

Recommended COVID-19 Promotion and Tenure Accommodations

To: Faculty Senate

From: Faculty Personnel Committee

David Bithell, Chair

Statement of Intent

The Faculty Personnel Committee acknowledges that SOU faculty members may experience wide ranging impacts to their teaching, service, and scholarship as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that the pandemic will affect faculty members differently and will likely exacerbate inequalities already present based on age, gender, race, ability, and socio-economic status. Additionally, there may be lingering impacts on faculty unable to initiate new research during this period. As such, it is our intention to support our faculty who may be going up for promotion and/or tenure during or after these challenging times with a series of reasonable and flexible accommodations.

Faculty members may choose to use, or not use, any of the accommodations below. Faculty members will be asked to provide context on the impacts of the pandemic in relation to particular activities for which accommodation is requested. This can take the form of narrative addendums to promotion and/or tenure materials, documentary evidence as appropriate (e.g. letters of acceptance from cancelled conferences) or both.

Recommendations

1. *Bylaws Amendment - Automatic One-Year Extension of Tenure Clock*. We recommend that the Faculty Senate vote to amend the Bylaws, section 5.220 as follows:
 - a. Automatic One-Year Extension. A faculty member who experiences a pregnancy, birth or adoption of a child, death of a spouse or partner, ~~or~~ death of a child, ~~or other significant crisis or hardship (including, but not limited to: pandemic, natural disaster, political unrest)~~ will automatically be granted a one-year extension by the Provost upon written notification and submission of a supporting document (e.g. a physician's letter or a copy of a death certificate) by the faculty member to the Provost. ~~In the case of a crisis or hardship with broad impacts (e.g. pandemic or natural disaster), a supporting document is not required.~~ Notification letters and supporting documents should not include specific information about medical history or manifestation of diseases or disorders. ~~Additionally, Faculty Senate may pass a resolution enabling this automatic one-year extension for all pre-tenure faculty members as a result of significant situations not otherwise covered here as agreed upon by the Senate.~~

Following such a Senate resolution, faculty members should submit written notification to the Provost stating that they wish to utilize the extension, though no individual documentation is required. If a faculty member experiences more than one event, then a maximum Tenure Clock Extension of three years may be granted. A maximum extension of one year may be granted for either or each Annual Review and Colleague Evaluation.

2. *Temporary Adjustment to University-wide Promotion and Tenure Expectations.* We recommend the following:

a. Teaching

- i. Student Evaluations. Faculty members may choose, at their discretion, to include or omit student evaluations from Winter 2020, Spring 2020 and/or Summer 2020 in one's P&T application (n.b. student stressors at the end of Winter 2020 could negatively impact evaluations). Faculty may decide whether or not to include these evaluations after reviewing them. If an applicant chooses to withhold student evaluations from their application, it should not reflect negatively on the applicant. The Faculty Personnel Committee will revisit this issue in relation to subsequent terms as needed.
- ii. Teaching Narrative. Faculty are urged to use the Teaching Narrative in their P&T applications to specify how they transformed their teaching during the impacted quarter(s) and to reflect on new skills and strategies.

b. Service

- i. Recognition for Informal Leadership Roles. Faculty should include in P&T applications formal and informal service roles they have taken on for their program, university, community, and/or profession in response to the pandemic.
- ii. Service Narrative. Faculty are urged to use the Service Narrative in their P&T applications to specify how their service was affected during the impacted quarter(s).

c. Scholarship

- i. Accepted Presentations. Presentations, performances, or other public dissemination of research, scholarship, and creative activity that were accepted by a venue or event (e.g. conference, concert, gallery show, etc.) that was canceled or postponed will count as having been disseminated for impacted quarters. Faculty should submit documentation of acceptance from the venue.
- ii. Forthcoming Publications. Research, scholarship, or creative activity that has been accepted for publication and therefore forthcoming shall be deemed as published for impacted quarters. Faculty should submit documentation of acceptance from the publisher.

- iii. Alternate Forms of Dissemination. Online conferences, virtual concerts, live-streamed events, or other alternate forms of dissemination are eligible for inclusion in P&T applications. Determination of impact and regional scope should be justified in relationship to parameters such as number of event participants and reputation of sponsoring organization.
 - iv. Undisbursed Grant Funding. Financial impacts may delay disbursement of grant funding and leniency should be extended accordingly. Documented grant acceptance may be considered as a scholarship activity in and of itself.
 - v. Initiation of COVID-19 Related Research or Creative Activity. Faculty members who are engaging in new research, scholarship, or creative activity directly related to the pandemic should be supported. Documentation of works-in-progress, grant applications, and other early-stage manifestations of COVID-19 related work may be used as part of the P&T scholarship portfolio.
 - vi. Scholarship Narrative. Faculty will use the Scholarship Narrative in their P&T applications to specify how specific research, scholarship, and creative activities were affected.
3. *Programmatic Adjustments to Promotion and Tenure Expectations*. Academic Programs may propose additional adjustments to their approved Faculty Performance Expectations document. For P&T applications submitted during the 2020-2021 academic year, programs may choose to specify a temporary one-year reduction in the total number of scholarship activities required for the categories of “acceptable”, “preferred”, or “exceptional” as listed in approved programmatic Faculty Performance Expectations. Programs may also consider recognizing alternate forms of dissemination and/or publication to count as scholarship during the impacted period. Such temporary amendments should be submitted in writing for review by the Faculty Personnel Committee no later than Friday June 12, 2020.

There may be lingering impacts or challenges for faculty unable to initiate new research or continue existing research during this period. If programs expect that the number of required activities will need to remain altered beyond a one year accommodation, they should submit revisions to their permanent Faculty Performance Expectations.