

COVID-19 ATP Tenured/Tenure Track External Reviewer Statement

Thank you for agreeing to review this tenure and/or promotion packet, we greatly appreciate your external expertise in this process.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, faculty throughout our institution experienced significant disruptions to teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service. In conjunction with disruptions experienced here on campus, many faculty members had to navigate additional unforeseen burdens and challenges related to working from home. As these impacts were not felt equally we previously allowed any faculty member who wanted an optional tenure-clock extension to apply for one. Candidates who may have used university-approved extensions should be held to the same standards one expects for a typical probationary period; that is, additional time should not prejudice the review in any way.

Regardless of an extension request, we suggest you take into consideration these unprecedented events when evaluating all faculty member's teaching and mentoring; research, scholarship, and creative activities; and service **since spring 2020** and review this time period with compassion and flexibility. Research facilities and sites where faculty conduct research (e.g. labs, libraries, community, cultural, and educational institutions) were closed during the COVID pandemic. Access to many of these sites remains restricted.

To comply with social distancing, faculty had to work out of their homes, K-12 students switched to online instruction or homeschooling, childcare was unavailable for a period of time, and many faculty members were caregivers for family members who were ill and oftentimes many of these tasks fell to faculty members who are already underrepresented in the highest ranks. I ask that all external reviewers reflect on how to reasonably accommodate COVID-19 impacts, particularly with respect to the quantity and timing of research output since spring 2020.

Thank you for your time and effort in this process and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns regarding this statement.

Sincerely,

Steven J. Berberich, Ph.D.
Provost and Interim Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs