

**End of Year Meetings
Management Sciences Dept**

Instructions:

- Upload a response to your goals for the year in Activity Insight – deadline has been extended (was March 24)
 - Complete this document (on this paper or on a separate typed page).
 - Send it to me as a email attachment
 - Set up a time for your end of the year meeting
 - Verify the time for your meeting (30 minutes).
 - Attend your meeting via Zoom.
 - Timeline for completing these is loose.
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Your name: Sarah Easter

1. What was one thing you were pleased about this year in your work at ACU? What made that thing particularly positive in your mind?

There are two things that stick out in my mind as being particularly positive from a teaching standpoint:

- 1) Re-Structuring of Strategic Management: This past year, based upon student feedback including a focus group I held last spring with former students, I chose to make some significant changes to Strategic Management in an effort to stimulate increased learning and engagement in the course. For context, this is a difficult course in which to engage students effectively, especially because the class is made up of graduating seniors and it is a required capstone course that does not fall within the clear boundaries of their specific business disciplines. Specifically, I re-structured the class to focus on core strategic management concepts – discussed via mini lectures and in-class case discussions – in the first part of the semester, followed by an increased emphasis on career development as well as experiential individual and project application of strategic management concepts in the second part of the course. Based upon initial feedback from students last semester, the re-structuring of the course seems to have been positive and helped to keep them better engaged with the course material. I will continue to look for ways to make improvements.
- 2) Second Iteration of Social Enterprise Consulting Class: The second consulting class that Laura Phillips and I designed, which built upon last year's client trip and deliverables, has been progressing smoothly and we are very excited about the high-quality deliverables that the students are working on for our clients. I feel very fortunate that the trip was still able to occur given the unfolding global pandemic. I am also hopeful we will be able to offer future consulting-based classes as I truly believe experiential learning is an effective means for learning that should be increasingly fostered within COBA and the university as a whole.

2. What was one thing that you wish had gone differently this year? Why?

This year has been another frustrating and discouraging one as it relates to publications. I continue to aim to publish in very high journal publication outlets, particularly for my dissertation based work, which I understand is a steep, uphill battle. I have experienced a number of rejections for a third year in a row in terms of publication submissions, including a rejection from *Organization Studies* after two rounds of review. However, I am continuing to press forward. I am currently working on a second round Revise and Resubmit to *Human Relations* as well as a Reject and Resubmit to *Organization Science* (both are FT-50 journals). I am also adapting my publication outlet targets for the other research projects I am advancing (apart from my dissertation related work) to set my sights on solid, but more achievable journal outlets.

It was also very disappointing that COBA's first planned study abroad experience to Southern Africa was not able to proceed due to the very uncertain climate created by the unfolding pandemic. My hope is that we will be able to revisit offering this study abroad experience in the not-so-distant future once the current situation has been resolved.

3. What is one thing you plan to do next year to enhance or improve your interaction with students (this can be in any form or context including outside activities, changes to class processes, etc.).

This past year I made the difficult decision to step back from regularly inviting students into my home due to too many other commitments and the need to create margin in my life. However, I have truly missed these opportunities to connect with students outside of the classroom, as I believe this is primarily where deep relationships with students are formed and fostered. Next fall, I hope to resume inviting students into my home for dessert and games nights. I also plan to continue in my role as a faculty sponsor for Enactus, which is a great platform for mentoring the handful of students involved as leaders in this student organization.

4. We are in the middle of a new accreditation cycle with possibly higher research requirements. What is your plan for your intellectual activity? What topics, etc. do you anticipate possibly exploring?

I am still primarily working to successfully publish two manuscripts out of my dissertation work and then I would like to build on this research stream, with a particular emphasis on collaborative partnerships across different sectors in order to address today's substantial societal challenges such as poverty or homelessness. I am also working on a number of other research projects, two with Monty Lynn as a co-author. The full list of my current projects is highlighted below within my scholarship activities (within question 6). I would also like to continue to establish more research collaborations in-house such as providing qualitative method expertise to further tease apart and complement many of my colleagues' work that tends to be more quantitatively focused. In this regard, the hymn project with Monty Lynn, Ryan Jessup and Greg Straughn has been a fun mixed-method study where I was able to contribute in terms of guiding the qualitative methodology portion of this study. As well, I would like to work to develop a teaching-based article with Laura Phillips focused on creating international consulting classes for undergraduate students.

5. Please think about your plans for employment, when you are anticipating retirement or any other job change, as well as any interest you have in leadership or administrative positions and be ready to discuss these in our meeting.

N/A

6. What (and when) is your next step, if any, in tenure & promotion? If you are untenured and tenure-track, please attach additional pages discussing your year's work and results in teaching, scholarship, service, and collegiality. This should be limited to two pages in most cases.

