

May 11, 2021

TO: SENATE FACULTY

FROM:

Campus Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Lori Kletzer  
Committee on Academic Personnel Chair Junko Ito

**Re: Addressing Impacts of COVID-19 in the Faculty Personnel Review Process**

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to provide guidance to faculty about advancement actions in 2021-22 and beyond. Last fall, we provided assurance that 2020-21 reviews would be viewed with understanding and compassion, under the principle that faculty should neither be held responsible nor penalized for exigent events related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The sentiments expressed in that communication remain relevant today and in the coming years.

The following guidance implements the recommendations of the Joint Senate-Administration Working Group that met several times during winter quarter to address COVID-related disruptions to faculty work and advancement. We acknowledge and appreciate the valuable contributions of the workgroup members.

Although the pandemic has impacted all of us, it has not done so equitably. Our colleagues with children whose daycares and schools were shuttered, or who are primary caregivers, or who have been prohibited from accessing critical venues (research facilities, field sites, performance venues, etc.) are among those hardest hit. In each faculty member's next advancement action, whether in this year or in the next two or three years (depending on rank and step), faculty who have been progressing successfully in normative time should continue to do so. This does not imply any diminution of academic standards, but rather an acknowledgement that the situation calls for a flexible and holistic approach consistent with APM 210-1d:

*In evaluating the candidate's qualifications within these areas, the review committee shall exercise reasonable flexibility, balancing when the case requires heavier commitments and responsibilities in one area against lighter commitments and responsibilities in another. The review committee must judge whether the candidate is engaging in a program of work that is both sound and productive. As the University enters new fields of endeavor and refocuses its ongoing activities, cases will arise in which the proper work of faculty members departs markedly from established academic patterns. In such cases, the review committees must take exceptional care to apply the criteria with sufficient flexibility. However, flexibility does not entail a relaxation of high standards.*

**Evaluation of Teaching During Remote Instruction:**

- We understand that the abrupt transition to emergency remote instruction created many difficulties. As stated in [previous guidance](#), challenges with remote instruction in winter and spring 2020 shall not be assessed negatively.

- Evaluation of teaching in 2020-21 and beyond-- both remote and in-person-- shall take into account the many difficulties imposed by the pandemic situation, acknowledging that conditions were not ideal and may not accurately reflect the individual's pedagogical abilities.
- Efforts to innovate in the delivery of remote instruction shall be recognized positively. Such work could include efforts to create an inclusive environment and engaging with units like CITL or Online Education, among other possibilities.
- Review of teaching must be based on at least two sources of evidence. SETs must be included in review files and referenced, and the evaluation itself can focus more substantively on other sources of evidence, such as teaching reflections in the personal statement, mentoring record (at the undergraduate and graduate levels), pedagogical innovations, syllabi and other course materials, and applications for pedagogy grants.
- Teaching excellence is particularly important for evaluating Teaching Professors. Please refer to the [October 2020 Guidance for Evaluation of Teaching Professors and for the Application of the Campus Special Salary Practice](#).

### **Individual COVID Impact Statements**

Faculty are strongly encouraged to include a separate statement on the impact of COVID on their scholarship/progress, if they feel there have been negative impacts. The statement should discuss the issues related to their productivity in research, teaching, and/or service.

- The statement is not expected to include personal details such as childrens' ages or special needs, or one's own or family health conditions.
- Statements do not need to be lengthy; one paragraph is sufficient, and ideally not more than two pages. Remember that CAP reads more than 200 review files each year.
- Statements can address both immediate and future impacts, including noting a disproportionate amount of time spent on teaching/mentoring and service.
- Missed opportunities should be addressed, e.g., research progress not made, trips not taken, invited talks or conferences that were cancelled or postponed.
- Progress should be compared to a typical year (e.g., "I would have published this many articles normally, but I was only able to ...").

### **Departmental COVID Impact Statements**

Each department is strongly encouraged to write a Departmental COVID Impact Statement that addresses the overall impacts to their discipline(s), e.g., widespread lack of access to venues in a performance-based discipline. Departmental statements may be included in each faculty review file as an addendum to the department recommendation letter. This saves time for each candidate, who will not have to repeat the same points in their individual COVID Impact Statements.

### **Salary Increases (The COVID Exception):**

For the next three years (2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24), we encourage faculty to undergo review at the normal time, and not to defer review solely due to COVID impacts. Deferrals postpone career progress and can present a salary disadvantage over the course of the career.

For the first review in this three year period, senate faculty whose productivity was impacted by COVID may be awarded an off-scale salary increase equal to one step, in lieu of a merit increase, based on reasonable and effective performance on any balance of research, teaching, and service.

This exception relaxes the limit on salary-increase-only outcomes from the current practice of a half-step, including for candidates at barrier steps Associate IV, Professor V, and Professor IX.

### **Merit Increases and the Special Salary Practice (Senate Faculty):**

To justify an increase in step, a review file must be holistically meritorious, in that the total collection of work justifies advancement of a step or more. This will generally be demonstrated with excellence in each of research, teaching, and service. For greater than normal advancement, there can be some increased fungibility between the categories due to the impacts of COVID. For example, research productivity might be slightly lower than normal expectations and teaching might be enough above basic expectations to compensate. Expectations for accelerations are unchanged.

As a reminder, the special salary practice criteria are:

- **Greater-than-normal Advancement:** Files that exceed the criteria for normal advancement will be considered for a one-step advancement plus an additional off-scale salary component.
  - **G1:** Greater-than-normal files that are closer to a normal action will be considered for an off-scale salary increase of one-third of a step.
  - **G2:** Greater-than-normal files that are closer to an accelerated action will be considered for an off-scale salary increase of two-thirds of a step.
- **Accelerated Advancement:** Files that demonstrate outstanding performance that is significantly beyond expectations in all three areas will be considered for a two-step advancement.
  - **AC:** A standard acceleration file will be considered for a two-step advancement with no additional off-scale salary component. Most accelerations are expected to be in this category.
  - **A1:** In rare and exceptional circumstances, acceleration files that exceed the standard for a two-step advancement will be considered for an off-scale salary increase of one-third of a step.

### **Tenure, Promotion to Full, and Above Scale Reviews:**

- Assistant Professors and Assistant Teaching Professors (LPSOE) may still request a **year off the tenure clock** for COVID impacts, by submitting the [request form](#), up until the tenure review begins. All reasonable requests will be approved. Faculty with approved time-off-the-clock may still choose to undergo tenure review at the normal time. Whether or not the faculty member chooses to request or

use the year off the clock, tenure cases will be evaluated without prejudice as if the work were done in the normal period of service.

- For all major actions, trouble in finding **external reviewers** should never be counted against candidates. We recognize that right now, more people are declining to be reviewers because of their own time pressures, so declines should be viewed as a sign of the times, not as any indication of the quality of the candidate.
- Research productivity expectations for promotions, step VI, and above scale reviews (initial and further) are unchanged.

CC:

VPAA Lee

CFW Chair Orlandi

CAAD Chair Falcón

Academic Personnel Office

Academic Senate Chair

Academic Senate Office

Deans

Department Chairs

Department Managers

Divisional Academic Personnel Coordinators