



## Provost Office Guidance on Promotion and Tenure Cycle for 2021-2022

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### Guidance

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Dear faculty, chairs/directors, and deans,

We recognize that **faculty work** has been **affected since Spring, 2020 by COVID-19 disruptions**:

- As individuals, we experienced the impacts in different ways.
- These impacts are not distributed evenly.
- We can't assume we know the impacts across our faculty.

As we move into the 2021-2022 cycle for promotion and tenure, it is important that we enable our faculty to document any impacts arising from the pandemic and have review committee members document how they took those impacts into account in their evaluations.

Thus, **all candidates have the option to address the impact of COVID-19 disruptions on their teaching, research/scholarship/creative or artistic work (hereafter, scholarship), service, and professional performance in their candidate statements for P&T.** (There will be no stand-alone COVID-19 narratives as there were for 2020 annual evaluations). While not required, Faculty Development encourages candidates to supplement their candidate statements as applicable, given the challenges raised by COVID-19 disruptions, specifically:

- It may be that some normally expected activities were simply not possible to accomplish or were drastically curtailed during the pandemic, especially, but not exclusively, in the area of scholarship.
- The conditions of the pandemic may be directly related to a change in the pattern or types of activity faculty pursued in the face of the challenges.

For privacy reasons, candidates should not share any personal circumstances in their statements, but rather focus on the impact to outcomes that they want to address. The inclusion of this supplemental information about the impacts of COVID-19 disruptions will allow chairs, deans, and promotion and tenure committee members to carefully review faculty dossiers and conduct fair and contextual evaluations of whether, except for COVID-19 disruptions, faculty are meeting our standards for P&T (FSRR 6.2).

**Instructions on the Promotion and Tenure forms have been updated to reflect this option for candidates, and when completing the evaluation forms, chairs/directors/deans/review committee members will be required to indicate how they considered the stated effects of COVID-19 disruptions in their written evaluations.**

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### What Candidates May Choose to Do:

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Faculty should prepare their promotion and tenure dossiers as normal, recognizing they may, at their choosing, also incorporate the impact of COVID-19 into their candidate statements on teaching, scholarship, service, and professional performance.

**Below is a non-exclusive list of some of the types of impacts faculty may want to address in their candidate statements.** These examples come from the literature on the impacts of COVID-19 on faculty work and efforts at other institutions to develop promotion and tenure processes that take COVID-19 disruptions into account<sup>1</sup>:

### Teaching

- Pivot to remote instruction in March 2020
- Technology challenges altered traditional methods of assigning and assessing student work
- Remote or hybrid instruction continuing into the 2020-2021 academic year required many faculty members to spend a significant amount of time learning new pedagogical methods and technological approaches, and revising existing courses for new teaching approaches
- Additional work needed to support students experiencing health, economic, and social consequences of COVID-19, including special circumstances of international students
- Cancellations of all kinds related to teaching: field courses, community-engaged work, service learning, performances and exhibitions, professional development conferences, study abroad

### Scholarship

- Lab closures, capacity reductions, relocations, and/or loss of research material
- 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.
- Cancellations of all types: book contracts due to the closure of or cutbacks at university or other presses; performances and exhibitions; conferences; invited talks; fellowships; artist/scholar-in-residence appointments, travel
- Other workload priorities intruded on time dedicated to research
- Inaccessibility of field work sites, human subjects, libraries, stacks, archives, and other research collections
- Delays in journal review process and publication schedules
- Impacts on recruiting, hiring, supporting, retaining, and replacing research personnel and graduate students
- Delay in arrival or inability to hire (e.g., due to travel issues) international students/postdocs
- Collaborators/research team members impacted

### Service

- Time spent on COVID-19 response teams and committees
- Pandemic response suspended or curtailed traditional and ad hoc service assignments
- Pandemic response greatly increased service responsibilities for some faculty
- Pandemic complicated 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 was halted/altered in significant ways
- Other workload priorities intruded on service

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<sup>1</sup> We are especially grateful to our colleagues at Kansas State University, the University of Delaware, and the Advisory Committee on Faculty Affairs of the APLU for sharing guidelines and practices to address COVID-19 impacts.

