SMART Goals

SMART goals can help students craft term goals that clearly articulate outcomes. This also helps faculty members accurately assess progress. SMART goals must have the following characteristics: they must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. SMART Goals must answer who, what, why, where, when, and which questions. Goals must be measurable and establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal. Students should write goals that you can map out a clear path to achieving. A SMART goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. Lastly, a SMART goal should be grounded within a time frame.

For example, consider this term goal: This term I will work on my dissertation proposal. It’s not specific or measurable. There isn’t enough information for the chair to determine if it is attainable or realistic, but it does state that the goal is to be accomplished this term.

Now consider this goal: By the end of this term, I will finish all revisions in Chapter 1 and complete at least 15 pages of Chapter 2. This goal is specific in what must be accomplished. It is measurable in that it states all revisions in Ch. 1 and 15 pgs. of Chapter 2 are to be completed. The chair can easily assess whether this is attainable and realistic for this student. Lastly, this goal is to be completed by the end of the term and so it is timely.

Using SMART goals each term will contribute to student progress on the capstone.