

March 27, 2020

Sent to Academic Senate and Academic Federation members

Dear Colleagues,

We wish to take this opportunity to once again thank you for all the efforts you are making on this campus to help ensure that we can, as much as possible, retain the ability to fulfill our obligations and essential services to our numerous constituencies, especially our students. It is self-evident that the sacrifices that we find ourselves collectively making not only reflect how seriously and conscientiously we consider our public service mission, but as well our altruism towards those members of our community who are right now in the greatest need of care and compassion.

We also know how important it is that we collectively engage in self-care, on both a personal and professional level. Please consider visiting [Human Resources' Coronavirus Guidance for Employees & Supervisors](#), including how to cope with the stress and anxiety brought on by COVID-19. The [Academic and Staff Assistance Program](#) is remotely providing confidential, cost-free assessment, intervention, consultation and referral services to all UC Davis and UC Davis Health academic appointees, staff and their immediate families. For appointments, they can be reached by phone at (530) 752-2727 for UC Davis employees and (916) 734-2727 for UC Davis Health employees.

Because the University of California relies so heavily on peer evaluation and shared governance, we want to provide assurance that, like you, we do not want any members of our academic community to be disadvantaged for reasons that obviously remain out of their control. We are committed to and invested in your success, and as Academic Senate faculty ourselves, we fully understand the current impossibility of carrying out our functions to the standard we customarily expect of ourselves. Please know that we do not expect you to either, but also be assured that we do not want any of our academic community members to be adversely affected in their advancements. This is a time, perhaps now more than ever, when the peer review in which we engage as a component of shared governance takes on even greater gravitas, and provides the opportunity for us to be understanding of and empathetic to the pressures and stresses that all academic appointees are experiencing. These stresses may be especially acute for those with children and dependents for whom they must now assume primary, full-time caregiving responsibility.

With all of that very much in mind, this letter addresses the following issues:

1. Paid administrative leave
2. Sabbatical leaves in Spring 2020
3. Faculty searches in Spring 2020
4. Advancement (merit, promotion) actions in 2019-2020
5. Instructional evaluations in Winter and Spring 2020
6. Research/creative activity/scholarship productivity

7. Extension of the promotion “clock”

1. Paid Administrative Leave

Many academics are being asked to fulfill their work-related responsibilities while having to provide childcare, supervision of others, elder care, etc. Without enough hours in the day to accomplish this unprecedented confluence of obligations, academics (and especially faculty with teaching loads) will have to triage their responsibilities to distinguish between what they must accomplish from what need not be accomplished at this time.

Academic Affairs is regularly updating new issuances from UCOP on its Paid Administrative Leave document: [COVID-19-Related Leave for Academic Appointees: Guidance for Supervisors](#). As a reminder, Paid Administrative Leave for COVID-19-related circumstances may be taken when at least one of the following circumstances are met:

1. When an employee is unable to work due to the employee’s own COVID-19-related illness or that of a family member; or
2. When an employee is unable to work because the employee has been directed not to come to the worksite for COVID-19-related reasons and/or the worksite has implemented a COVID-19-related remote-work program or is under a shelter in place order and it is not operationally feasible for the employee to work remotely; or
3. When an employee is unable to work because a COVID-19-related school or daycare closure requires the employee to be at home with a child or dependent, and it is not operationally feasible for the employee to work remotely or in conjunction with the childcare commitment.

This provides academic appointees with considerable latitude to take paid leaves on an intermittent basis when life events present themselves that are out of our control. When taking such leaves, please work closely with your supervisor or department chair to ensure that any teaching, which remains an essential function of the university, is impacted to the least extent possible. Here are some provisions you should be familiar with:

- For faculty and exempt academic employees, use of Paid Administrative Leave is in full-day increments; a day is defined as the regular time that an appointee would have worked on that day regardless of the actual number of hours worked per day. For such exempt employees, there will be up to 16 days on which the Paid Administrative Leave would occur.
- For hourly appointees, the total number of hours available is prorated to reflect the appointment percentage.
- Paid Administrative Leave can be taken intermittently, and for exempt academic employees is recorded in whole days.

- Paid Administrative Leave must be used by December 31, 2020 – after that date, Paid Administrative Leave will no longer be available.

2. Sabbatical leaves in Spring 2020

Many of the sabbatical leaves already approved for the spring quarter require travel to domestic or international destinations. Because of the travel restrictions imposed, these trips may no longer be possible. Requests to cancel sabbatical leaves for reasons related to travel impacted by COVID-19 will be approved. We recognize that it may be too late to assign teaching responsibilities to faculty who find themselves in this position, but faculty are still expected to be fully engaged with their university responsibilities to the fullest extent possible. Faculty without teaching assignments due to canceling sabbatical are encouraged to assist others in optimizing the virtual course experience or sharing instructional coverage with faculty impacted by family care needs or COVID-19 administrative leaves.

3. Faculty searches in Spring 2020

On March 17, 2020 we distributed an [advisory](#) to the campus about how to manage ongoing and future faculty searches in light of recent domestic travel restrictions and prohibitions on travel from countries in Asia and Europe due to COVID-19. This advisory remains in effect, although the scope of travel restrictions has expanded even further. We understand there are concerns about what will happen with searches that may be, extended, delayed, failed, or postponed until the 2020-2021 academic year. As deans are responsible for oversight of recruitments within their college/school, please direct these concerns and questions to your them via your department chairs.

4. Advancement (merit, promotion) actions in 2019-2020

All advancement actions continue to be processed and evaluated by reviewers at the department, college/school, and (where appropriate) university levels. Our goal is to have most actions determined by June 30, 2020, but in the event of delay please be assured that any actions decided later will be retroactive to July 1, 2020. We are grateful for the conscientious work of the many Faculty Personnel Committees, Committees on Academic Personnel (CAP-OC/CAPAC), Joint Senate-Federation Personnel Committee, Academic Federation Personnel Committee, and Administrative Series Personnel Committee in continuing to regularly meet and provide their valued advice and guidance.

