

## SECTION 5: CANDIDATE STATEMENT

**Candidate Statement of Accomplishments and Objectives on Research, Teaching and Service/Outreach (3-5 pages)**

For advice on the Candidate Statement, see the *Guide to the Promotion Process*: <http://facultyaffairs.arizona.edu/guide-promotion-process>. Candidates may also wish to consult the *Guide to the Promotion Process* for the revision of the University's promotion criteria that implements an "inclusive view of scholarship" <http://facultyaffairs.arizona.edu/promoting-inclusive-view-scholarship>.

**Signed Statement by Candidate on the Tenure Track or Non-tenure Track**

The candidate's signature should appear on the last page of Section 5 with the following statement: ***Sections 4 and 5 are true and accurate statements of my activities and accomplishments. I understand that misrepresentation in securing promotion and tenure may lead to dismissal or suspension under ABOR Policy 6-201 J.***

**Signed Statement by Candidate on the Continuing Status Track**

The candidate's signature should appear on the last page of Section 5 with the following statement: ***Sections 4 and 5 are true and accurate statements of my activities and accomplishments. I understand that misrepresentation in securing continuing status and promotion may lead to dismissal or suspension under ABOR Policy 6-302 G.***



## **SECTION 5: CANDIDATE STATEMENT**

### **Candidate statement of Accomplishments and Objectives on Teaching, Research, and Service/Outreach**

My desire to pursue a career in Cooperative Extension began as a graduate student at the University of Arizona and grew out of a strong belief in the mission of land-grant universities: to engage with people through applied research and education. While my work is primarily focused on community engagement and education, I am actively involved in applied research through program evaluation and collaborations with research faculty. In the following statement I will elaborate on my approach to the work I do and the philosophy that guides me.

#### **Teaching/Outreach**

I consider myself a life-long learner and a tireless teacher. My philosophy towards learning and teaching is that both can occur anywhere from the intimacy of private reflection to the impersonalized expanses of a lecture hall. I also believe that the most effective teachers are those that lead their students to self-discovery. As such, I am constantly learning on the job, sharing what I've learned with others, and encouraging others to continue to learn.

My teaching occurs in two fundamental ways: through non-formal education delivered in public workshops on topics such as parenting and early childhood development, and through mentoring junior colleagues, staff, and students.

When conducting community outreach programs, usually in the form of workshops, I emphasize the relevance of the information in the lives of the program participants. Relevance is an important element to learning, so I ask my students to consider how the subject matter relates to their everyday lives. I may use my own experience as an example, and encourage participants to share as well, if they are comfortable doing so. In this way they become teachers too, because others, including myself, draw from the examples provided and deepen our own understanding as a result.

Mentoring is also a form of teaching, so over the past several years I have gained much satisfaction by mentoring junior faculty, graduate students, and supervisees. For me this role has come about in part through age and increasing longevity on the job, but also through a desire to help, in my humble way, to guide those who are the future of Extension. I take pride in watching the growth and advancement of young professionals who move from instructional specialist to program coordinator. Some move on to bigger and better things, while others remain to help improve and expand our outreach programming. I also enjoy guiding newer Extension faculty through the process (as a mentor) and having some influence on the process itself (serving on the Annual Performance Review Guidance Committee) to help my colleagues be successful in their career journeys.

Another way I mentor is through co-authorship of publications. In reviewing my CV you will note that I am second or third author on a number of articles. I would define my role on such articles as lead author as I guided graduate and undergraduate students and staff in preparing what was often their first publication.

I consider myself a servant leader. Depending on the vicissitudes of funding, I might have as many as twenty employees and another dozen or so student interns or volunteers under my supervision. While the managerial responsibilities inherent in my capacity as Principal Investigator often take me away from direct teaching, through servant leadership, I try to support the learning, growth, and success of my team. Thus, they are better able to build and deliver successful community programming—teaching and outreach—and fulfill the mission of Cooperative Extension.

### **Research**

I sometimes refer to myself as a “blue collar scholar.” By this I mean that the research in which I am involved is most often conducted in the field as opposed to a laboratory, tends not to be particularly pristine, but is directly applicable to the everyday lives of the individuals involved. My epistemological perspective is that our understanding of the human condition requires an understanding of the context within which humans function. This, of course, can be quite messy and difficult to study, however it is a vital component for understanding what works and what doesn't work in community programming.

I also value translational research and believe that Cooperative Extension is aptly situated to assist in the process of translating research into efficient and effective methodologies, models, and practices for the families and communities we serve. That is exactly what Extension was designed to do, and although our audiences and our delivery methods have changed and evolved over time, the core objective remains the same. Evaluation research is one way science can be translated into best practices.

Yogi Berra, the much quoted baseball sage, once said, “In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.” Cooperative Extension puts theory to practice by bringing science to bear on practical problems to find solutions. As an Extension agent I see my role as bringing evidence-based and evidence-informed programming to the community. At the same time helping to inform researchers about the problems and issues faced by the citizens of Arizona. Below is an example of how I make that happen through one program.

