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Training for Accelerating The Functional Position of Lecturers through Goal-Setting Strategies

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Abstract

Higher academic ranks for lecturers impact their performance in the three pillars of higher education and contribute to the university's performance in various government programs. Unfortunately, in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, the number of lecturers holding the ranks of associate professor and full professor is minimal. This community service program aims to update participants' understanding and skills in goal-setting strategies to accelerate functional position. The program involved 17 lecturers. Two main areas of scientific and technological knowledge were transferred to the participants: (1) institutional policies for accelerating functional position and (2) goal-setting strategies for the functional position. Knowledge transfer was carried out using three methods: lectures and discussions, structured exercises, and presentations followed by reflection. The program was evaluated using seven open-ended questions, administered both before and after the training, and assessed using a four-level rubric. Pre-test and post-test data were analyzed descriptively and using the Wilcoxon signed-ranks test. The results showed that the training successfully improved participants' understanding and skills in applying goal-setting strategies for functional position (Z = -3.539; asymp. sig. = <0.001). Therefore, regular training and mentoring are necessary for accelerating individuals into functional positions.

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INTRODUCTION

The government has implemented several initiatives to promote lecturers' career development. However, many lecturers continue to face challenges that limit their progress in achieving higher functional positions. Here are some of the challenges that have been inventoried in scientific reports. Lecturers' errors in inputting and calculating credit points due to many assessment elements (Kusuma et al., 2016), low lecturer insight into the credit point assessment formula, excessive three pillars of higher education burden, and lack of socialization and training (Setyowati et al., 2018), changing standard rules in calculating journal grades (Muluk & Amelia, 2019), lecturers' difficulties in calculating their credit points and the disproportionate implementation of the lecturers' three pillars of higher education so that it accumulates in certain duties (Damayanti et al., 2021), and low administrative awareness of lecturers towards their activities (Setiawati,

2023). The series of accumulated lecturer obstacles mentioned above are both internal and external, so it is not surprising that the frequency of lecturers who are slow to improve their professional careers remains high, and, of course, directly impacts the performance of higher education.

The career development of lecturers at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education has not been maximized due to the limited number of lecturers holding functional positions, such as associate professor and professor. The details are: for the Biology Education Study Program, there is only one associate professor; for the Physical Education, Health, and Recreation Study Program, there are two associate professors; for the English Language Education Study Program, there are two professors; and for the Theology Education Study Program, there is not a single lecturer who functions as an associate professor or professor. Additionally, the functional length of lecturers currently exceeds four years; some have even exceeded 10 years. One of the reasons that hinders the career development of lecturers is that they have not been critical and strict in selecting the description of activities from the university's duties that are proportional in supporting their career development (increasing functional positions) as regulated in government regulations on the growth and development of the lecturer profession and career. Although the lecturer cumulatively meets the required credit points, if the distribution is not proportional, then the lecturer's hopes of increasing their functional position will fail, and the submission period will be extended.

The data above shows that lecturers need training to increase their insight into the importance of lecturer functional positions and highlight the potential duties and activities they can carry out to accelerate the promotion of functional positions. Several trainings that have been carried out to overcome the problem of accelerating lecturer functional positions include training on online credit point assessment applications and promotion of lecturer functional positions (Muslim & Candra, 2019), training on career planning and management starting from educational activities, research, and community service (Damayanti et al., 2021), as well as training and mentoring for the acceleration of functional positions (Syamsuddin et al., 2023). The results of this training can help lecturers recognize their understanding of priority duties so that they are selective in choosing duties to support their careers to contribute to institutional development (Setyowati et al., 2018) as well as motivate lecturers to make career and competency improvements through periodic academic functional position promotions (Suharso, 2014).

We now offer a variety of community service activities. The current community service focuses on transferring goal-setting strategy technology to facilitate lecturers in critically analyzing their potential activities to obtain credit points. In addition, through goal-setting, they also localize the three pillars of higher education activities that are obstacles when submitting functional applications (such as special requirements and other additional requirements). Goal-setting helps individuals to prioritize (Kennelly & Oke, 2024), manage themselves (Locke & Latham, 1991; Sulistiyana et al., 2024), focus, commit, mobilize efforts, and persevere towards planned conditions (Blegur, 2020) and act selectively according to indicators and assessment rubrics (Blegur et al., 2021). Thus, lecturers can create a priority scale for describing activities from the college's charities based on goal-setting strategies (outcome goals, performance goals, and process goals). It can prevent them from having problems managing functional positions, such as errors in calculating credit points or accumulating activities in specific charities.

Therefore, the purpose of this community service is not to organize and report on the charities that lecturers have implemented. However, rather than train lecturers to think and make more proactive goal decisions to select the charities that will be implemented,

so that they are more organized and on target according to the needs of fulfilling credit points at the next functional position level.

METHODS

The community service activity was carried out on June 13, 2024. It took place in the Alfa Building Hall, Universitas Kristen Artha Wacana, Adisucipto Street, No. 147, Oesapa Village, Kelapa Lima District, Kupang City, 85228, East Nusa Tenggara Province. Dra. Anggreini D. N. Rupidara, M.Si., Ph.D., is the Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education and opened the training program. Six participants served as Assistant Professor 300, two individuals served as Assistant Professor 200, and nine others served as lecturers.

The number of participating lecturers was 17 (M±SD age = 42.9±8.5) with the following demographic details. First, the Theology Education Study Program has three lecturers (two male and one female). Second, the English Language Education Study Program has six lecturers (male = 3 people; female = 3 people). Third, the Physical Education, Health, and Recreation Study Program has six lecturers (male = 4 people; female = 2 people). Fourth, the Biology Education Study Program has two lecturers (male = 1 person; female = 1 person).

The facilitator employed four transfer methods to ensure that the transferred goal-setting strategy technology had a lasting impact on participants. These methods include lectures and discussions on goal-setting strategies, preparation exercises for goal-setting strategies, participant presentations, reflections on the results of goal-setting strategy preparation, and evaluation of the community service program implementation. More detailed information about the four methods is provided in Table 1, elaborated as follows.

