


MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty, Deans, VCAAs, Associate Deans

From: Laura Hill, Senior Vice Provost 

Date: January 12, 2021

Subject: Guidance on writing COVID-19 statements for annual review

Impacts of COVID-19 have varied dramatically across programs and individuals, affecting teaching, research/ scholarship/creative activity, service, and outreach/community engagement. The pandemic has brought new opportunities and challenges: negative effects on productivity to many, and little to no effect on a few. The immediate impacts related to social distancing will continue into 2021, and the longer-term impacts on faculty work will be felt for many years.

While a COVID impact statement is not required, we encourage those who have experienced disruptions in their careers to consider including a statement about the effects of COVID on their work in their annual review. The purpose of the COVID statement is to help those conducting the review and evaluating outcomes understand the specific ways in which the pandemic has affected an individual's workload. This will help chairs and directors to evaluate achievement in context and relative to the opportunity that each person had in 2020 to work at their usual capacity.

The statement does not have to be long. The list on the following pages includes generic examples of possible COVID impacts on your work that you might include. Please adapt them to your specific situation. For example, for the first item on the list, instead of "Learning new pedagogical/technological approaches and revised existing courses to incorporate them", you might write "Searched for, reviewed, and acquired virtual lab software for Mechanical Engineering XXX; applied for supplemental funding to purchase it; learned how to use it; made extensive revisions to syllabus and grading criteria; trained TA to implement".

Please do not reveal personal or medical circumstances; it is sufficient to note the aspects of your work that were affected (negatively or positively) by COVID.

Demonstrable Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Faculty Work

This list is intended to provide examples of impacts; if you experienced others not listed here, please include them.

Teaching

- Learning new pedagogical/technological approaches and revised existing courses to incorporate them
- Changes in teaching load or teaching responsibilities (e.g., filling in for a colleague)
- Moving non-traditional courses to online or blended formats (e.g., lab/studio/clinical/field-based pedagogy)
- Challenges related to technology, wi-fi, or other access issues
- Technology challenges altering traditional methods of assigning and assessing student work
- 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 remote teaching/course development
- Changes in student evaluations in comparison to past evaluations
- Increase in student care activities for coursework or for advising (academic and other)
- Cancellation of performances and exhibitions
- Cancellation of field courses or field-oriented events
- Cancellation of community-engaged educational programs
- Interruption of clinical teaching and supervision of internships; the need to revise how those programs are designed and delivered
- Required revisions of research and teaching assistantship activities for undergraduate and graduate students who are under faculty supervision
- Cancellation of conferences related to teaching professional development
- Collaborators/team teaching members impacted
- Interruption/cancellation of study abroad
- Interruption or cancellation of extension programs or other extension work
- Other workload activities intruded on teaching time
- External factors intruded on teaching time

Research and Creative Activity

- Changes in access to labs, studios, other research spaces or sites
- Comparison to productivity in previous years
- Lack of access to practice and performance spaces
- Reductions in start-up funding and support due to changes in university or external support
- Grant extensions
- Need to use research funding for PPE or other precautionary measures related to COVID
- Status as an essential worker
- Transitions in research to focus on COVID

- Types of longitudinal research that may have been disrupted and the continued impact
- Lab closures and/or loss of research material, lab specimens, etc.
- Loss of time for data collection
- Lack of access to human subjects
- Impacts on lab personnel, collaborators/research team members, and other staffing
- Travel restrictions
- Canceled presentations, performances, exhibitions
- Sabbatical interruptions, postponements or adjustments
- Impacts on grant funding, including changes in the priorities of granting agencies,
- Cutbacks in funding available, new grant funding opportunities, and the fact that faculty were encouraged to continue to pay students, postdocs and technicians even if not advancing projects.
- Cancellation of book contracts due to the closure of or cutbacks at university or other presses
- Inaccessibility of field work sites, human subjects, libraries, archives, and other research collections
- Delays in journal review process and publication schedules
- Delay in arrival of international students/postdocs
- Impact of the need to revise/redefine activities of undergraduate and graduate student research assistants and how those trainees are supervised and mentored
- Cancellation of invited talks
- Cancellation of fellowships, artist/scholar-in-residence appointments
- Extension work was interrupted or cancelled
- Sabbatical interruptions, postponements or adjustments
- Other workload priorities intruded on research time
- External factors intruded on research, scholarship, or creative activity time

Service

- Contributions to the university to address COVID-19 (testing, coordination, etc.)
- Transitioning service responsibilities to online formats
- Changes related to student advising (e.g., increases, challenges, etc.)
- Increased student mentoring
- Disproportionate service obligations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Suspended or curtailed traditional and ad hoc service assignments
- Increased service responsibilities for some faculty, e.g. community outreach, governance, curriculum or mentoring.
- Complication of external service responsibilities such as journal editorships, chairing of academic conference sessions, professional organization service, and other integrated scholarly service
- Service to community-based institutions, public presentation halted or altered in significant ways
- Collaborators/service & engagement team members impacted
- Other workload priorities intruded on service time
- External factors intruded on service, outreach, or engagement