I plan to work on my online portfolio this summer in preparation for obtaining valuable input from COBA colleagues this coming Fall 2020. I plan to apply for tenure & promotion in Fall 2021.

Teaching

- Business & Sustainability course approved as a regular business course offering (MGMT 322)
- Continued to make refinements to Strategic Management class: 1) restructured class in an effort to increase engagement and student learning; 2) added experiential consulting project in partnership with Griggs Center where each class competes as teams in addressing a client need in the local Abilene community, client chooses winning team
- Added a mid-term exam to MGMT 330 based upon previous student feedback
- Developed and co-teaching second round of Social Enterprise Consulting class with field experience to Costa Rica with Laura Phillips; built on successes and student deliverables of last year's class
- Prepared for COBA's first study abroad trip to Southern Africa; unfortunately, trip was postponed indefinitely due to the coronavirus situation – hopefully we will be able to reschedule this study abroad experience at a later date

Scholarship

Below is a list of the presentations/papers with which I am actively engaged:

2019-2020 Presentations

Easter, S., Ceulemans, K. & Lynn, M. Contending with Sisyphus: Pursing sustainable development in a business-as-usual world. Accepted to 2020 Academy of Management Meeting.

Easter, S., Ceulemans, K. & Lynn, M. Contending with Sisyphus: Pursing sustainable development in a business-as-usual world. Accepted to 2020 26th International Sustainable Development Research Society Conference.

Lynn, M., Easter, S., Jessup, R., & Straughn, G. Harmonizing work: Meaning and meaning making in Christian hymnody. Accepted to 2020 Academy of Management Meeting.

Lynn, M., Easter, S., Jessup, R., & Straughn, G. Work and faith harmonized: Views of labor in Christian hymns from 1500-2000. 2019 Christian Business Faculty Association.

Easter, S. & Phillips, L. Creating globally and socially engaged business students: The case of a social enterprise consulting course in a global context. Accepted to LEAP Conference (postponed until 2021)

Easter, S., Ceulemans, K. & Lynn, M. Contending with Sisyphus: Pursing sustainable development in a business-as-usual world. Accepted to Sustainability as a Solution to Global Business Conference at UTD (postponed until 2021)

Working Publications:

Easter, S., Murphy, M. & Brannen, M.Y. Navigating across institutional logics in a cross-sector partnership: Bridging in a coalition to end homelessness. *Second Round Revise and Resubmit to Human Relations* (June 2020)

Easter, S. & Brannen, M.Y. Negotiating meaning systems in cross sector partnerships to tackle grand challenges: The case of homelessness. *Reject and Resubmit to Organization Science* (April 2020)

Easter, S., Ceulemans, K., Kelly, D. Bridging research-practice tensions: An autoethnographic exploration of day-to-day scholarly work investigating sustainable development challenges. *Under Review at European Management Journal*

Easter, S., Ceulemans, K. & Lynn, M. Contending with Sisyphus: Pursing sustainable development in a business-as-usual world. *Preparing to Submit to Journal of Business Ethics* (June 2020)

Lynn, M., Easter, S., Jessup, R., & Straughn, G. Harmonizing work: Meaning and meaning making in Christian hymnody. *Preparing to Submit to Journal of Business Venturing* (May 2020)

Service

- Serve as a faculty advisor for ACU Enactus
- Co-chair of 2018-2019 COBA BBA Core Task Force
- Member of University Athletics Committee, Academics
- Member of COBA Faculty and Staff Professional Development Committee
- Facilitator for women's Sunday morning bible class on a rotational basis at Highland
- Editorial Board Member, *Journal of International Business Studies*, service commitment extended until 2022
- Ad Hoc reviewer for *Human Relations* and *Organization Studies*
- New faculty mentor for Ramonica Scott

Collegiality

- Presented hymn research project with ACU co-authors for COBA Research lunch, November 2019
- Presented hymn research project with ACU co-authors for Adams Center lunch, February 2020
- Invited colleagues from across campus to participate in 2020 Business & Sustainability course
- Working with Monty Lynn, Ryan Jessup and Greg Straughn on research collaboration
- Working with Laura Phillips on teaching collaboration
- Collaborated with Steph Brown and Tim Johnston for Strategic Management course – mini-mock interviews added in Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 for all graduating seniors
- Collaborating with Mindy Howard in the Griggs Center to offer in-class team client competition for students in Strategic Management course, both Fall 2019 and Spring 2020

7. What is one thing that I can do to help you thrive in your work?

I continue to try and effectively balance teaching and service expectations alongside research aspirations. I greatly appreciate your flexibility with my teaching schedule, particularly as it relates to the recent adjustment for me to teach International Business online this summer, in an effort to maximize my research productively year round versus certain times of the year. I would like to continue to discuss and explore innovative ways in regards to my teaching schedule in order to better accommodate research productivity.

8. Anything else we need to cover?

Thank you for all that you're doing!