

University Prep’s Three-Year Professional Development Model: Individualized Teaching Improvement Plan

The Committee on Faculty Evaluation has identified four domains for teacher excellence: pedagogy, classroom environment, content, and life outside the classroom. As part of a plan for ongoing teacher professional development, teachers will work in conjunction with their department heads and division directors to map a three-year plan for continued teacher improvement. The teacher, in consultation with her/his department head and division director will select one or two domains as their main focus for improvement for the three-year cycle, and together design a program of professional development relative to particular skills within that domain (or domains) that will best serve the teacher and the department . * Faculty are expected to be engaged in this professional development model in continually repeating three-year cycles, no matter where they are on the salary scale. Additionally, the expectation is that every teacher’s performance in all domains will continue to meet acceptable standards as described in the “Characteristics of Good Teaching” (CGT).

The basic plan for the three-year cycle is outlined below. Individual plans will vary among departments and by teacher. Typically, the successful completion of the three-year cycle, as determined by the department head, division director, and head of school, will result in a teacher moving up a category on the faculty salary scale. However, this advance may not occur if any portion of the ITIP is assessed as having been unsatisfactorily completed. In such a case, the teacher’s ITIP timeline would be revised. Successfully engaging in and completing the ITIP cycle in a reasonable time frame is a requirement for continuing employment. Faculty members may be initially placed in any year of the three-year cycle. Starting placement in the cycle is the purview of the department head, division director and head of school.

* **New faculty:** Initiating the three-year cycle is slightly different for teachers new to University Prep. Rather than determining the ITIP focus relative to the CGT in the beginning of the year, the department head will observe the teacher throughout the first semester. Based on those observations and in consultation with the teacher, the ITIP plan should then be designed before the beginning of the second semester. At least two team observation sessions should occur that semester. At the end of the year, the decision will be made either to move the teacher into ITIP Year Two, or to have one more observation year.

Year One: The Formal Observation Year*

- In the first quarter of this year, the department head will meet with the teacher (at the teacher’s behest) to design the three-year ITIP plan reflecting the selected CGT domain(s). This plan should be submitted to the department head in writing for approval and a copy filed in the department head’s ITIP notebook.

- The teacher will then assemble an observation team comprising his/her department head, division director, and one or two peers (preferably in different disciplines). In the following three quarters this team will observe the teacher's classes, focusing their attention on the teacher's progress relative to his/her three-year professional development plan.
- Teachers will have a minimum of three observation sessions spaced throughout the year (the teacher should schedule these in consultation with the team members), each visit lasting the duration of an entire class. The department head or a division director will be present at all sessions, and each team member must take part in at least two of the observations. The entire team should be present at one of the observations.
- Each observation session will be preceded by a meeting in which the teacher and the team discuss the teacher's goals for the class, and how they relate to his/her professional development plan.
- After each session, the observers will meet with the teacher to debrief the class, focusing on the previously outlined goals for the class and the teacher's plan for professional development within his/her specified domain.
- The department head is responsible for completing the CGT Report form for each of the three observations, and the ITIP Checklist, each within a timely fashion.
- The teacher will meet with his/her team at the end of the year to discuss and summarize what went well, what needs improvement, and what the ITIP Year Two will actually look like. The teacher should subsequently provide a brief written summary of that meeting (including the Year Two plan) to the department head to file.
- The department head will report on the teacher's progress to the head of school and the division directors at their usual end-of-semester meetings. At the June meeting, those administrators will assess the teacher's observation year progress relative to approving satisfactory completion.

*See preceding page for process for faculty members new to University Prep.

Year Two: Professional Development Year

- In the early part of this year the teacher in consultation with her/his department head will refine and finalize the plan for professional development and inquiry to be completed beyond the walls of University Prep. This plan will be approved by the teacher's department head and division director. (This presumes an expectation that the department head is or becomes conversant with professional organizations and the opportunities they offer in his/her discipline, and can guide department members to a variety of external development ideas and opportunities.)
- This plan must support the teacher's three-year professional development (ITIP) goals.
- Examples of external professional development are pursuit of an advanced degree in a relevant field, taking classes in pedagogy and/or content, externships in the

teacher's field of study, participating in non-credit substantive programs, attending conferences and workshops, as well as exposure to other teaching venues.

- The plan should have coherence and an articulated desired outcome, and in all cases demonstrably relate to the teacher's three-year, domain-based plan.
- The external professional development may take place in the summers and/or during the school year.
- The plan should be financially feasible. The teacher and department head should consult with the academic dean regarding availability of funding.
- The teacher will provide the department head with documentation demonstrating successful completion of each facet of the plan and a brief written reflection on the efficacy of each aspect of external development undertaken.
- The teacher should continue to make discernable improvement in the domain and focus of his/her three-year plan. This will be the focus of assessment by the department head in his/her monitoring and mentoring via classrooms visits and conversations with the faculty member throughout the year.

Year Three: Portfolio and Documentation Year

- In this year the teacher will create a portfolio documenting the development and implementation as well as the progress of his/her new skill sets and capabilities.
- The portfolio should include:
 - Copies of any feedback notes from your team observations
 - Self-reflections (at least one each quarter) about the team's observations over time, the changes you are implementing, and the effect they are having on the students' engagement and mastery, on your instructional method and style, and in the school in general.
 - Student assessments related to any of your newly implemented teaching strategies related to your ITIP focus
 - Examples of classroom materials, lesson plans, etc., created in support of the plan's goals
 - Any observations or assessments by colleagues, or measurements or metrics that would demonstrate change and progress
 - Samples that represent and demonstrate the changes you have made as a result of this ITIP (e.g., videos of your teaching from Year One to Year Three, or samples of tests and/or lesson plans from Year One compared to Year Three).
 - Student works
 - A description of information about, and/or documentation of your "external adventures" in Year Two.
- The portfolio should be reviewed periodically over the course of the year by the department head and division director

- In the spring of the year, the faculty member will make a presentation of his/her ITIP cycle, including the portfolio, to the department and any team members or other faculty available. Organizing this, including inviting colleagues, is the responsibility of the faculty member.
- At the close of the year, the teacher should provide a summative reflection on the success of the three-year program of professional development, focusing on its effects on the teacher, the students and the school in general. In June, the department head, the division director, and the head of school will review and evaluate the success of the teacher's three-year ITIP plan. Should they determine that satisfactory progress has been made, the teacher's status on the salary scale will shift to the next higher ITIP column.