" refers to these statements.) Examples include preambles, descriptions of mission or values, or reminders of policies or expectations. These violate the defined nature and function of the PRS.

**The function of PRSs:** The *Faculty Handbook* separates evaluation of faculty performance (chapters 3 and 5) from addressing faculty misconduct (chapter 7). The PRS is a relevant tool for evaluation of faculty performance, but not for addressing faculty misconduct.

**Right to negotiate:** Faculty members have the right to negotiate the terms of their own PRSs to best describe their own areas of position responsibility. Additional statements in PRSs mandated by the department, college, or university curb this right. Some department chairs claim to be unable to authorize removal of such statements from the PRS, which further frustrates the negotiation process.

**Presumption of relevance to evaluation:** Given the PRS's defined connection to evaluation, inclusion of any additional statement gives the appearance of relevance to evaluation. Even when that is not intended, evaluators may misinterpret such statements. Such considerations can distort evaluations and lead evaluators to discount objective evidence about performance. Furthermore, a candidate is unable to challenge the factual basis for such judgments.

**Chilling effects:** These additional statements introduce special vulnerability to biased evaluation for faculty who differ from their evaluators with respect to race, sex, national origin, and other protected categories, as well as personality, political, social, or other differences. There are risks of chilling effects, including silencing or marginalizing faculty, decreased faculty morale, increased distrust, and limits on academic freedom.

**Problematic Circumvention:** Some colleges and departments have other documents about policies and procedures related to appointment and evaluation (including renewal, advancement, promotion and tenure, or post-tenure review). These documents may include statements that do not appear on individual faculty PRSs but are to be referenced during review. Inclusion of the problematic additional statements (about mission, values, professional expectations, etc.) on these documents would circumvent the problem with respect to PRSs, but would raise similar problems. For this reason, they are inconsistent with the spirit of the *Faculty Handbook's* policies about PRSs.

**Doesn't the AAUP permit evaluating collegiality within areas of position responsibility?** ISU's chapter of the AAUP issued a statement about PRSs on December 3, 2019. They clarified that the AAUP's position (both the local chapter and the national office) is that collegiality should never be evaluated alone, either as its own category or within a category of position responsibility. When lack of collegiality affects performance, it will manifest itself in performance problems. Those problems should be the focus of the evaluation, not the collegiality.

**What is proposed?**

This resolution proposes to bring all faculty PRSs and other documents relating to appointment and evaluation into compliance with the *Faculty Handbook* by removing all additional statements outside of the descriptions of the individual faculty member's areas of position responsibility.

**What is not proposed?**

It is not proposed that faculty are permitted to violate expectations of collegiality or professional conduct. Nothing in this resolution nullifies, abridges, or amends the policies and procedures in chapter 7 of the *Faculty Handbook* about faculty misconduct or anything in ISU's Policy Library. Egregious cases of misconduct are a serious problem, but the PRS is not the relevant tool for addressing them; attempts to use the PRS to address egregious cases create the potential for chilling effects on other faculty.

Nothing in this resolution undermines or limits our commitment to faculty core values.

Three previous Faculty Senate resolutions are appended at the end for reference, but are not part of the resolution.

## **Faculty Senate Resolution to Bring Faculty Position Responsibility Statements into Compliance with the *Faculty Handbook***

ISU's Faculty Senate affirms the importance of professional conduct. All faculty members have the responsibility to foster and sustain respectful environments and relationships in all areas of faculty work. In accordance with the Statement on Faculty Core Values (S16-11), we continue to be committed to: shared governance, academic freedom, ethical conduct of research, academic and personal integrity, respect for all members of the community (including a commitment to collegiality and respectful exchange of ideas), diversity and inclusion, a welcoming campus environment, and our responsibilities to maintain the curriculum and mentor students.

All faculty members are accountable for their conduct. We reject harassment, intimidation, bullying, and other hateful or disrespectful behavior (S18-13 and S19-8). Chapter 7 of ISU's *Faculty Handbook* (FH) describes policies and procedures relating to faculty misconduct. ISU's Policy Library includes other policies that govern ISU employee conduct. Nothing in the following resolution shall be construed as nullifying, abridging, or amending those policies and procedures.

The following resolution is limited to faculty position responsibility statements (PRSs) and other documents related to faculty appointments and evaluation. The point is that they are not the right tools for promoting missions or values, and they are not appropriate tools for addressing faculty misconduct.

Invoking collegiality, fit with mission, or other such values in performance evaluations presents insuperable difficulties:

- Judgments about them are subjective and subject to bias (and in ways that especially harm members of minority groups and those with less power).
- Focus on them can distort judgments about performance and can lead evaluators to discount objective evidence about performance.
- The faculty member is unable to challenge the factual basis for judgments about their collegiality, fit with mission, or other values (especially in review for renewal, advancement, or promotion and tenure).

