

Report of the Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the Wake of COVID-19

June 11, 2021

Workgroup Membership:

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Daniel Arovas, Professor, Physics
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Shelley Halpain, Professor, Neurobiology
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Robert Continetti, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, *Co-Chair*
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Preamble

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a century-scale disruption, unprecedented in scale and scope. While we are currently seeing diminishing numbers of cases in the United States and a gradual lessening of restrictions on activities, it is clear that the impacts of the pandemic will resonate for many years to come. At UC San Diego, we have persevered through a difficult time, through the concerted, extraordinary efforts of faculty, students, staff and administration. However, we must acknowledge the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has created discipline specific challenges to faculty, which need to be both mitigated wherever possible and carefully considered in the academic personnel review process.

Executive summary

The Senate-Administration Workgroup on Academic Advancement in the wake of COVID-19 (SAWAA) was empaneled in the Spring quarter of 2021 in response to the charge letter drafted by the Executive Vice Chancellor and the Chair of the San Diego Division of the Academic Senate. SAWAA was asked to assess the impact of the ongoing public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic on the research, teaching and service missions of UC San Diego Faculty. The workgroup began its inquiry by reviewing the actions taken to date at UC San Diego, as well as information from the systemwide Academic Senate, the Office of the President and other UC campuses. The group also reviewed actions being considered or implemented by other institutions of higher learning in order to gain a broader perspective about the response in the field of higher education as a whole.

The workgroup was then organized into four subcommittees: impacts on research, impacts on teaching, work/life balance-equity diversity and inclusion, and the academic review process. The subcommittees were organized around essential elements of the academic personnel review process (research and teaching) and the academic review process itself. In addition, one subcommittee was tasked to explore issues of faculty work/life balance and impacts of COVID-19 on equity, diversity and inclusion. Discussions about service were included, either directly or tangentially, in the discussions of each subcommittee. With one exception, each subcommittee had representation from faculty and administration.

Each of the four workgroups discussed basic principles that UC San Diego might adopt in the academic personnel process in the wake of COVID-19. In addition, each workgroup considered the short- and long-term impacts that the pandemic would create. A variety of topics were discussed: the reduced operations and output of the university in research and teaching, the

increase in time spent in preparing for teaching, crisis-level service, and the disruption of research and creative activity.

The discussions were productive and multi-faceted. Given the changing nature of the pandemic and the creation of a systemwide Senate-Administrative task force, the Co-Chairs asked the groups to then focus specifically on short-term recommendations that could be made to have an impact on academic advancement actions in the coming year. The committee determined that narrowing the focus of the discussion might have the best chance of making a short-term positive impact and offering some support and relief to faculty colleagues.

Our report represents the collective views of the workgroup. We include a summary of actions taken by UC San Diego from the onset of the pandemic to the present (June 2021), and suggest guiding principles to be adopted in academic personnel review in the wake of the pandemic. We then discuss impacts on research, teaching and service, in addition to faculty work-life balance and issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. Finally, we present ten recommendations affecting the academic advancement process that should be adopted in AY 21-22, and we suggest that a number of these recommendations should be considered for the next three academic years, until the faculty review cycle that has borne the brunt of the COVID-19 pandemic has completed.

The workgroup recommends reconvening after the systemwide Senate-Administrative task force has issued their recommendations. We anticipate that the next meeting of our workgroup will take place in Winter or Spring of 2022.

Structure and Process of the Workgroup

In accordance with the Charge Letter, the Workgroup was comprised of 14 members from various Divisions/Schools at UC San Diego:

Faculty Representatives

Susan Narucki, Professor, Music, *Co-Chair*
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Shelley Halpain, Professor, Neurobiology
Matthew Herbst, Teaching Professor, ERC
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Miroslav Krstic, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, Research Affairs
Cindy Palmer, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Academic Personnel

The Workgroup began meeting on April 8, 2021, and held weekly meetings through May 18, 2021. As noted above, the workgroup established four subgroups that met independently to assess the primary impacts on faculty careers.

