

Optional COVID-19 Impact Statement Guidance

April 13, 2022

Faculty members are invited to include an **optional** COVID-19 Impact Statement (Statement) in their review materials. The Statement should briefly document the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has had directly on faculty workload and professional opportunities and the resulting impact on faculty productivity, performance, and trajectory. This **two-page statement** can be shared with faculty review committees to contextualize the faculty member's performance and contributions. The Statement can be included by all types of faculty members (tenured/tenure track, professional track, librarian, extension) for all types of reviews including annual, mid-probationary, merit, promotion, tenure, and comprehensive periodic reviews. The Statements are internal documents and will not be shared with external reviewers.

Our review processes have, and continue to, focus on excellence in scholarly, research, and creative work; instructional; service; librarianship, and extension activities as articulated and defined in unit policies, procedures, and criteria. As we emerge collectively from the COVID-19 pandemic, the University recognizes the impact of the pandemic on our faculty members. While some faculty have had their careers accelerated due to the pandemic, or perhaps pursued new lines of inquiry only made possible due to the pandemic, others have faced both personal and/or professional challenges that have altered their anticipated trajectory. We must accept that our inferences about a candidate's potential could be based on different, or less, information than in the past, and that our traditional milestones and markers may not fully reflect a faculty member's potential contributions. Units will need to exercise judgment in assessing faculty performance and trajectory, balancing unit criteria and the personal and professional impacts of the pandemic faced by their faculty members. Unit heads and review committee members should refer to the University's [COVID-19 Unit Head and Promotion and Review Committee Guidance](#).

To inform the assessment process, candidates may submit a COVID Impact Statement. The decision to submit a Statement remains with the faculty member, and provides an opportunity for faculty members to:

- Describe the faculty member's workload, performance, and trajectory prior to COVID.
- Describe the impact that COVID has had on workload and professional opportunities and the resulting impact on faculty productivity, performance, and trajectory in each of the relevant areas of specialization (e.g., research, scholarship, creative activity, teaching, advising, service, librarianship).
- Describe how the faculty member has adapted, continues to adapt, and/or sought to adapt their work in light of COVID's impact to continue or re-build their trajectory.
- Contextualize accomplishments and challenges related to the pandemic for internal audiences.

While faculty members may elect to include personal challenges (e.g., dependent care, personal and/or dependent health challenges) faced during the pandemic, they should refrain from disclosing specific details. For example, a simple statement that the faculty member faced caregiving challenges that impacted research productivity, or that caregiving responsibilities required the faculty member to modify engagement in their teaching and service responsibilities, would suffice. Similarly, a statement that a faculty member's own health challenges – or that of a family member – impacted research productivity is sufficient.

Beyond the two-page limitation, faculty members have discretion on how they wish to organize their Statements, but may wish to do so based on relevant evaluative categories (e.g., research/scholarship/creative works; teaching, to include mentoring and advising; service; librarianship; and extension).

The below factors are illustrative of the types of COVID-19 impacts that faculty members may have experienced and/or continue to experience.

Research/Scholarship/Creative Works

- Limitations on the ability to travel to conduct research.
- Limitations on the ability to conduct research, for example, access to labs, studios, animals, clinical settings, field settings, human subjects, archives, libraries, etc.
- Limitations due to remote office infrastructure (e.g., printers, computing, adequate internet access and availability, ability to access data remotely).
- Limitations on access to funds to support research.

- Impacts on productivity due to COVID-related safety protocols in the relevant work or research spaces (e.g., labs, work spaces).
- Impacts on time to conduct research due to learning new teaching methods, (re)developing courses for remote and/or online delivery.
- Impacts on time to conduct research due to greater time spent on supporting and mentoring students/postdocs, or other student-focused activities.
- Impacts on time to analyze data, write, or engage in essential research activities.
- Delays in editorial decisions related to publications (e.g., journal articles, book manuscripts).
- Cancellations of or modifications to professional conferences.
- Closing of performance venues, exhibition venues, and/or cancellation of planned performances or exhibitions, etc.
- Restricted access to supplies/disruption in supply chains relevant to research.
- Adapting to new disruptions involved in remote work (i.e., multiple people sharing remote work spaces).
- Impacts on the ability to conduct research or engage in scholarly or creative activities due to personal challenges (e.g., eldercare, school and daycare closures, family health).