ISU's *Faculty Handbook* describes the nature and function of PRSs:

- PRSs "describe the range of responsibilities undertaken by a faculty member" (FH 3.4.1).
  - "Position responsibilities" refers to activities, such as teaching, research/creative activity, extension, outreach, professional practice, clinical practice, professional service, and institutional service. They are accompanied by an expected proportion of effort (FH 3.4.2.2).
- PRS descriptions should be brief (FH 3.4.1.2).
- "The PRS description itself ***should be general*** and 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 term faculty” (FH 3.4.1, emphasis added).

- PRSs are “referenced during all forms of faculty review” (FH 3.4.1.2.).
- Faculty members have the right to negotiate the content of their PRSs with their department chairs (FH 3.4.1). If the faculty member and department chair cannot agree, a mediation process exists (FH 3.4.4).

It is a violation of the *Faculty Handbook* for values, missions, or other such additional statements to be included in PRSs for the following reasons:

- The restrictive term “only” (FH 3.4.1) precludes including additional statements about missions, values, expectations for faculty conduct, or aspects of faculty performance that are not subject to explicit evaluation.
- Statements about values, missions, etc. mandated by the department, college, or university conflict with the faculty member’s right to negotiate the content of the PRS.

Furthermore, if statements about values, missions, etc. are included in PRSs, they may be misinterpreted as being subject to evaluation, given the connection between PRSs and evaluation. This increases the risk of chilling effects, including silencing or marginalizing faculty, decreased faculty morale, increased distrust, and limits on academic freedom.

These reasons similarly apply to other college or department documents that are related to faculty appointment or evaluation.

In sum, additional statements beyond brief descriptions of areas of position responsibility have no place in faculty PRSs or other documents related to appointment or evaluation of performance.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that ISU’s Faculty Senate judges that statements beyond the areas of position responsibility on PRSs violates ISU’s *Faculty Handbook*. Faculty members and their department chairs are directed to work together to remove those statements from PRSs. Furthermore, colleges and departments are directed to remove such statements from any college or department documents related to appointment or evaluation of faculty performance (e.g., renewal, advancement, promotion and tenure, or post-tenure review documents).

**BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Statement on Faculty Core Values (S16-11), ISU’s Faculty Senate re-affirms our continued commitment to: shared governance, academic freedom, ethical conduct of research, academic and personal integrity, respect for all members of the community (including a commitment to collegiality and respectful exchange of ideas), diversity and inclusion, a welcoming campus environment, and our responsibilities to maintain the curriculum and mentor students.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that ISU’s Faculty Senate calls on Faculty Senate President Sturm to convene a task force to recommend ways independent of the PRS to foster faculty collegiality, promote faculty values, and address faculty misconduct.

## Statement on Faculty Core Values

As faculty at Iowa State University, we are committed to excellence in all facets of university life – high quality educational programs, cutting-edge research, and dissemination of new knowledge – to benefit our students, the citizens of Iowa, the nation, and the world. To achieve excellence, we affirm that the following core values and conditions of campus life are essential to a functional, productive, and vibrant University.

**1. Shared Governance** – We are committed to participating fully in the shared governance of Iowa State University, and will work together with its administration and staff to govern the University in a transparent, communicative, and responsible manner. [FH 2.4.1]

**2. Academic Freedom** – We are committed to academic freedom, which enables us to freely teach our students and pursue academic knowledge within our disciplines; to conduct both basic and applied research, develop technology, expand the horizons of the understanding of our world, and contribute to a greater appreciation of humanity. As part of this academic freedom, we are committed to the principle that the granting of tenure to faculty is essential for unobstructed freedom of thought, generating new ideas, and enabling unbiased discourse in our pursuit of knowledge. [FH 5.2.1; FH 7.1.1]

**3. Ethical Conduct of Research** – We are committed to conducting all research at Iowa State University with the highest ethical standards, and acknowledge our responsibility to ethically pursue our scholarly endeavors, to be accountable for our fiscal operations, and to present our scholarly and research products in a manner beyond reproach. [FH 7.2.2.3; FH 7.2.2.5.7]

**4. Academic and Personal Integrity** – We are committed to maintaining our personal and professional integrity as educators and researchers. We denounce any form of plagiarism, falsification of data, misrepresentation, or other acts which compromise the reputation of our collective work at Iowa State University. [FH 7.1.2]

**5. Respect for All Members of the Community** – We are committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect for all members of the campus community. We are committed to collegiality, mutual support, and respect for cultural and disciplinary diversity, which are essential for a functional, responsive, and thriving campus climate. We are committed to the free exchange of ideas, civil discourse, and respect for differing opinions and perspectives in the pursuit of knowledge. [FH 7.1.2]

**6. Diversity and Inclusion** – We are committed to a diverse and inclusive campus community, which brings together people of different academic disciplines, cultures, intellectual perspectives, and beliefs. We welcome students, faculty, and scholars from around the world regardless of race, color, age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, sex, marital status, disability, or status as a U.S. veteran. It

## **APPENDIX 1: Statement of Faculty Core Values**

is critical to the success of Iowa State University, the State of Iowa, and the nation, that we open our campus to the very best faculty, staff, students, and scholars from around the world.

**7. Safe and Welcoming Campus Environment** – We are committed to maintaining a campus environment that is free of dangers, threats, or other unacceptable behaviors, so that everyone is safe as they pursue their studies, conduct research, teach, or provide service. We expect that all members of the campus community will be respectful and civil. [FH 7.2.2.2; FH 7.2.2.5.9]

**8. Responsibility to Manage the Curriculum** – We are committed to our role at the university where the faculty assume the sole responsibility to continuously manage, review, and improve the academic curricula offered at Iowa State University, ensuring their relevance and high quality. [FH 2.4.1; FH 7.1.2]

**9. Responsibility to Mentor Students** – We are committed to the role of faculty as mentors to the students participating in our academic programs. We strive to instill in our students the values of academic integrity and professionalism throughout their studies at Iowa State University. [FH 5.3.1.4.1; FH 7.1.2]

### Faculty Senate Resolution against Bullying and Intimidation on Campus

**Bullying** is construed to mean persistent and pervasive conduct—including electronic, written, verbal, or physical acts—

- that creates an objectively hostile work or learning environment
- that places people in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property
- that is defamatory or abusive
- that has a substantially detrimental effect on the person’s physical or mental health
- that has the effect of substantially interfering with a person’s academic or workplace performance, or their ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by an institution.

**Workplace bullying** is bullying that compromises the work environment for an employee.

**Educational bullying** is bullying that compromises the learning experience of a student.

#### WHEREAS:

- Workplace and educational bullying are injurious, and affect our teaching, research, and educational climate on campus, as well as our individual and collective abilities to succeed
- Workplace and educational bullying have been shown repeatedly to generate long-term negative emotional and physical consequences in the lives of people who are its targets
- Workplace and educational bullying have too long gone unchallenged on our campus
- Inaction and passive acceptance of bullying behaviors serve to promote them
- Bullying conflicts with the Iowa State University strategic plan, which states that “ISU will continue to enhance and cultivate the ISU Experience where faculty, staff, students, and visitors are safe and feel welcomed, supported, included, and valued by the university and each other”
- Bullying conflicts with Faculty Senate Resolution S16-4, which states that “We welcome all students to learn to the best of their abilities on our campus in an environment free from racism, sexism, bigotry, harassment, and oppression”

#### THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- ISU Faculty Senate stands firmly united that workplace and educational bullying have no place on our campus, are pernicious and will not be tolerated.

#### WE CALL ON FACULTY:

- to foster a climate of zero tolerance for bullying, intimidation, oppression, or victimization within our community
- to be attentive to any who may share encounters or experiences with workplace or educational bullying
- to build an educational environment at ISU that is respectful, empathetic and socially just to enable all to reach their full potential in research, teaching, and learning
- to work with the Policy Library Advisory Committee to establish, without infringing upon academic freedoms and the freedom of speech, a university policy against workplace and educational bullying

### **Resolution in Opposition to Racist Incidents Occurring at Iowa State University and in Support of Students Affected by Them**

#### **Preamble**

In the past few weeks, a number of incidents of racism and white supremacy have occurred on the campus of Iowa State University. These incidents have included the vandalism of the Bean House sign in Geoffroy Hall to read “Beaner” (a racist epithet targeting Latino/a/x peoples); the chalking of campus sidewalks with the phrases “Build the Wall,” “HH (Heil Hitler),” “No Trans Rights,” and others; an advisor posting pictures of himself on social media wearing blackface; the placarding of “13% does 50%” signs around campus with a QR code linking to a white supremacist website; and daily examples of microaggressions, racism, and sexism that students experience on campus from their classmates, faculty, and staff. Students of color, LGBTQIA+ students, and their allies, frustrated with the Administration’s response, were compelled to protest this hostile climate, taking time away from their studies.

Active racism and the passive acceptance of racism doubly harm those victimized by it. Racism has negative mental health, emotional, and cognitive effects on students, faculty, and staff. It impedes the ability of students who have suffered racism as well as the individuals who care about them to be successful in the classroom. Racism has deleterious effects on the myriad personal relationships students have within and outside of Iowa State University. It has harmful effects on campus climate for all who call Iowa State University home.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, homophobia, religious intolerance, and white supremacy are pervasive and persisting challenges on our campus and in the United States and have resulted in racial violence from Charleston to El Paso, Pittsburgh to San Diego.

#### **Resolution of the Faculty Senate**

**The Iowa State University Faculty Senate** stands opposed to racism, white superiority, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, religious intolerance, and other forms of prejudice and bias. We condemn these things both on and off campus.

**We** support our students who have been the targets of racism and discrimination.

**We** support the Constitutional rights of our students to protest.

**We** support the ideals of diversity and inclusion at our university and welcome all students to learn in an environment free from racism, sexism, bigotry, harassment, and other forms of oppression. While we uphold these ideals ourselves, we strongly encourage our colleagues across the University to do the same. **We** call upon the Administration at Iowa State University to openly and forthrightly examine all claims of racism and bias on our campus, and to work with all members of the community to enact policies that create meaningful progress in addressing racism and bias on our campus in the future. **We** pledge to continue to work for positive, progressive change through Faculty Senate to help Iowa State University achieve the resolutions mentioned herein.