- Subgroup on the Impact on Service/Work-Life Balance/Equity, Diversity, Inclusion
 - Shelley Halpain, Frances Contreras, Amy Cimini, Karen Christman
- Subgroup on the Impact on Research
 - Susan Narucki, Miroslav Krstic, Daniel Arovas, Bonnie Kaiser
- Subgroup on the Impact on Academic Review Process
 - Maripat Corr, Peter Cowhey, Cindy Palmer
- Subgroup on the Impact on Teaching
 - Robert Continetti, Matthew Herbst, Sarah Gille

The report of the workgroup that follows is organized into sections that address 1) Actions taken to date at UC San Diego in response to COVID-19, 2) Guiding principles for our efforts to limit the impact of COVID-19 on faculty carers, 3) Principal short-term and long-term impacts, and 4) Short term recommendations for reducing the impact of COVID-19 on faculty careers. Appendix 1 describes a Proposal for One-time Offset in Academic Reviews in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic.

A. Summary of actions taken to date at UC San Diego in response to COVID-19

1. Communication strategies:

Several initiatives and communication strategies were implemented during the initial stages of the transition to remote operations including development of UC San Diego's [Educational Continuity Task Force](#) to provide guidance and resources to support the educational mission of the university during the pandemic. A set of [Frequently Asked Questions regarding educational continuity](#) and a broader [Academic Affairs FAQ](#) were created and are updated regularly; the latest information is broadcast biweekly via the [Academic Affairs Newsletter](#).

The [Teaching and Learning Commons](#) and its [keep teaching website](#) continues to assist instructors with developing [strategies for impactful remote instruction](#) or refining elements of their remote courses. To that end, the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office created a *Departmental Technology Liaison Program* through AY 2020-21. Launched in Spring 2020, this program provided discipline-specific assistance to faculty and teaching assistants teaching remotely or wanting to learn more about how to integrate technology in their teaching practice.

The [COVID-19 Continuity of Research website](#) is a resource page designed to assist researchers and principal investigators in considering how changes in procedures during COVID-19 might impact their research, their lab staff, and their contractual obligations to funding received. Information on this page includes guidance from federal grant agencies regarding COVID-19 policies affecting contracts and grants and a list of research projects led by UC San Diego principal investigators relevant to COVID-19.

[Town Halls](#) have been routinely held for Students, Staff, and Faculty that provide critical information about COVID-19 restrictions and plans and serve as an important communication tool that should continue for the foreseeable future.

2. COVID-19 benefits/programs for eligible academics

A number of programs and benefits have been employed to date during the pandemic to mitigate the impact on faculty. These are enumerated in this section.

- [COVID-19 Probationary Period Extension and Academic Deferral Toolkit](#)
On March 24, 2020, Chancellor Khosla and EVC Simmons, in consultation with the UC San Diego Academic Senate, announced that appointees with a probationary period could receive automatic extensions to their probationary periods due to the pandemic. To support the program, Academic Personnel Services hosted a toolkit vetted by CAP and the Academic Senate for eligibility guidelines and procedural guidance.

- [Bright Horizons Back-Up Care Out of Network Care Expanded Benefit for Ladder Rank and Teaching Professors](#)
As of January 15, 2021, for a limited time period, UC San Diego activated an option to secure care from within a faculty member's own personal network (a neighbor, friend, or babysitter) and receive a reimbursement of \$100 per day.

- [COVID-19-Related Caregiver Modified Duties](#)
To help address the disparate impact of COVID-19 on faculty who are under the purview of Academic Personnel Manual 760-28 with dependent care responsibilities, Executive Vice Chancellor Simmons and the Academic Personnel Services Office received approval from UC Provost and Executive Vice President Michael Brown to implement the interim COVID-19 Care Modified Duties Program (CCMD) as a temporary exception to policy. This includes faculty on the General Campus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) and Health Sciences. Approved requests for CCMD include any of the following measures, or a combination thereof, though this list is not exhaustive:
 - o Relief from service obligations and responsibilities for an academic term
 - o Flexibility in terms of requesting days of the week and timing of classes, subject to scheduling constraints as determined by the Registrar
 - o Flexibility in what courses are taught within a specific academic term
 - o Other support for teaching such as co-teaching with advanced graduate students

- o Partial relief from teaching without the assignment of additional future teaching duties (full relief from teaching may also be available in exceptional circumstances)

As of May 4, 2021, thirty-five (35) requests for CCMD have been submitted on the general campus.

- Arts and Humanities - 7
 - Jacobs School of Engineering – 2
 - Physical Sciences – 2
 - Social Sciences – 24
 - SIO – 2
- [Dependent Care Travel Grant Program with New COVID-Related Support for Care Givers Teaching and Attending Conferences Remotely](#)
Through the Dependent Care Travel Grant program (DCTG), Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC) Simmons provides \$125,000 annually to help offset costs for Senate faculty who incur dependent care expenses related to travel. In addition, this academic year, as a separate provision due to COVID-19, EVC Simmons extended use of the program by allowing up to one \$600 DCTG each quarter to support dependent care needs that originate from faculty teaching responsibilities or from participation in professional conferences even if remote. Senate faculty were allowed to request use of this grant to offset care costs for dependents in their homes whose care facilities, schools, or daycare's have been closed or remain less than fully operational due to COVID-19 precautions.

As of April 14, 2021, fifty seven (57) faculty requested DCTG to support dependent care needs.

- [Faculty COVID Relief Grant](#)
The Center for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion, with funding from the UC Office of the President's Advancing Faculty Diversity Program and Chancellor Pradeep Khosla, provided active Senate and Non-Senate Faculty COVID-19 Relief Grants of up to \$2,500 to provide support to faculty demonstrating acute needs as a result of COVID-19. The program supported eligible faculty who demonstrated a need for assistance due to unexpected demands on their time during the pandemic, e.g., redesigning courses, remote teaching challenges, increased support for students, young children at home (who would normally be in school or daycare) or other related challenges.

B. Guiding principles for UC San Diego's efforts to limit negative impacts of COVID-19 on faculty careers

As stated at the beginning of our report, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a once-in-a-century disruption, unprecedented in scale and scope. It would be difficult to find any individual whose life, livelihood and family have not been impacted in some way by the events of the past fifteen months. We are heartened to see diminishing numbers of cases in the United States and the

outward appearance of life “returning to normal”. However, we must acknowledge that on a global scale, the pandemic is far from over and its effects will resonate for some time to come; we see these effects acutely as we consider the academic personnel review process.

While recognizing that systemwide analyses of the Academic Personnel process are taking place and will continue throughout the coming months, our discussions have led to a set of recommendations that UC San Diego should consider in the Academic Personnel review process during AY 21-22, and possibly into the future. As will be elucidated below, the recommendations provide support to faculty as we continue to deal with the vicissitudes and disruptions of the current phase of the pandemic.

We can assert with confidence that all faculty were impacted by the pandemic; however, for many, the impacts have been devastating. Some faculty lost family members or close friends. Many faculty lost access to labs and facilities. Experiments, exhibitions, conferences and research have been disrupted due to closures, and with travel restrictions the opportunity to engage in field work and collaboration evaporated. Faculty time and effort was redirected to the implementation of online teaching and to supporting their students, many of whom faced multiple crises. For some, home schooling and additional child care duties came to the fore. Some faculty had to contend with health issues, family crises and mental health concerns; and some health sciences faculty devoted more time to patient care. For many faculty members, the COVID-19 pandemic has created problems that are complex, intertwined and in some cases, deeply personal. Each person’s experience should be considered with empathy and with understanding. We should intervene where possible, consistent with policy, to mitigate the impacts that faculty members have experienced.

We believe that UC San Diego should provide **specific, targeted support** to faculty whose research trajectories have been most impacted, to enable faculty to re-engage with existing research that has been disrupted. Such support could also enable faculty to retool (within reason) in order to expand or shift research focus. We also believe that faculty **should not be penalized** for lack of research productivity over the course of the pandemic. We suggest that UC San Diego create various mechanisms through which faculty can discuss what they have achieved, relative to opportunity, **through a process that is not administratively burdensome**.

To be sure, faculty whose research productivity continued unimpeded and/or who had a robust period of activity during this period should be congratulated, but should also be judged by our existing pre-pandemic standards. For faculty with serious disruptions to research and creative activity, we will suggest commensurate reduction of teaching and service expectations in the near-term through programs like CCMD in order to facilitate a return to a balanced academic portfolio of teaching, research and service appropriate to their series.

C. Principal short-term and long-term impacts on faculty careers: a representative sampling

1. Research

Assessing long-term impacts on faculty research is, at best, a speculative process. We know that some disciplines have been more affected than others. We can also hypothesize that in some fields, disruptions will continue to occur, responding to unstable health conditions worldwide. We see uncertainty in research trajectories for creative and performing artists whose research is dependent on collaborations, both at our institution and in the wider professional world, as well as for experimentalists, researchers with human subjects, field researchers, among many others. However, in discussing short-term impacts of COVID-19 on faculty research, a number of concrete examples and scenarios came to the fore. The examples given in the following paragraphs are not exhaustive by any means: it is intended to represent a range of potential impacts, presented in order to provide context about the scope and scale of the issues that faculty are facing.

The short-term impacts of COVID-19 on faculty research have been substantial. Faculty find themselves directly affected in numerous ways: unable to collect data and therefore develop publications, unable to meet deliverables on grants, unable to visit field sites or communities to develop new research projects, and, or unable to produce results that provide preliminary evidence for research proposals in development.

In the creative and performing arts, the lack of opportunity to engage in existing collaborative research projects on campus, nationally and internationally, due to COVID-19 public health restrictions and systemic interruptions in various fields of endeavor is nothing short of devastating. Data compiled by major philanthropic organizations and federal granting agencies suggest that creative and performing artists have some of the highest instances of unemployment since the onset of the pandemic.^{1,2} While UC San Diego arts faculty have stable and sustained employment, we must recognize that external research opportunities in these fields have atrophied.

In addition, many faculty members in the humanities and social sciences have found it difficult to make progress due to inability to access research materials (e.g., libraries or archives), to engage in fieldwork that requires domestic or international travel, or to engage with human subjects for the purpose of primary data collection. Depending on the location, international fieldwork and community-based domestic research are likely to be disrupted for years to come, as the pandemic continues to affect marginalized communities and low- and middle-income

¹ Americans for the Arts, 501c3 engaged in nationwide arts advocacy. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/americans-for-the-arts-news/covid-19-impact-on-the-arts-research-update-may-4-2020>

² National Endowment for the Arts, federal granting agency for arts funding. <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/COVID-Outlook-Week-of-1.4.2021-revised.pdf>

countries most profoundly. Finally, faculty have found it difficult to make progress on research projects due to reduced access to facilities and reduced staff support at UC San Diego.

Across the full spectrum of disciplines at the university, we note that for many faculty members, research activity has been disrupted on a systemic level. In many fields, faculty research is dependent on the work done by graduate students and postdocs. In considering the manner in which COVID-19 has impacted the work of graduate students and postdocs; the widespread disruption of research, (in lab, health science, and other collaborative settings, and in the creative and performing arts) has impeded results needed for project completion, publication submission, etc.

A whole host of cascading problems are thus set into motion: delays may affect the students' ability to successfully complete their degree programs, grants may expire before the students have graduated. Some faculty will have a 1 to 1.5 year gap in bringing new students into their programs because admitted students either could not get a visa (due to COVID-19, not due to immigration policies) or the students stayed at home because there was no point coming to UCSD where their advisors' labs operated at only 25% capacity. Recently appointed faculty may have used startup funds on students appointed in Fall 2019 but with no results, therefore finding themselves with no prospects of grants to continue to support those students. Although faculty at many stages may encounter this problem, junior faculty who find themselves in this situation are particularly vulnerable.

In the case of performing arts, students had no access to facilities or the opportunity to engage in collaborative research/performance projects; they may have been first-year PhD students in departments in which the students on a fellowship choose an advisor only after the first academic year. Postdocs may find themselves in the difficult position of having their UC San Diego appointment end due to lack of funding, without being able to show results which would lead to the employment opportunities for which they have long been preparing. The situation is altogether lamentable.

The 1 to 1.5 year gap in bringing new students into programs may have a disproportionately negative effect on some academic programs, particularly those that are new, underfunded or that have had recent faculty retirements or separations. When coupled with the hiring freeze in AY 20-21, some programs and academic units may find themselves in a very precarious position.

Faculty at all career stages are cut off from networking opportunities that take place at conferences, creating a difficult situation for those who do not have the time, bandwidth or inclination to adapt to self-promotion in virtual environments. Opportunities for sabbatical leaves may have been affected, which could have an impact on planned collaborations or explorations of new research directions.

Faculty with ongoing care of dependents (children, eldercare, etc.) have been particularly impacted, and are likely to need special support in order to successfully reengage with research, and the task force has made specific recommendations for faculty in this group.

We may also speculate about the impact on faculty at different stages of their careers. Obviously, assistant professors are at high risk; they may also be a group with high resilience and least overlooked by funding agencies when it comes to special programs. Early mid-career (associate professors) may be overlooked, as a population that is most likely to have child care duties. Finally, senior professors who have been productive in normal times, and have been impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. loss of students and grants), may find it too difficult to re-start research operations. They may disengage sooner than they otherwise would. The cumulative effect of impacts on faculty at all stages of their careers would lead to a gradual weakening of the vibrant, intellectual landscape of UC San Diego - a situation we must do our best to guard against.

