# OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

# BUILDING YOUR VITA Using Parallel Construction to Strengthen Your Vita Document

# What is Parallel Construction(PC)?

Parallel Construction involves identifying *key themes* from your Extension body of work – specializations, major assignments - and then following and emphasizing these key themes throughout your vita in Teaching, Research, and Service. Each section of the vita hosts specific information. Using these themes, as opposed to repeating information several times, will allow the reader (A&P and P&T Committees) to clearly track your major impacts throughout your document. Information within the document should be related/linked, but should not be repeated. PC also provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate consistency and continued growth in your expertise.

# How do you identify and communicate your themes?

1. Think about what you do and translate them into themes:

What are three or four categories/themes/specializations in which you do most of your work? Examples could include: school enrichment, volunteerism, agronomic crops, Dining with Diabetes, food safety, economic development, livestock quality assurance, building community capacity, etc. Your Specializations will be useful in determining your themes.

2. Describe your themes clearly in your position description.

#### A. Introduction

- Biographical Narrative
  - Current overview of position, indicating percentages to describe major assignments, and clearly state area(s) of specialization.
  - Candidates should present and describe the programmatic themes that will be highlighted throughout their dossier (page 10, Faculty Guide for Promotion and Tenure 2016-2017 / page 12, A&P Educators Guide for Promotion 2016-2017)
  - Your position description is crucial because it sets the stage for the rest of your document and identifies and describes the themes that you will weave through the rest of your dossier.

#### B. Core Dossier

- TEACHING
  - 4. Extension and Continuing Education Instruction
    - This is where we locate the teaching tables that represent all programs taught in past five years or since date of last promotion (whichever is more recent).
      - o PC: Programs should be organized in categories that reflect your key themes. Do this by listing the theme in parenthesis immediately following the title of the teaching activity. (See example tables on page 14 of the Faculty Guide for Promotion and Tenure 2016-2017 / page 16 A&P Educators Guide for Promotion 2016-2017)

#### <u>5. Curriculum Development</u>

- Document curriculum and programs that have either been created or adapted by the
  professional to meet the needs of clientele and the impacts from that program/curriculum.
  These products may come from an individual effort or that of a team on which the
  professional served. If the result of a team effort, the professional should describe only their
  own efforts.
  - Explain programs or curriculum items developed/adapted and the role or responsibilities of the professional in the overall effort. Brief references may be made to funding received to establish the program or the recognition received as a result of the curriculum or program, but this is not the focus. The impacts described here should not be the same as those reported elsewhere.
  - Identifying themes and grouping curriculum entries underneath those themes will help with PC.
  - Please follow the suggested format and structure presented in the guidelines for promotion.



- 6. Brief Description of your approach to and goals in teaching, major accomplishments, plans for the future.
  - Here is where you can summarize the major impacts of your themes. Do not duplicate data from other sections.
- 8. Awards and Formal Recognition for Teaching
  - Describe awards and honors received for teaching.
    - o PC: If you have referenced an award in Curriculum Development, this is the appropriate location to provide a full description, tying it back to your theme.

## o **RESEARCH**

- 1. List Books, Articles, and Other Published Papers
  - List scholarly publications and presentations here. (A&P Not Required)
    - PC: Would expect to see that publications and presentations reflect work in theme areas.
- 2. List of Creative Works pertinent to your professional focus
  - List Extension publications and presentations here. Do not duplicate those listed in Books, Articles, and Other Published Papers.
    - PC: Would expect to see that publications and presentations reflect work in theme areas.
- 3.Brief Description of the Focus of Research, Scholarly or Creative Works, Major Accomplishments, and Plans for the Future
  - Describe focus area of specialization/themes, highlighting major creative scholarly works and future plans.
    - o PC: Highlight, please do not repeat. This allows for a summary to tie the elements together without simply restating previous information.

### 5. Research Funding

- List all funding received (in table format).
  - PC: Opportunity to provide detail of funding that was likely referenced within other sections of the document. Would expect to see funding tie in to work within specialization and central theme areas.

# o SERVICE

- 2. Offices held and Service to Professional Societies
  - Indicate all memberships and service to profession. These should be listed in chronological order, and likely by organization.
    - PC: Would expect to see service that reflects work and professional development related to specialization and central themes of the document.
- 6. Administrative Service
  - Opportunity to indicate all team/committee participation. These should be listed in chronological order, and likely by team / organization.
    - PC: Would expect to see service that reflects work and professional development related to specialization and central themes of the document.

These are examples. Not every theme will have something listed within each section of the document illustrated above.

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