Table 1 Training material syllabus

Facilitator	Material	Material indicators
Dr. Jusuf Blegur, S.Pd., M.Pd.	1. Institution's policy for accelerating the functional position of lecturers	a. Challenges lecturers face in accelerating functional positions b. Institutional policies supporting the acceleration of lecturers' functional position c. The significance of research duties in accelerating lecturers' functional position
	2. Goal-setting strategies for accelerating the functional position of lecturers	a. Goal-setting and its significance in supporting the acceleration of lecturer functional positions b. Formulating outcome goals for the acceleration of functional positions c. Formulating performance goals for the acceleration of functional positions d. Formulating process goals for the acceleration of functional positions

First, lectures and discussions on the materials of the two training materials (see Table 1) were conducted. The first material is about "Institutional policies for the acceleration of lecturers' functional positions," which aims to outline the problems of lecturers in the acceleration of functional positions, initiate strategic university policies to support the acceleration of lecturers' functional positions, and end with a discussion and rationalization of the significance of research and development duties in the acceleration of lecturers' functional positions. Every technology that has been transferred and developed is based on a problem, so analyzing the problem carefully is crucial for formulating effective policies to eradicate the issue of accelerating functional positions while reorienting programs to research duties as an essential pillar in lecturer career development.

The second material is titled "Goal-setting strategy for accelerating functional positions of lecturers," which aims to enhance participants' analytical understanding of using a goal-setting strategy to accelerate functional positions. This goal-setting strategy was formatted in three processes: outcome goal, performance goal, and process goal. With good understanding and analysis, participants find it easier to develop a goal-setting strategy through the target of increasing functional positions in the fastest time, determining the criteria needed to meet the target and the time to achieve it, and maximizing various strategic resources both autonomously and based on work programs to ensure that the criteria set are following the initial plan.

Second, the exercise involves developing a goal-setting strategy to accelerate lecturers' functional positions. This second method serves as a form of confirmation and absolute actualization of participants' understanding and analysis of the strategy, as well as the rationalization of the goal-setting stages, to support their functional acceleration. Participants prepared a work program based on outcome goals, performance goals, and process goals. At the same time, the facilitator verified and discussed the participants' formulation at each stage. Third, presentations and reflections should focus on the follow-up to the results of the previous exercise, drawing on the experience of developing a goal-setting strategy. They presented their work results and reflected on the "advantages" and "constraints" they learned from the goal-setting strategy to support the acceleration of their functional positions. The rubric for assessing participants' answers/opinions is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Assessment rubric for participants' answers/opinions

Score	Description
4	The argument is valid due to its rationality and systematicity.
3	The argument is valid and rational but lacks systematicity.
2	The argument is valid but lacks rationality and systematicity.
1	The argument lacks validity, rationality, and systematicity.

Fourth, the evaluation of the implementation of the community service program using seven open-ended questions developed from the two training materials (see Table 1) given before and after the end of the training activity, which are then assessed using a four-level scale assessment rubric (see Table 2). The first three questions (items 1-3) refer to the evaluation activities of the first material, including "*What main issue hinders you from accelerating your functional position as a lecturer?*" The other four questions (items 4-7) refer to the second material, including "*Why do you think goal-setting strategies accelerate a lecturer's functional position?*"

The data or responses from participants, which had been quantified based on collections before and after the activity, were then descriptively analyzed by the team to profile the mean scores and standard deviations and test for differences using statistical analysis. Referring to the Shapiro-Wilk normality test results, one data group showed a significance value of less than 0.05, namely the pre-test group ($p = 0.015$), while the post-test data showed a value greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.104$). Therefore, the appropriate analysis technique used was the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The tabulation and analysis processes used Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 29.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are reported based on the flow of community service activities, which began with a lecture and a dialogic discussion between the facilitator and participants. This was followed by a practice session or trial in formulating goal-setting strategies, conducting presentations and discussions, and concluding with an evaluation and discussion of the service activities' outcomes.

Lecture and Discussion

Institutional policy for accelerating functional positions for lecturers

1. Challenges faced by lecturers in accelerating functional promotion

Accelerating the promotion of lecturers to higher functional positions is an effort to enhance the quality of teaching and research in higher education institutions. Despite its importance, many lecturers face various problems during this acceleration process. These problems can stem from internal and external factors that continuously influence lecturers' academic career progression as well as the overall performance of the university.

Below are some common problems that often hinder lecturers' advancement in their functional position. The first is that a high workload may not apply equally across all study programs within the university, as some programs may have lower academic mobility. Nevertheless, this phenomenon remains a relevant topic of discussion, as lecturers often face extremely high workloads not limited to teaching, research, community service, and other supporting activities (Wardi et al., 2022). This heavy workload often demands much of the lecturers' attention and energy, leading to emotional exhaustion (García-Arroyo & Osca Segovia, 2019) and burnout (Dewi et al., 2021), thus potentially hindering their focus on proportionate activities that support functional position, such as academic publication and professional development. Lecturers caught up in teaching routines or administrative tasks may struggle to find sufficient time to meet administrative and substantive requirements, resulting in delays in their position to higher functional positions.

The second is obstacles in scientific publication. Low credit scores prevent many employees and/or lecturers from being promoted to higher functional positions (Handayani et al., 2020). The most important requirement for accelerating functional positions is a scientific publication in accredited national or reputable international journals. However, lecturers often face difficulties producing scientific works that meet the established quality standards because they are not confident enough in their research and articles (Arsyad et al., 2019). Limited access to research resources, limited research funding, and a lack of experience writing quality scientific articles often hinder lecturers from offering their research results to journals. In addition, the lengthy publication process and intense competition in accredited national journals (Sinta 1-2) and reputable international journals (Scopus and WoS) can hinder lecturers in meeting their publication targets. For this reason, Hariyadi et al. (2022) suggest that lecturers need to improve their skills in writing scientific papers by taking writing training and other equivalent programs.