2. Teaching

The short-term impacts of COVID-19 on the teaching mission of faculty have been significant. Even in the absence of a pandemic, it would have been a great challenge to implement on short notice a new teaching methodology – online instruction – across the campus. The situation demanded an extraordinary response and the faculty provided just that, in a variety of ways. From taking extra time to transition course materials to the remote environment, to upgrading home technology for delivery of instruction, to dealing with countless unexpected technological hurdles, faculty engaged in the process wholeheartedly. Faculty also addressed many student concerns, often giving freely of time to counsel students, offering additional office hours, and spending more time discussing students' personal crises.

As has already been stated, the unique nature of this public health crisis compounded the disruption for faculty teaching at home. Many experienced competing responsibilities and stressors simultaneously. Faculty coped with erratic internet and worries about delivering a reasonable class, while caring for immunocompromised family members, caring for children navigating their own on-line learning experience, and facing health issues of extended family. Finally, it must be noted that extra time spent adapting courses for online delivery left little to no time for more substantive content-driven updates for courses, in addition to taking time from research activities, service to the university and the community. Taking all of these factors into consideration, we feel that if faculty engaged with the students, a course of study was completed, and grades were assigned, that this could be deemed a success. One of the measures taken by the Senate and Administration in response to the pandemic was to make submission of the course and professor evaluations (CAPEs) from the SP20 quarter optional. We recommend returning to the practice of including CAPEs in all files beginning with the FA20 quarter, preferably in the context of a holistic teaching portfolio, with the understanding that reviewers will keep the context of the pandemic in mind.

The educational mission is not only focused on didactic instruction, and significant impacts on the mentoring of undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral fellows in research and creative activity must also be considered. From the inability to access research laboratories, archives, research subjects, etc., to the cessation of in-person mentoring and cancellation of performances, there is no question that the pandemic has resulted in the diminution of research and creative activity across the disciplines. At the same time, faculty have spent vastly increased time engaged in mentorship focused on emotional support and other non-research tasks to support their advisees.

Considering the long-term impacts on teaching, there are likely to be both positive and negative effects. All faculty gained experience with online instruction, and have been exposed to new tools for teaching effectively. Some faculty will adopt elements of what they learned in their post-COVID-19 classrooms, others will likely develop remote 'R' courses with Academic Senate approval. Hopefully in general the faculty will be better prepared to make effective use of remote learning in both theory and practice. The pandemic has also brought to the fore new types of academic integrity concerns in the remote environment (e.g. Chegg) and may have long-term impact on the student expectations for how course materials will be made available to them. As we endeavor to return to campus, many faculty may feel that they have even more work to do to update their courses.

3. Service

The workgroup did not have a subcommittee tasked with discussions regarding the impact of COVID-19 on faculty engagement in service. However, in terms of the academic personnel review process, recommendations are embedded in the following section and woven into discussions in the preceding section, as we consider how faculty met the myriad challenges of the past fifteen months, serving their students, their families and their communities. We celebrate those who were able to engage in broader service, but aligning with the guiding principles that we offer, assert that those who were unable to maintain a robust record of service ought not be penalized in upcoming faculty reviews.

Specific recommendations for work-life balance and considerations of equity, diversity and inclusion are woven throughout the document. One particularly noteworthy consideration: due to the sudden and unprecedented circumstance of widespread K-12 school closures for most of 2020-21, as well as changes to provision of elder and illness care for family members, many faculty felt obliged to step down from or curtail their engagement in leadership positions within the University. The workgroup recognizes that women and members of underrepresented groups may be disproportionately impacted by this circumstance. The significant strides made in recent decades to expand leadership opportunities for such recently marginalized groups could substantially reduce progress toward leadership equity within the University. We recommend that department chairs, Deans, and other administrators recognize this problem and take proactive measures to ensure that leadership roles are returned to those who desire them at the earliest opportunity, while also showing appropriate recognition to those faculty who have stepped in to fill temporary leadership gaps.

As will be noted in the following section, the workgroup recommends the continuation of programs in place that are dedicated to faculty support, as well as establishing a new funding stream to offer faculty time and support to re-engage with their research. We also include recommendations regarding implementation of COVID-19 impact statements with an eye toward a fair and transparent process. We look forward to the report of the systemwide Senate Administrative task force for further recommendations that will be implemented throughout the University of California system.