## Professional performance

- Impacts on productivity due to changes in on-site shift scheduling
- Added work adapting activities to new instructional and communication modes and approaches
- Limited access and contact with colleagues, compounding existing challenges of interdisciplinary work
- Additional time and coordination required to serve and attend to varied needs of students, faculty, and staff.
- Disruptions to public education efforts, hands-on experiential learning activities
- Impacts on all kinds of community outreach efforts, including tours at facilities

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### What Chairs/Directors, Deans, and Review Committees Need to Do:

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Review the instructions provided on the updated Promotion and Tenure Forms. If you have questions, please promptly contact Faculty Development ([facultydev@ku.edu](mailto:facultydev@ku.edu)).

If NO impacts from COVID-19 are mentioned by candidates, evaluate following regular criteria and procedures for the respective section.

If impacts are mentioned, respond in each evaluation section of the form (teaching, scholarship, service, professional performance). Use the following to guide discussion and ensure consistent documentation in the evaluations:

1. Comment on whether the candidate still meets the established specific criteria (rating of good or higher) in unit promotion and tenure guidelines, regardless of the impact of COVID-19.
2. If the candidate's record does not meet unit criteria sufficient for recommending promotion and tenure, provide a preliminary rating in the evaluation (i.e., any poor or marginal rating in any area) and indicate whether the stated COVID-19 disruptions have any relevance at all to the work assessed by the preliminary rating.
  - a. If the preliminary rating is completely unrelated to the stated COVID-19 disruptions, provide the reasoning to support the marginal or poor preliminary rating. The preliminary rating becomes the final rating.
  - b. If the preliminary rating is due to work impacted by COVID-19 disruptions, consider the record of accomplishments in light of the general university criteria for promotion and tenure for that area (FSRR 6.2). Explain whether, given the stated impacts:
    - i. It is reasonable to adjust specific unit-level criteria in such a way to produce an adjusted rating that is higher than the preliminary rating. Describe the adjustment(s) to the criteria and explain whether the resulting adjusted ratings supports promotion and tenure based on both the adjusted criteria and the general university criteria for promotion and tenure. The adjusted rating becomes the final rating; or
    - ii. It is not reasonable to adjust specific unit-level criteria. In this case, provide an explanation of this decision. The preliminary rating becomes the final rating.

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### General Reminders

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**Teaching:** Recall that Spring 2020 student surveys of teaching are not to be used for evaluation purposes, and after that, and through Summer 2021, faculty have the option to include them in their evaluation materials. Candidates will not be penalized for having opted to exclude the student survey reports, but our university standard in FSRR 6.2.2.2 does require of candidates for promotion and tenure: ". . . **a demonstrated commitment to student learning, efforts**

**to improve teaching skills over time . . .".** Reflecting on information gained from student surveys and demonstrating how subsequent changes were made to improve student learning is an important way to achieving the standard. Faculty Development recommends review of [CTE guidance](#) on ways to use multiple sources of information to document and assess their teaching effectiveness.

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### Tenure Clock Reminders

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#### **KBOR extension:**

All tenure-track faculty who were in their probationary period during the Spring 2020 had their tenure clocks automatically extended by one year. At their choosing, faculty can go through the P&T process on their original schedule. This extension does not count as one of the two extensions allowed under KBOR policy for birth/adoption of a child or other extenuating circumstances.

#### **Other extensions to the tenure clock:**

Untenured faculty members in tenure-track appointments who have not yet entered the mandatory review may interrupt the tenure clock under [the interruption of the tenure clock policy](#). Significant COVID-19 impacts continue, and the deadline for submitting a request to interrupt the tenure clock has been temporarily extended. A request for such an extension may be granted by the Provost upon written request of the faculty member and/or appropriate dean. **Requests must be received by the Provost no later than May 31, 2021, for those whose mandatory review year is 2021-2022.**

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### Questions

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Contact the Center for Faculty Development and Mentoring by email at [facultydev@ku.edu](mailto:facultydev@ku.edu).