The third is disorderly administrative management. Time management is still an obstacle that needs to be overcome (Nifasri et al., 2024). It is related to administrative procedures that are not thorough, obedient, and systematic for each lecturer, becoming a serious problem for them when applying for the acceleration of functional positions. Although the government has issued applications such as *Sistem Informasi Kelembagaan, Mahasiswa, Dosen Online* (SIKOMODO) at the Higher Education Service Institution (LL Dikti) region XV, East Nusa Tenggara Province, or manually via Microsoft Excel, a good and clear understanding of the lecturers regarding the activity indicators in each duty is still needed so that they are no longer mistaken in interpreting activities, documentary evidence, and the value of each of these duties. For example, being a lecturer in student community service activities is part of the structure of educational duty because lecturers are involved in guiding student activities, not community service duty. In addition, lecturers must also be orderly in providing the necessary documentary evidence to verify

and justify their activities, so that later, when applying for functional positions, they will not be confused in looking for assignment documents and performance evidence.

Fourth, lecturers lack competitiveness in competitive grants. Most lecturers need to receive research funding support from universities and training in writing research proposals to support career development, such as the research performance of lecturers receiving external funds (Haryanto et al., 2023). Of course, not all universities provide adequate support for lecturers' career development, either in the form of training or access to research funds, due to various challenges (internal and/or external). The graduation of lecturers in national and international competitive grants is also worrying due to limited capacity (Nanuru & Utama, 2019) and poor research grant writing skills (Omoji et al., 2023). At the same time, producing quality research and publications requires many resources. Without sufficient support, lecturers find it challenging to enhance the quality of their scientific work or develop research that can support the advancement of functional positions.

Fifth, there is a lack of guidance and mentoring. Lecturers, especially those who are young or new, often lack mentors or guidance on how to plan a successful and efficient academic career path. Without clear direction and goal orientation, lecturers are confused about the steps they need to take to achieve higher functional positions, including scientific publications and research development. They must be guided through the progression from obtaining the functional position of lecturer (credit 150) to full professor (credit 1050), including all administrative and substantive requirements, and how to achieve them. Through clear career introductions, they are more selective in preparing themselves, choosing activities, prioritizing their resource investments, and encouraging them to be more active in seeking information regarding the requirements and procedures for appointing positions (Hariyadi et al., 2022). In addition, universities can also optimize grafting programs for associate professors and professors as part of intensive guidance for young lecturers to develop competencies that implicitly affect their career development.

2. Institutional policy in supporting the acceleration of functional positions for lecturers

The university policy is fundamental to ensuring that its lecturers are active, participatory, and strategic in enhancing their professional roles. This improvement greatly helps eligible universities with various needs to fulfill human resources for program development, such as the opening of Teacher Professional Education and Postgraduate Programs (master's/doctoral), and, of course, has an impact on updating university clusters (mentored-independent) and others. Some policies that universities can implement to support acceleration are as follows.

First, provide guidance and monitoring. Career training and guidance can be an effective approach to improving the career orientation and functional positions of lecturers by analyzing the institutional arrangements of academic careers, including studying the actual developments in the growth of lecturers' scientific knowledge (Benz et al., 2021). Currently, one of the requirements for proposing a functional position is that lecturers must be able to meet the needs that have been formed. It means fulfilling credit points is insufficient; the scientific formation of the lecturers' functional position must be available. For this reason, providing guidance and monitoring to lecturers, especially new or junior ones, is very important. Supervisors are experienced lecturers, namely associate professors and professors, through the regular lecturer grafting scheme. They are responsible for guiding, directing, and evaluating lecturers when planning their careers (in the scientific field) under the latest regulations. They are equipped with various best practices for supervising lecturers, enabling them to become navigators for young

lecturers who prioritize activities in education, research, community service, and support, thereby ensuring effective and efficient lecturer self-development.

Second, organize the lecturer administration system. Muluk and Amelia (2019) have noted that the lecturer's archiving system greatly helps them to accelerate functional management. A well-organized data storage system facilitates the recording and reporting of data. Data such as self-development training to improve competence, published articles, providing training/lectures, and playing an active role in scientific meetings and others must be recorded in detail. A good data management system allows lecturers to group activities and evidence while increasing the efficiency of tracking time. In addition, it ensures that every achievement is recorded and easily accessible when needed for submitting a functional promotion. All documents and evidence of assignments and performance that they have organized in their folders based on duties and activities are sorted by year, month, and date to make it easier for them to track (see Figure 1).

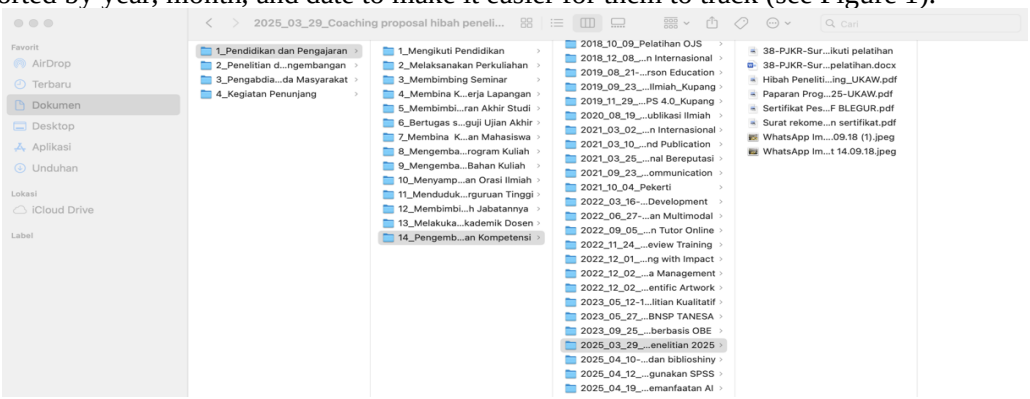

Figure 1 Example of display of education and teaching duty folder management

Third, updating and synchronizing data to Google Drive, Sister, SIKOMODO, and Sinta. After creating a systematic data storage folder, lecturers must also synchronize it with the available applications to facilitate online data collection and verification. Evidence of assignments and proof of performance are merged into a single PDF file and saved to Google Drive. Copyright data, books, and journal publication synchronization are updated in the Sinta account. The latest duties data is input and uploaded to the Sister account. Management and synchronization of data are also necessary in the SIKOMODO account, making it easier for lecturers to identify the value of certain duties they need to fulfill to accelerate the function (see Figure 2). The synchronization of higher education faculty service data facilitates lecturers in diagnosing credit score deficiencies and simultaneously reorienting their primary activities to meet both administrative and substantive (specific) requirements, thereby accelerating their careers.