D. Short-Term Recommendations for Reducing the Impact of COVID-19

1. Achievement relative to opportunity:

It is important to introduce the concept of *achievement relative to opportunity* as an evaluative concept enabling fair and equitable assessment given the opportunities won or lost due to COVID-19. A body of resources/data about the impact of the pandemic on various disciplines should be assembled to provide additional context to reviewers, including ad hoc committees, department reviewers, Divisional Deans, CAP and final decision makers. The existing resources/publications/research should support the departmental impact and faculty adaptability statements and serve as a tool to assist reviewers. The compilation should be a joint effort between Academic Personnel Services (APS) and individual department/divisions; APS could provide general resources and data that are broadly applicable, but each department and division would assemble its own information to support discipline specific issues.

In some cases, it might be necessary to rebalance the weight of academic portfolios of different disciplines during COVID-19, in order to give credit for community engagement (previously viewed as service), depending on scope and scale of work. Guidance on how other institutions have made this shift, such as the whitepaper on Guidance for Rewarding and Recognizing Community-Engaged Scholarship in the Arts from the Big Ten Arts Administrators³ could help us define general equivalencies (how to weigh different forms of activities) in relation to the metric of the number of publications or performances.

2. Department COVID-19 impact statement:

Within the department letter, the Chair should include a statement providing general context and a clear articulation of how the pandemic has affected the specific case, including increased specificity for the sub-discipline as necessary. The department letter should set the standard by which the candidate is assessed using the concept of *achievement relative to opportunity*. Where applicable, the department is encouraged to employ the flexibility provided in APM-210 when weighing achievements across the different evaluation areas. The relevant verbiage in APM-210 states: “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.”

For example, the COVID-19 pandemic may have created situations where faculty have demonstrated exemplary effort in teaching and service that compensate for their reduced opportunity to reach prior norms in research productivity. Additional relevant verbiage in APM-210 states: “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

³ Guidance for Rewarding and Recognizing Community-Engaged Scholarship in the Arts, Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities. <https://www.a2ru.org/new-report-on-guidance-for-rewarding-recognizing-community-engaged-scholarship-in-the-arts/>

established academic patterns. In such cases, the review committees must take exceptional care to apply the criteria with sufficient flexibility.” The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the University to refocus its ongoing activities, and there will be cases where the work of faculty members departs markedly from established academic patterns.

3. Faculty COVID-19 impact and adaptability statement:

Faculty are highly encouraged to include a COVID-19 impact and adaptability statement in their review file, in which the member outlines the ways in which the pandemic disrupted their normal opportunities and expected achievements.

Some members suggested that, in order to promote equity and destigmatize such statements, that COVID-19 impact statements should be included by all faculty, regardless of whether they have been particularly negatively impacted.

A majority of members proposed that these statements also be viewed as an opportunity to highlight specific ways in which the member demonstrated innovation and adaptability in view of the pandemic circumstances. Faculty should discuss how their research or teaching was impacted, but are not obliged to disclose personal details (such as medical or dependent-care challenges).

Within the adaptability statement, Faculty should include a narrative that provides reviewers with a summary of teaching and an explanation of the challenges faced. This provides faculty the chance to describe their pivot to remote instruction – time, skills needed (Zoom, Canvas, Kaltura, etc.), how they were addressed, and the overall work impact. The impact and adaptability statement may also address extra accommodations related to students (e.g. dealing with crises and additional non-academic support or counseling).

4. Flexibility to the October 15 file cut-off date:

Allow an extension to the file cut-off date for career review actions by allowing CAP or the final decision maker to request an update to the file. The update may be solicited by CAP or the final authority (VC/Dean/Dean equivalent, EVC or the Chancellor) in lieu of a preliminary negative decision. If solicited, candidates will be allowed a one-time file update through April 30. Acceptable updates for these cases include inclusion of significant service commitments, additional teaching evaluations, updates to grant awards and publications, and previously solicited extramural letters that arrived late.

Alternatively, the campus should more liberally make use of cross-over steps in lieu of promotion. Use of cross-over steps prevents loss of salary and allows faculty to subsequently submit promotion files within the normative time at step without requiring off-cycle or accelerated review considerations.

5. Extend the opportunity for clock extensions for appointees hired 7/1/2020 to 6/30/2021

Allow academic appointees who were appointed between 7/1/2020 and 6/30/2021, and who are subject to an 8-year clock, to request a COVID-19 pandemic related extension to the probationary period. The department must make the case that exigent circumstances support the extension. The “opt-in” mode will allow faculty to request the extension as soon as it becomes apparent that their productivity has been negatively impacted rather than offering an automatic extension that they may not need.

