DEVELOPING SMART GOALS

For use with the Doctoral Student Yearly Reviews

Establishing clear goals is important, not only to meet academic milestones, but also to promote the broader success of students, departments, and the Institute. Unclear goals may result in confusion about how and when top priorities should be completed and how success will be measured. The SMART goal development framework can make the annual goalsetting and assessment process more productive for everyone involved. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

Developing SMART goals involves collaborative discussions between the academic advisor and student. Please consider the following guiding questions when developing SMART goals.

S – Specific: **Is the goal focused, clear, and unambiguous?**
Develop a specific goal by asking the following questions: What do I want to accomplish? How and why will I accomplish this goal? Who else needs to be involved? Which requirements and/or constraints should I consider?

M – Measureable: How might someone determine whether or not you achieved your goal?
Concrete criteria is needed for measuring progress toward the attainment of the goal. A measurable goal will ask: How much? How many? How will I know when the goal is accomplished?

A – Attainable: Is it possible for you to attain the goal?
Attainable goals require that you have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and resources to accomplish them.

R – Realistic: Does your goal represent an objective that you are willing and able to accomplish?
To be realistic, the goal must represent an objective toward which you are willing and able to work. Be sure that your goal aligns with the multiple priorities in your life.

T – Time-bound: Did you specify a deadline for the goal?
A time-bound goal will be grounded within a timeframe. What can you accomplish in the upcoming semester? What can you accomplish by the end of the upcoming academic year?

EXAMPLE SMART GOALS
Using the SMART goal development framework, the following goals are examples that were discussed in a Doctoral Student Yearly Review (DYSR) meeting between a doctoral student and her academic advisor. The doctoral student listed these goals on the DYSR form for the section, "SMART Goals for the coming year:"

By December 31, 2017, my goals are to
(1) Identify my dissertation committee and have it approved by OGE;
(2) Complete the Responsible Conduct of Research CITI training; and
(3) Distribute my candidacy proposal to my committee.

By April 30, 2018, my goals are to
(1) Complete and pass my candidacy examination; and
(2) Complete the first draft of a manuscript for publication.