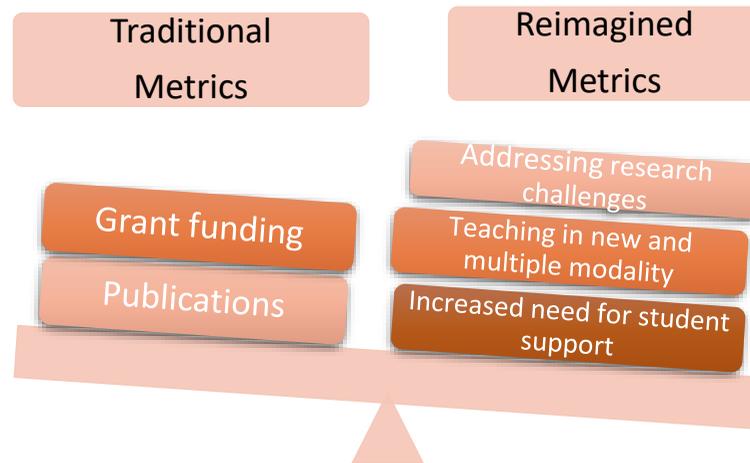


Equity Impacts of the Pandemic: Suggestions for Leadership

You know your faculty; center support on their needs



- Be aware of equity impacts and work to mitigate their effects.
- Equity adapts supports to the needs of each individual; equality gives everyone the same supports and resources. You know your faculty.
- Encourage the development of impact statements so that faculty can convey new responsibilities and unexpected challenges.
- Recognize the differential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; strive to lessen unequal outcomes.
- Assess faculty members by fairly accounting for their different working conditions under and even after the pandemic.
- Encourage use of pandemic impact statements in the evaluation processes so the variable impacts of COVID will be less likely to worsen existing inequalities.
- Have conversations with faculty about any accommodations they may need.
- Establish a departmental culture where personal needs are important and supported.

Resources on Equity Impacts

[Supporting Faculty During & After COVID-19](#)

[Don't let go of equity](#) –

The ASPIRE Alliance

[In the wake of COVID-19, academia needs new solutions to ensure gender equality](#) – *National Academies of Sciences*

Documenting Pandemic Impacts-Best Practices –

UMass Amherst ADVANCE

[Women's Emotional Labor in Higher Ed and the COVID-19 Crisis](#) –

Women in Higher Education

[The Virus Moved Female Faculty to the Brink.](#)

[Will Universities Help?](#) –

NYTimes

[Burning Out- Professors say faculty burnout is always a real threat, but especially now, and that institutions should act before it's too late.](#) – *Inside Higher Ed*

Higher Ed

Disproportionate Impacts

Women take on more service tasks than men. Service is not rewarded as much as research, even when service is essential (Guarino and Borden, (2017)).

- COVID has exacerbated this problem with service that is hard to quantify.
- COVID has disproportionately impacted communities of color; faculty of color may be similarly impacted.
- Faculty can self-advocate by documenting their “invisible service” in support the work of departments and colleges during the pandemic.
- Caregiving (and home schooling) has fallen to women; recent research shows that men have been disproportionately **advantaged** by the pandemic (Squazzoni et al. (2020)).
- Build systems to support faculty and their work and lives; prize equity over equality.

Supporting Faculty

Ensure faculty feel heard given imperative of balancing choices related to personal and family safety and well-being

- Acknowledge possible trauma among URM faculty in wake of civil unrest and systemic racism.
- Female faculty bear disproportionate responsibility for home, childcare/school responsibilities.
- Changing K-12 delivery modes force faculty to confront significant demands on time outside of RIT.
- Women may be reluctant to ask for help.
- Faculty are challenged by how these competing disruptions will translate long-term into productivity and advancement.
- Disruptions may seem short term (e.g., not able to apply for grants, present at conferences, etc.) but have long-term effects.
- Note [this memo](#) from Academic Senate and Provost (7/13/2020), regarding AY 2020 Plans of Work and faculty self-appraisals.

Pandemic Impact Statements: Pandemic Impact Statements can document COVID-19's impacts on a faculty member's career journey so others see the relevance of potentially hidden factors, both in terms of new responsibilities and unexpected challenges. By recognizing and documenting pandemic impacts through the evaluation process, the variable impacts of COVID-19 will be less likely to exacerbate existing inequalities. All faculty have been impacted to greater or lesser degrees but the impacts are compounded by differences among faculty. Evaluations should consider the impact of each person's unique working conditions—articulated in their Pandemic Impact Statement—on productivity.