6. Revision to solicitation letters

Recommendation 1: Academic Personnel Services should revise solicitation letters to allow writers to include information regarding the impact of the pandemic on their field and the implications of **achievement relative to opportunity**. Outside reviewers and ad hoc committees should be encouraged to pay special attention to contextualizing the lack of opportunity that may exist in specific fields during the COVID-19 pandemic. The solicitation letter should additionally ask reviews to comment if pandemic related issues make a difference in the case presented to them and if so, to explain how.

Recommendation 2: In AY 21-22, departments could request an exception to the number of required letters vs number of letters received if reviewers report an inability to respond due to their own pressures and time constraints related to the pandemic. In those cases, the letters received must be appropriately evaluative and unequivocally supportive of the advancement. The exception is intended to be utilized in cases in which a candidate’s record of research, teaching, and service within their respective rank and length of service is commensurate with the proposed action, and for which there is strong departmental and divisional support.

7. Streamlined process for normal merit

Departments should be encouraged to adopt the short-form for normal, on-time merit actions where the departmental criteria have been met and there are no special circumstances.

8. Proposal for one-time offset for advancement

As a one-time measure, when there is clear evidence of significant loss of productivity due to COVID-19 along with an otherwise worthy academic record during the review period, such that an individual cannot earn a full-step advance, a half-step offset will be provided to enable a full-step advance if required.

This provision does not apply to accelerated merit advances, merit advances to Professor Step VI, merit advances to Professor Above Scale, or promotions since those personnel actions occur at barrier steps that involve career reviews. Actions at a barrier step could use the offset to justify a bonus off-scale.

See attached proposal in Appendix 1.

9. Resources and programs that enable recovery of research programs/trajectories for eligible faculty

We recognize that the COVID-19 Care Modified Duties (CCMD) and Dependent Care Travel Grant (DCTG), in their current configuration, offer support for faculty whose need to care for dependents/extended family has been impacted by increased care burden caused by COVID-19. We recommend broadening the scope of programs such as CCMD and DCTG to offer support to faculty whose research programs have been severely impacted.

CCMD Extension – We support extending and renaming the COVID-19 Care Modified Duties (CCMD) program to COVID-19 Impact Modified Duties (CIMD). We recommend extending CIMD so that faculty who have faced hardships outside of issues related to dependent care can use the program to get their scholarly projects back on track. The extended CIMD should be made available if there has been significant impact on their research and/or creative activity during the pandemic (and there may be continuing impact in AY21-22). Documenting reduction of teaching and service expectations via CIMD maintains a consistent campus-wide process across all departments. Faculty need to apply for CIMD, providing sufficient context to justify their request and help departmental evaluators assess the need, but are not expected to disclose personal information Note: We do not recommend department-wide reductions in teaching load. The expanded program should:

- Provide a dedicated stream of funding (i.e. funding should not come from departments)
- Be focused on offering course release time to faculty who were severely impacted due to increased dependent care, but also include faculty whose increased teaching and service commitments over the period from March 2020 through the present have had a negative impact on research trajectories.
- Implement criteria that should be flexible enough to apply to faculty in different disciplines at all stages of career. The application process should be transparent and include departmental, decanal and Academic Affairs review.

Given the potential for continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend that the CIMD program be made available to all eligible faculty, who are under the purview of Academic Personnel Manual 760-28, through academic year 2022-23. However, the workgroup understands that extensions of the program to include other academic titles or to go beyond the initial 2-year time frame (19-20 and 20-21) will require additional review and approval by Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Michael Brown.

Dependent Care Travel Grant – In addition to traditional use of the Dependent Care Travel Grant program, the current one-year provision allowing faculty to request up to one \$600 DCTG each quarter to support dependent care needs that originate from faculty teaching responsibilities **or** from participation in professional conferences even if remote should continue for the 21-22 AY.

Augment funding for the Bridge Funding program of the Academic Senate Committee on Research: Bridge funding may play a critical role in assisting faculty in recovering from COVID-19 interruptions.

10. Best Practices in Teaching in the Post COVID-19 environment

As has been previously stated, the COVID-19 pandemic required faculty to adapt to teaching in a remote teaching environment. Some faculty are eager to return to the classroom and to jettison online instruction entirely. However, other faculty are interested in carrying over some elements from the remote instructional experience to their post-COVID-19 classroom. Others have become interested in continuing to develop remote instruction.

