

DATE: May 2, 2022

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Dawn Bratsch-Prince, Associate Provost for Faculty  
Tera Jordan, Assistant Provost for Faculty Development

RE: Documenting impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on faculty work

The Provost's Office has issued clear [communication](#) to address impacts of the sudden disruption and unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These impacts continue to unfold, and they continue to affect faculty work.

One data point that exemplifies these impacts is the use of the COVID-19 tenure-clock extension by pre-tenure faculty across Iowa State's academic colleges. It is evident the variability in pandemic-related experiences has affected faculty goals and productivity differently based on their respective disciplines, experiences, privileges, and constraints. The pandemic has clearly affected faculty position responsibilities and, hence, evaluation, promotion, and advancement.

Faculty have an opportunity to document the impacts of the pandemic in their promotion, tenure, and advancement materials through faculty activity reports, annual evaluations, and COVID impact statements. Previously, the Provost's Office encouraged faculty and department chairs to consider the following questions:

- How did the opportunities to carry out their position responsibilities change?
- How did the pandemic disrupt their teaching?
- How were research and/or creative activities impacted?
- What changes did they experience in their extension, outreach, or clinical work?
- How were their service commitments modified?

In reviewing the AY2021-2022 portfolios and dossiers for advancement and promotion, we have observed how faculty have documented notable impacts to their position responsibilities related to teaching, research, service, and extension/professional practice. For example, some faculty have incorporated greater detail about the flip to virtual and hybrid teaching, their reflections on how they adapted and, more importantly, what they learned from the experience. Others have documented how laboratory research pivoted from planned areas of inquiry to areas directly related to the science of COVID-19. And yet others documented how

global travel restrictions limited access to research archives, attendance at conferences, and invited talks. Faculty have also described how traditional, face-to-face human subjects research and extension activities were adapted or modified to take advantage of new modalities and pandemic-focused topics.

As a resource for faculty and departments, ISU ADVANCE has developed a guide for faculty (including department chairs and promotion, tenure, and advancement committee members) on [Best Practices for Documenting the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Faculty Workload](#). These best practices are based on research and approaches being utilized across higher education.

Based on the pandemic's continuing impact on faculty scholarship and position responsibilities, and in alignment with [other Association for Public Land-grant Universities \(APLU\)](#), we ask department chairs to foster discussion with all faculty about the impact of the ongoing pandemic and the value of documenting its impact on their work and productivity. More specifically, given the ways in which scholarship has been affected for many disciplines as described in the [National Academies Press](#), the [American Association of University Professors](#) and other venues, we encourage department chairs and promotion, tenure, and advancement committees to revisit and discuss the *Faculty Handbook's* [Meaning of Scholarship \(5.2.2.2.1\)](#) to provide clarity and consistency in evaluation.

We hope you find this guidance useful as you prepare for the next promotion, tenure, and advancement cycle.