One area of particular interest to me, and an important concern to many, is health and wellbeing. Specifically, I have dedicated much of my time and effort to developing and delivering nutrition education and physical activity programming to children and families with limited resources. Multiple theoretical models are used including experiential learning strategies, public health approaches, and the ecological model. I have employed these theories in the development of what I consider an innovative approach to health promotion in Pima County: the Garden Kitchen. The Garden Kitchen is a seed-to-table nutrition education facility located in a low-income urban neighborhood. This facility is both our base of operation for nutrition programming in the county and a gathering place for classes and health fairs, attracting program participants from a large geographic area. The Garden Kitchen uses hands-on teaching strategies that build the capacity of participants to grow and prepare healthy meals.

The Garden Kitchen is also a learning laboratory for students in public health and nutritional sciences, as well as a location for researchers to recruit subjects and conduct research. This is important because Extension, through projects like the Garden Kitchen, can be an excellent

venue for student engagement, as well as a convenient location for research. We host a number of students each semester who perform internships or fulfill requirements for their practicum at the Garden Kitchen. We have begun to formalize this relationship with the Department of Nutritional Sciences and have sought funding to help support our efforts. In addition, we have worked with research faculty to validate an online 24-hour food recall system to be used with youth; have helped design and test nutrition interventions for families; and are actively seeking funding with a pediatric oncologist to develop and test interventions for childhood survivors of cancer who have a propensity for gaining weight after treatment has ceased.

I hesitate to finish this section with goals I have not accomplished, but I feel compelled to convey the full story, warts and all. It is not only important, but, I believe, necessary that Extension continue to develop evidence-based community programming that keeps up with the times and addresses the needs of the populations we serve—to bring science to bear on the problems people face. For interventions to be considered evidence-based we need to conduct more rigorous evaluations/studies involving comparison or control groups, randomized assignments, and scaled to detect (or not) the changes we are expecting. For several years my colleagues and I have attempted to secure funding to test the effectiveness of intervention using youth as peer educators in the area of health, but without success. Nonetheless, this is a worthy endeavor that I will continue to pursue, not because I am a glutton for punishment, but because I believe it needs to be done, and I am eternally optimistic that we will someday succeed!

### **Service**

Community service has been a part of my life since I was a child. My parents were involved citizens in the small town I grew up in, and they instilled in me those same virtues of contributing to one's community and being community-minded, regardless of how that community may be defined. I was president of student council in junior high and high school and appointed by the mayor, while still in high school, to the Parks and Recreation Commission. My willingness and desire to provide service to my community has not changed.

As a graduate student I studied stages of human development and recognize that I am now well within Erikson's seventh stage: generosity vs. stagnation—I've chosen the former. Many of my efforts in the area of service have been to foster leadership within Extension and help mentor new faculty. I've previously described my efforts to mentor new faculty under the "teaching" section of this document, so allow me in this section to describe my endeavors concerning leadership.

I had the great fortune to attend the Western Extension Leadership Development (WELD) program several years ago. I was then invited to serve on the WELD planning committee and have done so for the past six years. Preparing current and future leaders of Extension is critically important for sustaining the institution and providing opportunities for career advancement within the system. I've learned a great deal while serving on the WELD committee (for instance, that I am a servant leader), and I like to think that I have helped others to recognize their leadership style and gain the confidence they need to lead in whatever capacity they hold.

Service is an expected and important aspect of an academic career. It provides faculty with an opportunity to exchange ideas and contribute collectively to the academy. If you feel strongly

that there's a better way to build a mousetrap, then you better get appointed to the mousetrap building committee, otherwise your opinions may never be heard. To paraphrase a famous quote, 80% of influence is showing up (and speaking up!). I am proud of my service over the years on various committees and the collective accomplishments we've achieved. While our system is not perfect, I believe my leadership on the Annual Performance Review Guidance Committee (guiding the county Extension faculty's annual peer-review process) has resulted in substantive improvements, providing faculty with meaningful and constructive feedback. My service on the National 4-H Healthy Living Management Team, as a non 4-H member representing Family and Consumer Health Sciences (FCHS), lent the committee a different perspective and enabled discussions of collaboration between 4-H and FCHS where their programs overlapped. Last year's 4-H National Youth Science Day experiment, Rockets to the Rescue, included a nutrition component, which was the result of a conversation I had over lunch with a 4-H State Program Leader. Being at the table makes a difference.

Finally, informal service, often not reflected on one's CV, occurs frequently and is an important way of fostering a collegial environment and contributing to the overall success of Extension. Historically, program evaluation has had only limited support within Arizona Extension. As a result, faculty with experience in evaluation and a willingness to help colleagues, frequently lend a hand in designing and, at times, implementing program evaluations for other projects. I have found myself in this position many times. Through this informal service, I have increased the capacity of my colleagues to perform more sophisticated evaluations. Ultimately this improves Arizona Extension's ability to tell its story and demonstrate impacts.

#### Summary

I hope from reading my candidate statement that you have a sense of the work I do within Extension and my belief in the mission of the land-grant institution. But more importantly, I hope you understand how the work I do is an extension of myself, my philosophy of life, and my personal convictions to be fully engaged in the communities I inhabit and to contribute in meaningful ways to the society at large.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. McDonald', written over a horizontal line.

Daniel McDonald, Ph.D.