

January 24, 2025

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Subject: Final Response to Byron Wilson's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)\*\*

This letter serves as the final response to the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) issued to Byron Wilson on December 8, 2023. Below is a comprehensive review of the initiatives and outcomes associated with the PIP, as well as a summary and recommendations for the path forward.

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## Faculty Development Support Plan

To improve Byron's teaching performance in areas such as respect for students, course organization, and effectively addressing varying student experience levels, the following activities were implemented:

### 1. Workshops

- *Assigned Activities:* Attend the "Student Engagement Strategies" workshop on January 19 and the "Having Difficult Conversations in the Classroom" workshop on January 26, both offered by the COFA Faculty Professional Development Program.
- *Outcome:* Byron completed the January 26 workshop but did not attend the January 19 workshop due to a medical appointment that could not be rescheduled.

### 2. Consultation with the Center for Teaching and Learning

- *Assigned Activities:* Schedule an individual consultation, including a peer observation of one of his classes, and submit a report to the department chair by May 1, 2024.
- *Outcome:* Successfully completed.

### 3. Mid-Semester Feedback

- *Assigned Activities:* Collect mid-semester feedback in Spring 2024 and Fall 2024, develop the survey in consultation with the Center for Teaching and Learning, and submit plans and results to the department chair.
- *Outcome:* Spring feedback was completed. Fall results are pending.

### 4. Peer Observation

- *Assigned Activities:* Participate in a peer observation process during Spring and Fall 2024 as arranged by the department chair.
- *Outcome:* Spring peer observation was completed with positive feedback from Jose Perez. Fall peer observation was completed with positive feedback from Tasheka Arceneaux Sutton. From the report: Professor Wilson fostered a positive, engaging, and comfortable learning

environment. At the start of class, he took time to check in with students, asking how they were doing and encouraging them to share their successes and challenges with printing their work. He also provided practical tips for troubleshooting printing issues in the future, demonstrating his commitment to supporting students both academically and technically. This approachable and supportive demeanor set a welcoming tone for the class.

## 5. CES Results Report

- *Assigned Activities:* Submit a written report to the department chair after receiving final CES results for Spring and Fall 2024, detailing how feedback from the activities was incorporated into teaching practices.
  - *Outcome:* Spring was submitted. Fall results are pending.
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## Additional Recommendations

It was recommended (though not required) that Byron include three custom CES questions (two from the "Contribution of Course Components to Learning" bank and one from the "Learning Environment and Engagement" bank) and share them with the department chair before survey distribution.

- *Outcome:* Byron selected 2 optional questions for course #21189 Spring CES, but not the second course in Spring 2024. He did not select any optional questions for Fall 2024 CES of his courses.
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## Outcomes for Measuring Improvement

### 1. CES Numerical Scores

- *Goal:* Achieve overall course and instructor ratings of 3.5 or higher.
- *Outcome:* Spring semester, mixed results.
  - *DES 294: Health Systems Design:* 3.3 (course) and 3.3 (instructor).
  - *DES 330T: Intro to Design in Health:* 5.0 (course) and 5.0 (instructor), though only one student completed the CES survey out of four enrolled.
- Fall semester, goal met.
  - *DES 326: Objects and Spaces:* 4.60 (course) and 4.67 (instructor)
  - *DES 330T / ITD 330T: Intro to Design in Health:* 4.25 (course) and 4.75 (instructor)
  - *DES 394 / MED 803ID: Anthropology and Design:* 3.80 (course) and 4.00 (instructor)
- Overall outcome: Goal met. Average CES across spring and fall of 2024 was 4.20 (course) and 4.35 (instructor).

### 2. Peer and Student Feedback

- *Goal:* Demonstrate improved classroom management, well-structured course assignments, clear lecture explanations, and ideally constructive feedback to which Byron Wilson responds and implements.
- *Outcome:*
  - Peer observation by Jose Perez provided positive feedback on classroom organization and clarity.
  - Student comments from Spring 2024 highlighted appreciation for the "simulation" assignment but recommended better course organization and more practical application of material.
  - Executive Committee feedback identified ongoing concerns with unclear course objectives and assignment instructions.
- Recurring feedback included:
  - No significant concerns about classroom management were expressed. Commentary was positive about establishing an effective learning environment, building rapport with students, and establishing an effective learning community.
  - Sometimes, and especially in graduate courses, course assignment goals or expectations are unclear. Other times course assignments are valued and praised. Relevant concerns expressed were usually focused on the organization of the course as a whole, not about individual assignments.
  - Most responses are positive about classroom discussion and critiques, however responses indicate a tendency for discussion to become philosophical and abstract, which occurred more often in graduate courses. Sometimes students responded negatively to that occurring.
  - Reviewers offered significant constructive feedback. Byron Wilson reflected on the feedback for Spring 2024 in a letter to the chair. No evidence of reflection for Fall 2024. No evidence of changes to courses resulting from CES or peer observation feedback.
  - Students did comment about the unclear structure of the course.
- Overall, this goal was met but still needs to work on the structure and organization of his classes.

### **3. Teaching Category Evaluation**

- *Goal:* Achieve a "Meets Expectations" rating during the annual review.
- *Outcome:* The Executive Committee rated Byron as "Meets Expectations" but reiterated concerns about clarity in course structure. I was surprised by the EC's rating. His CES scores were extremely low, the student comments indicated issues in the classroom and the EC noted that these were issues.

### **Timeliness of Submissions**

Several submissions were late, often requiring repeated reminders:

- Spring 2024 mid-semester feedback report (submitted September 5, 2024).
- Spring 2024 CES results report (submitted September 5, 2024).
- Faculty annual review materials (submitted December 4, 2024 after repeated reminders, following an extension request on October 22, 2024).

Reminder emails were sent on March 27, June 26, and August 23, 2024, as well as multiple times in Fall 2024.

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## **Summary**

Byron Wilson successfully completed the majority of the PIP requirements, demonstrating improvements in teaching performance. However, persistent challenges remain, including clarity in course organization and timely submission of required materials. While progress has been made, the improvements have not yet fully met the goals outlined in the PIP.

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## **Recommendations**

I recommend that Byron Wilson continue to focus on enhancing his teaching skills during the Spring 2025 semester without resuming administrative or research activity.

Sinceerely,



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