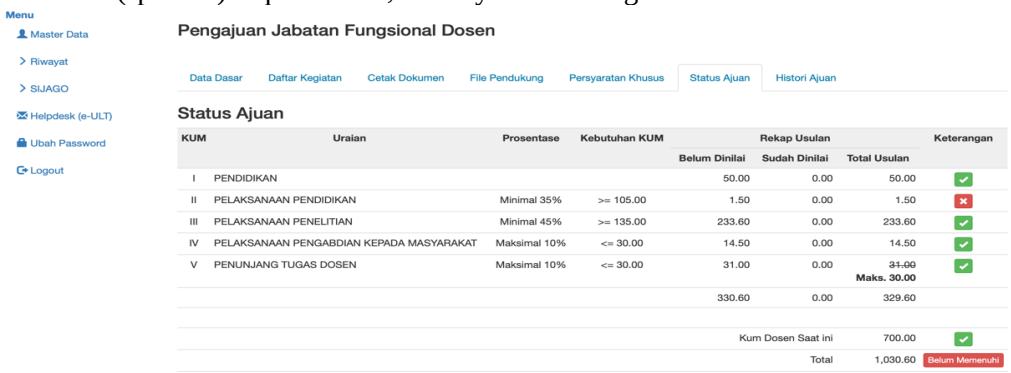

Figure 2 Example of the SIKOMODO application display

Fourth, strengthen the facilitation and culture of research and community service. Universities must provide funding support by offering research grants, publication incentives, and opportunities for participation in scientific conferences to enhance the capacity of lecturers (Hariyadi et al., 2022; Muluk & Amelia, 2019). This support accelerates the publication process and self-development of lecturers in their scientific fields, considering that publication is the biggest obstacle for lecturers in advancing their careers. In addition to meeting the cumulative and proportional credit points, lecturers must also meet the special requirements of accredited national journals for Assistant Lecturer to Associate Professor. These requirements include publication in reputable international journals (for a master's degree) and national journals accredited by Sinta 1-2 (for a doctoral degree). This means that writing, research, and publication training must become a periodic learning culture to foster lecturers' critical thinking, rather than waiting for momentum (Blegur & Tlonaen, 2022). Being active in increasing scientific publications can enhance the ability to conduct research, write scientific articles, and collaborate with fellow researchers from other institutions (Nurhalizah et al., 2023), which directly facilitates lecturers in meeting the publication requirements for advancing to functional positions.

Fifth, awards for outstanding lecturers. Universities also need to develop award policies that motivate lecturers to excel in teaching, research, and community service. For example, universities give awards to lecturers who successfully pass external grants (Haryanto et al., 2023). The promotion of lecturers' academic positions is a key parameter of lecturer performance, which is why universities need to provide awards to enhance their lecturers' performance (Setiawati, 2023). Lecturers who have succeeded in accelerating their functional position with significant results with a "minimal" diploma and a short time (for example, from Assistant Professor 300 to Associate Professor 700 with a master's degree within five years from the last term of office). Alternatively, lecturers who have succeeded in completing their doctoral program within ±two years, and so on. Although this is for personal interests, the university also has an impact, and this policy is part of the university's promotion and culture of management based on quality, not on ethnicity, religion, race, or intergroup relations. The award for lecturers with extraordinary performance can take the form of financial incentives, certificates of appreciation, or even accelerated promotions.

3. The significance of the duty of research in the acceleration of lecturers' functional position

Actively increasing scientific publications reflects a lecturer's focus on developing competencies in academic writing, research, and publication areas that align with their level of expertise or the specific requirements of their functional position. Increased publication output also enhances a lecturer's academic reputation and supports the building and strengthening of long-term career commitment (Nurhalizah et al., 2023). The following elaborates several reasons why the duty of research is essential in accelerating the functional position of lecturers.

The first is improving the quality of teaching. Research is a part of a lecturer's duty that focuses on advancing knowledge. By conducting research, lecturers contribute to scientific development and enrich the reference sources used in academic activities or student learning. Lecturers actively involved in research tend to teach more up-to-date and relevant material as they stay current with developments in their field. It also helps cultivate analytical, critical, and creative thinking in students through the learning process. For example, by using case studies or real-world examples in lectures, students can learn how to solve real-life problems using specific empirical frameworks. Lecturers

may also involve students in research or project-based learning, which sharpens their research abilities, critical thinking skills, and academic writing proficiency. Thus, lecturers' research and publication duties are significant not only in improving the quality of teaching but also in shaping a productive academic ecosystem and fostering higher-order thinking in students.

The second is improving the quality of community service. The satisfaction of a researcher lies in seeing their ideas and works, such as models and/or prototypes, used by society. Therefore, the results of a lecturer's research and publications must also be expanded regarding their benefits to the community. Some researchers may succeed in innovating a particular model and/or prototype, and these results should be made accessible to specific groups within society. Scientific publications play a crucial role in disseminating the practical outcomes of research to the broader public, whether through journals, seminars, popular media, or even community groups. It enables the ideas and innovations produced by lecturers to be adopted or replicated by others in the context of social service and community development. In other words, community service activities enable lecturers to disseminate and promote the outcomes of their innovations, allowing society to collectively and collaboratively address its problems. They not only transfer knowledge but also encourage the community to become involved in initiatives that are active, participatory, and focused on addressing their challenges using a more scientific and structured approach.

The third is fulfilling the requirements for promoting a lecturer's functional position. It is recorded that scientific publications are a primary indicator used to assess whether a lecturer is eligible for promotion in the system of a lecturer's functional position. It is because, as the lecturer's functional position advances, the responsibility to disseminate knowledge and technology to both academic and non-academic communities becomes increasingly demanding, complex, and prestigious. To guarantee this, lecturers must promote ways of thinking, working, and behaving that adhere to academic integrity and standards. The outcome of the duty of research is the production of scientific articles, whether in nationally accredited journals, international journals, or high-reputation international publications. These are key factors in accelerating functional promotion. A lecturer who is productive in conducting research and publishing their results will meet the requirements for promotion more quickly. A simple example is that to become an associate professor, a lecturer must have publications in Sinta 1 or Sinta 2 (for doctoral education) or Scopus (for master's education). To become a professor, they must have publications in high-reputation Scopus/Web of Science (Q1-Q2) journals.

Moreover, lecturers are required to have four years of experience in research and publication activities to fulfill these additional requirements. At a minimum, they must meet one of these four conditional activities. First, supervising or examining doctoral program students. For lecturers at universities offering doctoral programs, meeting the requirement to become a supervisor and/or examiner for doctoral students may not be too complicated. However, for lecturers from "smaller" institutions, meeting this requirement can be quite challenging. Lecturers must convince the program organizers or candidates that they are qualified to serve as a supervisor and/or examiner, which is evidenced by a publication record in the relevant field. Similarly, if a lecturer chooses to be an expert reviewer for two different reputable international journals, a track record of publications in highly reputable international journals once again becomes the primary requirement to ensure the lecturer's qualification. It is absurd for a lecturer to want to review articles for publication in a reputable international journal if they have little experience or have not published documents in reputable international journals.

Another option for additional requirements is receiving a competitive grant as a team leader with a minimum fund of 100 million rupiah. Once again, to convince the funders that the lecturer is worthy of a competitive grant, they must have a publication track record in the relevant academic field and research topic. It is reflected in three evaluation criteria, with a total weight of 15% in the assessment: publications, intellectual property, books authored by the lead proposer cited in the research proposal (5% weight), the relevance of the proposer's expertise to the research proposal topic (keywords) (5% weight), and the number of collaborators in publications in reputable international journals (5% weight) (Puspitasari et al., 2024). Thus, as long as a lecturer does not have a research track record in these three evaluation criteria (apart from other evaluation criteria), it becomes increasingly complex for them to succeed in competitive grants (Blegur et al., 2025). Considering tens of thousands of lecturers submit proposals for these national competitive grants each year, in 2025 alone, 50,595 proposals were submitted (across eight schemes) for the national research grant. This is why the duty of research is so crucial in advancing the professional status of lecturers.

Goal-setting strategies for accelerating the functional position of lecturers

1. Goal-setting and its significance in supporting the acceleration of the lecturer's functional position

Effective goals are a core feature of goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002), where an individual's actions must be deliberately directed through well-established planning (Locke & Latham, 1991). Thus, it is not an exaggeration to conclude that goal-setting is also a robust process that makes individuals think about the future (Manning, 2020), as what is to be achieved in the future becomes the foundation for someone to develop their current framework, along with the parameters and strategies to meet those parameters. Even more remarkable is that this concern and commitment to the future motivate a strong desire for autonomous learning.

In the context of this duty, lecturers begin to set specific and high goals that guide them toward tasks of higher performance than easy or abstract and vague goals. It drives them to maintain high discipline, be energetic in their efforts, and commit to achieving their goals. To reach these goals, lecturers set smaller, interrelated, and continuous goals, allowing them to view challenges as problem-solving arenas. Since goals refer to valuable outcomes in the future, goal-setting, first and foremost, is a process that creates a difference by filling the gap in the lecturer's current condition. It is possible that a lecturer is not satisfied with their current functional position and wants to achieve a different outcome or result (an increase in functional position) in the future (Alessandri et al., 2020; Locke & Latham, 2006). It means that those future goals stimulate lecturers to plan strategic actions to make them more realistic and achievable.

What happens if someone sails without a destination? They spend many resources, but achieving their goal is not proportional to the resources spent. Similarly, lecturers must know where their "port" is when enrolling at a university. Through well-established and organized goal-setting, individuals complete their tasks and/or responsibilities on time, selectively use information, and act according to performance evaluation indicators. They are committed to each task, use feedback to improve performance, and even autonomously develop learning strategies (Blegur et al., 2021). In accelerating a lecturer's functional progression, setting clear goals, such as becoming a professor within 10 years of service (with the note that this is realistic according to current regulations), is essential. Two years from lecturer to assistant professor, four years from assistant professor to associate professor, and four years from associate professor to professor. Referring to that goal, lecturers review the criteria or performance required to meet each

level's administrative and specific requirements and develop strategies to meet the criteria at each functional position.

2. Formulating the outcome goal for a lecturer's functional position

Outcome goals are the ultimate objectives one aims to achieve within a specific period (Blegur, 2020). This period can apply to the short-term, medium-term, or long-term. What is most important is determining what outcome is to be achieved and when or how long it will take to accomplish it. The established period will become a "boundary" for lecturers when planning their work agendas, ensuring that these are not only outstanding in their weighting but also realistic to achieve from the various activities in each duty of higher education. An illustration of the strategy for accelerating the functional position of lecturers is shown in Figure 3.

