

Teaching Excellence Plan

Introduction: The three-year Teaching Excellence Plan (TEP) is built on the assumption that teaching is always a work-in-progress, and that excellent teachers evolve as their students, disciplines, the context of teaching and learning, and they themselves change. Strong faculty are as intentional and organized about their teaching development as they are about their scholarly development. However, making time for reflecting and planning one’s teaching advancement is difficult. The TEP process supports that faculty work.

Often instructors discover new challenges when they join a new university. In this first year at Montclair, you are developing a sense of what your students need from you as an instructor. This plan allows you to move from general impressions to a plan with concrete details. As you progress through the next three years, your TEP will guide you through activities and outcomes that support teaching goals that are relevant to your students’ needs.

The packet assembled here is organized as a four-step process that will help you get to Step 4, a concise, doable, individualized three-year teaching development plan that includes a brief table that is reproduced below:

Step 4 Summary Table

Goal	Timeline	Activities	Resources	Product / Outcome

You may find it useful to include the final step, Step 4, as a supplement to the teaching section of your reappointment. We do not suggest including the first three steps, which are designed to help you write Step 4, the actual Teaching Excellence Plan. Finally, your TEP is meant to be a living document that you can reference in your teaching narrative, using it to ground your story of growth and development as a teacher, and adjust as your needs and opportunities change. You may even decide to keep with the model and extend it to a longer period of time.

Although the Provost and deans have reviewed and support the TEP, this is an optional activity, and it is not required as part of any personnel procedure.

What we suggest is that you give each step and question a try – if it doesn't have value for you, skip ahead.

Step 1: Self-Assessment

1. Strengths & Weaknesses

Broadly, as you think about this past year, what do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of your pedagogical practice as it has been applied in this new context, Montclair State University?

Strengths: What strategies or activities do you practice that lead to significant student learning, and what is the evidence – impressionistic, even – that makes you confident that significant learning has occurred?

Weaknesses: Where are you seeing students falter in their learning? What assignments, topics, skills, or competencies do you see many of your students unable to succeed in or develop?

2. First Thoughts on Development Plan

First thoughts or initial brainstorming can be illuminating. Take two minutes to write freely, speculatively, about what skills, pedagogies, or techniques you'd like to develop as a teacher.

Now be a little more disciplined, drawing on the strengths and weaknesses you have identified above:

Strengths: (It's always easier – and therefore beneficial – to do more of what we do well.) What skills, pedagogies, or techniques do you want to learn in order to capitalize on the strengths you have identified?

Weaknesses: What skills, pedagogies, or techniques do you want to learn in order to address the weaknesses you have identified?

Step 2: Aligning Your Plan with the Montclair Teaching Principles

Montclair's Teaching Principles were written by Montclair faculty for the faculty, making them worth considering in greater detail. For more understanding of these Principles, see the [Teaching Resources](#) page of the OFE website. As you consider your strengths and weaknesses for each principle detailed below, *strive* for objectivity, recalling student performance and responses, and considering commentary you may have received from observers. You need not address all these areas in your own personal plan, but reviewing these six areas will help you organize your thinking.

Clear Course Design:

- Course design strengths:
- Course design weaknesses:

Pedagogical Strategies that Support Learning:

- Pedagogical strengths:
- Pedagogical weaknesses:

Inclusivity and Diversity:

- Inclusivity and diversity strengths:
- Inclusivity and diversity weaknesses:

Universal Design for Learning:

- UDL strengths:
- UDL weaknesses:

Reflective Practice

- Reflective strengths:
- Reflective weaknesses:

Disciplinary Excellence:

- Disciplinary strengths:
- Disciplinary weaknesses:

Step 3: Drafting your Plan

Now that you have taken stock of your pedagogical strengths and weaknesses and how your teaching aligns with the six Montclair Teaching Principles, draft your plan of action to address areas to bolster or improve.

1. Identify and prioritize your preliminary goals

Write a list of 3-4 goals.

Review the list and make some notes:

- How would you pursue achievement of this goal (what activities would be required)?
- How would you seek to measure progress on this goal (outcomes)?
- How difficult/time consuming is this goal?

2. Trim and revise goals for feasibility

Review your preliminary goals through the lens of the actual time you can devote to development given your teaching, scholarship, and other activities, and make appropriate revisions to compose final goals from your brainstormed list. Consider starting with easier, less time-consuming goals and work your way up to more challenging ones. You might even drop the most challenging, difficult-to-measure ones for now.

3. For each goal you have listed, identify some potential specific activities and resources that can support your goals.

Sources for activities/resources:

- The content and resources found in the major teaching topics on the OFE Teaching Resources webpage – [Clear Course Design](#), [Pedagogical Strategies that Support Learning, Inclusivity and Diversity](#), and [Universal Design for Learning](#).
- The [Plan Your Teaching Development](#) section of the OFE website which provides resources on such pedagogical methods as **Flipped Learning, Team-Based Learning, Collaborative Learning, POGIL, Just-in-Time Teaching, Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT), or Wicked Assignments**.
- Your discipline's pedagogy resources
- Peers and colleagues about their best methods
- An OFE consultant – individual consultation based on your goals

4. Set a timeline for these activities. Include appropriate sequencing and timing, given your constraints. Include opportunities to revisit this plan to revise in response to your evolving goals and priorities.

Step 4: Complete the Plan – Summary Table with details
Three-Year Teaching Excellence Plan (TEP)

Summary Table

Goal	Timeline	Activities	Resources	Product / Outcome

* Individuals can identify as many goals as they would like; 5 is just a suggestion.

Goal Details

Goal 1:

Rationale:
Challenges:
Specific activities to achieve goal:
Desired outcome:

Goal 2:

Rationale:
Challenges:
Specific activities to achieve goal:
Desired outcome:

Goal 3:

Rationale:
Challenges:
Specific activities to achieve goal:
Desired outcome:

Goal 4:

Rationale:
Challenges:
Specific activities to achieve goal:
Desired outcome:

Goal 5:

Rationale:
Challenges:
Specific activities to achieve goal:
Desired outcome: