

TO: Academic Leadership Group

FROM: Elizabeth Weeks, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs

RE: COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty Productivity for Promotion and Tenure

DATE: June 1, 2021

Guidance for PTU, School/College, and University Review Committees

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of University operations and, in turn, every faculty member. We are deeply committed to the well-being and success of our faculty and acknowledge the differential and, in many cases, negative impacts of the pandemic on their work and career development. Therefore, in considering decisions about promotion and tenure, the University must evaluate each candidate's research, teaching, and service activities within the context of the pandemic.

Toward that end, promotion and tenure candidates will have an opportunity to describe how the pandemic has affected their professional accomplishments in the areas of research, teaching, and service in the dossier with notations in the Vita; description and documentation of efforts in teaching, research, and service; and/or in an optional COVID-19 impact statement added to the current dossier requirements. In addition, Deans and PTU Heads may offer in their respective cover letters insight on and contextualization of candidates' dossiers in light of COVID-19. Finally, language is suggested below that may be included when soliciting external letters, to remind evaluators of the pandemic's impact.

Any such notations, comments, or optional faculty COVID-19 impact statements should not negatively affect the review. At a minimum, the information should be treated neutrally and at a maximum it may positively impact the review. Note that the impacts of COVID-19 for faculty career trajectories may continue to be relevant for several years, even if COVID-19 is no longer a major factor in daily life.

Suggestions for Addressing COVID-19 Impacts in the Dossier¹

- Section 2, Cover Letters (Dean and/or PTU Head)
- Section 4, Vita (marking cancelled seminars or conference talks, loss in funded awards, graduate students who discontinued studies with a notation, e.g., "Canceled due to COVID-19," "Virtual conference presentation due to COVID-19," "Returned to/remained in home country due to COVID-19")

¹ Suggestions are by reference to [UGA Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure of Academic Rank Faculty Guidelines](#) but impacts may be captured similarly under promotion guidelines for other faculty tracks.

- Section 5, Achievements (adding notes related to teaching, research, and service, or separate section, “COVID-19 Impacts on Achievements”; see lists of possible impacts below)
- Section 7, External Evaluator Request Letter (see sample language below)
- Separate COVID-19 Impact Statement Addendum (two-page limit, standard formatting; added to Section 4, CV and Candidate Statement of Major Accomplishments)
 - Currently, Sections 4 & 5 cannot exceed 25 pages; with an added COVID-19 impact statement, 27 total pages may be submitted

Possible COVID-19 Impacts on Teaching, Research, and Service

Teaching

- Transitioning courses to online or hybrid format
- Changes in teaching load
- Learning, use, and incorporation of new instructional technologies
- Challenges related to technology, wi-fi, workspace, or other access
- Increased office hours, review sessions, or other efforts to help students adjust to online learning
- Mandatory or elective workshops to enhance online teaching
- Increased meetings related to effective teaching
- Leading or developing training to help others on course development
- Changes in student evaluations in comparison to past evaluations
- Challenges of conducting remote teaching with childcare, homeschooling, or other care responsibilities

Research/Creative Activity

- Restrictions on access to research sites, labs, facilities, studios, performance spaces, and other venues
- Restrictions on professional travel and field research; visa restrictions for self, collaborators, grad students, lab staff, etc.
- Loss of access to research subjects, practicum sites, and placements
- Need to restart or pivot research projects or focus, including transitioning research focus to COVID-19
- Cancellation of conferences, seminars, presentations, performances, exhibitions, and opportunities to collaborate
- Slowing of publication and grant funding processes; redirection of funding
- Reductions in start-up funding due to changes in university or external support
- Utilizing research funding for PPE or other precautionary measures related to COVID-19
- Status as an essential worker and related workload
- Longitudinal research that may have been disrupted
- Destroyed lab specimens
- Loss of time for data collection
- Impacts on lab personnel and other staffing

Service

- Contributions to the University's efforts to address COVID-19 (e.g., testing and vaccination, data gathering and analysis, planning, coordination)
- Transitioning service responsibilities to online format
- Changes related to student advising (increases, challenges, emotional labor, etc.)
- Increased student mentoring; support provided to students experiencing pandemic-related challenges
- Engagement in efforts to make pandemic-related changes to curriculum, advising, lab access, research resumption, etc.; engagement in pandemic-related initiatives for the department, university, professional association, and other organizations

General Guidelines for Two-page COVID-19 Impact Statement

- Describe both negative and/or positive effects of COVID-19 on professional productivity
- Describe the faculty member's workload, performance, and trajectory prior to COVID-19
- Describe the impact that COVID had on workload and professional opportunities and resulting impact on faculty productivity, performance, and trajectory in each of the relevant areas of effort (research/creative work, teaching, service, and administration)
- Describe how the faculty member has adjusted or plans to adjust his/her/their work in light of COVID's professional impact to continue or re-build trajectory
- Include time-period (but NOT the reason) for approved medical or personal leaves related to COVID
- Avoid providing personal/privileged information (e.g., dependent care inaccessibility challenges, personal or dependents' health information)

Possible Language to Add to External Evaluator Request Letters

Language Regarding COVID-19 Impacts:

When making your evaluation, the University asks that you consider the short- and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on working conditions, productivity, and career trajectory on many faculty members. Professor _____ may have noted in the CV or elsewhere in the dossier ways that the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 affected his/her/their research, teaching, and/or service. We ask that your assessment of the candidate's accomplishments take these special circumstances into account.

Language Regarding COVID-19 Extension:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Professor _____ has been granted a one-year extension to the tenure probationary period/time in rank limitation on appointment, in keeping with the University's policies. It bears emphasis that we evaluate the productivity of each candidate who has been granted a COVID-19 extension as if he/she/they had been in probationary status/time in rank for the normal duration.