



March 25, 2020

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

The unprecedented worldwide health threat from Covid-19 has led to significant changes in the way that the university operates. We know that this is a very stressful time for you and we want to do everything that we can to support you. The intention of this memo is to reassure faculty undergoing reviews that they will not suffer in performance reviews or evaluations as a result of these disruptions. Further, this memo will explain ways in which they can document how actions taken during the Spring 2020 semester impacted their ability to teach students, conduct research, and serve the campus community including documenting work that they were prevented from doing. This memo also serves as guidance and context for future reviewers to consider when reviewing faculty members' files for evaluation purposes. This memo was written in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate, members of the CFA leadership at CSUSM, and the Academic Deans.

Conference Presentations

Due to Covid-19 travel bans and the cancellation of many conferences, some faculty were unable to present their work as planned. If a paper/poster/creative activity was accepted for presentation at a conference through a peer review process (or as an invited paper), this should be listed in the comprehensive CV, even if it wasn't presented because of the travel ban. Simply insert an asterisk next to the reference to the work in the CV and briefly explain.

Student Evaluations and Performance Reviews

Faculty members shall not suffer in performance reviews or evaluations due to instructional disruptions. Faculty have been asked to switch teaching modalities with minimal time for preparation to accommodate the virtual classroom. These changes will cause disruptions in student learning and consequently might adversely affect their evaluation of courses taught in Spring 2020. Given the unique circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty can choose whether or not they want to include Student Evaluations of Instruction (SEIs) from Spring 2020 in their Working Personnel Action Files (WPAFs). This decision can be made on a course-by-course basis. Spring 2020 SEIs excluded by a faculty member from their WPAF will not be considered in Performance Reviews or Periodic Evaluations. Further, the Spring 2020 student evaluations will not be used for other evaluative purposes unless the faculty member agrees. Should a faculty member choose not to include any or all Spring 2020 SEIs, absolutely no negative inference will be permitted by reviewers at any point in time. We are so grateful for all the work faculty have done to move to virtual instruction in support of our students and hope this choice will provide flexibility and ease potential concerns.

Faculty Research and Creative Activity

Faculty members shall not suffer in performance reviews or evaluations due to disruption to research/creative activity programs. Faculty research may be disrupted due to the time required for transition to alternative teaching modalities, or if studies/projects had to be stopped because of restricted access to campus (e.g., labs, studios, equipment needed for creative activity, performances, or research participants). Additionally,

consideration must be given to the fact that projects/activities may take months to get started again once access to campus resumes. It is also possible that these disruptions will have a permanent effect on previously planned projects. Clearly stated, faculty members shall not be penalized for disruption to research/creative activity programs during this time.

Faculty Service

Faculty members shall not suffer in performance reviews or evaluations if disruption affected their work in the area of service.

In addition, at the request of and in consultation with members of the CFA leadership team at CSUSM, probationary faculty shall be able to submit a written request for an extra probationary year on the retention, tenure and promotion clock. The written request shall be submitted to the appropriate administrator. The appropriate administrator shall grant the written request of probationary faculty for an extra probationary year. All parties agree that an extra probationary year must not come with the expectation that there will be additional professional development work. The grant of an extra probationary year is in recognition of the unanticipated workload in Spring 2020, the disruption to research programs, and the decreased time that probationary faculty members will have to devote to that research.

All reviewers of Working Personnel Action Files (WPAFs) shall consider the directives above in their review of any materials submitted as evidence of teaching, research, or service in the Spring 2020 semester.

All candidates for performance review and evaluation shall clearly and concisely note in their CV and narrative how the campus decisions regarding preventing the spread of COVID-19 impacted their planned activities in all three areas of evaluation. All faculty shall include a copy of this memo in their future WPAFs.

We know this is a stressful time and we are here for you. As we move forward, updates and resources will continue to be posted on the University's [COVID-19 webpage](#). Please reach out to your Deans, Associate Deans or the Office of Faculty Affairs if you need assistance. Also, the Employee Assistance Program offers confidential services for a wide range of concerns including anxiety and stress. For more information, visit the [CSUSM EAP webpage](#).

Sincerely,

Ranjeeta Basu
Ranjeeta Basu (Mar 25, 2020)

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