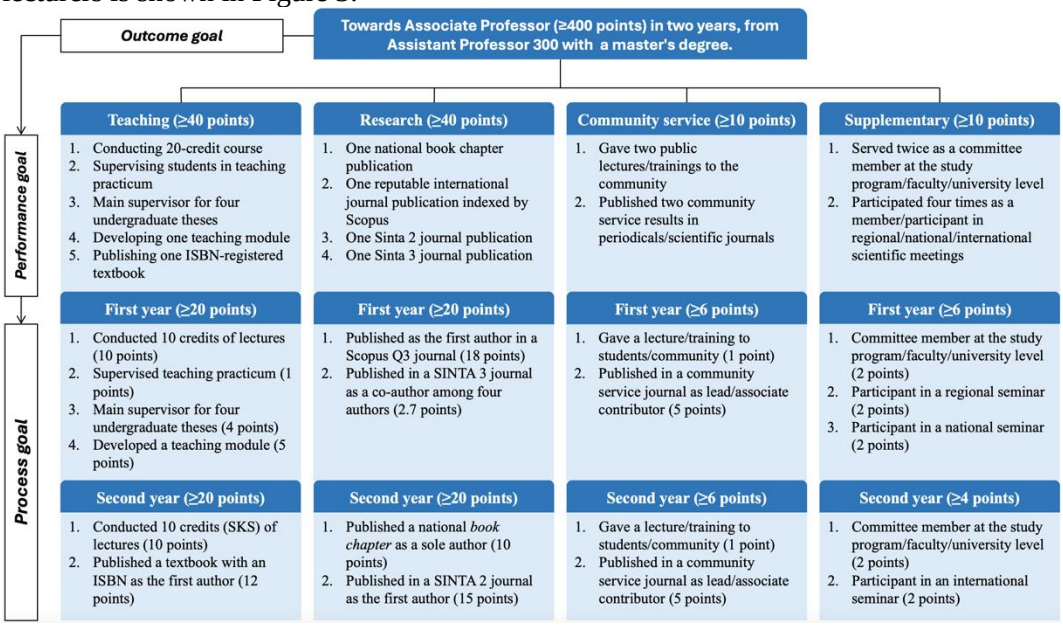

Figure 3 Illustration of the strategy for accelerating the functional position of the lecturer

For example, a lecturer sets a short-term outcome goal to reach Associate Professor 400 within two years from Assistant Professor 300 using a master's degree (see Figure 3, outcome goal). First, the lecturer must analyze the content of the regulations on credit score assessment and track the various specific requirements for promotion to Assoc. Professor 400 uses a master's degree, which includes particular criteria such as publication in reputable international journals indexed in Scopus with a Scimago Journal Rank >0.10 or Journal Impact Factor >0.05 (accompanied by Turnitin checks and correspondence evidence). Additionally, the lecturer must also track the required scores needed to meet that outcome goal. The required score of 100 must be proportionate to the duties of education and research, each contributing 40 credit points, and the duties of community service and supporting activities, each contributing 20 credit points. After successfully identifying the cumulative duties and specific requirements, the lecturer can begin selecting activities from each duty that can be carried out most potentially within the set time requirements (two years from the last counted service period).

3. Formulating performance goals for a lecturer's functional position

After setting the outcome goal, lecturers need to establish performance goals. These goals focus on the performance standards required at each stage to achieve the outcome goal

(Blegur, 2020). This means the performance or quantity of work (the number and quality of activities and credit points) required to verify that the established objectives can be achieved.

Continuing with the example above, in this stage, the lecturer decides which activities are most feasible for them to accomplish within the two-year work period to meet the 40 credit points for the duty of education. Referring to the example in Figure 3 (see performance goal), the lecturer sets five activity descriptions under the duty of teaching, namely: (1) teaching 20 credits, (2) supervising teaching practicum students (1 point), (3) supervising four undergraduate theses, (4) preparing one teaching module, and (5) publishing one teaching book with an ISBN. These five activities are spread over a two-year period. Second, for the duty of research with the required 40 credit points, the lecturer sets or decides on one activity description (specifically for producing scholarly works in their field) from 13 activity descriptions, namely: (1) one national book chapter publication, (2) one publication in a reputable international journal (using a reputable international journal because the lecturer is applying with a master's degree for the specific requirement), and (3) one publication in a Sinta 2 journal and one publication in a Sinta 3 national journal.

Third, for the duty of community service with a requirement of 10 credit points, the lecturer sets two out of seven activity descriptions, namely: (1) conducting training, counselling, workshops, or lectures for the community on a scheduled/programmed basis, and (2) publishing two outcomes of community service activities in a periodical/journal dedicated to community service or appropriate technology, which serves as the dissemination of the results of the community service program. Therefore, the lecturer also sets two out of ten activity descriptions for the supporting duty to fulfill 10 credit points: (1) being a member of a committee or body at the university, and (2) actively participating in scientific meetings. Once again, it is emphasized that because this community service focuses on strategies for accelerating the functional position, the lecturer must be very selective in choosing activity descriptions that are oriented towards weighting and realistic to achieve. If not, the lecturer may successfully carry out the activities, but the proportion of credit points may not be reached, causing the two-year submission target to be delayed to three or even more years.

4. Formulating a process goal for the lecturer's functional position

While performance goals focus on performance criteria, process goals concern the strategies used to achieve the established performance standards at each stage, continuously assisting the individual in achieving their outcome goal (Blegur, 2020). To facilitate the description of process goals for accelerating a lecturer's functional position to Associate Professor 400, the process goals are elaborated within two years based on the university duties as shown in Figure 3 (see process goal).

The key to achieving this goal is the process itself. It describes the strategic efforts that the lecturer must initiate and follow through while improving the limitations of each strategy they find, maximizing feedback from their performance (internal factors). Activities such as conducting lectures, supervising teaching practicums, and guiding student theses do not need to be discussed in depth as they are "routine." In these two years, the lecturer must be able to fulfill approximately 20 credit points each year. Two activities require the lecturer's strategy: preparing teaching modules and publishing a textbook with an ISBN. First, the lecturer must formulate material developed from their semester lesson plan. This material should be divided into chapters, with a minimum of six chapters for a textbook. Each chapter should include learning objectives, evaluation, and the main topic. The lecturer should prepare lesson plans for at least two courses with

two different activities. In the first year, the lecturer should prepare a teaching module for one course and a textbook with an ISBN in the second year.

Certainly, to produce these two learning materials, the lecturer also needs to equip themselves with various knowledge through seminars and training (which can be claimed under other university duties), reading books and journals on how to compile textbooks, and possibly collaborating with colleagues who have experience in writing textbooks. At this critical phase, it's time for the lecturer to make decisions about their process—whether they are motivated to enhance and add content, improve their writing skills, and refine their textbook, or whether they will ignore it. With the available time within these two academic years, ideally, the lecturer can produce two teaching materials if they are committed to meeting the set criteria. Once the materials are ready, the lecturer needs to select a publisher for the publication, preferably a member of the Indonesian Publishers Association, which has an ISBN. This step helps the lecturer to manage their time more effectively, choose the high-value of the three pillars of higher education, and stay motivated to improve their competencies. Additionally, when these goals are broken down into smaller sub-goals, the achievement process feels more measurable and can be periodically evaluated.