Teaching

- Significant time to reconfigure courses, syllabi, and other materials for remote/online, in person, and/or blended instruction format.
- Significant effort related to adopting new teaching formats as a result of the pivot to remote/online instruction and learning (including participation in professional training sessions such as those offered by TLTC).
- Significant effort required to address the complexity related to evaluating student work due to course delivery changes.
- Significant effort required to acquire, learn, and configure new infrastructure at home and/or in remote work environments to successfully engage in online/remote instruction (e.g., new technologies, augmenting internet connectivity, setting up a space, finding quiet spaces, etc.).
- Significant effort and time devoted to student care, stress, and mental health concerns.
- Reallocation of time and focus related to ensuring content delivery through multiple instructional formats.

- Management of disruptions and the need for multitasking required for blended, online, and simultaneous face-to-face and remote instruction.
- Management of new complexities when interacting with students (e.g., advising and mentoring) who face pandemic-related and other challenges.
- Significant time constraints and challenges created by personal challenges (e.g., eldercare, school and daycare closures, family health).

Extension

- Limitations on access to communities, research settings, and resources for extension/outreach.
- Limitations of service population technology infrastructure (e.g., computing devices, internet access) and ability to engage in digital content/programs (i.e., digital skills).
- Limitations on travel.
- Limitations and/or disruptions to engagement with community-based organizations and institutions.
- Challenges or inability to move programs and content online due to the nature of the services and/or programs (i.e., requires “hands on” demonstrations such as working with livestock, farming).
- Disruptions to in-person programming and moving to online programming.
- Disruptions that limit the ability to engage in Extension scholarship and service activities.
- Shifts in local and community priorities that impacted activities and funding (e.g., pausing some while others became immediate high priorities).
- Impacts on the ability to engage in Extension activities due to personal challenges (e.g., eldercare, school and daycare closures, family health).

Librarianship

- Impacts on performance of core librarianship functions due to the closure and/or limited operations of library buildings and inability to access physical collections.
- Challenges of engaging with service communities (e.g., students, faculty, staff) due to the pivot to online/remote service provision.
- Challenges of migrating instructional programs/workshops online.
- Challenges of migrating and/or creating exhibits/programs online.
- Limitations on travel.
- Limitations on the ability to attend professional conferences/meetings.

- Limitations due to remote office infrastructure (e.g., printers, computing, adequate internet access and availability, ability to access data remotely).
- Management of disruptions and the need for multitasking required for online and/or remote offering of services, programs, and meeting service community needs.
- Impacts on the ability to engage in librarianship activities due to personal challenges (e.g., eldercare, school and daycare closures, family health).

Service

- New, increased, and/or unanticipated service requests and requirements related to the response of the University, professional organizations, laboratories, funding/governmental agencies, etc. (e.g., establishment and service on DEI-related, caregiving, or other committees at the department, college, and/or University levels).
- “Hidden” service obligations, including additional time and energy spent mentoring and supporting students, colleagues, and others with particular impacts from the pandemic.
- Increased complexity and difficulty with service contributions due to prohibitions on travel, face-to-face meetings, communication, etc.
- Increased service requirements and time demands for faculty engaged in extensive outreach activities (e.g., facility closures, lack of connectivity/technology infrastructure in some areas, inability to travel, etc.).
- Added complexity and slower progress with committee work when relying on videoconferencing and other communication for meetings.
- Additional time needed to complete tasks due to caregiving and other personal responsibilities or matters.