Considerations for Evaluation: Consideration should be given to each individual's working conditions versus comparing faculty with differing work conditions. Faculty who opt-in to RIT's COVID-19 tenure extension must not be held to higher standards. Review committees may consider preparing a standardized acknowledgement of pandemic impacts to be included in faculty members' written evaluations so differential productivity may be recognized and rewarded.

Academic leaders are encouraged to de-stigmatize care and illness by acknowledging the disparate impact that COVID-19 had on faculty and the value of documenting these challenges in creating fair assessments. Not all faculty may choose to document health or caregiving impacts but documenting caregiving or homeschooling responsibilities (including single parenthood) highlights the disparate impact COVID-19 had on faculty's work. Faculty documentation of illness, risk of illness (pre-existing conditions, partnership with an essential worker), or loss of loved ones provides enhanced contextual understanding for assessments.

Addressing Pandemic Impact Statements in Faculty Evaluations

Acknowledging the impacts of the pandemic on faculty work will enable you to recalibrate the evaluation to focus on the work that faculty have been able to accomplish. The following four bullets summarize potential major categories of impacts and how they can be addressed in the evaluation.

- **Disruption-related impacts:** Characterization of disruption of normal work plans introduced by the pandemic can be used to recalibrate the evaluation by removing expectations of a typical year and focusing the evaluation on activities that the faculty member was able to accomplish.
- **Additional work, teaching, or service related to COVID:** The extra work that faculty needed to do related to COVID should be acknowledged and used to support a positive evaluation. Likewise, the quality of some of that work may contribute to a strong evaluation.
- **Specific challenges:** Noting instances where faculty showed adaptability and resilience despite challenges should be used to support a positive evaluation.
- **Advising and mentoring impact:** Acknowledging that the burden of advising and/or mentoring has increased for some faculty should be used to support a positive evaluation.

Personal Impacts: *Although faculty may share personal challenges that have impacted productivity (i.e. Stress, caregiving challenges, health issues) chairs should not include any personal information in faculty evaluations.*

The following may be included in a Pandemic Impact Statement

- **Changes to courses:** moving courses online; adopting of new technologies; identifying number of additional hours each week to adapt to changes (e.g., 15-hour/week workload for X course shifted to 30-hour/week workload for 7 weeks).
- **Specific challenges:** lack of resources (high-speed broadband, software) for faculty and students; trainings attended or led.
- **Additional teaching responsibilities:** course overloads due to personnel changes, retirements; issues with teaching assistants; assisting others with technology.
- **Changes to advising, particularly as students navigated changing requirements:** identify increases in advising load; note additional support for students experiencing physical and or mental health, economic, and social consequences of the pandemic.
- **Mentoring impacts:** additional mentoring time required with students/peers facing pandemic impacts; women and URM faculty already mentored students at higher levels, an even greater challenge during the pandemic.
- **Attending/leading meetings, additional efforts undertaken:** any work that would not have occurred during a regular semester; efforts to move meetings/events online e.g. commencement.
- **Additional work developing plans for closing/re-opening laboratories;** include coordination of research teams; developing safety protocols.
- **Contributions to any department, university, professional society, interdisciplinary, or community- engaged pandemic initiative.**
- **Disruptions to research or creative work. For example, faculty might note loss of:** research time due to increased or changed teaching and service responsibilities; sabbatical time, other paid or unpaid leave (Fulbright, etc.); research time due to health issues or caregiving responsibilities (based on willingness to disclose); access to necessary research facilities/labs/computing resources (including impacts on longitudinal research), studios, or venues for creative works/performances; access to research subjects, animals, cell cultures; additional time and resources spent to restart research, which varies by field; travel and field research opportunities; funding to support personnel due to travel and visa restrictions or due to research restrictions; access to internal or external research funds
- **Note other impacts:** additional teaching/preparations; cancellations of seminars, presentations, visits with collaborators or research teams; challenges due to increased time for review of submissions for funding or publication; redirected funding for COVID-19 related topics; pivoting/changing research agenda due to pandemic restrictions; diversion of funds for PPE; donation of supplies or personnel time to COVID-19 initiatives; challenges due to travel or visa restrictions.