

COVID IMPACT STATEMENT

Faculty are encouraged to provide a “COVID Impact Statement” to describe the ways that their work in any review area has been affected by the challenging conditions caused by the pandemic. (Statements need not exceed 1-2 pages.) Although such statements are optional, they can offer important context that will help reviewing agencies understand the impact that COVID-19 may have had on their academic record for the review period.

Flexibility, as described in APM 210-1-d, can then be used to weigh achievements across areas of review. These preexisting policies and practices provide the principles with which work can be assessed with reasonable flexibility:

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.

We recognize that providing such background and, where possible documentation, about their record may create an additional burden for faculty who are already experiencing disruptions to their work and home lives, but the basic information that is included in any self-assessment can help reviewing agencies understand both the special accomplishments of the review period and any areas in which productivity or activities have been impeded.

In some cases, faculty may want to consider providing comparisons with previous records of teaching, research or creative activities, professional and scholarly activities, and/or service to better illustrate the impact of these circumstances on performance. When the impact spans several years, it may be relevant to reference past COVID statements to demonstrate delays in research trajectories.

To assist in determining what to include, a non-exhaustive list of possible impacts, as well as questions to consider, are provided below for each of the four areas of review. Please note that although there is no expectation that faculty members disclose any personal circumstances, (caregiving, homeschooling, personal health, family illness, etc.), such information may be included at the discretion of the faculty member.

Research and Creative Activities

- Significantly reduced access to facilities, locations, personnel, research teams, studios, venues, etc.
- Inability to set up lab, studio, or begin new research projects.
- Inaccessible study populations, field locations, archives, animals, cell cultures, etc.
- Workload increases to develop plans for closing and re-opening of labs, development of protocols for cleaning and distancing, etc.
- Loss of research time due to changes in teaching and/or service responsibilities.
- Loss of research time due to family or caregiving responsibilities.

- Delays in the review and/or production of publications or other scholarly products.
- Need to pivot or shift research topics or areas of inquiry due to COVID-19 restrictions or emergent questions.
- Development of new technologies and platforms for remote performance and creative activities.
- Delayed research leaves.
- Efforts to support UCSB's COVID-19 response through research, service, or extra administrative work.

Teaching and Mentoring

- Challenging transition to remote teaching and learning due to class content, structure, objectives, size, etc.
- Technological challenges that impeded teaching and/or learning.
- Time devoted to the development of platforms, tools, course materials and other content to facilitate remote learning.
- Time devoted to workshops, tutorials, meetings, to develop new pedagogical strategies.
- Additional mentoring or advising time required to assist or support graduate students, teaching assistants, and undergraduate students.

Professional and Scholarly Activities

- Canceled or delayed talks, performances, conferences, scholarly meetings, etc.

Service

- Increased service to sustain departmental or other university operations.
- Time devoted to assisting peers in the transition to remote learning.
- Time devoted to assisting peers with adjustments to the remote environment, technical assistance, etc.
- Community service activities related to public health, K-12 education, or other non-university responses to COVID.

Additional Questions to Consider

- What was the duration of the impacts you have described?
- What obstacles did you experience in preparing and teaching courses?
- Did the increased workload in transitioning to remote learning impact time available for research or creative activities? In what ways?
- Did increased service demands decrease productivity? How?
- Are you responsible for homeschooling your child or children?
- Were your accomplishments in research, teaching, professional activities, or service, affected by caregiving demands at home?
- Did you experience illness or other health issues that affected your ability to engage in work-related activities?
- Are there special accomplishments resulting from the shift to remote work that you wish to highlight in the review period, such as the development of innovative course materials or pedagogical strategies, or extra departmental assignments you took on to assist colleagues who needed modifications to their teaching or service requirements due to the impact of COVID-19 conditions?