

## **COVID-19 Field Impact Statement Guidance**

April 13, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic has created both opportunity and challenge for faculty members to engage in their research/scholarship/creative works, teaching, service, extension, and/or librarianship responsibilities and activities. The optional candidate COVID-19 Impact Statement enables faculty members to articulate the specific impacts of the pandemic on them should they wish to do so. Such information can provide important context regarding the impacts of the pandemic on faculty members that inform unit assessments of faculty performance and trajectory based on unit evaluative criteria and expectations.

In addition to any individual impacts of the pandemic on faculty members, the pandemic has affected fields, disciplines and/or subdisciplines in a variety of ways. A Field Impact Statement can provide additional important context that informs review processes in light of unit evaluative criteria and expectations.

As such, academic units (departments, schools within colleges, and non-departmentalized colleges or schools) must develop a Field Impact Statement for inclusion in promotion dossiers and review processes (e.g., annual, merit, third year, periodic/post-tenure). These statements will remain internal to University promotion and review processes. The University recognizes that a discipline may comprise multiple subdisciplines, and in such cases, it may be necessary for a unit to develop differing statements for candidates under review.

### Field Impact Statements:

- Should not exceed one page.
- May provide general details about the impacts of the pandemic on the discipline. These general details should apply to all Field Impact Statements for candidates within an academic unit should there be a need for multiple statements.
  - Units that are multi- or interdisciplinary may not be able to provide a general statement about the field that applies to all faculty. In such cases, the Field Impact Statement(s) may focus on a particular subdiscipline of a candidate or set of candidates.

- May include additional specific details regarding a candidate's particular subdiscipline, if applicable.
- Should be developed and adopted by unit faculty through normal unit governance processes.

A suggested structure for Field Impact Statements is:

1. A general/broad statement regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the discipline (if possible).
  - a. Units may wish to focus on broad impacts such as the inability or limited to conduct human subjects research; the impact of the University's closure or limited operations of lab facilities; restrictions on travel; the inability of faculty members to access research materials at libraries, archives, or other institutions; extended review times for peer reviewed scholarship; and/or the inability to access or engage with communities essential to faculty research).
2. A more specific statement regarding the impact of the pandemic regarding University actions on the unit and its faculty.
  - a. These may include the closure of labs and/or the limited ability to engage in laboratory-based research; limitations on human subjects research; limitations on travel; inability to secure certain equipment essential for research due to supply chain constraints; ongoing access issues to essential materials (e.g., in archives or other facilities that remain closed or have limited access); and/or the inability to complete lab or other essential research space renovations.
3. A statement, if relevant, regarding the impacts of the pandemic on the review candidate's particular subdiscipline.

In addition to the optional COVID Impact Statement by candidates who elect to provide one, the Field Impact Statements are intended to further contextualize the impacts of the pandemic on candidates under review. Internal reviewers should consider both candidate (if provided) and Field Impact Statements in rendering their assessment of candidate performance in light of unit criteria and expectations. Appendix A provides additional guidance and information that may be useful for the development of Field Impact Statements.

The University anticipates that COVID-19 pandemic promotion and review measures will be in effect through the 2026-2027 academic year. University issued guidance will be reviewed annually by the Office of Faculty Affairs for any necessary

and appropriate updates. Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, Unit Field Impact Statements should be reviewed each year prior to initiating unit (e.g., merit, annual, periodic) and promotion (e.g., tenure, promotion) reviews.

**Appendix A: University Research and Travel Restrictions Timeline and Considerations for Unit Field Impact Statements**

University of Maryland Timeline of COVID-19 Campus Actions

<b>Research Phase/Restriction</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Effective Dates</b>
Phase 0	Severe research restrictions. Defined as one person per lab to prepare research spaces for reopening.  In addition, human subjects, clinical, and community-based research were suspended.	March 21, 2020-June 7, 2020
Travel	All University-sponsored travel suspended.	March 9, 2020-July 23, 2020
Phase I	Limited presence. Defined as 25% of all researchers are back in their campus labs.  Limited resumption of human subjects/clinical research. Community-based research suspension continued.	June 8, 2020-August 23, 2020
Travel	Limited essential University-funded domestic travel permitted with approval by Dean or Vice President. University-funded International travel prohibited	July 24, 2020-May 12, 2021
Phase II	Intermediate presence. Defined as up to 50% of researchers to return to their campus labs.  Human subjects/clinical research on a case-by-case basis. Community-based research suspension continued.	August 24, 2020-April 4, 2021

Travel	University-funded domestic travel permitted. Exception to University-funded international travel prohibition with approval from Dean or Vice President.	May 13, 2021-present
Phase III	Full resumption. Defined as up to 75% of researchers to return to their campus labs.  Human subjects/clinical research on a case-by-case basis. Community-based research suspension continued.	April 5, 2021-May 27, 2021
	100% lab occupancy.  Human subjects/clinical research enabled fully with COVID health and safety requirements in place. Community-based research suspension lifted.	May 28, 2021-present

**Considerations**

The questions below and considerations are provided to facilitate the development of unit Field Impact Statements. It is not possible to capture all the specific impacts on a field, discipline, subdiscipline, or functional area (e.g., Extension and Libraries) and thus the considerations below are illustrative and not exhaustive.

- What were/continue to be the impacts of travel restrictions imposed by the University on the field, discipline, and/subdisciplines?
- What were/continue to be the impacts of University restrictions or restrictions by other entities (e.g., county governments, city governments, state governments, archives, libraries) – e.g., access to labs, studios, clinical activities, performances, exhibits, archives, libraries – on the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines?
  - Were performance/exhibition venues closed? Have they reopened?
  - Were performances/exhibitions canceled?
  - Was access limited and/or restricted to research requiring access to animals, plants, or other specific subjects? Once faculty members were able to access research sites, was time/effort required (or still

- required) to restart or relaunch research activities (e.g., restarting lab experiments; developing new protocols; ordering new specimens)?
- How was the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines impacted by the restrictions on human subjects research?
    - How have the health and safety requirements for engaging in human subjects research impacted the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines?
    - Once faculty members were able to resume human subjects research or access live human audiences, was time/effort required to restart or relaunch research or creative activities (e.g., recruiting new participants; developing new protocols)?
    - How might the context in which faculty members conduct their research impact the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines (e.g., locally, regionally, nationally, and/or internationally)?
    - How have restrictions on access to particular communities of study impacted the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines?
  - Regarding peer review, publication venues, and conferences,
    - Were major book publishers, academic presses, and/or journals closed temporarily and/or discontinued?
    - Were peer review times increased?
    - Were major professional conferences canceled or modified in ways that had a significant impact on scholars/scholarship?
  - Do the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines use a large number of international graduate students or postdocs who were unable to travel to the US, research labs, and/or field sites?
  - Have supply chain issues impacted ability of faculty members within the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines to access essential resources or supplies necessary to conduct their research activities?
  - Were major grants, fellowships, or other funding opportunities delayed, canceled, and/or modified in ways that have a significant impact on opportunities for research/scholarship in the field, discipline, and/or subdisciplines?
  - How might the combination of University restrictions and/or health and safety requirements, combined with local requirements throughout the state, have impacted Extension activities (e.g., 4H, activities in schools, activities in other local settings)?
  - How might the combination of University restrictions and/or health and safety requirements, have impacted the activities of Librarians to engage in their Librarianship and other activities (e.g., access to physical collections; engagement with students, faculty, and staff)?