The SAWAA teaching workgroup made a number of suggestions for implementation. Department might identify and engage with pedagogical experts who can share disciplinary specific ‘best practices’ in teaching, drawing on the scholarship of teaching and learning in light of the experiences that COVID-19 has offered to the field of higher education. Our Teaching Professors could be particularly useful in disseminating such information.

Each academic division or school could hold annual or semi- quarterly workshops coordinated with the Teaching and Learning Commons. Faculty can include a narrative in their teaching portfolio showing their participation in such workshops and explain how their teaching aligns with best practices in their discipline. (The campus’ holistic teaching report recommended a related idea).

Above all, the entire committee recognized the extraordinary work that university faculty did in maintaining pedagogical continuity over the past year - courses were taught, grades submitted - and this should be recognized as sufficient to demonstrate that faculty have met teaching expectations through this year. Fundamentally, faculty “did their jobs” through an extraordinary time and this must be acknowledged.

Conclusion

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the university and society as a whole is continuing to evolve, and will be enduring. At the first meeting of the SAWAA workgroup, we recognized the complexity of the task before us. Over the course of our conversations and meetings, many of the same concerns cropped up. We offer ten recommendations upon which we found broad agreement among the members of the taskforce.

That being said, recommendation number eight generated the most discussion among the members of the group. Those supporting the action judged that, in the case of many faculty, the proposed one-time offset would provide an opportunity to offer financial relief and a much-needed sense of support from the University to its faculty. Those who were less enthusiastic articulated concerns about the process and implementation, questioning whether the support could be applied equitably among the faculty.

At any rate, we expect that the recommendations as a whole, will be thoroughly discussed by leadership of the Academic Senate and the Administration. We would urge a timely review of the report. The members of the workgroup are well aware that there is very little time to implement changes in the upcoming year's academic review; it is our sincere hope that our work will have a strong, positive impact and offer relief to faculty colleagues who have given so much during a very difficult time.

Appendix 1

Proposal for One-time Offset in Academic Reviews in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic

Effective for merit actions with effective dates of July 1, 2021 through July 1, 2025

As a one-time measure, when there is clear evidence of significant loss of productivity due to COVID-19, such that an individual cannot earn a full-step advance, a half-step offset could be provided so that the individual receives a full-step advance or the equivalent thereof. This action is applicable to faculty members that are being considered for a merit advancement (not promotion), at all academic ranks, including Above-Scale. The one-time offset is a permanent step and salary increase, in contrast with a bonus off-scale salary increment, which is of limited duration. Since the vast majority of faculty receive a merit advance or more, this policy would handle most cases.

Faculty members shall receive a merit advancement if:

1. The review period of their next merit review (including mandatory five year reviews) includes one or both years in the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021;
2. Have records of teaching and service for that review that are judged to be good or better pre-pandemic, and were able to transition to remote operations during the pandemic;
3. Whose research record at their last academic review earned a step or more advance;
4. Whose research record at the current review is judged not to meet expectations for a full-step advance; *and* who attest in a self-statement that their research was significantly negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic;
5. Who, without this offset, would otherwise be considered for a traditional ½ step bonus off-scale in lieu of merit.

This offset cannot be used to justify a greater-than-normal advance (i.e., a merit + BOS or accelerated merit). Hence, even if the teaching or service or both records are deemed outstanding, if the research record, but for the offset, fails to meet normal expectations, then the faculty member in question can receive only one step.

If faculty are up for a promotion (i.e. Assistant to Associate, Associate to Full), the above criteria will still apply, but an equivalent cross over step will be used. If crossover steps are exhausted at a barrier step, such as at Associate Professor V, Professor V, and Professor IX, the one-time offset could be used to justify a bonus off-scale increment.

For newly appointed Assistant Professors, given that the standards for a first merit after appointment for Assistant Professors are already fairly minimal, it is unlikely that any newly hired Assistant Professors will need the offset. For faculty who were hired with tenure, the individuals, their chairs, and/or deans should provide evidence that a research record that fails to meet expectations is the result of COVID-19, and their efforts should be considered by reviewers in the context of achievement relative to opportunity.

In addition, in the rare instances in which a faculty member did not meet the criteria for a merit advancement at a step other than the barrier steps, and instead was recommended for a “no-change”, we ask for extra scrutiny in the review process in the context of achievement relative to opportunity.

This policy would expire after July 1, 2026; that is, it expires after the effective date of the last five-year review that could encompass July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in the review period.