The situation in the research duty is quite similar regarding process goals. Figure 3 (see process goal) shows that in the first year, the lecturer sets a process goal for publication as the primary author in a reputable Scopus-indexed international journal and as a contributing author in a nationally accredited Sinta 3 journal. Publishing as the primary author is a mandatory requirement, as this will be used as a specific condition when submitting for a functional position. Therefore, the lecturer must strategically plan their process goal by diagnosing potential reputable international journals for publishing articles, downloading article templates, determining research problems or topics, learning strategies for writing articles through research or community service journals, attending seminars and workshops on article writing, collaborating with experienced lecturers in research grants or article writing, and engaging in other activities that demonstrate the intensity and repetition of the lecturer's efforts in improving their competencies to publish both articles in the first year successfully. The process goal achieved and completed in the first year can also be tested again in the second year, allowing for the publication of a national book chapter independently and in a nationally accredited Sinta 2 journal as the first author.

In community service duty, for example, the lecturer must succeed in becoming a resource person/facilitator in at least two community service programs within two academic years. It begins with the transfer of science and technology by submitting proposals to specific community groups, including teachers, students, internal or external organizations, and other bodies. The science and technology may come from the lecturer's research/team results, or others if it helps address the partner's problems. The lecturer can collaborate and share tasks and responsibilities according to their expertise to ease the workload. The lecturer can submit proposals through various community service grant schemes from the university, government, or other organizations. Sometimes, the lecturer may need to provide their own funding (self-funding) to ensure the activity's success. The most important thing is to prepare the material and evaluation instruments for the community service program so the results can be converted into a publication article in a scientific journal. This process must become a system, so after diagnosing the partner's problem, the lecturer begins working on the material in an article template for community service. Thus, after the training ends, the lecturer can immediately draft the article, submit it, revise it, and publish it online.

An example of a supporting duty activity description includes being a member of a university-level committee and participating in scientific meetings. Over the course of two years, the lecturer devises various strategies to establish trust as a member of a university committee. One committee per year is realistic, considering other lecturers have the same opportunity to be entrusted with committee roles. Suppose the lecturer has not yet had the chance to be involved in a committee. In that case, they and several colleagues can initiate self-funded community service activities that support the development of students or fellow lecturers, which the faculty/university leadership can legitimize through a decree. Another activity description is participating in regional, national, or international seminars. Technological advancements make such activities easily accessible, allowing lecturers to attend them from anywhere and at any time. Therefore, lecturers have no valid excuse for not participating in at least three scientific seminars in the last two years. It is essential to note that the acceleration of a lecturer's functional position is a key investment agenda for the lecturer. Suppose funding for participation is not yet included in the work program budget structure. In that case, lecturers should immediately initiate self-funding (through certification allowances, as it is intended to develop the lecturer's competencies) or other relevant funding sources (if not yet certified). The facilitator delivers and discusses the material shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4 The facilitator presented and discussed the material

Exercise: Developing a Goal-Setting Strategy

This activity aims to assist lecturers in designing goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound, evaluable, and documented. These goals should be based on outcome goals, performance goals, and process goals, ensuring that the goal-setting strategy developed by the lecturers or participants is coherent with their commitment to the process of accelerating functional position promotion, whether from lecturer to assistant professor, from assistant professor to associate professor, and beyond. During the exercise, participants are encouraged to analyze their current academic achievements, critically evaluate their strengths and areas for improvement, and identify target activities related to the four core duties of higher education. These activities should be easily accessible while having a high credit point weight, making the reason for meeting the functional promotion agenda more logical and achievable.

Material for the seminar/lecture and discussion phase: in the seminar/lecture and discussion phase, the facilitator demonstrated an example of accelerating functional position from Assistant Professor 300 to Associate Professor 400. However, during the practice session, participants are encouraged to adjust the strategy to meet their needs. The exercise includes simulations for short-term and long-term planning, creating a

timeline of activities, and aligning them with relevant government regulations related to the functional position, specifically the operational guidelines for credit score assessments. Through this strategy, lecturers are expected to be more focused, directed, and committed to quickly achieving the credit points needed (two years from the last recorded duty period). Furthermore, this strategy encourages lecturers to be more organized and meticulous in managing data, proactive in collaborating with colleagues across disciplines and institutions, improving the quality of scientific publications in accredited national journals (Sinta 1/Sinta 2) and internationally reputable journals (Scopus/WoS), and optimizing free time by engaging in self-development activities to address any competency issues that may hinder the acceleration of functional position. With a structured goal-setting strategy, career advancement can be carried out more effectively, efficiently, and sustainably.

Presentation and Reflection on Goal-Setting Strategy Formulation

In the presentation session, participants systematically expose the results of their goal-setting practice, including short-term and long-term goals, indicators of success, activity timelines, and strategies to achieve credit points in university duties. This presentation trains participants' oral presentation skills and provides an opportunity for them to receive constructive feedback from the facilitator and/or fellow participants. Once again, during this moment, the validation of participants' presentations focuses on the content of the activity descriptions from each duty that they can achieve to the maximum. Particularly in the duties of education and teaching, as well as research and development, because each requires a high proportion of credit points that must be fulfilled within two years. These two duties account for 80% of the credit points required for the functional progression from Assistant Professor 200 to Assistant Professor 300 or from Assistant Professor 300 to Associate Professor 400. Therefore, if participants fail to formulate effective strategies and demonstrate low commitment, the acceleration strategy will miss its target.

Following the presentation, a reflection session was conducted to evaluate the planning process and identify strengths, challenges, and potential adjustments to the current goal-setting strategy. The reflection helps lecturers critically review how well their plans align with the regulations for the functional position, whether the activity descriptions for each duty are realistic to achieve, whether their resource capacity supports the realization of their plans, and what opportunities are available to accelerate the functional position. Several cases have warned that resource issues significantly influence the choice of duty activities that lecturers decide to pursue for acceleration. Therefore, strengthen commitment and consistency, and always create a collaborative and supportive work environment and culture with various colleagues, both internal and external, to facilitate the acceleration of resource strengthening in meeting the challenges of the activity descriptions aimed at accelerating the functional position (two years from the date of the last official assignment). Thus, the presentation and reflection not only serve as a means of validating strategies but also become a moment for boosting motivation and collective learning that strengthens lecturers' readiness to accelerate their academic career development.

