

## How to write a Professional Activities Statement (PAS)

Some suggestions from the members of the Faculty Personnel Committee  
(FPC) updated August 2022

- The typical length is 2500-3000 words excluding tables, graphs, and figures; please do not exceed 4000 words. Feel free to use charts, tables, etc. wherever that helps to succinctly summarize relevant information.
- There is no required format, but most people split the document into three sections (teaching, scholarship, service—in that order), sometimes with an overview at the start and/or conclusion at the end.
- Throughout this document, “scholarship” has its usual broad Dickinson meaning, incorporating performance, creative works, patents, grants, etc.
- This document is primarily targeted at tenured and tenure-track faculty preparing a PAS in all three areas (teaching, scholarship, service). Adjunct and visiting faculty can adjust the guidelines by eliminating or reducing the scholarship and service sections as appropriate.
- The PAS has two major objectives. The first is to clearly reflect on and summarize your progress in all three areas (teaching, scholarship, service) since your last review. (For a Year 2 PAS, summarize your progress since you started at Dickinson.) You may also refer to 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 your progress in each area:
  - Teaching: Mention 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). Describe 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. Mention student enrollment in your courses, noting 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), describing 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 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 or the equivalent) 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](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 the committee aware of ways you may have served that could be less apparent, such as ad-hoc committees or work at the departmental level. Although service does affect promotion and salary decisions, remember that service is considered a clear third behind teaching and scholarship--so your PAS should emphasize teaching and scholarship.
- The second important objective 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.
- Ask one or more colleagues to share examples of their own PAS documents with you.
- Ask one or more colleagues to look over a draft of your PAS. Feel free to ask a former member of FPC.
- The point of the PAS is for you to reflect on progress and achievement as well as opportunities for further development in all three areas. Self-awareness and an ongoing commitment to improvement as a teacher, scholar, and community member are valued. Note any changes you might be making in the future and what resources on campus or elsewhere you might utilize in forthcoming years, and explain your trajectory in all three areas. This is the document in which you make your case that you have been and will continue to be a vital member of the Dickinson College faculty.