

COVID-19 Issues for Fall 2020

1. Will faculty and librarians be required to work on campus?

The presidents' representatives stated that requests by faculty and librarians to work completely remotely will be addressed at each individual campus.

2. Access to faculty/librarian offices:

The presidents' representatives stated that faculty and librarians' offices continue to be accessible, but that the individual university guidelines for use must be followed.

3. Fall 2020 evaluations of full-time faculty and librarians:

a. Submission of materials:

The committee agreed that submission of materials may be done digitally, in compliance with the university's requested format(s). Such formats may be by thumb drive, upload to the university website, etc. Paper submission should be a last resort.

b. Conduct of evaluations:

The committee agreed that evaluators will be allowed to transmit their evaluation and recommendation to the candidate for personnel action by email. Candidates will be allowed to respond to their evaluations by email.

c. Student evaluations:

The committee agreed that there will be no evaluations of *part-time faculty* in the Fall 2020 semester. The Committee has *not reached an agreement* regarding student evaluations of full-time faculty. Absent an agreement, student evaluations will be administered in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.

d. Classroom/direct observations of librarians:

The committee has *not reached an agreement* regarding the conduct of classroom/direct observations of librarians. Absent an agreement, classroom/direct observations will be conducted in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement.

4. Tenure eligibility (extension of "clock"):

The presidents are considering this at this time.

5. Office hours/advising obligations:

The committee agreed that faculty can perform office hours/advising obligations remotely for the semester; however, if a faculty member and student mutually agree that there is a need to meet in person, then they may do so in an on-campus location that allows for compliance with university guidelines for face-to-face meetings.

6. Service obligation:

A unit member's performance of university service will be evaluated in light of available opportunities and needs of the department and university. There will be a reasonable shift in expectations this semester due to these novel circumstances.

7. Continuing scholarship obligation:

The committee agreed that faculty must be committed to continuing scholarship in the fall 2020 semester, but that unit members shall not be penalized if conferences and other research opportunities have been reduced or eliminated or if university funding is unavailable. The unit member should address this in their narrative.

8. Handling of student complaints:

The committee agreed that the department chair or EO officer (depending upon the nature of the complaint) and unit member will communicate in accordance with university policy, which at this time requires they will communicate electronically.

9. Student access to online remote learning:

The provosts are concerned and attentive to the fact that students may have technology and internet service issues that need to be addressed. In response to concerns that students do not receive or have difficulty with remote learning, the presidents' representatives noted that evaluators should consider these circumstances.

10. Communication with students:

The committee recognizes that communication is occurring primarily by email. They anticipate this will continue.

11. Obligations related to students with disability:

The presidents' representatives noted that faculty should continue to work with the campus disability resource officer questions concerning accommodations for disabled students.

12. Tutoring:

The provosts noted that tutoring will be made available at their campuses, much of it remotely.

13. Online and remote delivery of lectures:

The presidents' representatives noted that teaching modes will vary from university to university, and that at this time universities are including a variety of options for faculty including online and face-to-face/streamed hybrid modes. The committee reminds faculty that training is available during the summer and encourages faculty to take advantage of it. The committee acknowledged the value of sharing the training provided by or prepared at one university with the others. These links are on the MSCA COVID-19 Teaching Resources page.

14. Availability of software subscriptions:

The presidents' representatives responded that the availability varies university to university and that faculty should contact their department chairs for assistance. A university may be able to provide only limited assistance if it does not support the particular technology.

15. Privacy issues during online/remote teaching:

The presidents' representatives noted that many institutions are notifying students that recording of lectures without consent is illegal. Faculty are encouraged to include some type of statement in this regard on their syllabus.

16. Academic integrity (tests, final exams, etc.):

The committee recognizes concerns in this area and noted that different universities are taking steps to help faculty ensure that students adhere to academic integrity policies.

17. Modes of instruction not adaptable to online/remote teaching:

The committee acknowledged that this situation is dynamic, that each university is working to determine which components of the curriculum are essential and how to handle their delivery.

18. Availability of equipment:

The provosts stated that to the extent equipment is needed, efforts continue to provide that equipment. Faculty should contact their Dean/department chair for assistance with this.

19. Sick leave for part-time & DGCE faculty:

The committee notes that these employees are entitled to statutory leave under state law, and may receive benefits under the newly enacted Federal law.

20. Sick leave bank.

The union proposed that unit members who belong to the bank not have to be off the payroll for five days before accessing the bank under all circumstances. The presidents' representatives stated that HR will waive the 5 day waiting period for unit members if the leave is the result of a COVID related illness. The usual contract terms will apply in the event the bank nears depletion.

21. Virtual committee meetings:

The committee agrees that the need remains for committees to meet virtually. Furthermore, the committee urges the universities to convene all governance committees by September 14, 2020.

22. Grievances.

The committee agreed that hearings will be handled electronically unless the hearing participants mutually agree to meet in person, subject to university guidelines for such face-to-face meetings.

23. Librarians not able to reduce vacation leave by September 1, 2020.

The committee agreed to extend the deadline to December 31, 2020 on a case-by-case basis. Librarians who are not able to work down their vacation leave by September 1, 2020, are expected to demonstrate by August 15, 2020, that they made a request in writing for vacation leave of the supervisor outside the unit and the request was denied.

24. Unemployment compensation.

The presidents' representatives recognize that part-time faculty may be eligible for unemployment compensation in some instances based on reduced work. The Universities will respond carefully to DUA requests for information when part-time faculty are seeking unemployment compensation benefits.