Evaluation of the Community Service Program

Overall, the descriptive analysis results indicate a five-point increase, where the total pre-test data showed M±SD = 15.8±1.9, and it increased to M±SD = 20.2±1.9. This result was also confirmed by statistical testing, where the Z value = -3.539 with an asymptotic significance of <0.001 (<0.05), thus concluding that the training program using the goal-

setting strategy has been proven to enhance participants' understanding and skills in designing strategies for accelerating functional positions through outcome goals, performance goals, and process goals. Table 3 shows pre-test and post-test data, descriptively and statistically, using non-parametric methods (Wilcoxon signed-rank test).

Table 3 Evaluation of the community service program

No	Questions	Description (M±SD)		Wilcoxon test	
		Pre-test	Post-test	Z	Asym. sig.
1	What main issue hinders you from accelerating your functional position as a lecturer?	2.2±0.4	2.8±0.6	-3.000[a]	0.003
2	Why do you think institutional policies are essential in accelerating a lecturer's functional position?	2.2±1.1	3.1±0.7	-3.071[a]	0.002
3	Why do you think the duty of research is essential in supporting the acceleration of a lecturer's functional position?	2.4±0.6	2.8±0.6	-2.333[a]	0.020
4	Why do you think goal-setting strategies accelerate a lecturer's functional position?	2.7±0.5	3.2±0.6	-2.530[a]	0.011
5	How do you formulate outcome goals to support the acceleration of a lecturer's functional position?	2.2±0.4	2.8±0.6	-3.000[a]	0.003
6	How do you strategize in formulating performance goals to support the acceleration of a lecturer's functional position?	1.7±0.5	2.6±0.6	-3.017[a]	0.003
7	How do you formulate process goals to support the acceleration of a lecturer's functional position?	2.3±0.6	3.1±0.6	-2.919[a]	0.004
8	Total	15.8±1.9	20.2±3.1	-3.539[a]	<0.001

a. Based on negative ranks.

When we highlight the items in Table 3, the sixth question has the lowest pre-test (M ± SD = 1.7 ± 0.5) and post-test (M ± SD = 2.6 ± 0.6) values compared to the other questions. This condition is caused by the participants' literacy regarding the regulations on credit score assessment, which has not yet been optimized, hindering them in identifying the potential performances they need to meet the specific requirements for applying for a functional position. In fact, mastery of these regulations is crucial in helping participants select activity descriptions from each duty when aiming to accelerate a functional position. For instance, for the specific requirement to become an associate professor with a master's or doctoral degree, the required output of publications differs. Similarly, when applying for a professor position, in addition to the specific requirements, lecturers also need to meet additional requirements, such as experience in supervising or examining doctoral students, serving as a reviewer for reputable international journals, and/or having experience obtaining competitive grants.

Through the training and mentoring program aimed at accelerating functional positions with a focus on goal-setting strategies, lecturers will have specific, clear, and measurable goals that align with regulations, helping them address various challenges in managing their functional positions. For example, this program enhances lecturers' administrative awareness of multiple activities to facilitate documentation (Setiawati, 2023). It prevents errors when assigning and calculating the value of activities within university duties (Kusuma et al., 2016). It ensures they proportionally select activities so that no particular duty is overloaded (Damayanti et al., 2021; Setyowati et al., 2018).

Lecturer performance is one of the factors influencing university performance (Lestari, 2015). Therefore, universities need to anticipate and design strategic steps for managing human resources with a focus on quality, including accelerating functional positions to meet the educational service quality needs in the era of the industrial revolution (Indrawati, 2021) by facilitating and enhancing the productivity of publications by lecturers (Handayani et al., 2020).

Career development and lecturer performance are ongoing needs for higher education institutions. It is because career development and performance improvement should not only occur when there is a gap between actual and expected performance (Lestari, 2015). Instead, this development and improvement must be continuously pursued to fulfill academic and moral responsibilities as contributors to human resource development. A lecturer who demonstrates career development is marked by improvements and progress based on specific standards in terms of knowledge, attitude, and skills (Supardi, 2016). In the context of this service, career development refers to the improvement of functional positions, so lecturers must ensure that their knowledge, attitude, and skill potentials are maximally developed through the functional position scheme. Thus, at the same time, lecturers must also learn to develop their careers so they can effectively teach their students.

A lecturer's functional position is both a career and a recognition of their ability to carry out the three pillars of higher education (Purbasari & Wahanani, 2017). Career development for lecturers is an iterative process that aligns with the implementation of the three pillars of higher education by meeting proportional credit points in each duty (education-supporting), as well as various special or additional requirements that comply with the latest regulations. A lecturer is considered to have maximized career development when they reach the highest functional position, full professor (credit 1050). To achieve this, lecturers need to critically assess activities from each duty to ensure progression to the next functional level within the maximum time frame (two years from the previous functional term). It indicates that lecturers must inventory and track a range of proportional and productive duties in compliance with the latest career development regulations, so that their career development aspirations can proceed smoothly and on time.

CONCLUSION

Although the service program was successful, there is still room for improvement through future training programs and other initiatives. Participants acknowledge that they still require ongoing mentoring to implement their strategies in accordance with their targets consistently. Therefore, future training should be complemented with regular training and monitoring programs involving senior lecturers or functional position assessors. Another format could involve university collaboration schemes to develop detachment and/or secondment programs with associate professors or professors from other universities who are experienced in the three pillars of higher education, particularly in research and publication, to enhance the accuracy of mentoring and career acceleration program development for younger lecturers. Additionally, the training material should be strengthened with real-case studies, proposals for functional position document preparation, and simulations of credit-point evaluations through automatic calculation applications, such as SIKOMODO. In this way, the acceleration of functional positions for lecturers becomes an individual target and part of a more planned and sustainable university development strategy.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Conceptualization, JB, ADNR, and ZAT; methodology, JB, and ADNR; formal analysis, JB, and ZAT; resources, JB, and ZA.; writing—preparation of the original draft, JB; editing, ZAT; visualization, JB, and ADNR; and funding acquisition, ADNR, and ZAT.

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