

## **SAMPLE CANDIDATE STATEMENT**

I have developed a focused line of scientific inquiry that is important, innovative, and sustainable. My work contributes to the public health research literature and public health practice (and aligns with the mission of the College of Health and Human Services [CHHS]: to improve and promote community health). My research focus is to: 1. understand and promote sexual/reproductive health (SRH) among young people, and 2. study the impact of and employ innovative digital technologies for health promotion and behavior change (called digital health).

Since joining the faculty at SDSU, through nationally competitive/other grant programs, I have secured \$2,203,179 as a principal investigator (PI) or Co-PI and another \$1,001,999 as a co-investigator (Co-I) for research projects. I have been a contributor on 14 submitted grant proposals: 3 as PI that were funded, and 6 as PI (including to the National Institutes of Health; NIH) and another 5 as Co-I that are either pending or have not been funded. I have also contributed to multiple NIH applications, as a Co-I. These projects reflect my interests in SRH (SD-SA TCC) and digital health (SMART-GUIDE).

I have also been highly productive in disseminating my research in scholarly venues, publishing 24 papers (12 first-authored) in high-quality peer-reviewed journals. Including the published/“in press” manuscripts, I have published 4 papers/year in 6 years as an Assistant Professor. These papers have impact, as they have been cited 253 times, according to ISI Web of Knowledge (<http://bit.ly/2cH5HOv>). I have also written 4 book chapters and 7 editorials, book/media reviews, or abstracts in peer-reviewed journals. I have disseminated my research at international, national, and regional scientific meetings—65 oral, 25 poster, and 18 invited presentations.

I have stimulated collaboration between researchers and students. As an illustration of research collaboration with students, 74% of my published or “in press” manuscripts are co-authored jointly with students. And, since 2015, under my leadership, our school’s collaborative research team has conducted multiple activities designed to expand opportunities for undergraduate/graduate scholarship through innovative courses, experiences, and engagement, including hosting 2 journal club meetings, 3 research development sessions, and 2 lectures.

I enthusiastically serve on my division’s graduate faculty and have taught students at SDSU at the Masters and Undergraduate levels. I have demonstrated a high level of skill and competence as a classroom instructor for graduate classes, as evidenced by strong and improved teacher’s evaluation scores, and strong peer visitations/evaluations. In fact, my student evaluation scores were better than the school average in 4 of the 6 classes I have taught at SDSU. For the 2 other classes (PH 666, a course that I have taught twice), I improved from 3.99 (my first semester at SDSU) to 4.19 (the school average was 4.21). My classroom teaching competence is also embodied by my students presenting their class papers/projects at national professional conferences and publishing their findings in high impact, refereed journals.

I have demonstrated excellence in mentoring students, as evidenced by the number of students requesting my involvement on their committees: I am currently mentoring 5 MPH students by serving on their committees. As noted above, my work with the college research collaborative provides additional mentoring, scholarly seminars, and journal clubs for students at all levels. Moreover, my teaching extends to other institutions—my primer paper on structural equation modeling is used at other universities within the CSU system. Teaching and serving as a mentor for graduate and undergraduate students allows me, on a day-to-day basis, to make a special contribution in facilitating discovery and finding meaning.

My philosophy of teaching/mentoring is twofold: I believe teaching 1) is comprised of a dynamic and reciprocal relationship between me and my students, and 2) involves the development of the total person. First, in teaching, I believe my central role is to facilitate students' learning. However, I also believe my own learning is critical in the process. My mentors introduced me to the teachings of the late Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, who believed that education occurs within the context of a structured dialogue. Such a dialogue combines the iterative dynamics of listening, acting and reflecting, which allows for the continued growth of both educator and student. I feel I can be a consummate teacher when I can reflect on student feedback. Such feedback includes voluntary mid-semester (anonymous) evaluations, occasional student check-ins, and more formal class reflection activities that students complete and turn in individually. Second, I believe that my role in teaching and mentoring students is to facilitate the development of the total person. I facilitate the acquisition of public health and health promotion/behavioral science skills, such as critical thinking, evaluation, research, and quantitative analysis. In addition, I believe that I also model professionalism, practical reason, and being resourceful, among other critical areas of life. Regarding professionalism, I strive to foster in my students a sense of collaboration, teamwork, and mutual respect.

My service extends to the University, to the public health profession, and to the community. At the University-level, I currently serve on the University Senate, Student Health Advisory Board, and Sexual Violence Task Force, and have served as a Judge for the 2015 and 2016 Student Research Symposia. At the profession-level, since joining the faculty at SDSU, I have engaged in a number of service activities, including research service (e.g., Participant, Early Career Reviewer Program, NIH), journal review service, and professional organization-related service. At the community-level, I serve as Member for the San Diego Unified School District Sexuality Education Advisory Committee and Member of the National Advisory Board, Digital Education Initiative, and Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

My efforts in research, teaching, and service are linked. Working with students in-class and 1-on-1 allows me to express my passion for digital health. When students witness my excitement for these topics, they too want to get involved. It is at this point that I introduce students to the professional associations to which I belong (and provide service). I also connect students to community-based organizations doing this work “on the ground.” My research is community engaged and could not be possible without these CBOs.

I am continuously working to improve my teaching and striving for research excellence. My goals for the coming year are to continue my current research projects, submit two grant proposals, and continue disseminating my research so that it makes a difference in my community's health. One project's aims are to 1) Develop a social web analytic and surveillance hub (SWASH) dashboard prototype for HPV vaccines (combining social media and popular webpages); 2) Combine manual coding and machine learning methods to classify HPV vaccine-related messages with a multi-level communication scheme; and 3) Analyze collaborative engagement and collective activities of social media and web users. This project reflects both of my research foci, SRH and digital health, and comprises part of my 5-year plan.