

How to write a Professional Activities Statement (PAS)

The Professional Activities Statement (PAS) is a document that reflects upon successes and challenges in a faculty member's professional life in relation to teaching, scholarship¹, and service over the years since their last review.² It is also a forward-looking document that articulates plans and aspirations for future work. Across the span of a professional career, PAS statements form a narrative account that offers insight and explanation to complement the accomplishments listed on a curriculum vitae. Self-awareness and an ongoing commitment to improvement are valued.

Faculty members at Dickinson craft a PAS to accompany every personnel review (Year 2, Year 4, Year 6, Senior, and Promotion-to-Full Reviews). It is not necessary to submit a PAS to accompany sabbatical proposals or post-sabbatical reports. When writing a PAS, please use the following guidelines:

- The typical length is 2,500-3,000 words excluding tables, graphs, and figures; please do not exceed 4,000 words. Feel free to use charts, tables, etc. wherever that helps to succinctly summarize relevant information. The total document length, including text and any charts or tables should not exceed 7-8 pages in length (Times New Roman Font 12). PAS documents which are overly long will be returned for revision.
- Please organize the document into three sections (teaching, scholarship, service—in that order). You might consider an overview at the start and/or conclusion at the end.
- As noted, the PAS has two major objectives. The first is to clearly reflect upon and summarize your progress in all relevant areas (teaching, scholarship, service) since your last review. (For a Year 2 PAS, summarize your progress since you began at Dickinson.) You may also reflect on your career as a whole, but the focus should be on progress since your last review. FPC members and senior members of the department will have access to previous PAS statements and review letters. Here are some guidelines for summarizing progress in each area:
 - **Teaching:** Describe the level (e.g. introductory, intermediate etc.) and the role in the curriculum (e.g. required, elective) of the courses you have taught since your last review. The College “normally expects that each faculty member should routinely teach courses at every level of the curriculum from introductory to the most advanced” (Faculty Handbook 6-5). Discuss changes you made to your courses or teaching methods to address any problems based on your own perceptions, student evaluations, feedback from colleagues, and other relevant information. Note student enrollment in your courses, describing any issues (e.g. fully enrolled). Analyze numerical student scores and written student comments, noting any strengths or weaknesses emerging as themes from this analysis. Except for Year 2, it's essential to specifically consider each document from your previous review (FPC letter, department letter, peer teaching observations, your own previous PAS). Describe how you implemented any suggested improvements in those documents and what resources, if any, you used in crafting new teaching strategies. In the teaching section, please also include information regarding advising: in particular, how do you teach your advisees the logic of Dickinson's curriculum and/or

¹ Throughout this document, “scholarship” is intended to encompass intellectual, creative production across disciplines, incorporating performance, creative works, patents, grants, etc.

² Lecturers, adjunct instructors, and visiting faculty reflect only on the areas (teaching, scholarship, and service) that reflect the expectations of their position.

strategies to address their interests and priorities as they progress towards graduation? Also mention, here or in other sections as appropriate, any efforts to enhance inclusivity and/or diversity in the classroom, the major, and/or at Dickinson. Finally, please also mention in this section your contributions to assessment.

- **Scholarship:** Describe all scholarly achievements and activity during the review period. Recall that *achievements* are peer-reviewed products (publications, funded grant proposals or the equivalent in the visual and performing arts) and *activity* is anything else. These are clarified in Chapter 4 of the Academic Handbook (http://www.dickinson.edu/download/downloads/id/5973/chapter_4.pdf). For each achievement, explain the level of peer review or equivalent. If your work is collaborative, explain the extent of your own contribution. Please also give your readers an understanding of the impact of the venues where your material has been reviewed or appeared and why you chose to submit your work to a particular venue. As with teaching, and again excepting Year 2, refer back to all relevant documents from your previous review, explaining how you addressed any suggestions for scholarship in those documents and how the projects you discussed in those documents have progressed.
- **Service:** Briefly describe your service during the review period. This is a good opportunity to make FPC aware of ways you may have served that could be less apparent, such as ad-hoc committees, work at the departmental level or any other service beyond your department or the College. Although service does affect promotion and salary decisions, remember that service is considered a clear third behind teaching and scholarship—your PAS should emphasize teaching and scholarship.

The second important objective of the PAS is to clearly summarize your plans for the next few years, again in all three areas. Specific content for each area might include the following:

- **Teaching:** For challenges or weaknesses you have identified but not yet addressed, describe your ideas for addressing them. Describe any ideas for new courses.
 - **Scholarship:** Describe as concretely as you can the activity and achievements that are likely to be forthcoming during the next review period. Where possible, give approximate dates and likely venues targeted for submission, performance, or presentation.
 - **Service:** List any specific plans or desires for service, but this can be very brief.
- Like other kinds of writing, it is easier to craft a PAS if you have seen one before. Ask one or more colleagues to look over a draft of your PAS. Feel free to ask a former member of FPC.
 - In your PAS you may choose to disclose personal information, such as health issues or family challenges, as they relate to recent progress and achievement or your plans for the next few years. This is permitted, though certainly not necessary. Please be aware that to officially document health-related information, for example to request workplace accommodations or a medical leave of absence, you must communicate directly with Human Resources Services.