

EXCERPTS ADDED TO THE PROVOST'S TENURE & PROMOTION MEMO REGARDING COVID

Three Areas of Evaluation

For the award of tenure, the candidate must demonstrate excellence in two of these domains and at least strength in the third. For promotion to (full) Professor, assessment in all three domains is required, but there is no mandate to reach a conclusion about whether each domain is excellent, strong, or not strong.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020, many faculty members experienced disruptions to their research/creative and professional activity, teaching, and service. Faculty were invited to describe these via COVID-19 Impact Statements through the Annual Faculty Review process. At the faculty member's discretion, these statements, or a summary of these statements, may be included as a separate addendum to the faculty member's personal statement. The faculty member should indicate whether any COVID-19 Impact Statement(s) should be shared with external evaluators or be for internal use only. Internal evaluators (DPC, chair/head, CPC, and Dean) should assess the faculty member's work in light of any COVID-19 impacts reported in the dossier.

Solicitation of External Letters/Evaluation of Research

Solicitation letters for tenure or promotion of faculty who started work during or before Spring 2020 should remind external reviewers of the disruption that the campus experienced beginning on March 13 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research facilities, including labs and libraries, were closed. Faculty had to move some or all their courses online. All formal evaluation of teaching was suspended in Spring 2020 and Fall 2021, and pre-tenure faculty were automatically granted a one-year delay in the tenure decision. Most faculty had to work out of their homes, K-12 students switched to online instruction or home schooling, and childcare or other dependent care was largely unavailable. The template solicitation letter to external reviewers cautions them against regarding approved TDY delays as "extra" time from which greater productivity can be expected. The same caution applies to internal reviewers.

Research/Creative/Professional Activity

During the COVID-19 pandemic period beginning in March 2020, any scholarly disruptions and decreased productivity, particularly when inconsistent with the prior or subsequent record, should not be interpreted as meaningful. Likewise, changes in areas of emphasis may have occurred as an adaptation to the pandemic and should not be viewed as problematic. In addition, scheduled conference presentations, invited talks, performances, and exhibitions that were cancelled should be weighed as if they had occurred. Virtual performances and exhibitions, along with presentations at virtual conferences and seminars, should be weighed as if they were face-to-face. In fields such as Engineering where doctoral completions are evaluated in tenure cases, allowance should be made for the pandemic's effects on doctoral students' progress toward their degrees.

Because the pandemic's impacts have fallen more severely on certain faculty (e.g., women, persons of color, parents), internal evaluators should avoid implicit or explicit comparisons

with faculty members whose personal circumstances allowed their productivity to remain undiminished during the pandemic and to cases that were successful prior to the pandemic.

Evaluation of Teaching

Contributions to maintaining educational continuity for our undergraduate and graduate students during the period of remote learning beginning in Spring 2020. Faculty success in moving courses online, developing substitutes for class labs and studios, maintaining student engagement, and providing students with a human connection to our institution should be acknowledged. Because SRTIs were not administered in Spring or Fall of 2020, reviewers should rely more heavily on faculty self-reporting of teaching accomplishments. Faculty are encouraged to be explicit about their efforts and include any evidence of successes in the realm of teaching.

Student evaluations were not administered during the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters because of the shift to remote learning. Departments were permitted to administer either SRTI or Forward Focus for the Spring 2021 semester by agreement with the MSP. Spring 2021 student evaluations, however, should not be compared to past or future student evaluations in assessing teaching effectiveness. The SRTI/Forward Focus choice was continued into the 2021-22 academic year.

Evaluation of Service

Many usual forms of service were difficult or impossible to carry out during the COVID-19 pandemic; committees did not meet and many conferences and professional events were canceled. At the same time, some faculty made extraordinary contributions to service, and their efforts should be recognized. One example is the contribution that some of our more tech-savvy faculty made by helping their colleagues to move their courses online. These individuals are particularly deserving of recognition because their contributions to our educational mission extended beyond the students in their own courses. Another example is the public service rendered by our faculty who contributed their expertise to understanding and responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. A third example is contributions faculty made to their professional associations in transforming face-to-face conferences to virtual platforms. These examples are by no means an exhaustive list of how our faculty rendered unusual service during this difficult time.