5. Instructional evaluations in Winter and Spring 2020

We wish to assure faculty that they will not be disadvantaged in their advancement actions because of the sudden and unprecedented changes in course delivery and evaluation. In all merit and advancement actions, reviewers will be instructed to disregard comments and scores in Winter and Spring 2020 teaching evaluations that appear to be negatively influenced by the transition to remote teaching and examinations. Where review policies permit, evaluations for Winter and Spring 2020 may be excluded from the dossier. While departments and colleges/schools may retain these teaching evaluations for the purpose of monitoring performance and making reappointment decisions, any such review shall take into account circumstances beyond the instructor's control due to the impact of COVID 19 disruption. Faculty are encouraged to address any such issues in their Candidate's Statements included in the academic dossiers.

We also acknowledge that some students may find the creative efforts faculty are making to deliver some or all of their courses remotely to be highly appreciated and singularly meritorious. Faculty are encouraged to document these efforts as a demonstration of their resilience and dedication while confronting these extraordinary times.

6. Research/creative activity/scholarship productivity

There is little doubt that all of us will face impediments to the continuity of our individual academic enterprises, but academic appointees should not be penalized for it. The reasons for such impediments will be myriad, ranging from exigent family circumstances to the inability to travel to destinations for research; moreover, the impact of such impediments may extend well beyond Spring 2020. Regardless of reason, academic appointees should avail themselves of the opportunity to explain the impact of COVID-19 on their productivity in their subsequent merit actions. We also encourage academic appointees to carefully read the timely and reassuring letter, [Guidance from the Committee on Academic Personnel Oversight \(CAP\) on Advancement Actions and COVID-19](#), that was endorsed by us and the Davis Division of the Academic Senate's Executive Council, regarding how reviewers should flexibly consider all factors when assessing research, creative activity, and scholarship (as well as teaching and service).

7. Extension of the promotion "clock"

Certain titles at the assistant rank are expected to promote within an eight-year time period. These titles include:

- Assistant Professors (tenure)
- Acting Professors of Law (tenure)
- Lecturers with Potential for Security of Employment
- Assistant Agronomist (_ in the AES)
- Assistant Professor in Residence
- Assistant Professor of Clinical X

- Health Sciences Assistant Clinical Professor
- Assistant Adjunct Professor (>50% time)
- Assistant Specialists in Cooperative Extension
- Assistant Professional Researchers

We wish to remind our academic community that under certain conditions the “clock” can be extended for up to two years upon request; this is already enshrined in the UC Academic Personnel Manual ([APM 133](#)), with relevant sections shown below (emphasis added):

[APM 133-17\(h\)](#):

A faculty member may request to stop the clock during the probationary period for personal reasons (see below), including childbearing, childrearing, serious health condition, disability, bereavement, *or significant circumstance or event that disrupts a faculty member’s ability to pursue his or her duties*. Extensions are normally granted for a period of up to one (1) year for each event, automatically for some reasons, and upon request and approval for other reasons. For those extensions needing approval, such approval will be at the discretion of the Chancellor.

A faculty member may be granted no more than two (2) years of extension during the probationary period. A faculty member is eligible to stop the clock even if the faculty member does not take a formal leave or have a modification of duties. A request to stop the clock should be made as soon as the need becomes apparent.

§(3): Significant Circumstance or Event

A faculty member may request to stop the clock during the probationary period, for reasons due to a *significant circumstance or event beyond the faculty member’s control that disrupts the faculty member’s ability to pursue his or her duties*. Examples of significant circumstances or events beyond the faculty member’s control for which the faculty member may request to stop the clock include *the effects of a natural disaster* or the effects of significant delays in the provision of research space, facilities, or resources committed to the faculty member and necessary for his or her research activities.

[APM 133-17\(i\)](#):

Faculty members shall not be arbitrarily disadvantaged in their promotion, advancement, or compensation because they have elected to take a childbearing or parental leave, to stop the clock for reasons listed in section (h) above, or to defer a personnel review. Personnel reviews that are deferred due to a family accommodation as defined in APM - 760 should be treated procedurally in the same manner as personnel reviews conducted at the usual intervals. The file shall be evaluated without prejudice as if the work were done in the normal period of service and so stated in the department chair’s letter.

We believe that impact of COVID-19-related events on an Academic Senate or Academic Federation member's ability to satisfactorily perform their academic duties qualifies as an "effect of a natural disaster." Therefore, such requests for a one-year extension on this basis will be regarded favorably and without prejudice or penalty. Requests by academics in the above titles to extend the "clock" may be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs through their department chairs and deans after July 1, 2020. Although we have received questions about extending the "clock" beyond two years, this is not allowable under UC policy, and can only be granted in extraordinary cases by the approval of the systemwide UC Provost.

Even when "clock" extensions are approved (for any reason), academics are not required to use them, and may still advance in normative time (or sooner). However, not utilizing such approved extensions does not itself constitute an acceleration in time.

In addition, we will similarly approve postponements (as outlined in [APM 220](#) and [APM UCD 220 Procedure 3](#)) for COVID-19-related impacts on academic duties, which will not count against normative-time review cycle academic progress.

Finally, we wish to draw your attention to our site for important campus [Finance, Operations and Administration Status Updates](#). This includes answers to many questions we have received about university function in the coming weeks, including Human Resources, mail, parking, safety, travel, and worklife.

With best regards and immense gratitude for your extraordinary commitment to our university,

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