

SAMPLE PLAN

This is an example of a plan

SABBATICAL PLAN

September 22, 2011

1. Name:
Department:
Rank:
2. This is my first application for sabbatical leave. I was appointed to the faculty in August 2003 and have never previously had sabbatical leave.
3. I am requesting sabbatical leave for the Spring Term of the 2012/13 academic year.
4. My last comprehensive evaluation was completed in the Fall of 2009 in connection with my application for promotion. Copies of the pertinent letters are attached below.
5. Description of sabbatical project:
 - a. 25-50 word synopsis of the sabbatical project.
 - b. Projected activities and outcomes:

If granted sabbatical leave, I plan to use the leave to work toward completion of a draft of a book-length manuscript on the nature of free agency and free will. By the time Spring Term of 2013 begins, I should have drafts of three chapters of the book. During my leave, I would aim to complete an additional three chapters. I expect that two further chapters may be required to finish the manuscript. One article I wrote last summer may be suited to serve as one of these chapters. Thus, at the conclusion of my leave, I would hope to have roughly three-fourths of the manuscript in good enough shape to be ready for final revisions before submitting the manuscript to a publisher.

I also plan to convert the material from at least one of the chapters I would write during my leave into at least one journal article. Of course, the feasibility of this plan depends upon the form this material takes.

My work on this manuscript is the culmination of a research program that began with my doctoral dissertation (completed in 1988) and that has generated much of my subsequent published work. In the dissertation, I argued that free agents must possess certain critical abilities that are defined partly in relation to substantive normative standards. In order to be free as an agent, one has to be capable of reflecting on one's actions in light of an appreciation of applicable domains of value. That idea was then and still continues to be at odds with most philosophical accounts the character of the normative capabilities required for freedom has changed a great deal since 1988, and it has changed in ways that raise a host of questions about the moral and social relevance of free agency. Two recent books on free will (Susan Wolf, Freedom Within Reason, Oxford University Press, 1993; and Richard Double, The Non-Reality of Free Will, Oxford University Press, 1994) make a case for the normative content of freedom but fail to address those questions that interest me most at present.

Three issues, in particular, would be at the center of the work I would undertake during my leave. The first and most fundamental issue concerns the relation between two familiar accounts of our interest in free agency and free will. One account holds that we value freedom because it ensures a certain sort of autonomy. Our freedom as agents permit our actions to be genuinely up to us, wholly self-governed. Another account suggests that we value freedom because it seems to be a central necessary condition of moral responsibility; and most of the kinds of personal and social relationship that we care deeply about presuppose that participants in such relationships can be and often are morally responsible. Both of these accounts seem plausible, yet the relation between them is perplexing because these various grounds of interest in freedom seem to conflict practically. I hope to show that the second account, which focuses on moral responsibility, can explain what is correct and what is mistaken in the first account. By contrast, the first account, which focuses on a certain notion of self-governance, cannot adequately explain what is right in the second account. In the process of showing this, however, I think that some common assumptions about the connections between freedom, responsibility, and autonomy will be substantially revised.

A second issue that I plan to examine is the character of the values that, according to theories that require normative competence of free agents, free agents must be able to appreciate. As far as I am aware, all such theories have

assumed that the relevant values can be understood from a solipsistic perspective. They assume, that is, that persons' appreciation of the significance of values for their motives and actions can be understood entirely in terms of what goes on in their individual heads. This seems quite mistaken. It appears that the sort of normative understanding that free agents possess is best characterized partly in terms of the social practices and interpersonal relationships in which they participate. I hope to develop a social account of normative competence and to show that it can explain the moral importance of freedom far better than can the usual solipsistic accounts.

One implication of the idea that social factors partly determine the content of normative competence is likely to be that freedom is relational in the surprising way. This means that a given person may act freely in relation to one social standpoint on their conduct while not active freely in relation to another standpoint even though the very same piece of behavior is being considered. This possible result gives rise to the third issue I will examine, namely, how much and what sorts of value conflict are compatible with the conducive to free agency? In some instances, agents caught among conflicting normative standpoints enjoy enhanced freedom; in other cases, their freedom is inhibited. As well as trying to understand this phenomenon, I want to consider the implications of my account of normative competence for our conception of the unity of agency. Usually, the rational capabilities of persons are seen as explaining how unified agency is possible. However, the ideas I have about the social determination of rational capabilities suggest that the familiar sorts of unified agency are neither possible nor desirable.

c. Timetable for accomplishing outcomes:

As I have already indicated, I plan to have six chapters of the manuscript drafted by the beginning of the Fall Term 2013. I project that drafting whatever chapters remain and revising the complete manuscript will require another twelve to eighteen months.

d. Location of activities:

I would remain in Dayton for the sabbatical.

e. Other persons or organizations involved:

No other persons or organizations would be involved in my writing project.

f. Foreseeable contingencies:

There are no contingencies that I presently foresee interfering with the proposed project.

g. Sources and amount of financial support:

Aside from my regular salary, no further financial support will be necessary.