

From: Office of the Provost <noreply@mailbox.sc.edu>

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Subject: Extension for faculty evaluation accommodations



Dear UofSC Columbia Faculty,

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our personal and professional lives in ways we could not have envisioned in March. In late March, the Office of the Provost announced several immediate changes for faculty evaluation processes to minimize any negative consequences of the disruption. At the end of this communication is a list of the options provided at that time.

Now that we see the duration of the pandemic and have a fuller understanding of its impact, the Office of the Provost and the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion have discussed how to extend the earlier accommodations, with a mutual commitment to faculty support that recognizes the need to adjust expectations given the disruption of COVID-19.

Specifically, the Office of the Provost, with the full support of UCTP, offers the following accommodations.

1. Any pre-tenure faculty member with a tenure-start date of August 16, 2020 or January 1, 2021, will receive an automatic one-year tenure-clock extension without the need to formally request it.
2. Any faculty member may choose to proceed with their original tenure clock without the one-year extension if desired. Pre-tenure faculty may additionally choose to extend the tenure-progress review, commonly known as third-year review, independently of the candidate's decision to utilize the extension of the probationary

period.

3. Any pre-tenure faculty member may request an additional tenure-clock extension based on COVID-related disruptions to productivity. This extension if requested will be included in the maximum number of three extensions per faculty member, which policy remains in effect. See [ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review \[pdf\]](#) for additional information about extensions.
4. Automatic post-tenure review extensions will be provided for a full six-year cycle. That is, any faculty member scheduled for a post-tenure review for academic years 2021-2022 through 2025-2026 will receive notice of a post-tenure review extension; those scheduled for 2020-2021 should have already received this notice. This extension will count as one of the maximum three allowed extensions as stated in the Faculty Manual. Any faculty member may choose to proceed with post-tenure review without the one-year extension if desired.
5. Any tenured faculty member may request an additional extension of post-tenure review based on COVID-related disruptions to productivity. Any additional extension will be included in the maximum number of three extensions per faculty member. See [ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review \[pdf\]](#) for further information about extensions.
6. Faculty who hold an endowed chair or named professorship may request an extension of the review for reappointment to that position, using the [post-tenure review extension form \[pdf\]](#). Because these positions have fixed ending dates and may have financial commitments, the extension is not automatic and must be approved by the unit dean. For these reviews, only one extension per five-year review cycle can be requested. Emails to chairholders scheduled for review in 2020-2021 were distributed on October 28.
7. In addition, the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion and the Office of the Provost together urge colleagues involved in all faculty evaluation processes to show compassion and flexibility during the disruption of COVID-19. In light of this recommendation, the University Committee on Tenure and Promotion encourages tenure and promotion units throughout the university to also demonstrate flexibility to those seeking tenure and/or promotion through the following recommendations.
 - We ask that unit-level T&P committees discuss, independently of any individual case, how the unit's

criteria and procedures might, without formal modification, reasonably accommodate COVID-19 impacts, particularly with respect to the quantity and timing of research output.

- We ask that each unit strongly encourage each candidate to include a statement regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the candidate's professional life at the conclusion of the personal statement, which will also be sent to external reviewers. This statement should explain how the candidate's research, teaching, or service has been affected since early 2020 by the pandemic. Examples may include: changes in research focus, whether voluntary or directed; diversion of laboratory capacity to pandemic-related work; productivity changes due to family obligations; personal health; travel restrictions; effects of changes in teaching or advising conditions; etc. The statement may emphasize approaches used by the candidate to overcome unforeseen challenges of the pandemic.
- We ask that the Teaching Summary provided by the unit include student course evaluation and peer evaluation average scores broken down by mode of teaching (in-person, hybrid, fully online) to allow for equitable comparison. The Teaching Summary should also include the mode of teaching for each course taught by the candidate. All accommodations regarding teaching evaluations issued March 27, 2020, remain in effect, and we urge reviewers to respect the exceptional demands on faculty as they continue to adjust their instruction (see addendum below).
- Finally, the UCTP strongly recommends that all units consider rescheduling or waiving the peer evaluations of teaching for the 2020-2021 academic year due to the constantly changing situation that impacts both the teacher and the peer evaluator.

While most of these recommendations are specific to processes and evaluations for tenure-track faculty, the Office of the Provost strongly encourages units to provide the same considerations for evaluation of professional-track faculty.

Sincerely,

William F. Tate IV
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

F. Wayne Outten
Chair, University Committee on Tenure and Promotion

Addendum

Faculty Evaluations: Accommodations for COVID-19 Impact (March 27, 2020)

Tenure-clock extensions: All pre-tenure faculty with less than three previously approved tenure-clock extensions were granted a tenure-clock extension (TCE) and extension of the tenure progress review, if applicable. As with any TCE, use of the extension is optional.

1. **Post-tenure review extensions:** All tenured faculty scheduled for post-tenure review (PTR) in 2020-2021 were granted a one year extension. Again, use of the extension is optional. Note that the Office of the Provost does not track PTR, so notifications were made based on those identified by the colleges as scheduled for PTR.
2. **Teaching evaluations for Spring 2020:**
 - Student course evaluations are required by state law and will be conducted electronically for all courses that have 5 or more students in them. For annual performance review, tenure progress review, tenure and/or promotion applications, and post-tenure review purposes, instructors may choose to not include the Spring 2020 evaluations at part of their evaluation portfolio for the academic year 2019-2020.
 - Academic units that use some form of aggregated course evaluation scores for comparisons in any faculty evaluation process are encouraged to not include data from Spring 2020 in the aggregate comparison scores. If the academic unit chooses to include aggregate data for Spring 2020, faculty members of these units being evaluated may allow their own Spring 2020 data to be included in aggregate comparison scores or request that

it not be included.

- Peer evaluations are not required by state law but may be required by policy of the academic unit. Spring 2020 peer evaluations after Spring Break may only be done via remote technology. Academic units should consider waiving the requirement of peer evaluation in Spring 2020. Faculty members of these units being evaluated may request that peer evaluations of their own Spring 2020 courses that have been conducted be included in their annual performance review or that they not be included.

3. **Course Evaluations for Promotion and Tenure Applications:** The University Committee on Tenure and Promotion (UCTP) will honor (a) individual faculty decisions to not include the Spring 2020 student course evaluations and peer teaching evaluations as part of their tenure and promotion file and (b) unit and/or individual faculty decisions to not include Spring 2020 student course evaluations in their aggregate data in the tenure and promotion teaching summaries. We encourage all academic units to also honor these individual faculty decisions at the unit level for professional faculty promotion files.